

This article was downloaded by: [University of California Santa Barbara]

On: 04 May 2015, At: 09:03

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Word & Image: A Journal of Verbal/Visual Enquiry

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/twim20>

Translation as illustration: the visual paradigm in Mallarmé's translations of Poe

Dominique Jullien

Published online: 05 Nov 2014.



CrossMark

[Click for updates](#)

To cite this article: Dominique Jullien (2014) Translation as illustration: the visual paradigm in Mallarmé's translations of Poe, *Word & Image: A Journal of Verbal/Visual Enquiry*, 30:3, 249-260, DOI: [10.1080/02666286.2014.938531](https://doi.org/10.1080/02666286.2014.938531)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02666286.2014.938531>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

Translation as illustration: the visual paradigm in Mallarmé's translations of Poe

DOMINIQUE JULLIEN

Edgar Poe personnellement m'apparaît depuis Whistler.
(Mallarmé)¹

Although the 1875 edition of “Le Corbeau” (Mallarmé’s translation of Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Raven,” with illustrations by Édouard Manet), by the publisher Richard Lesclide, was a commercial failure, for later generations of readers and art lovers it has come to epitomize great artistic collaboration, as well as a new departure for the modern art book.² The case of Mallarmé and Manet’s “Corbeau” appears exemplary because it is at the crossroads of a number of important nineteenth-century trends: as an instance of artistic brotherhood between two major artists (both of them, we might add, ahead of their time and both rather underappreciated by their contemporaries), as evidence of the growing importance of the visual element of culture throughout the century, a phenomenon described by David Scott, in his seminal study, as “pictorialist poetics,”³ and as an example of a new approach to translation, both in practice and in theory. Mallarmé’s translations of Poe’s poems (this essay looks at “The Bells” and “The Raven” specifically) provide good examples of the foreignizing aesthetics that would prevail in the late nineteenth century. Mallarmé translated Poe’s highly musical verse into non-rhyming prose, a decision that rendered necessary the transposition of musical effects into visual ones. In the case of the Lesclide “Corbeau,” the transposition of the musical into the visual was even more pronounced, since Mallarmé’s translation was accompanied and, as it were, completed by Manet’s illustrations. Significantly, Mallarmé and Manet’s joint project brought together a translation of a foreign poem (E. A. Poe’s “The Raven”), and a pictorial rendition by Manet of both Poe’s verses and Mallarmé’s prose poem: both the image and the text portions were thus interpretations — whether a translation of an original written in a different language, or an intersemiotic translation in the Jakobsonian sense of a transposition into a different art.

Thus the 1875 Lesclide collaboration offers us a case where the notions of translation and illustration intersect in complex and multiple configurations. This article attempts to articulate two issues: on the one hand, the foreignizing aesthetics of translation, of which Mallarmé himself was a prominent advocate; on the other hand, the particular situation of translation theory in nineteenth-century France, in relation to the question

of the visual. My hypothesis is that the translations by Mallarmé, in particular the collaboration with Manet for the Lesclide edition, are best understood when framed within the contemporary debate on artistic transposition. In turn, this might help to explain the high degree of self-representation observable in both text and images: this search for self through another’s text or another’s artistic medium accounts in part for the joint “Corbeau”’s enduring fascination for readers,⁴ and, as I hope to show, ultimately rests on a profoundly Mallarméan mechanism of failure-and-compensation.

Translation in the nineteenth century: foreignizing ideal and visual paradigm

Changing ideas about translation in the nineteenth century were closely bound up with a new emphasis on the visual. The nineteenth-century French reading public was an avid consumer of translations, not only translations of contemporary literature (such as Loève-Weimars’s introduction of E. T. A. Hoffmann’s fantastic tales into the French canon in 1830), but also retranlations of the classics, notably the Greek poets. New ways of thinking and theorizing about the task of the translator made the nineteenth century a critical century for translation, marked by an advance of the foreignizers. Against the French domesticating tradition, which had so far prevailed, more and more translators would adopt the new, German Romantic foreignizing aesthetic, which, following Goethe and Schleiermacher, recommended defamiliarizing the target language in order to enhance the reader’s feeling of estrangement: the translator should attempt to move the reader toward the author rather than the author toward the reader, as far as possible.⁵ With Romanticism, the new ideas would enter French practice with translators such as Leconte de Lisle, Mallarmé, Baudelaire, and many others.

Anne Bignan’s 1830 translation of the *Iliad* “en vers français” provides a good example of the French domesticating tradition. Names were Latinized, including names of heroes (Achille) and gods (Pluton, Jupiter). Homer’s dactylic hexameters were transposed into the classical Racinian alexandrine, with a rigorous 6/6 metric division, numerous syntactic inversions, and a restrained abstract tragic vocabulary (*courroux, débris, trépas, sépulture*, etc.).⁶

By contrast, Leconte de Lisle, who translated the Homeric epics and several Greek tragedies over the years, adopted a foreignizing strategy in his 1867 version of the *Iliad*.⁷ Leconte de Lisle's "barbarizing" translations of the Greek poets not only renounced French verse for prose, but also delatinized Greek names — Akhilleus and Zeus, for example, rather than Achille and Jupiter — and sought to recreate for readers (whose appreciation had perhaps been blunted by years of schoolboy exercises) a defamiliarized image of the age-old classic. Thus his translations echoed his own poetic vision, which had also celebrated a "barbaric" past, inhabited by "les hommes chevelus de l'héroïque Hellas."⁸ Leconte de Lisle restored Greek names to their original (or pseudo-original) Greek form and "savage" spelling; by choosing a prose version, he avoided having to transpose Greek verse into a different prosodic tradition; his syntax was often purposely awkward, for example in *Odyssey* 7, when a servant at the court of the "Phaiakiens" brings water to Odysseus "pour qu'il lavât ses mains."⁹

Translation theory thus followed the same trend as painting or travel writing: all felt a need to convey the remoteness of far-away or long-ago subjects. Departing from the classical ideal of neutrality, local color, the picturesque, and the exotic were prized, in narrative as in painting and translations. Leconte de Lisle himself articulated this pictorialist theory of writing very clearly: "Le premier soin de celui qui écrit en vers ou en prose doit être de mettre en relief le côté pittoresque des choses extérieures."¹⁰

Leconte de Lisle's translations of ancient Greek texts were praised by critic Remy de Gourmont for their colorfulness. The first essay of his famous *La Culture des idées*, an essay entitled simply "Du style ou de l'écriture," should be considered, he claimed, as a "préface à une théorie de la traduction."¹¹ The pleasure the reader gets from Leconte de Lisle's translation is a visual pleasure, one that ignites the reader's "imagination visuelle." This, Gourmont claimed, is typical of a translation that is paradoxically too good ("une trop bonne traduction").¹² The argument hinges on the notion of *cliché*. Gourmont argues that the cliché (a word that in French retains its visual, photographic origin) results from an abstraction of the concrete image, a blunting of what initially was sharply visible. Conversely, he praises translations like Leconte de Lisle's for their ability to make the readers see the scene depicted with visual acuity. Indeed, for Gourmont, "l'imagination visuelle" is at the root of style; a good writer is one who can make the separate worlds of sensations and words mingle: "S'il y avait un art d'écrire, ce serait l'art même de sentir, l'art de voir, l'art d'entendre, l'art d'user de tous les sens, soit réellement, soit imaginativement; et la pratique grave et neuve d'une théorie du style serait celle où l'on essaierait de montrer comment se pénètrent ces deux mondes séparés, le monde des sensations et le monde des mots."¹³

Time and space affect the perception of clichés, Gourmont argues, since concrete images usually become lifeless over time, and exotic phrases might be felt as original. Gourmont gives

the example of Fénelon's *Télémaque*, whose images seem dead to a modern reader, but were probably new and visually striking when Fénelon first used them, and might appear so again to a foreign reader: "Le plaisir que nous donne l'*Iliade* mise en bas-relief par Leconte de Lisle, les étrangers peuvent le trouver dans une œuvre aussi surannée pour nous que *Télémaque*: mille fleurs naissantes émaillaient les tapis verts n'est un cliché que lu pour la centième fois; nouvelle, l'image serait ingénieuse et picturale."¹⁴ Conversely, Leconte de Lisle's spectacular version of Homer is "une trop bonne traduction," because it renders concrete images long turned into abstract clichés, Homeric epithets that Homer's contemporaries would not have perceived as live images: "Les trop bonnes traductions, celles qu'on peut appeler de littéralité littéraire, ont en effet ce résultat inévitable de transformer en images concrètes et vivantes tout ce qui de l'original était passé à l'abstraction."¹⁵

