

Benjaminian Translatability and Elias Canetti's Life Component: The Other German Speaking Modernity

Authors : Noury Bakrim

Abstract : Translatability is one of Walter Benjamin's most influential notions, it is somehow representing the philosophy of language and history of what we might call and what we indeed coined as 'the other German Speaking Modernity' which could be shaped as a parallel thought form to the Marxian-Hegelian philosophy of history, the one represented by the school of Frankfurt. On the other hand, we should consider the influence of the plural German speaking identity and the Nietzschean and Goethean heritage, this last being focused on a positive will of power: the humanised human being. Having in perspective the benjaminian notion of translatability (Übersetzbarkeit), to be defined as an internal permanent hermeneutical possibility as well as a phenomenological potential of a translation relation, we are in fact touching this very double limit of both historical and linguistic reason. By life component, we mean the changing conditions of genetic and neurolinguistic post-partum functions, to be grasped as an individuation beyond the historical determinism and teleology of an event. It is, so to speak, the retrospective/introspective canettian auto-fiction, the benjaminian crystallization of the language experience in the now-time of writing/transmission. Furthermore, it raises various questioning points when it comes to translatability, they are basically related to psycholinguistic separate poles, the fatherly ladino Spanish and the motherly Vienna German, but relating more in particular to the permanent ontological quest of a world loss/belonging. Another level of this quest would be the status of Veza Canetti-Taubner Calderón, german speaking Author, Canetti's 'literary wife', writer's love, his inverted logos, protective and yet controversial 'official private life partner', the permanence of the jewish experience in the exiled german language. It sheds light on a traumatic relation of an inadequate/possible language facing the reconstruction of an oral life, the unconscious split of the signifier and above all on the frustrating status of writing in Canetti's work : Using a suffering/suffered written German to save his remembered acquisition of his tongue/mother tongue by saving the vanishing spoken multilingual experience. While Canetti's only novel 'Die Blendung' designates that fictional referential dynamics focusing on the nazi worldless horizon: the figure of Kien is an onomastic signifier, the anti-Canetti figure, the misunderstood legacy of Kant, the system without thought. Our postulate would be the double translatability of his auto-fiction inventing the bios oral signifier basing on the new praxemes created by Canetti's german as observed in the English, French translations of his memory corpus. We aim at conceptualizing life component and translatability as two major features of a german speaking modernity.

Keywords : translatability, language biography, presentification, bioeme, life Order

Conference Title : ICGES 2017 : International Conference on German and European Studies

Conference Location : Tokyo, Japan

Conference Dates : March 27-28, 2017