The Paratext/Metatext Continuum
Walter Benjamin's "The Translator's Task" As a Paratext That Is Also a Metatext Within a Network of Nested Textual Manifestations

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Abstract

Paratexts have been defined as liminal devices that mediate a text to readers, such as titles, forewords, prefaces, etc. However, there's an inherent open-endedness to their role since they often act as important commentaries on the text, and influence its reception in fundamental ways, thus blurring the distinction between paratexts and critical essays, what Gérard Genette terms "metatexts" (2001: 270). Accordingly, Walter Benjamin's iconic "The Translator's Task" is analyzed as a paratext that is also a metatext, along with an essay by Steven Rendall, his most authoritative contemporary translator into English, to show how the interplay between source texts, translated texts, paratexts, and metatexts produces a phenomenological network of nested textual layers, and that absolutist boundaries between paratexts and metatexts create various ambiguities and contradictions that obscure the fact that there is a continuum between these important manifestations of textuality.

Key Words

Paratexts, metatexts, source texts, translated texts, continuum

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Introduction

In "From Work to Text", Roland Barthes declares that "Just as Einsteinian science demands that *the relativity of the frames of reference* be included in the object studied, so the combined action of Marxism, Freudianism and structuralism demands, in literature, the relativization of the relations of writer, reader and

observer (critic)." (Barthes, 1988: 156). He proposes, in contrast to the old classical, Newtonian idea of the Work, a new, more relativistic, phenomenological concept which he calls Text. He states that the Text is "a methodological field" (p. 157), and that it cuts across "the work, several works" (p. 157), that whereas the Work represents the stopping point of the signified, the Text "practises the infinite deferment of the signified, is dilatory…" (p. 158). This plurality is radically intertextual, it is not marked by a process of filiation, like the Work, but by a ludic interplay that is akin to a network, wherein the Text extends itself "as a result of a combinatory systematic" (p. 161), which Barthes likens to biological systems, a profusion and patterning of the weave.

It is with this in mind that I propose to explore a continuum of textuality that embodies these principles, where the interplay between source texts, translated texts, paratexts, and metatexts produces a kind of phenomenological network of nested textual layers: Walter Benjamin's "The Translator's Task" (Rendall, 1997: 151-165), translated by Steven Rendall in a special issue of the journal *TTR* (1997, Vol. 10, no 2) entirely dedicated to Benjamin's iconic essay, and Rendall's critical discourse around that, specifically his article "Translation, quotation, iterability" appearing in the same issue (Rendall: 167-189).

Of course, Benjamin wrote "The Translator's Task" (hereafterTTT) as a preface to his translation into German of Baudelaire's *Tableaux parisiens* poems (part of *Les Fleurs du mal*), so TTT is itself part of a paratextual/metatextual nexus, and Rendall's critical discourse is a paratext/metatext to his own translation of a paratext/metatext, which is found in an issue of a journal that is a paratextual/metatextual locus in its entirety for TTT. So this investigation will unravel the extent to which TTT and "Translation, quotation, iterability" is a paratext, or metatext, or non-binary hybrid combination of both, or some other manifestation of textuality, depending on the frame of reference. One of the main starting points and core theoretical constructs of the analysis will be Gérard Génette's paratextual typology, outlined in *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, the English translation by Jane E. Lewin of *Seuils*, originally published in French in 1987.

1. Genette's Paratextual Typology

In the foreword to the book, Richard Macksey succinctly defined paratexts as "those liminal devices and conventions, both within the book (*peritext*) and

outside it (*eptitext*), that mediate the book to the reader: titles and subtitles, pseudonyms, forewords, dedications, epigraphs, prefaces…" (Genette, 2001: xviii). Genette himself described the paratext as "More than a boundary or a sealed border, the paratext is, rather, a *threshold*, […]. It is an 'undefined zone' between the inside and the outside, a zone without any hard or fast boundary on either the inward side (turned toward the text) or the outward side (turned toward the world's discourse about the text)" (Genette: 2). Further, Genette states that "By definition, something is not a paratext unless the author or one of his associates accepts responsibility for it" (Genette: 9). However, later in the book, Genette includes allographic prefaces, those not written by the author of the text, in his purview of paratexts (Genette: 263), and mentions instances of prefaces by translators, which is precisely what this present analysis is concerned with.

