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The Monstrosity of the Body in Translation

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In the introduction to his *Poétique du traduire*, Henri Meschonnic lays out what he calls four forms of “teratology”: “*suppression*”, “*ajouts*,” “*déplacements*” of units or groups of units, and the last, “*non-concordance*” (one unit translated with many) and “*anti-concordance*” (many units translated with one). His parodic classification of monsters (“teratology”) is a purposefully reductive account of what have been known in translation pedagogy and linguistics as procedures (Vinay-Darbelnet), shifts (Catford, Van Leuven-Zwart) and solutions (Pym). He likens “teratologies” to “calque”, both of which are the “alibi of fidelity” (26), in service to the translator’s invisibility. In parentheses, after the word “teratologies”, he writes “the biological metaphor implies a comparison to a whole and healthy (*sain et intègre*) body, the body in question being the source text.” Monstrosity is for Meschonnic a problem: it is the perversion and corruption of a unified, complete, well-formed and autonomous body¹.

The term “teratology” in Greek comes from *teras*, meaning “monster” or “marvel” and it is typically defined as a classification of monsters, or as the study of deformities, in both human and non-human life forms.

The theme of monstrosity was not new to translation studies at the time of publication of Meschonnic’s *Poetics*, and has not always been in service to notions of fidelity seeking to erase the authorial trace of the translator’s work. Carol Jacob’s 1975 article “The Monstrosity of Translation” comments upon Benjamin’s famous article “the Task of the Translator”, in which monstrosity is used in precisely the opposite manner to Meschonnic, as the disarticulation of the original in a translation through the monstrous intrusion of literality. This, as Jacobs reads, is for Benjamin the “the most perfect of all translations” (762). A certain literality in translation interrupts the hegemony of sameness. In Jacobs’s monstrosity, this very subject can be fractured or fragmented providing fissures through which the work of translation itself may appear.

Monstrosity in this account is a creative poetics of language in translation through which “the foreignness of languages” (to use Benjamin’s terminology, which later becomes a corner stone of Bhabha’s Third Space) may shine through. But before we assimilate this

¹ Meschonnic’s take on the “*sain et intègre*” body, is slightly more complicated than this, but I did not want to take up space in the body of the article to dedicate to Meschonnic’s rhetorical convolutions. As “teratologies” is ironic for Meschonnic, the “*sain et intègre*” body onto which these teratologies are imposed is probably likewise ironic. My logic remains the same however, insofar as Meschonnic does not question his imagining of this “*sain et intègre*” body—regardless of whether this body is “his” version of the text to be translated or the linguists’. In addition, the irony is twisted: his disdain for teratologies is clear, and his use of this word is negative. This negativity could be read contra the negative association with the “*sain et intègre*”. Whether it should or not is unclear. The double irony creates a confusion about whose white male body he is referring to and whether he “approves” of this body or not.

to Venuti's penchant for foreignizing, I would like to advocate against any absolute methodological dogma for translation, and rather see translation as a site for negotiation and conversation, to borrow Didier Coste's lexicon (2016)—an invitation to read more deeply the specifics of the cultural power dynamics at play in the interaction between texts, what Kwame Anthony Appiah has called “thick translation” (1993). As such, the opening to the other that a literalizing strategy in Jacobs/Benjamin accomplishes, I believe can also be accomplished as a translator intervenes to adapt a text to a given public. In other words, the familiar dichotomy of foreignizing/naturalizing that we find canonically in Venuti, must be tailored to the cultural specificity of the texts at hand and especially, the relationships of asymmetry that ground and surround them. To take this back to our reading of Meschonnic's, “biological metaphor” of translation, we might wonder: to whom does this presumably whole and integral body of which Meschonnic speak belong? What does it look like? Does it look like Meschonnic's body?

I would like to deploy this notion of monstrosity, as its etymology intimates (*monstre*, from *mostrare*, to show—but also an ill omen), as the set of strategies for making the conflicts and tensions of translation visible. This theoretical knot has notably been woven and unwoven in post-colonial practices of writing back, in logics of *détournement*, recycling, anthropofagy and transcreation (for an excellent account of this, see Rachel Galvin's article “Poetry is Theft”). And also in the field of feminist translation, which I will deploy specifically in this article—in particular in the context of primarily white and Canadian feminist translation from 1989 until now. Luise Von Flotow's feminist hijacking, supplementing, prefacing and footnoting (1991), Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood's “rewriting in the feminine” (1991), Barbara Godard's notion of “transformance” (1989) and Carolyn Shread and Von Flotow's “metramorphic translation” (2007)² all conjugate feminist theory with an interventionist, transformative practice of translation. Barbara Godard's transformance—a term she borrows from a “re/writing (translation) project” of Nicole Brossard and Daphne Marlatt—makes the translation work happening in the in-between space visible (*mostrare*) through the model of performance. For Godard, translational space is also a feminist one, from which new meanings may emerge performatively from the thickness of cultural difference:

Translation in this theory of feminist discourse, is production, not reproduction... mak[ing] visible the place of women's exploitation by discourse. Pretension to the production of a singular truth and meaning are suspended.... Feminist discourse presents transformation as performance as a model for translation.... This is at odds with the long dominant theory of translation as equivalence grounded in a poetics of transparence. (44)

Meschonnic's *Poetics* laments the disjunction of form and meaning, calling this a false distinction perpetuated by linguists—part of what he calls the “hatred of poetics”. This disjunction in “transformance” however is a creative space, like the one opened in translation, a site for hashing out contested and contestatory discourses, and of interrupting the hegemony of masculine discourse.