It is remarkable that so much visual vocabulary is applied to processes of translation.¹⁶ Reading Leconte de Lisle's *Iliad* is equivalent to seeing a Greek bas-relief: Remy de Gourmont's expression, "mise en bas-relief," besides echoing Leconte de Lisle's own pictorialist definition of writing (the writer's duty being, we recall, to "mettre en relief le côté pittoresque des choses extérieures"), clearly underlines the prevalence of the visual paradigm within the context of translation theory. Gourmont extends this visual quality of "trop bonnes traductions" to Mallarmé's translations of Poe and Tennyson: "Traduits par Mallarmé, les poèmes d'Edgard [sic] Poe acquièrent une vie mystérieuse à la fois et précise qu'ils n'ont pas au même degré dans l'original," just as, when translating Tennyson's bland *Mariana*, Mallarmé adds color to the "grisaille": "par la substitution du concret à l'abstrait, [Mallarmé] fit une fresque aux belles couleurs d'automne."¹⁷ Leaving aside the question of whether Mallarmé's translations improved upon the originals — it is not clear here that Gourmont himself was doing anything more than repeating what had already become a cliché on Edgar A. Poe — we note, yet again, the emphasis on the visual. Mallarmé himself expressed it best in his 1876 preface to William Beckford's *Vathek*, praising "la grandeur des visions ouvertes par le sujet" and celebrating the "orgy" of local color that delighted readers of this early Orientalist text: "Tant de nouveauté et la couleur locale, sur quoi se jette au passage le moderne goût pour faire comme, avec, une orgie."¹⁸

"Transposition d'art"

In their approach to translation issues, Leconte de Lisle, Mallarmé, and other French foreignizers such as the historian Augustin Thierry, were riding a major European wave.¹⁹ In addition, translation theory and practice in nineteenth-century France would encounter a culturally specific conjunction: the emphasis on the visual, picturesque qualities of translations coincided with an exceptional intensity of interarts relations. Cross-pollination between writers and artists remained unparalleled throughout the period. Given this exceptional cultural

climate, Mallarmé's work as a translator should not be viewed as an isolated endeavor. Rather, it is important to situate it at the intersection between foreignizing translation theory, artistic brotherhood, and pictorialist poetics.²⁰

Some well-known facts are perhaps worth recalling in order to illustrate the so-called *fraternité des arts* so prevalent during the nineteenth century. On the cover of its 1831 issue, and for subsequent years, the journal *L'Artiste, Journal de la littérature et des arts* displayed an engraving by Tony Johannot showing a painter, a musician, a poet, and a sculptor all working together in the same studio (figure 1). Courbet's famous canvas, *L'Atelier du peintre, allégorie réelle* (Paris, Musée d'Orsay, 1855) would later personalize this idea by depicting actual artists and writers (most notably, Baudelaire in the far right corner), gathered together in the artist's studio. For the first time in history, artists from different media, no longer bound to an individual, aristocratic, or ecclesiastical patron, but to an anonymous and unpredictable Public, found themselves joined by common views, interests and ideas. In his essay on "L'Œuvre et la vie d'Eugène Delacroix," Baudelaire famously stated that the arts in the nineteenth century aspired "à se prêter réciproquement des forces nouvelles."²¹ Friendships were many: the close

personal ties between Impressionists and writers like Baudelaire, Mallarmé, and Zola are only the most famous examples.²² Several writers were initially trained as painters (Gautier and Fromentin are the best known of these), or, like Hugo, also painted and drew, while painters like Delacroix drew much of their pictorial inspiration from literature. The unprecedented blossoming of illustrated books and art journals, also characteristic of this new ideal of artistic fraternity, was a trademark of the period, from *L'Artiste*, *Le Magasin pittoresque*, and *L'Illustration* all the way down to the glamorous *Revue blanche*.²³ Indeed, Gourmont himself, together with Alfred Jarry for the first numbers, founded and co-edited the magazine *L'Ymagier*, which ran for two years (1894–95).²⁴ Last but not least, several writers also made a living as art critics, reviewing the Salons in the press: Baudelaire, Gautier, Mallarmé, Zola, all made decisive contributions to the public's understanding and acceptance of modern art.²⁵

All of this is well known: it allows us to turn now to specific cases where the questions pertaining to translation theory and to pictorialist poetics converge. Both Baudelaire and Mallarmé were poets in their own right, translators from English (of the same author, Poe), close friends of painters (of the same artist, Manet), and art critics.

My claim here is that the French translation of Poe's writings, especially Poe's poetry, which presented a unique challenge because of its extreme musicality, was informed and shaped by a theoretical model analogous to what Roman Jakobson called intersemiotic translation, and nineteenth century writers, less jargon-prone, *transposition d'art*. While Jakobson's term broadly refers to transpositions between verbal and visual modes in any direction, the Romantic notion of *transposition d'art*, in which one direction tends to prevail (from visual to verbal), seems, however, close to Jakobson's theoretical model in the context of the present argument, which concerns itself with passages between representational systems.²⁶

Art critics who were also writers, like the ones mentioned earlier, were not the only art critics. But they felt imbued with — and were tacitly granted — special authority to speak of art. For following in Diderot's footsteps, they understood the art critic's mission to be one of translating: translating the colors and shapes on the canvas into verbally communicable emotions. Thus the art critic was fundamentally a translator: in the energetic words of Albert Thibaudet, the task of the art critic and that of the translator were one and the same: "La critique d'art est une *traduction* d'une langue dans une autre, de la langue plastique dans la langue littéraire."²⁷ What followed (astonishingly perhaps, for our contemporary viewpoint which radically segregates the area of scholarly art criticism from that of creative writing) was that the best art criticism not only could, but should be subjective, a creative transposition of the picture into the writer's words, a picture in the form of a poem. Thus Baudelaire could claim in the introductory chapter to the *Salon de 1846* that "la meilleure critique est celle qui est amusante et poétique ... le meilleur compte rendu d'un tableau

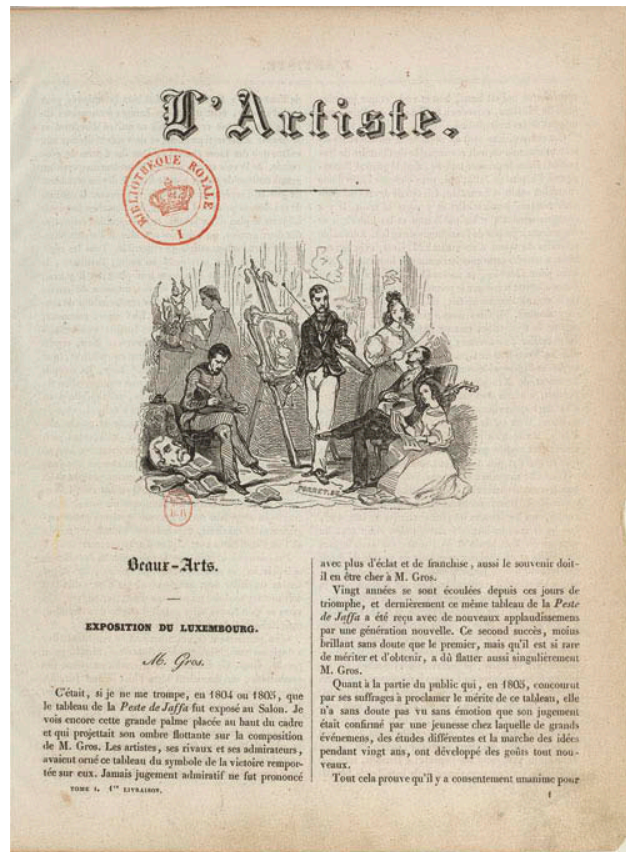


Figure 1. Tony Johannot, *La Fraternité des arts*, frontispice de *L'Artiste* 1, no. 1 (1831): 1. 20 × 26.5 cm. Courtesy of Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

pourra être un sonnet ou une élégie.”²⁸ He could have been thinking of Gautier’s *Salon de 1836*, where one of the articles was composed of poems evoking paintings by Corot, Rousseau, and Troyat.²⁹ The same Gautier, when he took over the editorship of the journal *L’Artiste* in 1856, wrote announcing his intention of increasing the place of art criticism in the journal: “Après avoir vu, notre plus grand plaisir a été de transporter dans notre art à nous, monuments, fresques, tableaux, statues, bas-reliefs, au risque souvent de forcer la langue et changer le dictionnaire en palette.”³⁰ While this artistic brotherhood, and Gautier’s place within it, have been extensively studied, the translational paradigm at the heart of art criticism (and conversely the other side of the coin, the visual paradigm at the heart of translation theory) is what interests me here. In this regard, we can make sense of Gautier’s otherwise peculiar concern (in order to transpose visual arts into verbal art, he confesses, he has often risked “forcer la langue”) by analogy with foreignizing translation aesthetics, which not infrequently requires “forcing” the target language in order to enhance visual or picturesque effects.