In a footnote, Genette declares that "In the case of a translation, the preface may be signed by the translator, as we have just seen. The translator-preface writer may possibly comment on, among other things, his own translation; on this point, and in this sense, his preface then ceases to be allographic." (Genette: 264). So, not only does he seem to include translators' prefaces in his paratextual typography, but also appears to acknowledge the status of the translator as an author in his or her own right, insofar as the translator comments on the translation. Thus, there's an inherent ambiguity in Genette's definition of paratexts. This ambiguity is only intensified when he declares that "Nevertheless, the critical and theoretical dimension of the allographic preface clearly draws it toward the border that separates (or rather, toward the absence of a border that does not sharply separate) paratext from metatext and, more concretely, preface from critical essay." (Genette: 270) In an earlier work, *Introduction à l'architexte*, Genette had defined metatextuality as "The transtextual relationship that links a commentary to the text it comments upon (without necessarily citing it)." (Genette, p. xix) He further declares, wittily, that "All literary critics, for centuries, have been producing metatext without knowing it." (*ibid*) Thus, the metatext encompasses all of literary criticism, and because of its enormous scope, Genette defers delving into a systematic exploration of it. Nevertheless, it does point to the fact that a paratextual preface might not only present the text to the external context, but also contain critical metatextual discourse, as is often the case. Accordingly, it is that hybridity and ambiguity that I would like to explore further in this analysis, as well as the resulting continuum of textual manifestations that it produces.

2. Further Critical Discourse on Paratexts by Later Scholars: Gürcağlar

The ambiguities, contradictions, and complexities of Genette's foundational paratextual typology are taken up by further critical discourse on paratexts, and elaborations/additions to the idea of paratextuality, by later scholars who embody what I term "the continuing life of paratexts"—following Walter Benjamin's iconic notion in TTT that translations represent the "F*ortleben*" or "continuing life" of texts, and also Caroline Disler's assertion in another issue of *TTR* that the use of the term "afterlife" in traditional Benjamin scholarship is a mistranslation of "*Fortleben",* that translation in TTT is another step in the original's continuing life (Disler, 2011: 183-221).

Towards the end of his book on paratexts, Genette declares that he has "left out three practices whose paratextual relevance seems undeniable, but investigating each one individually might demand as much work as was required here in treating this subject as a whole. The first of the three practices is *translation…*" (Genette: 405). In "What Texts Don't Tell: The Uses of Paratexts in Translation", a seminal article in the continuing life of paratextuality, Sehnaz Tahir Gürcağlar critiques Genette's relegation of translation to an activity that merely has "paratextual relevance" (Tahir Gürcağlar, 2002: 45). This places translations in a subordinate hierarchical role in relation to source texts, and restricts their agency in a number of important phenomena where translation has central implications, not the least of which is the fact that, citing Benjamin, translation is the means through which source texts attain an "afterlife" (p. 46) or "continuing life", a notion that this essay is integrally concerned with. Gürcağlar also presents very useful terminological distinctions that assimilate and categorize various manifestations of translational textuality, namely between "text", which refers to a translated text and indicates that she considers a translated text to be a text in itself and not exclusively a paratext; "extratexts", which "refer to the general meta-discourse on translation circulating independently of individual translated texts" (p. 44); and "paratexts", which "refer to presentational materials accompanying translated texts and the text-specific meta-discourses formed directly around them." (p. 44) Again, this can be applied to this investigation, since Benjamin's TTT can be regarded as an extratextual phenomenon given that it is a meta-discourse *par excellence* on translation that is almost always published independently of the translated Baudelaire poems that it is supposed to form a preface to. Further, Rendall's "Translation, quotation, iterability" can be considered a "paratext" in this sense, since it's part of the presentational

material that accompanies Rendall's translation of TTT and is a text-specific meta-discourse around TTT.

3. Further Critical Discourse on Paratexts by Later Scholars: Batchelor

Another scholar in the continuing life of paratexts, Kathryn Batchelor, presents an entire book titled *Translation and Paratexts* in order to provide a comprehensive overview of paratextuality and its definitions, uses, functions, categorizations, contradictions, ambiguities, and boundaries, as it pertains to translation. In discussing notions emanating from Genette of translation as paratext, that translations "serve as commentary on the original text" (Genette: 405), in the sense that they offer "an elucidation of how the text itself (that is, the original) is to be understood" (Batchelor, 2018: 19), Batchelor states that they would have to be viewed comparatively, for example with the original and its translation side by side:

> For readers to benefit from the translation's ability to serve as commentary on the original text, they would, of course, have to be aware of the distance and differences between the original text and its translation, or in other words would have to read them in a comparative mode. They would also need some awareness of the potential alternative readings not chosen by the translator— for a translation can only act as commentary insofar as it reveals decision-making processes. (Batchelor, 2018: 20)