New bodies may thus be built from the vestiges of invisible ones, appearing through the cracks, out of the contestatory thickness of translation, and of the disjuncts present in language that the discourse of masculine hegemony has attempted to gloss over. Translation, as we know, shares etymological roots with “metaphor” (to carry or bring

² As an aside, with the exception of the last, these notions all appeared before the arrival of Venuti's campaign of foreignizing and visibility for the translator.

across, transport), and *metapherein* itself was once used for “translation”. *Tropos*, also, means “turn”, yet another one of translations many expressions (*vetere*, version). This alliance of metaphor and translation has been critiqued however, in Maria Tymozcko, who prefers a “metonymical” process of reading in translation, as she feels this allows us to read translations in context, both linguistically and culturally (1999: 278-300). Tymzcko opposes this to a metaphorical approach that sees translation as a process of substitution (she cites Catford, Nida and Holmes), which indeed favors a model of equivalence and transparency. Metonymy, Tymzcko writes would instead “build new syntagms.” (281) Part of this distinction she makes however is related to her use of Jakobson’s distinction between metaphor as selection and substitution (paradigmatic) and metonym as combination (syntagmatic). “Substitution” implies that the meaning was “already there” to be substituted with.

However, a more intriguing model is supplied by Carolyn Shread’s use of “metramorphic translation”, which “reflects a feminist re-structuring of exchange relations and accesses an ethics of difference.” (2007: 214). Shread’s metramorphosis rejoins a motif of feminist ethics by which it is the contact or the relation that creates the being, rather than two autonomous beings coming into contact to create an encounter³. In particular, work by feminists working between languages like Gloria Anzaldúa, Cherrié Moraga and the authors of *This Bridge Called My Back* offer a profound matrix in which to rethink translation à la Shread, i.e. as a breakdown of masculine codes both in language and in society. This ethics of transformation-through-encounters can be tied together to a feminist critique of essentialist ontology wherein the subject would be constructed/constructs itself performatively, rather than preceding the encounter with others.

Metramorphosis refers to processes that do not involve single unities acting through the condensation of metaphor or the displacement of metonymy; instead they provoke changes that mutually alter the meaning they create, without supplanting or deferring the signifier... it is a transformative process, but one which does not mask or efface its origins; rather it expands them in a connective border-state where “source” and “target” meet creatively. (224)

Shread’s metramorphosis stems specifically from Bracha Ettinger’s “matrix” and Catherine Malabou’s “plasticité” and is thus deeply grounded in the female body as a site for “exploding form... but also giving form, receiving form [and] regenerating form” (2011: 52). The theoretical-political gesture of writing from the *topos* of the female body meets with a metaphysical critique that rewrites metaphors (both making new metaphors and rewriting what a metaphor *is*): metraphor. I see in this something similar to what Donna Haraway does when she deconstructs the nature culture divide, writing nature as culture and culture as nature. For Haraway, and I think for Shread and the other scholars of feminist translation I list above, “Overwhelmingly, theory is bodily” (*Promises of Monsters*, 4). Both bodies and metaphors are what she calls “material semiotic generative nodes”. In other words, the body is literal: of the letter. And it is also a trope. To deconstruct the phallogocentric body is also both to deconstruct literality and figurality, and to posit translation as a site of regeneration and proliferation, for the making-visible and working through of conflictual thicknesses.

Could a part of feminist ethics also be the coding for new metaphors or *metraphors*,

³ Gloria Anzaldúa’s “borderzones” and Mireille Rosello’s “performative encounters” or Donna Haraway’s “contact zones” or “making-kin” to give just a few examples.

at the touch points of translation disjuncts, in the fragmented monstrous performances of bodies where translation is visible? At the end of Lori Chamberlain's 1988 essay on "The Gender Metaphorics of Translation" she writes: "As women write their own metaphors of cultural production, it may be possible to consider the acts of authoring, creating, or legitimizing a text outside of [...] gender binaries." (327) I would like then in this article to try out a stereoscopic reading experiment, which would begin finally where Chamberlain's article ends: at the creation of new metaphors (metraphors).

I take the word "stereoscopic" from Marilyn Gaddis Rose, who developed a methodology of reading across cultural and linguistic differences of texts in translation that would draw out a supplementary reading that cannot be found in one culturally or linguistically identified textual unity (1997). This is a liquid approach to texts that celebrates the creative potential of diversity and cultural difference rather than lamenting or trying to control the confusion presented in contamination, in the transgression of national, linguistic or disciplinary borders.

As we saw above, monstrosity read through the lens of a feminist ethics of translation is importantly a question of the body: of performance, of the visibility of female bodies, of bodies that disrupt the hegemony of the "healthy and whole (white, male, bourgeois) body" (my parentheses). A metamorphic teratology should do just that. I will focus here on the invention and the creation of bodies emerging out of third text between Samuel Beckett's *L'Innommable* (1951) and *The Unnamable* (1953)⁴. In so doing, I take the theoretical knot of self-translation as a topos—a turn—from which to transcreate⁵ a stereoscopic reading practice. Self-translation studies have traditionally had to face the indecision between original and copy which creates a genetic multiplication of textual loci (see Fitch 1988, Montini 2007, Cordingly 2013). A self-translated text is one that is unavoidably liquid from the get-go, that "requires abandoning the most pre-established models of translative practice... [such as] the standard binary model of author and translator... models of source and target languages... models of lexical equivalence, and foreign versus domestic culture." (Hokenson and Munson, 2007: 3). Although in this instance, we will not so much abandon them as appropriate them and rewrite them, in a metamorphic and transcreative praxis of stereoscopic reading I have called the "third text."⁶

1. Body assemblages

1.1 Re-membering the heart

But of what body do we speak? What does this word "body" even mean? The very material-semiotic generative node represented in the word "body" is fractured and dislocated before we even begin. There are the bodies represented *by* language: the "head" given by the word "head", or the "*coeur*" by the word "*coeur*". These bodies are confusingly both simultaneously real and figurative: biological, psychosomatic, imaginary, symbolic and metaphorical. Then, there is also the body of language itself—again both real and figurative. For language itself has bodies, visual and auditory, that are also felt, seen,

⁴ BECKETT, Samuel, 1951, *L'Innommable*, Paris, Les Editions de Minuit; BECKETT, Samuel, 1955, Three Novels by Samuel Beckett, *Molloy, Malone Dies, The Unnamable*, New York: Grove Press.