The problem of the untranslatable

Turning now to specific instances of poetry translation, we can ask what happens when poets / writers / art critics try their hands at translating untranslatable poetry. Translators of Poe’s poems by and large considered them untranslatable; specifically, the challenge was not to translate a picture into words, like the art critic, but rather to translate the characteristic music of Poe’s rhythms and rhymes. Different translations of Poe’s works exhibit different choices, but invariable frustration. Baudelaire essentially stuck to the prose tales, with a few exceptions including “The Raven,” acknowledging the untranslatability of Poe’s poetry: “Tout vrai amateur de poésie reconnaîtra que ... ma très humble et très dévouée faculté de traducteur ne me permet pas de suppléer aux voluptés absentes du rythme et de la rime.”³¹ There are numerous instances of Baudelaire’s self-doubt as a translator of Poe’s untranslatable poetry. In his first essay on Poe, regarding “The Bells,” he confesses: “Il y a un petit poème de lui, intitulé *Les Cloches*, qui est une véritable curiosité littéraire; traduisible, cela ne l’est pas.”³² He also laments in “Notes nouvelles sur Edgar Poe”: “une traduction de poésies aussi voulues, aussi concentrées, peut être un rêve caressant, mais ne peut être qu’un rêve.”³³ On the perceived deficiencies of his prose “Corbeau,” he writes:

Dans le moulage de la prose appliqué à la poésie, il y a nécessairement une affreuse imperfection; mais le mal serait encore plus grand dans une singerie rimée. Le lecteur comprendra qu’il m’est impossible de lui donner une idée exacte de la sonorité profonde et lugubre, de la puissante monotonie de ces vers, dont les rimes larges et triplées sonnent comme un glas de mélancolie.³⁴

The foreignizing principle precluded transposing English verse into French verse (“une singerie rimée,” as he called it — that,

we remember, was Anne Bignan’s domesticating choice in translating Homer), and Baudelaire felt that, absent the “voluptés” essential to Poe’s rhythmic magic, nothing would remain of the poems. Mallarmé, on the contrary, taking on the translation task as “un legs de Baudelaire,”³⁵ translated several of the most famous poems as a homage to both Poe and Baudelaire, in non-rhyming prose, a logical foreignizing choice, but one that entailed the loss of the musical effect. Appended to the translations were the *scolies* (remarks), where Mallarmé commented on some of the challenges and defined some of his principles as a translator. The translations were described as an exercise in tracing, *un calque*: “voici un calque se hasarder sans prétention que rendre quelques-uns des effets de sonorité extraordinaire de la musique originelle, et ici et là peut-être, le sentiment même.”³⁶ One of the poems translated by Mallarmé, the famed “Bells,” was declared to be, in an echo of Baudelaire’s statement, “[d]e tous ces poèmes, le seul effectivement intraduisible!”³⁷ Yet remarkably, unlike Baudelaire, Mallarmé did not forgo translating the poem — but neither did he attempt to reproduce the alliterations, rhymes, or rhythmic effects. His strategy was a curiously hybrid one. Having translated the poem into non-rhyming prose, he added parenthetical repetitions in italics, whose purpose was to supply the reader with a reminder of the original music, yet which were not intended to be read aloud with the rest of the poem but rather to be a kind of visual ghost haunting the French translation: “d’accord (*d’accord, d’accord*) ... des cloches (*des cloches, cloches, cloches, cloches, cloches, cloches*).”³⁸ The quintessential magic of the original poem — the onomatopoeic tolling of the rhymes, “time, time, time,” “bells, bells, bells,” and so forth — was undeniably lost, but it returned to haunt the prosaic rendition with a spectral reminder of the loss. What could not be heard — the untranslatable sound effects — was transposed into another sense, the visual, as the poet translator explained in the “scolie” appended to the final version: “Force m’a été de transcrire ces séries de répétitions seulement parmi des parenthèses; et comme des indications que le lecteur ne lira que des yeux.”³⁹ In addition, the “scolie” quoted another translation — a free adaptation, in reality — by fellow poet Émile Blémont, who did attempt, unsuccessfully yet bravely, to do what Mallarmé did not, that is, to translate the sound effects.⁴⁰

Struggling with Poe’s fiercely untranslatable poems, and his own deficiencies as a translator, Mallarmé found a compensation in intersemiotic transposition: the prose translations offered visual substitutes — “calques” — for the lost rhyme and rhythm, which thus returned to haunt the target-language version as ghosts — an appropriately Mallarméan solution.⁴¹ In this manner even the failures of the translation, of which he was only too aware, would ultimately result in inspiring to the translator a prose poem all his own: one cannot help noticing the close affinity between Mallarmé’s version of “The Raven” (on which more presently) and the prose poem “Frisson d’hiver,” with its identical setting — a lonely man reading in a cold room, a female ghost.⁴²

Illustration as translation

Mallarmé's translation offered visual substitutes of Poe's music: not only internal to the poem but also, perhaps especially, in the poem's paratext. The history of Mallarmé's translation of Poe's "Raven," as is well known, was intimately tied up with the joint project by Mallarmé and Manet to publish an illustrated edition of the poem. After some delay, thanks largely to Manet's insistence, the project finally came to life in 1875 — Mallarmé's *annus mirabilis* — a bilingual edition with the famous ink drawings by Manet, reproduced thanks to the lithographic process (figures 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7). Thus Manet's illustrations became a decisive piece of the puzzle, a key voice in the interarts dialogue.

Manet's illustrations themselves can be viewed — and indeed were viewed — as translations on multiple levels. The fact that he chose ink drawings obviously underlined the close affinity between the arts of writing and drawing. This was also true of the lithographic reproduction process which ultimately equalized Mallarmé's poem and Manet's picture. The analogy between print literature and the various reproduction techniques of images resonates with Baudelaire's observation on the proximity between literature and engraving: "parmi les différentes expressions de l'art plastique, l'eau-forte est celle



Figure 2. Édouard Manet, *Le Corbeau*, frontispice (Paris: Lesclide, 1875). Lithograph. 55 × 35 cm. Courtesy of Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

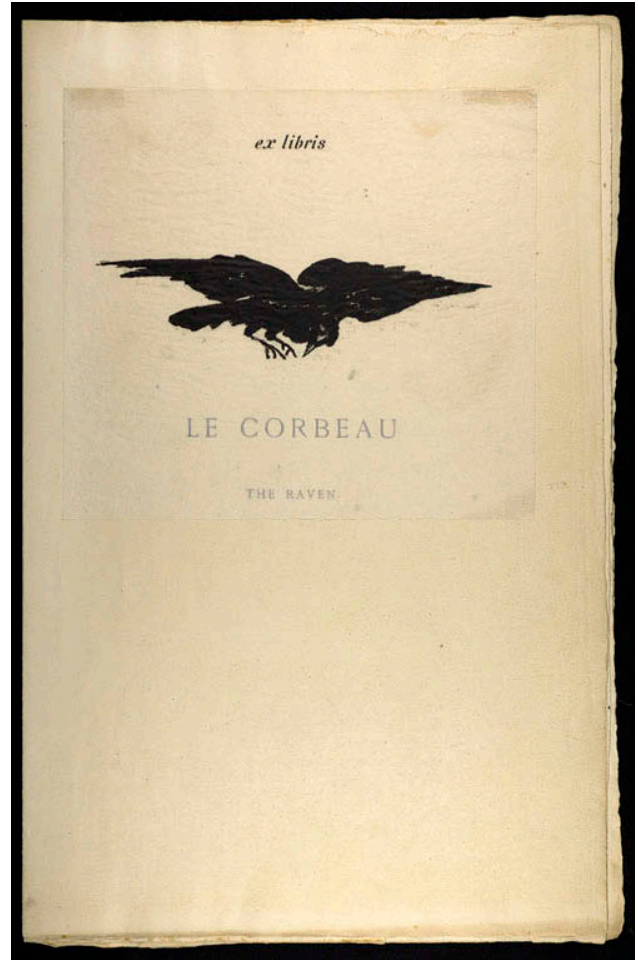


Figure 3. Édouard Manet, *Le Corbeau*, *ex libris* (Paris: Lesclide, 1875). Lithograph. 55 × 35 cm. Courtesy of Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