In that sense, Walter Benjamin's translations of Baudelaire's *Tableaux parisiens* poems can be read as paratexts, since, as we learn from Steven Rendall's article "Translation, quotation, iterability", they were published "along with the original French text of each poem, which was printed on the left-hand page, facing Benjamin's translations on the right-hand page." (Rendall: 184-185) Of course, as Batchelor notes, the caveat as far as Genette is concerned, in this specific instance, is that "the translator would need to work closely with the author, or, better still, be the author". (Batchelor: 20) However, again, this linking of paratexts and translations with authorial intention and allyship is full of ambiguities and contradictions, given that Genette considers allographic posthumous prefaces, those written after the death of the author, to be part of his paratextual typology as well:

> All those prefaces are obviously produced posthumously, that is, after the death of the author of the text. That possibility, from which the authorial preface is, of course, excluded, is the one thing that distinguishes the temporal occasions

of the allographic preface; thus an allographic preface may be original (for a first edition), later (for an anthumous republication or a translation), or delayed (these are generally posthumous). (Genette: 263-4)

This is where Genette appends his famous note regarding translators' prefaces that we saw above, that it ceases to be allographic if the translator comments on his own translation. According to Batchelor, given that Genette views translations as later versions of the original text (Batchelor: 21), the bestowal of authorship on the translator "suggests that the translator is to be considered author of the translation process, but not of the final product; the work of the translator, and the responsibility for it, is to some extent embedded in the translated version, yet the text itself still belongs fully to the author." (p. 22) Batchelor goes on to say that this conservative position runs against the current view of translation that sees it as a "creative process of rewriting" (p. 22), and this is reflected in contemporary post-Genette scholarship around paratextuality, as we shall see below.

Sehnaz Tahir Gürcağlar posits that translators' prefaces should not be classified as either authorial or allographic but "handled separately in a category of their own". (Batchelor: 30; Tahir Gürcağlar, 2013: 93). Accordingly, another scholar, Sharon Deane-Cox, proposes the designation of "translatorial paratext" (Batchelor: 30; Deane-Cox, 2014: 29) to distinguish material by translators as opposed to authorial or other third-party paratexts. Evelyn Dueck creates even further categories, namely the translatorial peritext and epitext, those authored and emanating directly from the translator, and translated peritexts and epitexts, referring to translated source text paratexts (Batchelor: 31; Dueck, 2014: 213).

Batchelor also proposes an updated definition of the paratext that does away with Genette's problematic idea of authorial intention or allyship, one in which a translated text is a text in its own right, with its own paratexts, and which does not specify where a paratext needs to be placed relative to a text: "A paratext is a consciously crafted threshold for a text which has the potential to influence the way(s) in which the text is received." (Batchelor: 142) Further, she outlines a more focused mode of differentiation between paratext and metatext, which is centrally relevant to this present analysis. As we saw earlier, Genette had posited that metatextuality embraces all of critical discourse, and that the border between a preface and critical discourse was fluid and ambiguous. Batchelor states that the term *metatext* "functions only in relational terms: in other words, a text is a metatext in relation to the specific text upon which it comments." (Batchelor: 149). Thus, it can act in a complementary

manner with the term *paratext*, and the distinction would be that "A paratext is a threshold to the text. A metatext is a commentary on the text." (p. 149). This obviously causes significant overlap, as Batchelor herself notes, since "paratexts often comment on a text as a means of providing a threshold to it." (p. 151), and that paratexts can be metatextual, providing commentary on the text, and metatexts can be paratextual, being consciously crafted thresholds to the text. Genette himself acknowledged the fluidity between paratext and metatext, with the suggestion, according to Batchelor, that it would perhaps be excessive and unfruitful to "impose stricter borders around the paratext" (p. 151). She concludes that the best approach would be case by case, depending upon the research framework and question adopted. This is why I have used the term "continuum" to characterize the paratext/metatext polarity. Nevertheless, within that continuum, gradations of varying textuality can be more precisely focalized, and that is what this analysis has concentrated on.

4. Paratextual Analysis of Walter Benjamin's "The Translator's Task"

Now that we have established a thorough critical framework, with an analysis of Genette's classical typology for paratexts/metatexts, and those of later scholars up to the contemporary period, we can proceed with a paratextual analysis of the concrete manifestations of textuality that this study is concerned with, namely Walter Benjamin's "The Translator Task" (Rendall, 1997: 151-165) and Steven Rendall's "Translation, quotation, iterability"(Rendall, 1997: 167-189).