⁵ The notion of "transcreation" is a politics of textual recycling, appropriation and recreation found in the work of Haroldo de Campos, to which I return in more detail in the body of the article.

⁶ This is a notion I developed extensively in my doctoral dissertation, *Politique et Poétique du Tiers Texte: Une expérience de lecture de L'Innommable/The Unnamable de Samuel Beckett*, 2014, sous la direction de Tiphaine Samoyault, Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis.

heard and understood *by* bodies. And so that introduces yet another assembly of bodies: those reading, writing, speaking and listening. This includes of course my own body, with which I am writing: my fingers typing on the keyboard, my eyes reading the digitally transmuted code appearing as a string of little black and white bodies on my screen, and my ears, listening to the tapping of the keys and imagining the sounds of the words appearing as language in my “head” (if that is truly where “thinking” occurs—but we will leave that to the neuroscientists).

When I write of using self-translation as a theoretical topos from which to create a “third text”, this is what I mean: that I can use it as a site to mobilize these different meanings, both literal and figurative, both “by” and “of” language (the body created “by” language, and the body “of” language itself, as well as those bodies reading or listening to language, and making it—you and me among others), letting these different registers inform one another. In this instance perhaps we might also speak of a *Cixousienne* “third body”: “Au croisement de nos langues il nous est venu un troisième corps, là où il n’y a pas de loi.” (At the intersection of our languages, a third body came to us, there where there is no law.) (89)

So the bodies of bodies start in lawlessness and dis-assembly. But they constellate in the process of figuration, of metramorphosis:

Table 1

“bien les posséder, dans ma tête ” (15)	“I knew them off, by heart ” (243)
------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------

A chronological approach allows us to remark a certain creative shift excess introduced by the supplement of self-translation. As Beckett wrote the French first, in 1951, one might wonder why he chose not to translate “*dans ma tête*” with “in my head.” In reverse chronology we might likewise remark that he could have written “*par coeur*”, although he did not. “Could have” is perhaps a good slogan for the painful process of re-writing that is self-translation. Indeed, writers and scholars such as Nancy Huston, Julie/an Green, Ngugi wa Thiong’o, Abdelkebir Khatibi and Elin-Maria Evangelista have commented upon the extent to which self-translation can also be read as a translation of one “self”, a process by which a writer faces themselves in a fun-house mirror, monstrously twisted, parts rearranged to take form in a new language. A heart in the place of a head (*tête*), a head (*tête*) in the place of a heart. An inside-out body.

Let’s remain for the moment with this figure of the heart: this roving organ of the third text.

Table 2

“main sur le cœur » (13)	“hand on heart ” (295)
“ cœur ” (40)	“core” (310)
“Pour porter a son comble mon mal de cœur ” (66)	— (326)
“Que de nerfs a vif arrachés a l’hébétude, avec l’épouvante y afférente, et le feu a la cervelle.” (105)	“what nerfs torn from the heart of insentience, with the appertaining terror and the cerebellum on fire.” (349)

“ça ils y tiennent” (110)	“they have set their hearts on that” (352)
“les vrais cœurs ” (127)	“ hearts of flesh.” (363)
“Le cœur lui en démarrerait, c’est une valse, il entendrait valser son cœur, tra boum la la la, corunefois, tra boum la la la, ré mi ré de pan pan, qu’on n’aurait pas à s’en formaliser.” (127)	“And even should his start off, his heart that is, on its waltz, in his ear, tralalalay pom pom, again, tralalalay pom pom, re mi re do bang bang bang, who could reprehend him ?” (363)
“décourageront” (133)	“lose heart ” (366)
“J’arrive, j’arrive, cœur de mon cœur » (140)	“I come, I come, my hearts delight.” (371)

In theoretical allegory to the liquid mobility of texts in self-translation, the center, the heart/*coeur* of third text moves, it bounces all over the place like the irregular beats of an arrhythmia. *Coeur* and heart of course do not always coincide, and the “*coeur*” of the text can be a “core” (310), like the core of an apple or the core of the earth. Or it may be absent, as on page 66/326: heartless, or perhaps the body of the third text is like the tin man, who had a heart but he just didn’t know it. It is also what is held, what they “*tiennent*” (110). The third text also invents a body with multiple hearts, as on pages 140/371 the hearts multiply: “*coeur... coeur*” and “heart”, a kind of alien body like that of a Time Lord or a Time Lady (the alien species to which Dr. Who belongs) with two hearts. We might also think here of the figure of organ donation or a surgical operation, where hearts are given, lost or exchanged. Or the surgical operation of valentines.

1.2. Cubist metonyms and synesthesia

The third text is also the space where translational procedures and figures of rhetoric overlap. Such is the case with the metonym—to respond to Tymoczko’s call to “build new syntagms” with a metonymical approach to translation:

Table 3

“figure” (304)	“face” (30)
“Car un collier, assujetti aux rebords de la jarre , m’enserme maintenant le cou, juste au-dessous du menton. Et ma bouche... » (75)	“For a collar, fixed to the mouth of the jar , now encircles my neck, just below the chin. And my lips... ” (332)
“nez à nez” (91)	“face to face” (341)
“Entrainant celle de l’espace comme de juste, elles se donnent le bras , depuis quelque temps” (126)	“Involving very naturally that of space, they have taken to going hand in hand ” (362)