qui se rapproche le plus de l'expression littéraire" ("L'eau-forte est à la mode").⁴³ Furthermore, the *japoniste* style of the pictures, in addition to their technique, points to Manet as a kind of translator of Japanese art. (In fact, the earliest known picture connected with the *Corbeau* project is a lithograph combining a raven's head, three studies of a Pekinese dog, and some Japanese seals).⁴⁴

Reviews of the Lesclide "Corbeau" often read like a series of variations on the illustrator-as-translator paradigm.⁴⁵ The anonymous reviewer in *Le Siècle* expressed his enthusiasm for Manet's illustrations in terms of translation, praising Manet for being true to the spirit of the poem: "Il a vu plus que la lettre, il a senti et rendu l'esprit du poème."⁴⁶ Gygès, in his review for *Paris-Journal*, was even more explicit:

L'artiste a traduit avec une verve singulière, à l'aide du blanc et du noir, les multiples et fantasques silhouettes de l'oiseau sinistre. Par les brutalités et les négligences apparentes, mais très-étudiées du procédé, par le jeu des silhouettes sommaires

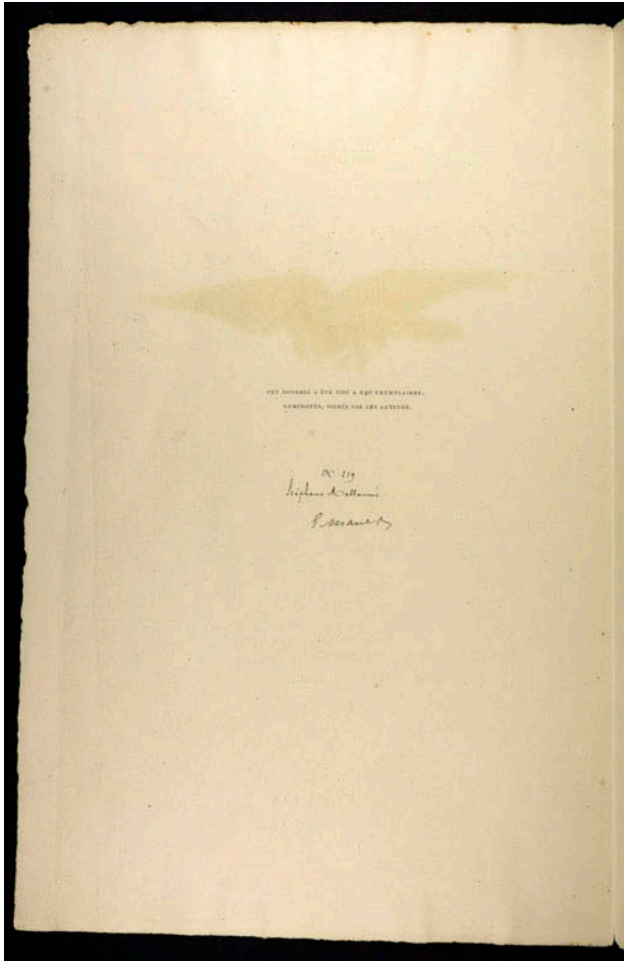


Figure 4. Édouard Manet, *Le Corbeau*, signatures (Paris: Lesclide, 1875). Lithograph. 55 × 35 cm. Courtesy of Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

et des ombres violentes, M. Manet a transposé d'un art dans un autre la sensation de cauchemar et les hallucinations qu'Edgar Poë a si puissamment réalisées dans son œuvre.⁴⁷

If the illustrator was dignified by being the translator's equal, the product thus obtained escaped the disdain commonly attached to illustrated books, which Mallarmé, like Flaubert and many other writers, held in contempt. In part this was due, no doubt, to the mediocre quality of many such books, in part, perhaps, to an ambiguity between languages. The word "illustration" itself, in its new meaning, was borrowed from English, often written with italics or an apologetic disclaimer:⁴⁸ perhaps because the original French usage of the verb *illustrer* meant to render illustrious, to confer glory, it was felt that the illustrator's pretension to confer glory on the better artist (the poet) was preposterous. However, with a collaboration such as "Le Corbeau," involving two great artists and two different translations of the original poem (one verbal, the other pictorial), the emphasis shifted to the community of equals, the analogy



Figure 5. Édouard Manet, *Le Corbeau*, plate 3 (Paris: Lesclide, 1875). Lithograph. 55 × 35 cm. Courtesy of Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.



Figure 6. Édouard Manet, *Le Corbeau*, plate 1 (Paris: Lesclide, 1875). Lithograph. 55 × 35 cm. The Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.



Figure 7. Édouard Manet, *Le Corbeau*, plate 4 (Paris: Lesclide, 1875). Lithograph. 55 × 35 cm. The Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

between the arts leading to the suggestion of an identity between the artists.

Portrait of the artist as another

Looking at Manet's raven, moreover, we observe that it functions in the Lesclide edition as a kind of pictorial signature.⁴⁹ No doubt Poe's poem had achieved emblematic status at the hands of its French translators, and stood, even then, for the very essence of Poe's genius. Something like a poetic self-image is at stake in the illustrated "Corbeau": Mallarmé chose to retranslate "Le Corbeau" after Baudelaire, a gesture that, along with the numerous quasi-verbatim repetitions of Baudelaire's translation, affirmed the Symbolist poet's filiation both to Poe and to Baudelaire. No less significant was the choice of a poem through which Poe expounded a method of composition so new and so daring that it would come to revolutionize poetry, at least in France. The *scolie* to

Mallarmé's translation of "Le Corbeau" focuses exclusively on Poe's controversial essay "The Philosophy of Composition," while saying not a word about the textual challenges (which were no less daunting than in "The Bells" and other Poe classics, however) — as if to underscore the deceptive self-image fashioned by the American poet in his essay. Even though Poe's essay "The Philosophy of Composition" is "un pur jeu intellectuel," "sans fondement anecdotique," Mallarmé claims, it is now inextricably bound to the readers' experience of the poem: "La mémoire d'un examen quasi sacrilège de chaque effet, maintenant poursuit le lecteur, même emporté par le cours du poème."⁵⁰ The same could be said of Mallarmé's appropriation of Poe's influential text. Indeed, "The Philosophy of Composition" has become inseparable from Mallarmé's Symbolist interpretation of it, which proposes to read the raven as a symbol of a flight of the spirit from the irrational recesses of inspiration to the composed chamber of the intellect: "Noir vagabond des nuits hagardes, ce *Corbeau*, si l'on se plaît à tirer du poème une image significative, abjure les ténébreux errements, pour aborder enfin une chambre de beauté, somptueusement et judicieusement ordonnée, et y siéger à jamais."⁵¹ In the light of the joint Lesclide project, the words "chambre de beauté" come to suggest more than the intellectual composure and formal beauty of Poe's poetry as filtered through Poe's essay and Mallarmé's reading of it: they also merge with the room conjured up in a few ink strokes by Manet's pictures. Manet's third plate in particular (figure 5) seems to corroborate Mallarmé's words about the Raven forever enthroned in the *chambre de beauté*: almost pushed out of the frame, at the bottom right of the picture, reclining far back in contemplation of the central and brightly illuminated bust of Athene with the dark raven atop it, the poet-mourner seems overwhelmed by this dual symbol of the creative mind. As if to underline the tension between the mournful, ghostly subject of the poem, and Poe's unsentimental, hyper-intellectualist explication of its writing in his essay "The Philosophy of Composition," Manet has played up the contrast between the luminous bust of the goddess and the dark bird, doubling both bird and bust by their shadows and surrounding the entire area with dark ink stroke shades. This picture is obviously an illustration, not of Poe only, but of Mallarmé's Poe, which overlays the emotional response to the poem with the acknowledgement of the cerebral, "palladian" interpretation dictated by Poe's essay.