As mentioned previously, I will be using Steven Rendall's translation of Walter Benjamin's iconic essay on the hermeneutics of translation and its metaphysical function, published in 1997 in the translation studies journal *TTR*, in a special issue entirely dedicated to TTT. Benjamin wrote TTT as a preface to his translation into German of Baudelaire's *Tableaux parisiens* poems (part of *Les Fleurs du mal*). However, there's no direct mention of Baudelaire or his poetry or Benjamin's translation decisions in TTT. Instead, it seems to be a metatext on the act of translation itself. Translation is to be a conduit for revelation and for uncovering a "pure language" ("*reine Sprache*") that reveals its divine origins in the creative Word of Genesis. Benjamin is not interested in the idea of language and translation rendering meaning or information in the conventional sense, it doesn't represent for him the essence of a text. What is essential, however, is the transmission of what Benjamin calls "the incomprehensible,

the secret, the 'poetic'" (Rendall: 152). In order to do that, languages need to be brought together in translation so that the pure language inherent in all languages can emerge. This cannot be achieved through the old paradigm of sense-for sense translation, handed down from Cicero and St. Jerome, etc., but through a kind of transfigured literal translation that breaks apart the syntax of the target language, the conventional, discursive network of associations, and allows the "poetic", the "ineffable", the "*reine Sprache*" to come through:

> Freedom does not gain in standing from the communication's meaning; it is precisely fidelity's task to emancipate translation from the meaning. Rather, freedom demonstrates in the translation's own language what it can contribute to the service of pure language. To set free in his own language the pure language spellbound in the foreign language, to liberate the language imprisoned in the work by rewriting it, is the translator's task. (Rendall, 1997: 163)

Benjamin cites Holderlin's translations of Sophocles as a prime example of this, in which "the harmony of languages is so deep that meaning is touched by language only in the way that an Aeolian harp is touched by the wind." (p. 164). Thus, TTT represents the hermeneutic approach to translation, as opposed to, for example, the linguistic or functionalist or cultural approach.

An important thing to note about the publication context of TTT is that Steven Rendall is listed as the author in the table of contents and bibliographic citation, [Rendall, Steven. "The Translator's Task, Walter Benjamin (Translation)." TTR : Traduction, Terminologie, Rédaction, vol. 10, no. 2, 1997: 151-165.], not Walter Benjamin, who is listed within the title of the article itself, with the fact that it's a translation nested in the title as well. This seems to indicate a privileging of the status of the translator as an author, which is in accordance with more contemporary discourse within translation studies concerning translatorial agency, compared to Genette, given that this was published in 1997. Further, there are no paratextual translator's notes by Rendall explaining his translation decisions anywhere within the otherwise considerable paratextual apparatus that this issue of TTR represents for Benjamin's essay. Instead, there's Rendall's article "Translation, quotation, iterability", which seems to be a metatext in the guise of a paratext, and another article of his exploring the errors in Harry Zohn's previously canonical translation of TTT into English (Rendall, 1997: 191-206). This seems to be the only place where actual translation decisions are mentioned, albeit those of another translator. Nevertheless, the errors that Rendall indicates give clues to his own translation decisions in translating TTT. For example, Rendall points

to passages in which Zohn has completely inverted Benjamin's meaning in the source text, such as a passage (Rendall: 191-192) which talks about certain concepts in language that acquire meaning and significance when they do not refer exclusively to humanity, which reveals Benjamin's concept of the essential non-human nature of language—here, Zohn completely omitted the negative "do not", making Benjamin say the exact opposite of what he stated in the source text. Another example occurs when Zohn neglects to translate "messianich" in the source text, resulting in "If, however, these languages continue to grow in this manner until the end of their time...", whereas it should read "[…] until the messianic end of their time…", thus obliterating the concept of messianism in this passage which is central to Benjamin's thought (Rendall: 192).

In terms of Genette's paratextual typology, TTT appears at first to be an allographic, posthumous epitext, since it isn't written by Baudelaire, so not authorial, it's written after Baudelaire's death, and it's at a distance, spatial and temporal, to Baudelaire's original edition of *Les Fleurs du mal*. However, it's a translator's preface, to which Genette, as we have seen, accords non-allographic, authorial agency to the extent that the translator comments on his own translation. Yet again, Benjamin does not comment on his actual translation of Baudelaire, at least not directly, but on the act of translation itself. Again, Rendall in "Translation, quotation, iterability", contends that Benjamin was in fact writing about Baudelaire indirectly, as we shall see further in this analysis. There's also a fundamental ambiguity about whether TTT is a paratext or, in fact, a metatext. It's a perfect embodiment of "The transtextual relationship that links a commentary to 'the text it comments upon (without necessarily citing it)'" (Genette, 2001: xix), since Benjamin does not cite his translations of Baudelaire at all in it.

