

**TOMICHE, Anne (2012): “L’Intraduisible dont je suis fait”:
Artaud et les avant-gardes occidentales. Paris: Le Manuscrit,
410 p.**

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[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

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droit et, surtout, autonome» (p. 15), mais il n'en reste pas moins que certains concepts connaissent des contraintes juridiques, qu'une bonne terminologie se doit de présenter. Sur le plan purement matériel, la partie terminologique est quelque peu redondante: le «glossaire» et le «dictionnaire» comportent des informations qui sont en grande partie reprises dans les fiches.

Les réserves que l'on peut faire par rapport à ce travail par ailleurs très opportun concernent surtout sa présentation en tant que terminologie autonome et exhaustive selon des critères objectifs d'inclusion; en tant qu'entrées dans une banque de données, les fiches rendraient telles quelles d'immenses services, et l'on ne peut qu'espérer qu'elles figureront bientôt, sous une forme appropriée, dans la base de données terminologique interactive pour l'Europe IATE.

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This book is a significant contribution to both Artaud scholarship and translations studies. It reveals the importance for the development of Artaud's poetics of a heretofore largely neglected facet of his writing – namely, his idiosyncratic practice of translation. While a small selection of Artaud's translations have received some interest from critics (Deleuze and Lecercle among others), the connection between the translations and Artaud's more obscure material has not previously been studied in such depth. In her introduction, Tomiche notes possible reasons for a lack of sustained attention. On the one hand, the translations

themselves occupy a very small place in Artaud's work and are limited both in time-frame (to 1943-1944, during his internment in the asylum of Rodez) and in size – a handful of mostly short texts and poems, with the exception of the longer adaptation of Matthew Gregory Lewis' *The Monk*, undertaken in 1931. On the other hand, Artaud himself was profoundly dismissive of the activity of translation and his knowledge of English was very poor. Yet, what is significant about these translations is that they coincide with Artaud's return to writing after the breakdown in 1937, which led to a nine-year period of interment in a series of mental asylums. The question, then, that drives Tomiche's study is the following: what role did the translations and, more broadly, the activity of translating, play in Artaud's rediscovery of writing and what light can they shed on the development of his poetics?

Tomiche explores these questions in three parts, following a trajectory that moves from text to context. This trajectory begins with the detailed textual analysis of what Tomiche calls “traductions linguistiques”; then proceeds to re-evaluate Artaud's post-Rodez poetics, via a focus on the relationship between language, glossolalia, and drawing based on “translations glossolaliques” and “translations graphiques”; and, finally, contextualizes Artaud's poetic practice within the broader framework of avant-garde twentieth-century literary production. The book integrates a series of previously published articles, substantially revised, so as to offer a cohesive analysis of Artaud's work, and presents a reading of Artaud as practising a form of avant-garde poetics that engages with both the theory and the practice of translation.

The first section explores three translations: two texts by Lewis Carroll, that is, the poem “Tema con Variazioni” and the episode of “Humpty Dumpty” from *Through the Looking-Glass*, and a poem by Edgar Allan Poe, “Israfel.” These texts are chosen not only because each one illustrates a different translational practice but also because they are accompanied by letters and commentaries that reflect upon the practice of translation itself. Tomiche's approach is two-fold: she provides a detailed reading of the translations and examines the particular translation strategy used in each case; at the same time, she reveals the broader thematic concerns that play out in each translation and traces their occurrence throughout Artaud's corpus. In so doing, she establishes a continuity in Artaud's works, punctuated by the experience of Rodez, while also showing how it is the practice of translation itself that embeds the recurring themes into the work of language. More precisely, the progression of Artaud's treatment of language is inherently tied up with the specific

themes that Tomiche identifies in each translation. From the confrontation with Carroll's "Tema con Variazioni," there emerges a concern with a relationship between orality and fecal matter; this, Tomiche argues, develops into a writing that privileges the materiality of the word – Tomiche refers to this as "le mot-matière régurgitée." In translating Carroll's "Humpty Dumpty," Artaud explores the connection between sense and non-sense in the possibility of mastering language, which, in turn, produces a writing that inscribes breath into the written text, "le mot-soufflet." And, finally, the translation of Poe's "Israfel" reveals the importance of the figure of the spectre, or angel, and its role in the construction of both poetic self and poetic language, thereby originating a practice of writing caught between religion and poetry, "la poésie-dictame."