The fact that the poet-mourner resembles Mallarmé himself, or perhaps a composite portrait of Poe and Mallarmé rolled into one (in particular figures 5 and 6), further confirms that Manet understood the practice of translation as a poetic self-image as another, and echoed it on a visual level. Indeed, even the last plate (figure 7), with the empty chair in the barely sketched out room (an image so abstract and modern that it was seldom appreciated at the time)⁵² can be read as a visual translation both of Mallarmé's translation and of the *scolies*: the book closes with a picture of an empty room haunted by the spectral presence of the bird, now

merely a shadow on the floor, reminiscent of Mallarmé's definition of writing as a ghostly art of suggestion ("*Nommer un objet, c'est supprimer les trois quarts de la jouissance du poème qui est faite de deviner peu à peu: le suggérer, voilà le rêve*"),⁵³ but equally suggestive, perhaps, of his melancholy appraisal of his translation as a mere "calque."

Both words and pictures, then, conspired to paint a portrait of the artist as another. Mallarmé's oil portrait by Manet, dating to the same years (1876), shows a barely suggested Japanese screen in the poet's background, as if to evoke not only the poet's taste for *japonisme* and art in general, but also no doubt his friendship with and defense of Manet, the creative reinterpreter of Japanese art. As is well known, 1874 and 1876 are the years in which Mallarmé published his essays in defense of Manet, whose works had been rejected for the Salon, prompting the first Impressionist exhibition in Nadar's studio. The year 1876 also marks another collaborative project: Manet produced four drawings for wood engravings illustrating Mallarmé's "L'Après-midi d'un faune."⁵⁴ Manet's portrait of Mallarmé in turn recalls an earlier and equally famous picture of a writer friend, Émile Zola (1868): in the background, next to a miniature replica of the scandalous *Olympia* which Zola had ardently defended in his articles, a Japanese print of a Sumo wrestler suggested Zola's combative nature as well as his taste for the arts. Collaboration and mutual portrayal veered over into identification: as Mallarmé and Zola portrayed Manet in their polemical articles, so Manet portrayed Mallarmé and Zola in a pictorial space where text and image had become indissociable.

Conclusion

As a translator, Mallarmé did not simply transfer meaning from source text to target text: the additional dimensions of intertextual reference (Baudelaire's Poe) and intersemiotic transposition (Manet's pictures) complicated the translation into not simply a reflection but a refraction of multiple elements. We could not be further from what Lawrence Venuti recently criticized as the contemporary norm of the translator's invisibility.⁵⁵ Baudelaire famously claimed that he translated Poe because he discovered in his writings more than a soul mate, a foreign *alter ego*, upon recognizing "des phrases pensées par moi, et écrites par lui vingt ans auparavant."⁵⁶ Mallarmé's legendary anecdote was that he learned English in order to read Poe: "Ayant appris l'anglais simplement pour mieux lire Poe, je suis parti à vingt ans en Angleterre."⁵⁷ Time, especially in France, has by now merged the identities of Poe and Baudelaire into one single poet — "Poedelaire", as one critic dubbed him⁵⁸ — a half real, half ideal portrait of the artist, or in Mallarmé's words, a "suprême tableau à la Delacroix, moitié réel et moitié moral."⁵⁹ With Mallarmé's translation of Poe, something similar is at stake (although names do not allow for the same kind of *mot-valise*): the translator, by definition a person who is two persons, offers in his translation a portrait of himself as another. Likewise, a few years later, in his posthumous homage to Manet, Mallarmé would highlight

similarities of destiny between painter and poet, in particular the public's incomprehension of art.⁶⁰ Not only is the translator highly visible here, but we are presented with a kind of holographic portrayal, in which the image displayed changes endlessly from Poe to Baudelaire to Mallarmé to Manet. A later picture, Paul Gauguin's 1891 etching, "Portrait de Stéphane Mallarmé," represents the poet with a raven above his head, as if perpetually haunted by Poe and Manet (figure 8); critics have also noted the likeness to Gauguin's self-portrait of the same time period.⁶¹

"Croyez que ce devait être très beau":⁶² Mallarmé's famous bittersweet statement on the invisible work of his entire life, *Le Livre*, which never materialized yet defined and orientated the visible portion of his work, also applies to his lifelong obsession of translating Poe, whose poetry he began translating while still in high school, and continued reworking for most of his life. Yves Bonnefoy, in a recent article, argues that we should look,



Figure 8. Paul Gauguin, *Portrait de Stéphane Mallarmé*, 1891. Copperplate engraving. 18.3 × 14.3 cm. Courtesy of Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

not at the shortcomings of the actual published translations, but rather at what he calls “la traduction au sens large.” In a sense, Bonnefoy claims, Mallarmé also forwent translating the poems: “Si traduire, c’est rencontrer un poème en sa poésie pour le recréer comme poésie dans un texte d’une autre langue, Mallarmé lui aussi, bien que sans le dire explicitement, a donc renoncé à traduire Poe.”⁶³ The real translation, according to Bonnefoy’s theory, is not “Le Corbeau” or any of the other poems translated in prose, but the glorious “Sonnet en –yx,” a much more creative response to Poe’s challenge. The “Sonnet en –yx” is a translation in the broader sense, because contrary to the prose translations, it displays “l’interaction la plus poussée du son et du sens au sein d’une forme, le vers.” Furthermore, Bonnefoy claims, “J’appelle traduction ‘au sens large’ ces réactions du traducteur qui s’ajoutent à sa traduction au sens étroit et habituel de ce mot: qui s’y ajoutent ou même s’y substituent.”⁶⁴

The concept of “traduction au sens large” is a seductive one, because it both accounts for the failure and yet also allows us to move beyond it. But because it remains within the boundaries of the textual, it does not separate itself clearly enough from an influence study. I would propose instead that Mallarmé’s solution to the challenges of untranslatability lay in the appeal to intersemiotic transposition, which alone could supply synesthetically composite impressions: the only way, perhaps, for Mallarmé to succeed — or compensate for the *défait* of his own *langue* — was to reach beyond the limitations of his own medium, and point, however allusively, to a potential multimedia translation.

NOTES

- 1 – Stéphane Mallarmé, “Edgar Poe,” in *Médailles et portraits*, in *Œuvres complètes*, ed. Bertrand Marchal, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 2 vols. vol. 2 (Paris: Gallimard, 1998) 145. All further references are to this edition.
- 2 – Juliet Wilson-Bareau and Breon Mitchell document this commercial failure in their study, “Tales of a Raven: the Origins and Fate of *Le Corbeau* by Mallarmé and Manet,” *Print Quarterly* 6, no. 3 (1989): 258–307. François Chapon credits “Le Corbeau” with initiating a new era in book illustration, bringing about a “transformation du concept d’illustration.” François Chapon, *Le Peintre et le livre: L’âge d’or du livre illustré en France, 1870–1970* (Paris: Flammarion, 1987), 9.
- 3 – David Scott, *Pictorialist Poetics: Poetry and the Visual Arts in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).
- 4 – In addition to the studies mentioned in note 2, the following have dealt extensively with the iconic Lesclide “Corbeau”: Ségolène Le Men, “Manet et Doré: L’illustration du *Corbeau* de Poe,” *Nouvelles de l’estampe* 78 (1984): 4–21; Penny Florence, *Mallarmé, Manet, and Redon: Visual and Aural Signs and the Generation of Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Burton R. Pollin, *Images of Poe’s Works: A Comprehensive Descriptive Catalogue of Illustrations* (New York: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1989); “Le journal du *Corbeau*. Dossier reconstitué par Michael Pakenham à partir de la Correspondance jusqu’à ce jour inédite de l’éditeur Richard Lesclide,” in Edgar Allan Poe, *Le Corbeau, traduction de Stéphane Mallarmé, illustrations par Édouard Manet*, ed. Michael Pakenham (Paris: Séguier, 1994), 1–99; Michael Pakenham, “*Le Fleuve et Le Corbeau* illustrés par Manet, problèmes d’édition et de réception du livre de peintre au XIX^e siècle,” in *L’Illustration. Essais d’iconographie*, ed. Maria Teresa Caracciolo and Ségolène Le Men (Paris: Klincksieck, 1999), 365–80; Michèle Hannoosh, “From Nevermore to