In terms of post-Genette paratextual scholarship, TTT would easily fall into the category of Sehnaz Tahir Gürcağlar's extratext, "the general meta-discourse on translation circulating independently of individual translated texts" (Tahir Gürcağlar, 2002: 44), given that it is a meta-discourse *par excellence* on translation that is almost always published independently of the translated Baudelaire poems that it is supposed to form a preface to. It is also, of course, a meta-discourse in the sense that it posits a kind of metalanguage, the pure language or *reine Sprache*, towards which translation, in the ideal Benjaminian sense, should be a gateway. According to Evelyn Dueck's classifications (Batchelor, 2018: 31; Dueck, 2014: 213), it's a translatorial epitext, those authored and emanating directly from the translator. In terms of its timeframe,

we learn from Steven Rendall, in a footnote, that TTT was written much after the Baudelaire translations were completed:

> It is clear, however, that "The Translator's Task" was written as a preface to the translations, and was composed long after the latter were largely completed. Benjamin had begun work on the translations as early as 1914, according to a letter he wrote to Hoffmansthal in 1923; the earliest extant manuscript draft dates from 1915 (GS 4,2:890). Benjamin was thus working on the translations at about the same time as he was writing his essay "On Language as Such and on the Language of Men." (Rendall, 1997: 180)

So, according to Kathryn Batchelor's temporal categories (Batchelor, 2018: 156-7), it would be classified as "post-TT" (target text) relative to its composition, but "with-TT" relative to its publication, since it was published at the same time as the Baudelaire translations that it was a preface to, in 1923. In terms of the possible addressees for TTT, beyond what Genette calls "the public" (Genette, 2001: 9), it would be readers in Germany who would be interested in French Late Romanticism and Baudelaire, and also those who could appreciate the fact that it had a "philologically correct" (Rendall, 1997: 185) reproduction of the original French text, on the left-hand page. Similarly, the addressees of Rendall's translation of TTT in the journal *TTR* would not primarily be the general public, but translation scholars and students to whom the journal is mainly addressed.

Finally, in terms of function, as Genette would say "the illocutionary force of its message" (Genette: 10), we can say that it's interpretive or hermeneutic, an archetypal metatext on translation itself. It could also represent, as Paul de Man asserts, a new kind of modernity, an attempt to overcome the "secular historicity" upon which the old concept of modernity depended (De Man, 1985: 17) and to re-establish "the sacred" or poetic experience that the previous type of modernity had lost contact with, to reinfuse the "sacred" into secular modernist discourse. A possible function of Steven Rendall's translation of TTT could also be to propagate a similar hermeneutics of the sacred and poetic in a late 90s context that had gone through structuralism, and the linguistic, functionalist, and cultural turns successively. Alexis Nouss, the editor of the special issue of *TTR* dedicated to Benjamin's essay, offers his own justification for publishing a new translation of TTT, namely that he is enacting the logical fulfillment of Benjamin's idea of the "continuing life" of originals through the multiplicity of their translations. More specifically, Nouss wants to provide a more accurate and accessible rendering of the text, while at the same

time maintaining the "conceptual opacity" of Benjamin's language. (Nouss, 1997: 9-12)

5. Paratextual Analysis of Steven Rendall's "Translation, quotation, iterability"

Turning now toward's Steven Rendall's essay "Translation, quotation, iterability", one can say that in some ways it stands in a similar relation to Benjamin's TTT that the latter stands in relation to the Baudelaire translations it prefaces. On one level, it's supposed to be a paratextual preface that presents Rendall's translation of TTT, yet there's no actual mention of the translation itself or his translation process. Instead, it unveils itself as a metatext centred around a particular way of looking at TTT, with the crucial difference that it at least mentions the content of TTT and quotes from it. Rendall focuses on the metaphysics of language and explores the full implications of what Benjamin means by "pure language". He sees Benjamin's concept of translation in TTT as another version of Derrida's "iterability", the repetition of a word or text in another context, thus "naming" the word, tearing it out of its usual chain of signification, and reconnecting it with its origin in the divine Word:

> Benjamin's metaphysical theory of language posits that every thing participates in language, for "it is essential to everything to communicate its spiritual content." […] In Benjamin's account, which is explicitly modeled on the first chapter of Genesis, and perhaps implicitly on Baudelaire's "Correspondances", this spiritual content is the residue of the divine act of creation through the word; mutely communicating their linguistic nature to human beings, things call out for recognition of their divine origin. (Rendall: 168)

Linked to this, according to Rendall, is the idea of "naming", which Benjamin had singled out as the fundamental human language act in his essay "On Language as Such and on the Language of Man". Naming "repeats Adam's naming of the animals in the Bible, and distinguishes it from the symbolic and utilitarian functions of language. For Benjamin, the word as name is immediately related to its object. Naming melds subject and object in a single cognitive act that recognizes the residue of the divine creative word in the object, and thereby reveals language as the sole medium of truth." (Rendall: 174).

In the early part of the essay, Rendall reveals one of its functions: to discuss iterability as a means of clarifying "the place of translation in Benjamin's thought by situating it with respect to other modes of iteration he discusses,

and more generally, to suggest a different way of thinking about translation." (p. 169) Following Benjamin, he cites criticism or metatextuality as another mode in the work's continuing life, alongside translation, which Benjamin had explicitly stated in TTT: "The Romantics, he writes, had far more insight than others into the life of art works, but directed almost all their attention to criticism, 'which also represents a phase, even if a lesser one, in the continuing life of the work.'" (p.170) So, there's an interrelated textual continuum between translation, criticism, and quotation, another mode of iteration that he discusses. It's worthwhile to note here that whenever Rendall quotes directly from TTT, he appends a footnote in which he provides the German source text of the quote. This may indicate that he wrote this essay before he had completed his translation of TTT, otherwise he would have referred directly to the translation, instead of translating on the spot for the purposes of this article. Further, he keeps alternating the translation of the title of Benjamin's essay, from "The Task of the Translator" to "The Translator's Task", revealing that he has not yet decided on the title's translation. In terms of Batchelor's classification, it would thus be a "pre-TT" paratext/metatext, in contrast with Benjamin who completed his translations of Baudelaire years before the wrote TTT, as we saw above.

In terms of the possible (inferred, since Baudelaire is never mentioned in Benjamin's essay) relations between TTT and the translated Baudelaire texts it prefaces, Rendall declares that "by making this essay the preface to his translations of Baudelaire's *Tableaux parisiens* he transplants the latter into his own discourse, quotes them and makes them potential examples of his theory of translation." (p. 180) However, Rendall himself admits that's it's not at all clear at first how "how or whether Benjamin's translations of Baudelaire realize the kind of translation he describes in his preface" (p. 180), since the translations are not literal in any ordinary sense: "Not only do his translations not follow the original word-for-word, but their German syntax is relatively normal." (p. 183) Rendall concludes, after a labyrinthine thought process, not unlike Benjamin's syntax in TTT, that it is in the reproduction of a "philologically correct" French source text of the poems, as we saw above, and their confrontation with their translation on the facing page, "a more legitimate confrontation of translation and original ('more legitimate', presumably, because based on a more accurate French text and a more faithful translation)" (p. 186), the difference made by translation is made perceptible, not in an obvious way that is made directly perceptible to the senses, but between the lines' in their differential relation to each other. For the movement away from

language's embroilment in instrumentality and myth is adumbrated, not in the similarity of the two texts, but in their difference. Iterability, translatability, quotatibility are that part of the structure of a thing that differs from the thing itself, points toward something beyond it. For Benjamin, that beyond is pure language (p.187).

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, then, as we have seen, there is a continuum between different variants of paratexts and their sub-categories and metatexts, between Genette's paratextual typology and those of later scholars, between Baudelaire's *Tableaux parisiens* poems and Walter Benjamin's translations of them, and his metatextual shadow-paratext titled "The Translator's Task". In turn, TTT gives impetus to a hermeneutics of translatorial thinking, a reinfusion of sacred phenomenology into secular, modernist discourse, like Benjamin's Angel of History flying backwards into the future, which gives rise to Steven Rendall's "Translation, quotation, iterability", linking Benjamin's pre-structuralist hermeneutics with Derrida's postructuralist iterability. This is the "infinite deferment of the signified" that Barthes evokes (1988: 158). We are in the presence of the Text, a radical, nested intertextuality and hybridity that cuts across works and is subversive of categories, a ludic interplay that coincides with and arrives at, in the end, a revitalized "practice of writing" (Barthes: 164).

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