One subset of the metonym is the synecdoche, the figure of substitution for part replacing whole or whole replacing part. This is of course not the first time that

traductology has remarked on metonymy as a translational procedure (Wecksteen-Quinio et al 2015: 49; Ballard 2004: 113-132), but what emerges in the third text? As we see in the first example, a face is much more than a face. It is also a “*figure*” in French, whose bilingual homophone we use in English to refer to the body. This “figure” of the “face” deepens, takes amplitude and shades of polyvalence in-between languages. Levinas’ ethical face, recreated in Haraway as the tropical site for responsibility between species (2008: 25-26). The face creates figures: synecdoches and monstrous bodies, the catachrestical jar with a mouth, and the synecdochal lip-mouth. Or Gogol’s nose in the third example, where the “face” is a nose (“*nez*”), and the nose is a “face”. We might think of a body in a cubist painting, or in the fourth example of a surgically amputated one. As we saw earlier with the example of heart/head, in the third text, body parts may be shifted and rearranged, as in plastic surgery where fat can be moved from one part of the body to the other. This creates a new body, like Orlan’s or Frankenstein’s monster. This body is also rearranged according to the time-space continuum in which it is situated: time modalities expressed in different ways “*depuis quelque temps*” (for some time) expressed here with the present perfect tense “haven taken to”. The body of time in language is also rearranged.

1.3 Synesthesia and body processes

This metonymical figure can also be read into what the body does and what the body perceives:

Table 4

“Je ne la verrai pas venir” (90)	“I shall not hear her coming” (340)
-----------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------

In this example the eye and the ear, see (*verrai*) and hear are rearranged and reassembled in the third text in an imaginary shimmery mobile body where eye and ear are synonyms. It is the case of hearing colors or seeing sounds. The third text eye roams, in magical projection, synecdoche for understanding:

Table 5

“ils verront” (67)	“they’ll come round to it.” (327)
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This again is a kind of out of body experience. The bodies find themselves far from themselves, projecting themselves into space. They see (*ils verront*) the curve of the mountain as though they were already round it. These bodies are both near and far, on fluctuating spatial matrices. These are also two forms of perception, the visual and the tactile, and so the third text makes trouble in the order and classification of senses. As soon as we start troubling hierarchies, we often wind up troubling binaries as well, such as the metaphysical division between body and spirit, or the ones dividing up the animal kingdom.

Table 6

“C’est à <i>voir</i> ” (9)	“Time will tell” (292)
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“Sight”, Donna Haraway writes, “is the sense made to realize the fantasies of the phalocrats.” (1992: 295) In this example, vision is aligned speech, the speech of time, what “time will tell”. Sight, like speech, is the spirit of metaphysics. But in this promise that speech can offer of time or of vision, there is also a confusion of subject and object, between who sees and what is told. The third text horizontalizes this binary in allegory to its horizontalizing of language and discourse, reading language itself as one might read a poem, meaning erupting in the interactions between bilingual homophonies. The multitasking of “tell” to both “show” and “tell” is split in two with the interjection of “voir”, looking across the expanse of the third text, breaking the unity of “tell” into different facets. Each “subject” of language is inhabited by not one but many “objects”, and its unity is constantly contaminated.

Table 7

“à tourner la tête, à dresser l’oreille, à rouler l’œil.” (127)	“turn his head, roll his eye.” (363)
-----------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------

Understanding is indeed a bodily process. And in this example we can witness the third text body misunderstanding, trying to understand. It’s the ear itself that is not translated in this example: the gesture of hearing. The third text tropes here unheard or untranscribed speech, interrupted in its sending, a partial reception of a message, a stuttering, between phoneme and grapheme, between two sides of a translation.

So the third text can show us bodily processes of perception in motion, but external perception of phenomenon is not the only facet of the body’s understanding. Sometimes the body digests:

Table 8

“Je n’ai qu’à bailler , c’est eux que j’entends, de vieilles assurances suries, où je ne peux rien changer.” (82)	“I have only to belch to be sure of hearing them, the same old sour teachings I can’t change a tittle of” (335)
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Here, something has happened to Beckett’s body in the third text. Yawn (“*bailler*”) has become “belch”. The third text is also—like the body—a place where chemical processes may occur. This body is the figure of a body caught between cultures, and of cultural misunderstanding, of what we read on a body with its mouth indiscreetly open.

Table 9

“je m’assierai dessus et je leur chierai les des histoires.... Naissez, chers amis, naissez, rentrez-moi dans le fondement , vous verrez s’il fait bon s’y tordre, ce ne sera pas long, j’ai la courante. Ils verront ce que c’est, que ce n’est pas commode, que c’est un goût spécial, que ce n’est pas pour tout le monde, qu’il faut naître vivant, que ce n’est pas une chose qui s’acquiert, ça leur	“I’ll let down my trousers and shit stories on them.... Be born dear friends, be born, enter my arse , you’ll just love my colic pains, it won’t take long, I’ve the bloody flux. They’ll see what it’s like, that it’s not so easy as it looks, that you must have a taste for it, that you must be born alive, that it’s not something you can acquire, that will teach them perhaps, to keep their nose out of my business .”
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<p>apprendra peut-être, à me foutre la paix. Oui, mais voilà... du temps où je m'évertuais, conformément à mes instructions, à ramener au bercail l'être cher..." (155)</p>	<p>Yes... in the days when I was bursting my guts, as per instructions, to bring to the fold the dear lost lamb." (380)</p>
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Lucky for us there is a third text, because one or the others of these actions left alone... (metonymically implies the other): to sit down (“assiérai”) and to pull down one’s trousers would end in quite a mess. And this shit is for others: “*je leur chierai les histoires*”/ “I’ll shit stories on them.” As Freud says, poop is the child’s first gift. To each their own way of shitting of course, and like the untranslatable, shit is both too singular and too universal to be translated. Once again as well, we see the two halves of an allegory of bodily processes and translation itself, knotted together in the figure of the third text body: some might say that shit is indeed a translation of food, both biological and symbolic. Both the parts of the body and their movements are thus untranslatable, and play out the translations of their differences. “*Fondement*” and “*arse*” perform the equivocity of most body parts, their symbolic polyvalence that plays out across differences in registers. The third text body is what Annie Abrahams has identified as the “*estranger*”: “an *estranger* is invisible, exotic, unidentifiable, rude, hybrid, blurry, deformed, subversive, incomprehensible, complex, pliable, lonely, abject, harder and more fragile at the same time.” (2014: 7).