Eternity: Mallarmé, Manet and “The Raven,”” in *The Dialogue between Painting and Poetry. Livres d’artistes 1874–1999*, ed. Jean Khalfa (Cambridge: Black Apollo Press, 2001), 37–57; Mireille Ruppli and Sylvie Thorel-Cailleteau, *Mallarmé, la grammaire et le grimoire* (Geneva: Droz, 2005). Naturally, this fascination is also shared by poets and artists, as we can see from a number of editions, sequels, and books-about-a-book, among which the playful variations by Michel Butor: Michel Butor, Stéphane Mallarmé, Axel Cassel, and Edgar A. Poe, *Réminiscences du Corbeau* (n.p.: Éditions Luigi Mormino, 1982) and Michel Butor, John F. Koenig, Edgar A. Poe, and Jane Otmezguine, *Le Corbeau revient vers la côte Nord-Ouest* (Nice: Jane Otmezguine Éditeur, 1998); Claude Cluny, *Le Livre des quatre corbeaux: Poe, Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Pessoa, peintures de Júlio Pomar* (Paris: Éditions de la Différence, 1998) 5th edition, or the bilingual, three-text edition *The Raven/Le Corbeau* (Paris: Éditions du Boucher, 2002). The Spanish language tradition also has a long and rich history of engaging with both Poe and Mallarmé (and additionally, Borges): see for instance Edgar A. Poe and Francisco Pino, *Traducción infiel de El Cuervo de Edgar A. Poe: con un poema, ocho poetas y prólogo* (Salamanca: Junta de Castilla y León, 1997).

5 – According to Schleiermacher, the translator has a choice between two possibilities: “Either the translator leaves the author in peace as much as possible and moves the reader toward him; or he leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the writer toward him” (Friedrich Schleiermacher, “On the Different Methods of Translating,” quoted in Lawrence Venuti, ed., *The Translation Studies Reader* (New York & London: Routledge, 2004), 49). On the German Romantic foreignizing position, see also Venuti, *The Translator’s Invisibility: a History of Translation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 15–16.

6 – *L’Iliade, traduction nouvelle en vers français, précédée d’un Essai sur l’épopée homérique*, trad. Anne Bignan, 2 vols. (Paris: Belin-Mandar, 1830). See Appendix.

7 – Homère, *Iliade*, trad. Leconte de Lisle (Paris: A. Lemerre, 1882). See Appendix.

8 – “Les Érynnies,” in *Poèmes tragiques* (Paris: Alphonse Lemerre, 1884), 262, line 4.

9 – Homère, *Odyssee*, trad. Leconte de Lisle (Paris: A. Lemerre, 1877), Rhapsodie 7, 101, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k2003192> (accessed September 16, 2014). A similar phenomenon was occurring in England, with William Morris’s “deliberately, consciously archaic” translations of the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid*. See Susan Bassnett, ed., *Translation Studies* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), 71. On the archaizing tendency, see also Venuti, *The Translation Studies Reader*, 141–45.

10 – Leconte de Lisle *Œuvres diverses*, vol. 4 (Paris: Les Belles-Lettres, 1978), 479. Also quoted in Scott, *Pictorialist Poetics*, 93. Serge Meitinger stresses the Parnassian poet’s “mise en évidence du caractère d’abord plastique et quasi visuel de l’image poétique.” See Serge Meitinger, “Leconte de Lisle ou la passion du pittoresque,” *Revue Grand Océan* 6 (1995): <http://www.lrdp.fr/articles.php?lng=fr&pg=621>, mis en ligne en septembre 2007.

11 – Remy de Gourmont, *La Culture des idées* (Paris: Société du Mercure de France, 1900), 40, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k810225/1i.image>.

12 – *Ibid.*, 40.

13 – *Ibid.*, 20.

14 – *Ibid.*, 40.

15 – *Ibid.*

16 – Interestingly, the terms of the debate were also applied to translations from Arabic. When Joseph-Charles Mardrus published his foreignizing translation of *The Thousand and One Nights* at the turn of the century, Michel Arnauld, one of the reviewers of the new translation for the *Revue blanche*, quoted Gourmont’s appreciation of Leconte de Lisle’s translation to apply it to Mardrus. See Dominique Jullien, *Les Amoureux de Schéhérazade: Variations modernes sur Les Mille et Une Nuits* (Geneva: Droz, 2009), 107–8.

17 – Gourmont, *La Culture des idées*, 40.

18 – Stéphane Mallarmé, “Préface de 1876 à Beckford,” in *Vathek*, 2: 6.

19 – Defending the “orthographe germanique” he adopted in his *Récits des temps mérovingiens*, Augustin Thierry claims that the foreignizing spelling was

necessary to convey the true color: “cette restitution était ici une convenance inhérente au sujet. Elle contribue à la *vérité de la couleur* [emphasis added] dans ces récits, où j’ai mis en scène les diverses populations de la Gaule conquise; elle forme un contraste qui sépare, en quelque sorte, les hommes de races différentes. Si le lecteur s’étonne de trouver changés des noms qu’il croyait bien connaître, de rencontrer des syllabes dures et des lettres insolites, cette surprise même sera utile, en rendant plus marquées les distinctions que j’ai voulu établir.” *Récits des temps mérovingiens, Précédés de Considérations sur l’histoire de France*, 6 vols, (Paris: Furne, 1866), 1: 261.

20 – Scott, *Pictorialist Poetics*.

21 – Charles Baudelaire, *Œuvres complètes*, ed. Claude Pichois, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 2 vols. (Paris: Gallimard, 1976), 2: 744. All further references are to this edition.

22 – On Mallarmé’s ties to many of the major artists of his time, see Lloyd J. Austin, “Mallarmé critique d’art,” in Francis Haskell, Anthony Levi, and Robert Shackleton, eds., *The Artist and the Writer in France: Essays in Honour of Jean Seznec* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), 153–62.

23 – See Scott, *Pictorialist Poetics*, 61. He also points to technological advances that allow interpenetration of illustration and text.

24 – On this short-lived collaboration, see Alexia Kalantzis, “Remy de Gourmont et *L’Imagier* (1894–1896), une utilisation symboliste du rapport texte–image,” in *L’Europe des revues (1880–1920): Estampes, photographies, illustrations*, ed. Évanghélia Stead and Hélène Védrine (Paris: PUPS, 2008), 279–94, esp. 281.

25 – This is not to say that this *fraternité des arts* as a practice was unproblematic during the nineteenth century. Recent work has shown that the ideal of artistic brotherhood came under increasing strain at the end of that period, particularly because of a shift in balance between image and text with the expansion of illustrated journals: this is what Évanghélia Stead and Hélène Védrine argue in “La force et l’expansion de l’image,” in *L’Europe des revues*, 7–11, esp. 10.

26 – “Intersemiotic translation or transmutation is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems.” Roman Jakobson, “On Linguistic Aspects of Translation,” in *Language in Literature*, ed. Krystyna Pomorska and Stephen Rudy (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1987), 429. While in this definition Jakobson seems to privilege a single direction (from verbal to nonverbal), later on in his essay he broadens the definition into “transposition ... from one system of signs into another” (435).

27 – Albert Thibaudet, *Intérieurs. Baudelaire, Fromentin, Amiel* (Paris: Plon-Nourrit, 1924), 124; quoted in Scott, *Pictorialist Poetics*, 21. Emphasis added. Baudelaire also uses the word *traduire*; he remarks in “Le Paysage,” in his *Salon de 1859*: “Tout paysagiste qui ne sait pas traduire un sentiment par un assemblage de matière végétale ou minérale n’est pas un artiste” (*Œuvres complètes*, 2: 660). Tom Conley comments on the passage as follows: “The artist is ... viewed as an exemplary translator who turns matter into objects of contemplation” (Tom Conley, “Colors in Translation: Baudelaire and Rimbaud,” in *Rethinking Translation: Discourse, Subjectivity, Ideology*, ed. Lawrence Venuti (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 177–95, p. 179).