The preliminary conclusions that Tomiche draws from this section reveal that it is precisely the practice of translation that allows Artaud to return to poetry and lay the foundations for a new poetics, "une poétique de la voix, du rythme, de la scansion" (p. 184). The second section of the book then goes on to explore the specific nature of that poetics – one that is based on an expansion of language towards glossolalia and drawing – and the process according to which Artaud redefines his voice as a poet. Tomiche characterizes the latter as a sustained denial by Artaud of his genealogical ties in order to re-create for himself new biological and literary filiations: Artaud rejects his parents and invents for himself six daughters, which he calls "les filles de cœur"; conversely, he chooses a series of literary father figures, among the "damned" poets Lautréamont, Rimbaud, Baudelaire, and Nerval, in relation to whom he positions himself as son. Tomiche's insight is to show that Artaud's genealogies constitute a development of the poetics he elaborates during the translations – that is, the construction of meaning and poetic self by inscribing voice into text through diction. This is because the construction of new genealogies does not occur through narrative; rather, it develops in the form of syllabic declension and the repetition of names, according to the same mechanisms at work in the translations: "les mouvements de reprises, de condensations, de déplacements, de superpositions d'images et de figures" (p. 194).

Artaud's treatment of language, privileging the sound and the materiality of words over their semantic content or referential function, leads Tomiche towards an exploration of his use of glossolalia and drawing. After providing an overview of the history of glossolalia and of the three ways in which it is typically studied – namely, as an instance of religious experience, as psycholinguistic disturbance, or as avant-garde

poetic practice – Tomiche ably draws parallels with Artaud's drawings, or "dessins écrits." These parallels turn around a reflection on the relationship between form and deformation: the intentional "maladdresses" in Artaud's drawings are comparable to his desire to deform words in writing; thus, they constitute a continuation of the poetics of glossolalic writing, which, according to Tomiche's main argument, is founded upon a practice of translation.

Tomiche's analysis here sets up a series of questions that provide the framework for the third section of the book. These questions revolve around the relationship between glossolalia and translation within the context of Artaud's search for a more meaningful language, one that would be material, physical, and universally comprehensible. Given the unstable nature of glossolalia – both translatable and untranslatable – the concern with translation can rapidly become a question of interpretation. In other words, glossolalia is either seen as coded message to be deciphered or as pathological disturbance to meaningful linguistic structures. In her reading, Tomiche rejects both approaches on the grounds that they are too concerned with meaning, or the lack thereof; instead, she argues for a reading that focuses on the ways in which glossolalia can exploit the possibilities of sound, with or without semantic content. Thus, Tomiche aligns Artaud's writing with avant-garde poetic experimentation and proceeds, in the last section of the book, to draw comparisons with works by Vëlimir Khlebnikov, Hugo Ball, John Barth and Christian Prigent.

By placing Artaud within this context, Tomiche underscores the deliberate nature of his poetic program, contrary to readings that might characterize his disruptions of language as childish babble or the utterances of a madman. Thus, on the one hand, she presents a unified image of Artaud's corpus, by relating the glossolalia to Artaud's work from the 1930s on theatre and "cruelty" (p. 183); and on the other hand, she discards readings that might consider Artaud as an anomalous case, by placing him squarely within a literary tradition. This tradition is framed by the figure of Mallarmé and is characterized by a profound sense of the insufficiency of language; it is a tradition that persistently probes and questions the relationship between sound and sense, with a view to freeing the word from its referential ties.

Such a conclusion, however, appears to relegate the main focus of the book, translation, to a secondary role. Tomiche implicitly addresses this issue in her concluding remarks, by focusing on the connection between Artaud and Mallarmé and on their relationship to English. While in the first section of the book, Tomiche had offered a brief

comparison between the two poets' translations of Poe's "Israfel," in the conclusion she establishes a connection that is both looser and more comprehensive: namely, both poets experience the confrontation with a foreign tongue (English) as, on the one hand, a displacement of their so-called mother tongue towards the foreign and, on the other hand, an opening up of that tongue to the element of foreignness that they believe resides within language itself.