We also see in the above example, the reappearance of a familiar character, Gogol’s nose, this time with a rather violently erotic mission to “*foutre la paix*.” Bodily fluids are again translated, converted, between “*bloody flux*” and the “*courante*”, and later “*bursting my guts*” and “*m’évertuais*.” The metaphor for fluid metamorphosis and transfusion is a reoccurring theme in discourse on translation, and we find it as early as Dryden (“if a new spirit be not added in the transfusion, there will remain nothing but a *caput mortuum*” (20)), as well as in in Haroldo de Campos and Oswalde de Andrade in the figures of anthropophagy and vampirism. Are spirits not liquid? This image of the transformation of bodily fluids, brings us back to Meschonnic’s “*whole and healthy*” body. If we consider translation as a conversation between discrete bodies, we might consider the third text like the doctor’s clinic, one body diagnosing the other—although we could never settle on which is which (the original diagnosing the translation or the translation diagnosing the original), and whether this diagnosis is ever resolved. The foreign doctor might be tempted to assimilate “*s’évertuer*” with *ventre*, as a translation of “*guts*”, but if this is anything, it is an invisible bilingual homophony, *s’évertuer* is related to “*vertu*”, to how hard you’re trying. Is it my fault that my stomach hurts?

The last piece of the puzzle in this lengthy reading of the above example, is the translation between “*the dear lost lamb*” and “*l'être cher*”. We see of course that the biblical reference is reinforced by reading stereoscopically here, but let’s take this to the next level and read the third text at the poetics of language, and consider (the) being as a lamb. In Agamben’s reading in *The Open of the Theriomorphous*, the five senses are aligned with animals. A dehierarchizing of the senses is thus read as being analogous to the dehierarchizing of the animal kingdom. The hybrid body of the third text is not only a metaphysical deconstruction of bodily processes (of the organization of body and mind, the senses, and the symbols of perception), but also of the “*integrity*” (whole and healthy) of the human body, and of a unified and coherent notion of the human itself.

2. Hybrid creatures

The theoretical site of thinking about “post-human bodies” is one such avenue for critiquing the notion of the “whole and healthy” integral body as unified, coherent and self-same: “Queer, cyborg, metametazoan, hybrid, PWA ; bodies-without-organs, bodies-in-process, virtual bodies : in invisualizable amniotic indeterminacy, and unfazed by the hype of their always premature and redundant annunciation, posthuman bodies thrive in the mutual deformations of totem and taxonomy.” (Halberstam and Livingston, :13). As the third text carries out a three-fold operation of metramorphosis, this assembly of bodies can also be reread, or allegorized as challenges to textual approaches that presume the “whole and healthy” unity of the text or of a language, and as the stage upon which the monstrous body of the translator or the stereoscopic reader herself may make herself visible. However, I would like to weave a critique of post-human bodies into my congress of bodies insofar as the post-human at times posits a block of “others” in opposition to the “human.” This is both anthropocentric and reductive of “otherness.” Haraway has in fact renounced the term in favor of “nonhumanism” (2008: 92), in effort to get away from its anthropocentric tendencies. However, Zipporah Weisberg has elaborated on this critique to show that Haraway herself (as indeed we might suspect from the word “nonhumanism”) divides beings into “human” and “non-human”, partially in an attempt to connect together her work on cyborgs and her work on animals (both “non-human”). Part of the work I am doing here is a work of proliferation: indeed, meaning always proliferates in translation. In the figures of bodies I present below, it is important to think of each individually, rather than as diverse members in a cast and crew of “post” or “non” humans. Or could we speak of metramorphic bodies?

1.1 Vampires and cannibals

We began our reading with the example of the heart, pumping blood through the body. And we saw that this heart is roving, unstable, moving between worlds and through different parts of the body (of the text). In Oswalde de Andrade’s “Cannibalist Manifesto”, the devouring and reintegration of bodies is a way of appropriating and rewriting texts, and of upsetting hierarchies and histories of power. So this heart and this blood can circulate even beyond bodies, and travel between them. Haroldo de Campos has written often on de Andrade’s notion of cannibalism: “Translation as transfusion. Of blood. Ironically we could talk of vampirization, thinking now of the translator’s nourishment.” (Haroldo de Campos 1981: 209, cited in Vieira : 95).

Table 10

<p>“Allons, donc ! Ce serait trop facile, le cœur n’y serait pas, il faut que le cœur me sorte par la gueule aussi, entortillé dans un vomi de boniments, là alors j’aurais enfin l’air de me croire, ce ne sera plus des paroles en l’air. Enfin, ne perdons pas l’espoir, j’arriverai peut-être, d’une façon toute mécanique, à force d’avoir la bouche ouverte et les sangs tournés” (82)</p>	<p>“But God forbid, that would be too easy, my heart wouldn’t be in it, I have to puke my heart out too, spew it up whole along with the rest of the vomit, it’s then at last I’ll look as if I mean what I’m saying, it won’t just be idle words. Well, don’t lose hope, keep your mouth open and your stomach turned, perhaps you’ll come out with it one of these days” (336)</p>
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In this example, the blood enters literally into the stomach “sang” translated with “stomach”—or it leaves it, as the third text putting into suspension the chronology of

textual creation, must always imagine things in both directions. The metamorphosis might then conjure two non-competing images: that of the Roman vomitorium, or of cannibals or vampires—this human-demon hybrid figure that troubles the distinction between life and death. Indeed, if we think of vampires as imbibing essences, not only of the human body, but of meaning in language, a deconstruction of the rhetoric of metaphysics might be read into the figure of the vampire, as essence is reduced to stuff, to material sustenance.