28 – Baudelaire, “À quoi bon la critique?,” in *Salon de 1846*, 2: 418. Because of this emphasis on subjectivity and *rêverie*, Scott argues, “much nineteenth-century literary art criticism was to become more or less poetry in prose” (*Pictorialist Poetics*, 22).

29 – See David Kelley, “Transpositions,” in *Artistic Relations: Literature and the Visual Arts in Nineteenth-Century France*, ed. Peter Collier and Robert Lethbridge (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 178.

30 – Théophile Gautier, “Introduction,” *L’Artiste* (14 décembre 1856): 4, quoted in Lois Cassandra Hamrick, “Au-delà de la traduction: Baudelaire, Gautier et le dictionnaire du poète-artiste-critique,” in *Langues du XIX^e siècle*, ed. Graham Falconer, Andrew Oliver, and Dorothy Speirs (Toronto: Centre d’Études Romantiques Joseph Sablé, 1998), 215–32, p. 216.

31 – Baudelaire, *Œuvres*, “Avis du traducteur,” 2: 347.

32 – Baudelaire, *Œuvres*, “Études sur Poe,” 2: 274.

33 – *Ibid.*, 2: 336. “Notes nouvelles sur Edgar Poe”.

34 – Baudelaire, preface to the translation of “The Philosophy of Composition”: “La Genèse d’un poème,” *Œuvres*, 2: 344. See Haskell M.

Block, “Poe, Baudelaire, Mallarmé, and the Problem of the Untranslatable,” in *Translation Perspectives*, ed. Marilyn Gaddis Rose (New York: SUNY Binghamton, 1984), 104–12.

35 – “J’accepte cette tâche comme un legs de Baudelaire,” Mallarmé wrote to Villiers de L’Isle-Adam, who had asked him for translations of Poe for his literary journal. See Block, “Poe, Baudelaire, Mallarmé,” 106.

36 – Mallarmé, “Scolies,” *Œuvres complètes*, 2: 771. It is possible that the word chosen by Mallarmé, “*calque*,” is a reference to Chateaubriand’s preface to his translation of Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, itself a manifesto in favor of foreignizing translation: “J’ai calqué le poème de Milton à la vitre; je n’ai pas craint de changer le régime des verbes lorsqu’en restant plus français j’aurais fait perdre à l’original quelque chose de sa précision, de son originalité ou de son énergie” (*Remarques sur la traduction du Paradis perdu de Milton* (Paris: Renault et Cie, libraires-éditeurs, 1861), iii–iv, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5452523p>, accessed September 16, 2014). I am grateful to Hélène Védrine for pointing out this intertextual connection.

37 – Mallarmé, “Notes sur les poèmes: Les Cloches,” *Œuvres complètes*, 2: 781.

38 – Mallarmé, *Œuvres complètes*, 2: 744–45. See Appendix. The earlier versions of “Les Cloches” are included in a “Dossier des Poèmes d’Edgar Poe” which gives two slightly different translations (“Premier jet” and “État corrigé,” both 1860): there Mallarmé kept much closer to the verse format, the rhythms, and the repetitions (*Œuvres complètes*, 2: 801–803 and 817–20).

39 – Mallarmé, “Scolies,” 2: 781.

40 – *Ibid.* Blémont’s translation of “Les Cloches,” with illustrations by Henri Guérard, was published in 1876 by Lesclide, the same publisher who issued Mallarmé’s “Corbeau” with illustrations by Manet. See Évanghélia Stead, “De la revue au livre: Notes sur un paysage éditorial diversifié à la fin du XIX^e siècle,” *Revue d’histoire littéraire de la France* 4 (décembre 2007): 803–23, esp. 813, and Luce Abélès’s article in this issue, “Les traductions illustrées d’Edgar Poe en France (1855–1914).”

41 – However, at other times Mallarmé proved perfectly capable of retaining alliterations in his translation, for instance in the following passage describing the rustling of the curtains: “And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain / Thrilled me,” translated by Mallarmé as “Et de la soie l’incertain et triste bruissement en chaque rideau purpural me traversait” (“Le Corbeau,” *Œuvres complètes*, 2: 731), a close echo of Baudelaire’s “Et le soyeux, triste et vague bruissement des rideaux pourprés me pénétrait.” See Claude Cluny, *Le Livre des quatre corbeaux*. Interestingly, Pessoa’s 1924 translation of “O Corvo” is the most effortlessly close to the original.

42 – See Suzanne Bernard’s analysis on the connection between the prose translation and the prose poem as a genre, in *Le Poème en prose de Baudelaire jusqu’à nos jours* (Paris: Libraire Nizet, 1959, repr. 1988), 33–4.

43 – See Scott, *Pictorialist Poetics*, 60, and Baudelaire, *Œuvres complètes*, 2: 736. On the constant “affinité entre pointe et plume,” see E. Stead, “Gravures textuelles: un genre littéraire,” *Romantisme* 118 (2002): 113–32, esp. 121–22.

44 – See Wilson-Bareau and Mitchell, “Tales of a Raven,” 262.

45 – Arsène Houssaye defends illustration on the grounds that it has the same effect on the reader as a translation: “Feuilletez un livre illustré que vous avez lu autrefois; ce sera comme si vous voyiez jouer en langue étrangère une pièce à vous bien connue: *Hamlet* ou *Les Brigands*” (“Le livre illustré” (1877), quoted in Philippe Kaenel, *Le Métier d’illustrateur, 1830–1880* (Geneva: Droz, 2005), 7).

46 – *Le Siècle* (13 June 1875), quoted in Wilson-Bareau and Mitchell, “Tales of a Raven,” 265.

47 – *Paris-Journal* (17 July 1875), quoted in Wilson-Bareau and Mitchell, “Tales of a Raven,” 265.

48 – See Kaenel, “‘Illustration,’ ‘Illustrer,’ de 1830 à 1875,” annexe 1 in *Le Métier d’illustrateur*, 597–601.

49 – Such seems to have been also the intention of the Pléiade edition, which reproduced the raven directly opposite Mallarmé’s “Le Corbeau” (2: 730).

50 – Mallarmé, “Notes sur les poèmes: Le Corbeau,” *Œuvres complètes*, 2: 771.