In comparing Mallarmé's and Artaud's relationship to translation and foreign languages, Tomiche sums up her intuitions in this succinct sentence: "Là où Mallarmé avait recours à une théorie de la traduction pour fonder une langue pure, Artaud a recours à une pratique de la traduction pour forger sa langue glossolalique" (p. 394). The implications of this contrast are left in suspense by the brevity of Tomiche's overview of Mallarmé's relationship to English; consequently, the line of inquiry that ties Mallarmé to avant-garde poetics, through a reflection on the practice of translation, remains somewhat underdeveloped. Perhaps the reason for this might derive from the fact that, despite quoting from Mallarmé's philological work on the English language, *Les Mots anglais*, Tomiche relies primarily on readings of Mallarmé's poetics rather than on an analysis of his practice of and reflection on translation.

Such an analysis would ideally look not only at Mallarmé's literary translations – notably, his translations of Poe – but also at the little-known manuals he produced for his language classes: *Thèmes anglais pour toutes les grammaires* and *Recueil de "Nursery Rhymes."* These texts are fascinating documents for exploring the relationship between translation and poetics because they present an idiosyncratic method of translation, based on word-by-word back translations and free-form adaptations, that explore precisely the tensions between sound and sense that is at the heart of Mallarmé's poetics (and, as Tomiche shows us, Artaud's). Furthermore, because these translations are full of errors, mistranslations, and misunderstandings, deriving from the fact that Mallarmé's knowledge of English was patchy despite his being an English teacher, they raise some important questions for translation theory in relation to poetics: such as, what is the place of the "maladrese" in both the translative process and the poetic practice? What can errors in translation reveal about the way language works? What are the limits of translatability and how do we conceive of untranslatability?

While Tomiche does not address directly the term "untranslatability," despite its prominence in the title, her book posits the need to rethink what we mean by terms such as "translatable" or "untranslatable," in order to conceive of transla-

tion in ways that go beyond the transmission of semantic content. One of the ways in which she encourages us to think about translation is through the Freudian model, which she uses suggestively throughout the book: "Le concept freudien de traduction [...] permet de penser la traduction en termes énergétiques plus que sémantiques, en termes de forces plus que de sens [...]" (p. 23). Thus, by rethinking translation through the work of Artaud, Tomiche's book not only recasts Artaud's post-Rodez poetics through the lens of translation – thereby revealing an alternate way of engaging with Artaud's famously difficult material – but also opens up new areas of inquiry for exploring the relationship between translation and poetics, within and beyond avant-garde aesthetic practices.

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KAINDL, Klaus et SPITZL, Karlheinz (2014): *Transfiction: Research into the realities of translation fiction*. Amsterdam/Philadelphie: John Benjamins, 373 p.

Le recueil d'articles *Transfiction: Research into the realities of translation fiction*, dirigé par Klaus Kaindl et Karlheinz Spitzl de l'Université de Vienne, a été publié à la suite de la 1st International Conference on Fictional Translators and Interpreters in Literature and Film tenue du 14 au 17 septembre 2011 dans la même université. En lieu de dédicace, le livre commence par la célèbre mention «all characters appearing in this work are fictitious. [A]ny resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental». Comme le mentionne Kaindl dans son introduction, la traduction est devenue une métaphore pour décrire les phénomènes sociaux liés à la mondialisation. Bien que la traduction et l'interprétation soient présentes dans une longue tradition d'œuvres littéraires qui remonte loin dans l'histoire, elles sont devenues des thèmes récurrents dans l'imaginaire littéraire et cinématographique à cause de la place importante qu'elles occupent dans notre société moderne. C'est ainsi que *Transfiction* nous présente des phénomènes de traduction dans les œuvres de fiction, leur rôle dans la trame narrative et leur lien avec la société.

Le recueil se divise en quatre parties, ou plutôt quatre épisodes. L'épisode 1 porte sur les approches théoriques qui ont influencé les œuvres de fiction sur la traduction ou leur étude d'un point de vue traductologique. Dans son article, Rosemary Arrojo insiste sur l'importance de la fiction comme outil théorique, notamment en établissant une comparaison entre la philosophie