What we also see here is the third text’s impulse to reread the discourse of translation itself within the construction of its metaphors: both “by” and “of”, as mentioned above. The third text is then also eating itself in a way, rewriting its own metaphors as it creates them to apply to itself. In the “*sangs tournés*”, we might read then *vertere*, the resonance of which can still be heard today in French translational pedagogy, in “version” courses, translating from a foreign language into your own (universally: foreign language into French). To turn, twist, trope or pour is to translate, the translational turn. The words themselves are turned as well, “idle words” into the mouth with “paroles en l’aire”, “*d’une façon toute mécanique*”, invisibilized, the writing disappearing “en l’aire” as it crosses into English. Translation from speech into writing, as Norma Cole writes, is perhaps that “first translation” (2010: 14). The invisible machine of translation, turns the blood, digests beneath the skin, multiplies meta- and metra-phorically across discursive strata.

1.2 Humanimals

Let’s return to the above example of the “lost lamb”. This phenomenon of humanimals appearing in the third text has been treated in Linda Collinge’s reading of the second book of Beckett’s trilogy, *Malone Meurt/Malone Dies*. She lays the groundwork for our analysis when she reads the translation of the proper name “Louis” as “Lambert” in a passage where farm animals are at stake. The resonance with “Lambert” animalizes the character, as an English reader will hear the resonance with “Lamb.” Collinge identifies other examples that “assimilate man and animal in the translation” (“*assimilent l’homme à l’animal dans la traduction*”): “drop me” (*MD* 207) with “*accoucher*” (*MM* 207); “overbreeding” (*MD* 210) and “*racée*” (*MM* 90); and “gullet” (*MD* 232) with “*l’oesophage*” (*MM* 131). This phenomenon can also be observed in *L’Innommable* and *The Unnamable*. Indeed, it can probably be observed in almost any translated literary text—animal imagery being such an anchor in the way humans perceive their own bodies (as though our bodies were not animal!). But what I’d like to get at by reading this through the third text is not only that the line between humans and animals is much less distinct than we might imagine, but that when we inhabit the expansive space *between* languages, new figures are born, such as the humanimal:

Table 11

“Il a fait la crabe pendant dix bonne minutes” (54)	“You should have seen him hopping sidelong.” (319)
“si ce n’était pas moi en effet...” (56)	“if I was not in fact the creature...” (320)
“leur tribu” (63)	“their breed”
“merde alors, voilà une vacherie dont je ne reviendrai pas de sitôt” (153)	“oh swine, that’s one i won’t get over in a hurry” (379)

In these above examples we see that the various degrees to which animal imagery enters or doesn't enter into each of the texts in either language participate in the creation of third bodies such as the "crab-man" or the "moi-creature". The third text is a human zoo. The violence of this historical reference plays out again in the translation between "tribu" and "breed". Can the universalist's suspicion of community be read through the lens of the reproducing hierarchy of domination separating animals from humans? Indeed the history of deconstructing the notion of the "human" often appears in work that attempts to deconstruct the relationship between humans and animals (Agamben, Haraway). In Agamben, this division is put to work to critique similar divisions separating humans from humans, and contributing to the reproduction of structures of violence and domination. In Haraway however, the features of this division are deployed to carry out a critique of the human itself, in relation to her earlier work on cyborgs, who deconstruct the polar opposition between machine and human, thus de-essentializing both parties. Indeed, the monstrous bodies written in the third text betray a similar desire to deconstruct the sanctity of the "human", as well as anthropocentric discourses that place humans in the center.

However, as I mentioned above, scholars in critical animal studies have exposed the anthropocentrism of this important critique. Rethinking the domination of animals is not only about critiquing the history of what it means to be human. It is also animals. In the last example above we see the reappearance of the translated shit, but also a circulation of farm animals in shit, as "*merde*" translates "swine" and "*vacherie*" translates "one", but also "swine", in compensation. In other words, it is not only humans that are mixed with animals in the third text (or indeed human bodies rearranged) but animals themselves, the animal kingdom. In the third text we see again a strong penchant for hybridization and cross-breeding, as here for example, we see different breeds of horses translating each other:

Table 12

"Un percheron" (77)	"A Clydesdale. A Suffolk Stallion" (333)
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To conclude this section, I would like suggest that there is much potential fodder at the intersection between animal studies and translation studies. The question of animal rights often returns to an impasse at the place of language and discourse: what right do we have to speak for animals, and yet, what choice to we have? I do not have time to trope further on this theoretical olive branch, but I would like to suggest that at least a part of the problem of animal rights is a problem of translation, of translating between animal and human.

1.3 Cyborgs and cyrberghosts

Table 13

"L'avion, lui" (112)	"The airplane, <i>on the other hand</i> " (353)
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The figure of the airplane, "*l'avion*" is figured here in two ways, if we allow the monstrous literality of grammar to infuse our figure-making: "on the other hand" and him "*lui*". As monstrosity disarticulates literality and figurality it likewise gives figurative

(poetic, imaginary, creative) contours to grammar, and grammatical (mechanical, repetitive, bodily) contours to figures. In one, *l'avion* is cyborg, both human and machine, like the pronoun itself: *lui*. On the other (hand), the airplane is an object held in the hand, or perhaps, sitting aloft a hand? The metaphor of the body in *metramorphosis* can take on these very real dimensions, after which the airplane become once again, or doubly cyborg in the third text: both that which holds and that which is held.

