Notes

1   In her Introduction, Wright explains how the Canadian Theosophical Society placed "emphasis on 'Truth' and 'tolerance to all'" and demonstrates how *The God of Gods* "dramatizes these key theosophical tenets: the play's central characters perform monologues on tolerance and discoveries of religious truths—or untruths, as the female protagonist (Suiva) realizes that the community's religious idol offers little more than stage tricks" (xxi).

Works Cited

Fletcher, John. "Sympathy for the Devil: Nonprogressive Activism and the Limits of Critical Generosity." *Theatre Historiography: Critical Interventions*. Ed. Henry Bial and Scott Magelssen. Ann Abor: University of Michigan P, 2010.

NICOLE NOLETTE

Jouer la Traduction: Théâtre et hétérolinguisme au Canada francophone
University of Ottawa Press, 2015. 296 pp.

ALISON BOWIE

There is something playful and ironic about writing a review of a book dedicated to the study of heterolingualism and translation in a different language from that of the manuscript. Such is the case with this review of Nicole Nolette's *Jouer la traduction: Théâtre et hétérolinguisme au Canada francophone*, which focusses on contemporary theatrical texts in French Canada outside of Québec that encounter or create difference, and are written and performed in linguistic otherness. In particular, Nolette focusses on texts in translation, specifically investigating the notion of *la traduction ludique*. While Nolette chooses not offer a specific, concise definition of this term, she articulates the *qualities* of play and playfulness that exist within the medium of *traduction ludique,* and, citing Mathieu Guidère's play theory, parallels the role of the actor with the role of translator. Specifically looking at translation in theatre, Nolette explains that, "La traduction ludique telle qu'elle se manifeste dans le théâtre franco-canadien hétérolingue relève de ce plaisir (ou *play*sir) du jeu, que ce soit celui entre les langues ou celui des possibles de la représentation théâtrale" (19). For Nolette, translative play is more than wordplay or code mixing; *traduction ludique* is meta-theatrical, beyond the visual and spoken languages of the characters, and layered, offering a different experience to those who understand one or the other language, or both.

Nolette carefully and thoughtfully engages in dialogue with Derrida and Bhabha, identifying the double codedness of both cultural and linguistic translation. She explains that, "la traduction ludique met stratégiquement en place des espaces d'hybridation et de supplémentarité aux frontières poreuses, instables et dynamiques" (23). In her book *Traverser Montréal : Une histoire culturelle par la traduction*, Sherry Simon, whose work is prominently featured in Nolette's study, describes cities as sites of translation that are constantly in

motion, in change, as memories, cultures, and languages encounter one another and are layered upon one another. Nolette parallels this idea in her premise that *traduction ludique* within a heterolingual French Canadian theatrical text invites additional playful translations from the outside, permitting the texts "de voyager vers les métropoles du théâtre au Canada et leurs spectateurs moins bilingues" (25). As Nolette demonstrates, the idea of a translation being nomadic, repositioning itself, moving, or taking up space not previously available to the source text, particularly in the case of cultural communities that have been literally or figuratively displaced, is critical when talking about French Canadian works. Nolette's definition of the metropolitan audience as one made up of unilingual individuals, however, seems to be at odds with both Simon's notion of cities in translation and Nolette's own idea of *traduction ludique*, as well as her discussion of the fluidity of culture and language in space and time. A double consciousness of linguistic and cultural identity seems to be a characteristic of a group or collective, or within a theatrical text or space, but in Nolette's theory it does not extend to the individual audience member.

Over the course of three chapters, Nolette presents case studies from three different French Canadian communities outside of Québec: Western Canada, Ontario, and Acadia. Through these case studies, Nolette investigates:

> si les jeux de la traduction qui m'interessent sont passés inaperçus justement à cause de cadres épistémologiques liés au milieu diglossique qui les a vus naître, ils puisent de ce milieu une grande partie de leur sens - et de leur ludisme. Ainsi, les jeux de traduction de la dramaturgie franco-canadienne, s'ils sont jubilatoires, ne sont pas délirants. Ils ne sont pas désillusionnés pour autant: leur ludisme est plutôt empreint de luciditié. (47)