51 – Ibid., 772.
 52 – Sarah Whitman, Poe’s former muse and fiancée, thanking Mallarmé for her copy of “Le Corbeau,” nevertheless confessed to being baffled by this last picture: see Wilson-Bareau and Mitchell, “Tales of a Raven,” 267.
 53 – Mallarmé, “Sur l’évolution littéraire [Enquête de Jules Huret],” *Œuvres complètes*, 2: 700.
 54 – See Rosemary Lloyd, *Mallarmé, The Poet and his Circle* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1999), 123, and Anna Sigrídur Arnar, *The Book as Instrument: Stéphane Mallarmé, the Artist’s Book, and the Transformation of Print Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 106–07, 132 and 138.
 55 – Venuti takes issue with the “illusion of transparency” prevalent in contemporary practice. See “Invisibility,” *The Translator’s Invisibility*, 1.
 56 – Baudelaire to Théophile Thoré [c. June 20, 1864], in *Correspondance*, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade (Paris: Gallimard, 1973), 2: 386, quoted in Andreas Wetzel, “Poe/Baudelaire: Poetics in Translation,” *Cincinnati Romance Review* 6 (1987): 59–72, p. 62. Wetzel describes Baudelaire’s translation and creation of a French Poe as “an act of repossession” (63). However, more recently, Michel Brix cautions against the “soul mate” theory, pointing out Baudelaire’s ambivalence toward the American master and the time and effort spent translating his works. See Michel Brix, “Baudelaire, ‘disciple’ d’Edgar Poe?,” *Romantisme* 122 (2003): 55–69, esp. 57–60.
 57 – Mallarmé to Paul Verlaine, November 16, 1885, *Œuvres complètes*, 1: 788.
 58 – Fritz Gutbrodt, “Poedelaire: Translation and the Volatility of the Letter,” *Diacritics* 22, no. 3–4 (Fall–Winter 1992): 49–68. In the same vein, we might note the striking resemblance between two of Manet’s etched portraits (one of Poe, intended for the *Memorial Volume* put together by Sara Sigourney Rice, and one of Baudelaire submitted for Charles Asselineau’s biography), reproduced in Wilson-Bareau and Mitchell, “Tales of a Raven,” 292, figs. 135 and 136.
 59 – Mallarmé, “Scolies,” 768. Such is the grip of Baudelaire’s translation of Poe in French culture that virtually the only works known to French readers, to this day, are those Baudelaire translated. Jany Berretti speaks of a “traduction obstructrice,” in “E. A. Poe en traduction française: questions méthodologiques,” *Revue de littérature comparée* 63, no. 2 (1989): 189.
 60 – Mallarmé, *Quelques médaillons et portraits en pied*, 2: 146–7. See R. Lloyd, 128, on Mallarmé’s medallion of Manet, written more than ten years after the painter’s death. The poem, she argues, doubles as a self-portrait of the artist facing the crowd’s incomprehension. In the same vein, Borges evoked the merging of the Persian poet Omar Khayyam and his English translator Edward FitzGerald into a single poet: “Death and vicissitudes and time led one to know the other and make them into a single poet,” Jorge Luis Borges, “The Enigma of Edward FitzGerald,” in *Selected Non-Fiction*, ed. Eliot Weinberger (Penguin Books, 1999), 368.
 61 – See Simon Abrahams, “Gauguin’s Stéphane Mallarmé (1891),” *Every Painter Paints Himself*, last modified November 8, 2010, http://www.everypainterpaintshimself.com/.../gauguins_stephane_mallarme/
 62 – Mallarmé’s last letter to his wife and daughter, written September 8, 1898, the day before his death (*Œuvres complètes*, 1: 821). Emphasis added.
 63 – Yves Bonnefoy, “La traduction au sens large: À propos d’Edgar Poe et de ses traducteurs,” *Littérature* 150 (juin 2008): 9–24, p. 22. On Bonnefoy’s theory of translation, in particular the idea that verse should only be translated into verse (albeit free verse), see the preface to his 2007 translations of Shakespeare’s poems: Shakespeare, *Les Sonnets, précédés de “Vénus et Adonis,” “Le Viol de Lucrece,” “Phénix et Colombe,”* trans. Yves Bonnefoy (Paris: Gallimard, 2007), 36, as well as his preface to his earlier translation (1993) of *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece* “Traduire en vers ou en prose,” reprinted in the 2007 edition, 316. By an interesting paradox, Bonnefoy

himself reverted to prose in his new translation of “Venus and Adonis,” arguing that it was better suited to the pictorial quality of the poem, a choice he described as “abdiquer la virtualité poétique pour des effets de peinture” (*Les Sonnets*, 325).

64 – Bonnefoy, “La traduction au sens large,” 23.

65 – Poe, *The Fall of the House of Usher and Other Writings* (London: Penguin Classics, 1986), 91.

66 – *Œuvres complètes*, 2: 744.

67 – Poe, *The Fall of the House of Usher and Other Writings*, 77.

68 – *Œuvres complètes* de Baudelaire (Paris: Louis Conard, 1936), 19 vols, vol. 9: *Traductions: Eureka, Genèse d’un poème, Le Corbeau, Méthode de composition*, par Poe, p.155.

69 – *Œuvres complètes*, 2: 731.

Appendix

I. *L’Iliade, traduction nouvelle en vers français, précédée d’un Essai sur l’épopée homérique*, par Anne Bignan, 2 vols. (Paris: Belin-Mandar, 1830):

Muse! chante avec moi la colère d’Achille,
 Colère formidable, en longs malheurs fertile,
 Qui, livrant au trépas tant de Grecs valeureux,
 Envoya chez Pluton leurs mânes généreux,
 Et laissa leurs débris, couchés sans sépulture,
 Des oiseaux et des chiens devenir la pâture.
 Ainsi de Jupiter s’accomplissaient les lois,
 Du jour où, s’allumant pour la première fois,
 La discorde enflamma d’un courroux homicide
 Et le divin Achille et le puissant Atride.

Quel Dieu les désunit? Apollon dont le bras
 Déchaîna sur le camp la peste et le trépas,
 Depuis qu’Agamemnon, provoquant sa colère,
 De son prêtre Chrysès insulta la misère.

(Online publication: Nouvelle édition entièrement revue et corrigée (Paris: Ledoyen, libraire, 1853: <http://iliadeodysee.texte.free.fr/aatexte/bignan/accueilbignan/iliadbignan.htm>)

II. Homère, *Iliade*, trad. Leconte de Lisle (Paris: A. Lemerre, 1882), p. 1:

Chante, Déesse, du Péléide Akhilleus la colère désastreuse,
 qui de maux infinis accabla les Akhaiens, et précipita chez
 Aidès tant de fortes âmes de héros, livrés eux-mêmes en
 pâture aux chiens et à tous les oiseaux carnassiers. Et le dessein
 de Zeus s’accomplissait ainsi, depuis qu’une querelle avait
 divisé l’Atréide, roi des hommes, et le divin Akhilleus.

Qui d’entre les Dieux les jeta dans cette dissension? Le fils
 de Zeus et de Lêtô. Irrité contre le Roi, il suscita dans l’armée
 un mal mortel, et les peuples périssaient, parce que l’Atréide
 avait couvert d’opprobre Khrysès le sacrificateur.

(Online edition: <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b4034599>)

III. Edgar Allan Poe, “The Bells”:

Hear the sledges with the bells —
 Silver bells!
 What a world of merriment their melody foretells!
 How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,

In the icy air of night!
 While the stars that oversprinkle
 All the heavens, seem to twinkle
 With a crystalline delight;
 Keeping time, time, time,
 In a sort of Runic rhyme,
 To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
 From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
 Bells, bells, bells —
 From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.⁶⁵

IV. “Les Cloches”, trans. Stéphane Mallarmé:

Entendez les traîneaux à cloches — cloches d’argent! Quel monde d’amusement annonce leur mélodie! Comme elle tinte, tinte, tinte, dans le glacial air de nuit! tandis que les astres qui étincellent sur tout le ciel semblent cligner, avec cristalline délice, de l’œil: allant, elle, d’accord (*d’accord, d’accord*) en une sorte de rythme runique, avec la “tintinnabulisation” qui surgit si musicalement des cloches (*des cloches, cloches, cloches, cloches, cloches, cloches*), du cliquetis et du tintement des cloches.⁶⁶

V. Edgar Allan Poe, “The Raven”:

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
 Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,
 While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
 As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
 “‘Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my chamber door —
 Only this, and nothing more.”

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December,
 And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
 Eagerly I wished the morrow; — vainly I had sought to borrow
 From my books surcease of sorrow — sorrow for the lost Lenore —

For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore —
 Nameless here for evermore.⁶⁷

VI. “Le Corbeau,” trans. Charles Baudelaire:

Une fois, sur le minuit lugubre, pendant que je méditais, faible et fatigué, sur maint précieux et curieux volume d’une doctrine oubliée, pendant que je donnais de la tête, presque assoupi, soudain il se fit un tapotement, comme de quelqu’un frappant doucement, frappant à la porte de ma chambre. “C’est quelque visiteur, — murmurai-je, — qui frappe à la porte de ma chambre; ce n’est que cela et rien de plus.”

Ah! distinctement je me souviens que c’était dans le glacial décembre, et chaque tison brodait à son tour le plancher du reflet de son agonie. Ardemment je désirais le matin; en vain m’étais-je efforcé de tirer de mes livres un sursis à ma tristesse, ma tristesse pour ma Lénore perdue, pour la précieuse et rayonnante fille que les anges nomment Lénore, — et qu’ici on ne nommera jamais plus.⁶⁸

VII. “Le Corbeau,” trans. Stéphane Mallarmé:

Une fois, par un minuit lugubre, tandis que je m’appesantissais, faible et fatigué, sur maint curieux et bizarre volume de savoir oublié — tandis que je dodelinais de la tête, somnolant presque: soudain se fit un heurt, comme de quelqu’un frappant doucement, frappant à la porte de ma chambre — cela seul et rien de plus.

Ah! distinctement je me souviens que c’était en le glacial Décembre: et chaque tison, mourant isolé, ouvrait son spectre sur le sol. Ardemment je souhaitais le jour — vainement j’avais cherché d’emprunter à mes livres un sursis au chagrin — au chagrin de la Lénore perdue — de la rare et rayonnante jeune fille que les anges nomment Lénore: — de nom pour elle ici, non, jamais plus.⁶⁹