Table 14

“voilà que j'en parle” (201)	“listen to me speaking of it” (407)
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We might also witness a similar kind of disarticulation in this grammatical modulation between subject and object. “Je” (I) is translated with “me” in the same breath that a ghost interlocuter is created. I use the term “ghost” to talk about a character, addressor or addressee existing in only one of the texts of the stereoscope. This listening or speaking figure is both present and absent. In today’s world, ghost and cyborg often find themselves in confluence, as technology allows us to be in the presence of absent bodies and voices.

Some other examples of this:

Table 15

“Presse, mon ami , presse bien fort, n’abuse pas” (39)	“Squeeze, squeeze, not too hard.” (310)
“Mais penche-toi vite, mon cher ” (43)	“But quick consider” (312)

In these two examples, the addressee is occulted. We might liken this to the figure of apostrophe (talking to someone who isn’t there), or to a lost letter. A more current cyborgian figure for this takes form in one of our most dearly “held” companions: our telephones.

Table 16

“Car si je ne devais jamais les voir ensemble, il faudrait que devant moi Malone succède à l’autre, ou le précède, toujours dans le mêmes délais exactement.” (20)	“For if I were never to see the two of them at once, then it would follow, or should follow, that between their respective appearances the interval never varies” (299)
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Here, it is the ghost of Malone who haunts the third text, both there and not there.

Table 17

“Et pourtant, toutes les histoires de Mahood étaient sur moi” (43)	— (312)
“ Je me demande si mon histoire ne s’arrête pas là, si Mahood ne l’a pas	“Perhaps it stops there, perhaps they stopped it there, saying... you don’t need

arrêtée là, en me disant... tu n'as plus besoin de moi " (72)	us anymore." (330)
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A story begins to unravel, as Mahood joins ghost Malone in the third text in the first example. In the second, I am there and not there, and when I am there I have transmuted, become many, "us".

Table 18

"Voilà, j'étais tout entier, je cite Mahood, à mon affaire" (55)	"The answer to all that is this, I quote Malone, that I was entirely absorbed in the business at hand" (320)
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The mystery is finally revealed: Mahood is Malone. Perhaps this is the ghostly "us" that translated "*moi*"—a "*moi*" possessed by multiple absent figures (Malone and Mahood)? Is my body a telephone?

3. The Queer body and conclusion

I would like to conclude with the Queer body as a node around which certain tensions exploding binaries have become visible—even surrounding the use of the word "queer." I might like to use it as a verb for example (as I have done elsewhere⁷), to say that this metamorphic stereoscopic reading of monstrous bodies "queers" translation. In a sense this could be read as appropriating the body of queer discourse for my own use. What I would rather do is allow the queer body to interrupt discourse on translation, adopting it again as a node or a knot from which to read the in-between space of translation as generative and supplementary rather than substitutive. And indeed as we see in the third text, the human body is discursively constructed:

Table 19

"qu'est ce qu'ils ont dans la crâne" (154)	"ah will they never learn sense" (380)
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Of course we make "sense" with our entire bodies, and yet metaphysical historical discourse dictates that we situate it in our minds. Is "sense" something you "learn" or something you have ("*ont*")? Object or interlocutor? *Autre* or *autrui*? Yet history travels, all over the body. A reflection of the queer body, like a reflection on the body of the third text, must likewise situate itself beginning with a discursive body which is called upon to interrogate the situation of the body stuck in-between the discourses of nature and culture, and between visible and invisible (body "of" and body "by"):

Table 20

"avec leurs histoires d'être et d'existence" (103)	"with all their balls about being and existing." (348)
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⁷ "Keepin' It Queer : an experiment in translating queer and queering translation", *Drunken Boat* 22: <http://www.drunkenboat.com/db22/translation/lily-robert-foley-translating-lily-robert-foley>

Balls is a type of discourse—a figure that situates itself beyond logos, in nonsense, in foreignness: *barbare*. The body, as we have seen is also a history, a text, a corpus, a discourse etc. The body is both what understands and what is understood. These alliances become visible (*mostrare*) in the performance of translation.

The first on Halberstam and Livingston’s list of “post-human bodies” is the “queer” body. We find many examples of this in the third text, of a body hovering in-between “male” and “female” poles.

Table 21

“Ce ramassis de conneries, c'est bien d'eux que je le tiens, et ce murmure qui m'étrangle, c'est eux qui m'en ont farci.” (80)	“It is they who dictate this torrent of balls, they who stuffed me full of these groans that choke me.” (335)
“Qu'est-ce qui vient faire <i>le con</i> ” (126)	“What <i>balls</i> is going on” (362)
“Conneries que tout ça” (147)	“Balls, all balls” (375)

In all of these examples, “balls” in English translates with “*conneries*” or “*le con*”, which “literally” in French means “cunt.” Like obscenities in many languages, these words are inhabited by complex figurative ecosystems. In the third text this gives us a hermaphroditic or transgender body, one that disobeys biological discourses of what is “proper”, “natural” and most of all a fundamental—and *visual*, as Beatriz Preciado has remarked (2014: 101)—binary opposition between “male” and female”. In the same breath it divides “nature” and “culture”. Of course gender in translation is almost always queer, as languages have different systems of grammatical gender. In this case grammar conjugates once again figures in the sense of characters, identities and names.

Table 22

“ nous l'avons toujours connu comme ça, toujours s'arrêtant, pas vrai Pépé ? C'est vrai...” (58)	“ever since he was a mite, always stopping, wasn't he Granny . Yes, Indeed.” (318)
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The “monstrous” here becomes a real live third text character: your third text/sex grandparent! We may take the monstrosity with a bit of irony in this case, since we in no way mean to put a negative spin on a queer body! There is undoubtedly enough of that already. Besides which, in this article monstrosity is positively spun. Once again, the third text reads a very real monstrous and metamorphical body created *by* the texts in stereoscope, but also *of* the third text and its genealogies in translation discourse itself, in particular in relationship to feminist theory. Feminist translation theory is anchored in an account of language by which gender binaries inhere in grammar itself (Lotbinière-Harwood, 19), language making gender and gender making language. To critique gender is rend grammar itself, to get into the matrix structuring its in-betweenness and queer it.