In other words, she explores the *traduction ludique,* which is born out of the heterolingualism of the French-Canadian identity in English Canada, and is marked by intentionality and clarity of thought. While Nolette's analysis focuses mainly on the textual elements of theatrical works, she does touch on some texts in performance. In Chapter 2, Nolette explores the role of geographic and temporal distance in *traduction ludique* as a mechanism for resisting or including cultural and linguistic identity through analyses of various plays from Manitoba and Saskatchewan, including *Je m'en vais à Regina* by Roger Auger and *Sex, lies et les Franco-Manitobains* by Marc Prescott. Looking at various elements of the texts in translation, including the register of language of each of the characters, the code-switching (both in dialogue and in the structure of the texts), and the cultural markers and rhythms embedded in the texts, Nolette examines the ways in which the authors of these plays create a double visioning of inversions or reversals that counter or defy societal norms. This process makes visible the translation process, and thus the frameworks of the two linguistic systems, and their interactions (both in resistance and accommodation) for those who understand both languages. In Chapter 3, Nolette turns her attention to Ontario. With a lack of geographic distance to the larger metropolitan theatre centres (Toronto and Montreal), and a form of cultural assimilation on the part of the critics of works when played in translation or within Quebec, Nolette proposes that *traduction ludique* is employed by Franco-Ontarian playwrights, particularly Louis Patrick Leroux and Patrice Desbiens, to create that estrangement, that sense of distance, and maintain their position as a minority literature (as per Deleuze and Guaratti

and Dominique Maingueneau). The heterolingual nature of Franco-Ontarian plays extends beyond the text, coming back to Nolette's idea that this form of translation is also metatheatrical. In discussing Leroux's *Rêve totalitaire de dieu l'amibe,* she explains that, "Cette expérience théâtrale n'est plus hermétique au plateau, mais traverse la salle d'une manière ludique dans ses allusions aux styles de théâtre" (143). The playfulness in these plays is similar to Wagner and Kandinsky's *total theatre*, in that they use music, rhythm, language, visual elements, and the mixing of styles and forms of theatre, to provoke the audience to see a unique Franco-Ontarian identity. Chapter 4 provides an analysis of Acadian theatre, including *La Sagouine* by Antonine Maillet and *Empreintes* by Paul Bossé, demonstrating that translation of Acadian works reinscribes the style of the individual author rather than reaffirming a national or regional cultural identity. The plays employ almost Brechtian-style alienation effects to displace the audience and the English language rather than the Acadian culture, which has historically been itself displaced. Nolette explains that, "Dans tous ses cas, l'anglais est relégué à l'espace virtuel proche ou lointain: il n'a pas de place dans l'espace actuel de la scène, ses formes les plus intenses étant explusées performativement vers les coulisses du théâtre monctonien ... ou, comme pour Michael de *Pierre, Hélène et Michael*, vers Toronto"(191). Here, *traduction ludique* engages the untranslatability of Acadian culture and language by creating a new language within the play that utilizes syntax, grammar, vocabulary, and rhythms from both French and English to elicit various forms of laughter—humourous, uncomfortable, recognition, self-effacing—in the audience.

Nolette's book provides a detailed and insightful overview of translation theory as it relates to *traduction ludique* and the inherent playfulness of translation for the theatre. From a literary or a translation studies perspective, the methodology and analysis have a lot to offer. The manuscript, however, could be somewhat problematic for theatre or performance studies scholars as there is a lack of depth to the historical context of French Canadian theatre and minimal discussion of the differences in codes and conventions between French- and English-Canadian theatre creation and production. In the field of dramaturgy in particular, there has been a great deal of research done on theatricality and performativity, the relationship between theatrical text and performance (and the embodied translational element of moving from one to the other), as well as the cultural context of performance. These limitations, however, do not negate the value of this book for those studying translation theory as it offers a new framework of understanding the nuanced and layered nature of theatrical translation.

JESSICA RILEY, ed.
A Man of Letters: The Selected Dramaturgical Correspondence of Urjo Kareda.
Playwrights Canada Press, 2017. 568 pp.

ROBIN C. WHITTAKER

> I've already taken the opportunity to read [your play] because of a manic desire to start 2001 with a clean slate. Which meant that I finished last year with no scripts *un*-read. (531)