Metonymic readings of translation in Tymozcko’s account, must be sunk deep in the specifics of cultural economies of power, a move she relates to the cultural turn in translation studies. Tymozcko has located one such reading in “the juxtapositions and

innovative syntagms” (281) of Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood’s “rewriting in the feminine”. Lotbinière-Harwood creates a feminist praxis of translation grounded in performance, like Godard’s transformance, in the making visible of invisible bodies: the woman’s and the translator’s. This body emerges from in-between spaces:

“Il n’y a pas de corps plus actif, plus agissant, dans la pratique langagière, qu’un corps traduisant. A la fois corps lisant, corps écoutant et corps ré-écrivain, il circule sans arrêt dans les mots du texte à traduire, il parcourt les dictionnaires et l’intertexte, fouille son propre imaginaire, interroge l’auteure, se penche vers les lectrice... En mouvement perpétuel, le corps traduisant **performe le passage** entre le sens de départ à décoder et le sens d’arrivée à encoder, toujours en tenant compte du rapport d’adresse, de la relation à l’autre.” – Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood (48), on translation as performance in *Re-Belle et Infidèle: la traduction comme pratique de réécriture au féminin/The Body Bilingual: Translation as Rewriting in the Feminine*.

There is no body more active, more activating, in linguistic practice than the translating body. At once reading body, listening body, and rewriting body, it circulates ceaselessly in the words of the text to be translated. It surfs dictionaries, digs into its own imagination, asks questions of the author, leans into the reader... In perpetual movement, the translating body **performs the passage** between a decoding of source meaning and a coding of target meaning, always taking into account the complicated voyage between sender and receiver, and the relationship to the other. (my (hijacked) translation)

Much occurs on this stage where the passage is performed, the theater of in-betweenness. Much is made. Monstrous bodies, vampires, cannibals, humanimals, cyborgs, ghosts, and the very queer body of the human itself, much less “*sain et intègre*” than it first appeared. However, in ascribing monstrosity to “all” bodies, do we not in some sense lose some of historical and cultural context of the specific ecology in which a translation occurs? What of Beckett’s body? What of mine? What right do I have to impose bodies on others?

Since its apparition in 1991, Luise Von Flotow has critiqued and tweaked her own sense of the figural node of “hijacking”, as one of her four forms of feminist translation (74). Hijacking does what the name implies, intervenes to appropriate a text and turn it around for one’s own uses, often for politicized ends. This is a politically contestatory, and contested, move—for everything depends of course on who is hijacking whom. And Von Flotow’s principal addition to the notion has been to situate it in the specific cultural and historical context of 1990’s Canadian feminist writing and translation. This has become increasingly important as the notion has circulated more and more widely between micro- and macro-cosmopolitan levels of sharing (2009: 246). But also, the hijacking itself must be situated. Susanne de Lotbinière’s Harwood insertion of feminine endings in translations from English to French, is quite different from Henry Luc-Planchat’s unconscious hijacking of Joanna’s Russ *Female Man* (year), translated with the title *L’Autre Moitié de L’Homme*, which I have argued elsewhere⁸ is a “masculinist” translation (contra a feminist one). It is the very same reason why it is always over-simplistic to speak of “reverse

⁸ “Femalentedue”, *Text Journal* vol. 20 n° 2: http://www.textjournal.com.au/oct16/robert_foley.htm

racism”: the intersectional (Crenshaw 1993) dynamics are wiped away, re-placing dominant discourse in an uncritiqued locutionary center. Carolyn Shread’s metamorphical translation of Marie Vieux-Chauvet is another interesting example, since she hijacks the text, introducing Kreyòl into an English translation of text written in a Kreyòl-expunged French, rewriting the history of violence structuring the original that would have coded for the eclipse of Vieux-Chauvet’s own Kreyòl in context. However, as a white woman in an institutionally privileged position translating a dead black Haitian woman, is this a form of cultural appropriation? I sincerely don’t think so but I make the case because, if we consider metamorphosis a kind of hijacking, we must also accept the monstrosity not only of its political thickness but of its political *stickiness*. Figural nodes or knots (i.e. bodies, grammar, tropes) are not only constructions but affect-inflected places of dilemma, disagreement, of intersectional problems.

Von Flotow posits the problem of intersectionality and hijacking at the time worn methodological impasse linking (or rather not linking) the general and the particular (247). It is indeed important not to lose sight of the dangers of eclipsing the particular when generalizing. We will still be many decades or centuries (eternities?) recovering from all of the erasing tendencies of European universalism often present in the work of abstraction, such as the one in which white male bourgeois discourse substitutes blindly for all others, or in which one subaltern discourse is taken as standing in for all others. This is the danger of conceiving figural nodes as substitutions rather than the creation of homophony and congress (i.e. of ideas).

On the other hand, to be historically specific we must also postulate a real, which indeed Von Flotow critiques as part of a metonymical approach to translation (249). Postulating a real can be an important, fecund, politically powerful thing to do, and I do not wish to take away from that. But one may at times wish to go beyond the real—for example in the fantasizing or creating of better tomorrows. Where can a fantastical reading like this take place? Could there be a culturally specific reading of the future? A place where metonymics and metamorphics conjugate to give us a situated, thick stereoscope of an as-yet-to-be realized real? I will end on that note: that work that aims to critique white, male, pre-decolonial Eurocentric discourses is most certainly a matter of being more specifically accurate and factual—but could it also wish to dare to rewrite ontologies and methodologies such as the ones coding for accuracy and fact?

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