

Les Feluettes/Lilies/LILIES: Translation Theatre *par excellence*

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Introduction

Despite the politics of Québécois theatre and its translation into English, Japanese translators have tended to rely on English translations as departure texts throughout the brief history of Québécois theatre translation and translation theatre in Japan. Kisa Eichi's translation of Michel Marc Bouchard's *Les Feluettes ou La Répétition d'un drame romantique*, adapted by Kurata for the production by Studio Life, relies on Linda Gaboriau's English translation *Lilies* as at least a parallel departure text, and, significantly, retains the English language title. The fraught relationship between French and English in Quebec, however, is not at the heart of Bouchard's play, which instead addresses the diglossia between Québécois French as a vernacular, or *vulgar*, language, and 'international' French as cosmopolitan and literary. The distinctive nature of Quebec theatre rests on its use of the vernacular, which in *Les Feluettes* confronts the literary French language and finds that there is still love between them. "Since dramaturgy is above all a speech act and dramatic action is often [...] 'un combat pour la maîtrise de la parole,' the levels of language used on stage become important indicators of the state of Québec society" (Moss 2001: 15). Certainly they are crucial to Bouchard's play to challenge both the notions of "cultural virility" (Moss 2001: 15), and the literary and linguistic constraints shaped by powerful social imperatives that limit expressions of love, beauty and desire. I will consider the case of Michel Marc Bouchard's *Les Feluettes ou La Répétition d'un drame romantique* (1988) and its Tokyo performances by Studio Life in 2002 and 2003, and again in 2009, mediated by both the English translation of the play by Linda Garboriau and a semiotic translation based on the androgyny found in "traditional" Japanese theatre.

Speaking (Lily) White: *Les Feluettes* in Japanese Translation (via English)

The first Canadian play performed in Japan was also the first Québécois play to be staged here. Michel Tremblay's *Bonjour, là, bonjour* (1974) was produced by Gekidan Toen in 1981, under the direction of Osanai Hideo, using a translation by Mita Chihiro. Another Tremblay play, *Albertine, en cinq temps* (1984), was translated by the prolific Yoshihara

Toyoshi and staged by Half Moon Theatre under the direction of Yoshiiwa Masaharu in 1994. Yoshihara was also responsible for the Japanese translation of Tremblay's *Hosanna* (1973), produced in 1997 by Theatre Anne Falle under the direction of Kaiyama Takehisa. In 2002, Studio Life finally introduced Japanese audiences to a Québécois playwright other than Tremblay with *LILIES*, its production of Bouchard's *Les Feluettes*.

Fujii Shintaro of Waseda University has discussed the low visibility of French language plays in Japanese translation and production. Theatre translation activity reached a peak in 1966-1967 with the publication of five volumes of French plays, making Corneille, Molière, Racine, Dumas, Cocteau, Beckett and other prominent playwrights' work available in Japanese. However, despite more exposure due to an increase in public funding and subsidies since the 1990s, Fujii suggests that French theatre still "strikes Japanese audiences as too artistic, too abstract and too distant" (Fujii online) but highlights translation problems as a source of this impression:

The first misfortune of our play translations is that the translators have most often been academics like me (alas!) who are far from being poets. Many academics don't understand the idea of faithfulness (they often cheat in order to remain faithful), and tend to give preference to text over texture, and to meaning over sensations and sensuality. As a result the plays translated are unperformable and produce very little enjoyment when read. (Fujii online)

Fujii also blames the paucity of spoken Japanese for its inability to match the musicality of the language of traditional Japanese theatre and dreams of "one day being capable of inventing a new language for the stage that would enable us to have the writing heard and the speaking read" (Fujii online). He also registers the expressive gap between French and Japanese and touches on the translation of Quebec French and how to differentiate it as such: "How can you translate the subtle difference in Quebec French from the French spoken in France without resorting to the use of dialect?" (Fujii online). Most of the questions Fujii raises about translation are the familiar and longstanding queries that have been asked in Japan at least since the Meiji era. Although they remain germane, I am interested in his remark that translators 'cheat' in order to be faithful to their texts. Is this why Japanese translators of Québécois plays resort to English translations? Of the more than twenty theatre translations of Canadian, American and British plays that Yoshihara has translated, for example, Tremblay's plays are the only ones by a francophone playwright. Furthermore, published English language translations by John

Van Burek and Bill Glassco were available for both *Albertine* and *Hosanna*. Sato Ayako, the translator of Bouchard's *Les Muses orphelines* (1988), makes clear in the text of her translation, published by Sairyûsha,¹ that it is based, with the author's permission, on Gaboriau's 1993 English translation. The actor's script of *LILIES* appears to be not only based on the English translation by Gaboriau, but the production itself is undoubtedly inspired by the English title *Lilies* and the cover image of the English text. In short, the Japanese translations of Québécois theatre for performance or publication have shown little concern with the issue of "speaking white" and the tense linguistic relations in Quebec between English and French found at the heart of so many Québécois plays.

Gaboriau herself has observed that the "omnipresent invisible character" in Quebec theatre is the Quebec language, and that "she could not find the means to translate this invisible character, for it would be absurd and politically inappropriate to celebrate the English language in a translation of a Quebec play" (Bowman 2003: 43). The diglossic relationship between Quebec French and English was precisely the issue that spoke to Bill Findlay and Martin Bowman when they decided to translate Tremblay's *Les Belles-Soeurs* into Scots, and the subsequent success of *The Guid Sisters* (1988) as translation theatre. Findlay and Bowman see vernacular translation "as opposed to adaptation" as a way to verify that the language can project other experiences than just its own and sustain its power:

It's one of those myths of our civilization that whereas middle class culture is international and universal, working class culture is somehow local and parochial. It's a comforting idea in that it reduces the common experience of the millions of human beings drawn into the cities in the industrial age – their courage, humour, reliance – to a matter of 'local' character. (Bowman 2003: 42)

It is not difficult to see the politics of theatre translation that motivated Findlay and Bowman's decision to translate the joual of Tremblay's plays into Scots. As Carl Honoré sums it up, "[B]esides a familiar linguistic scale, Tremblay serves up a sharp but entertaining analysis of the themes that haunt the Scottish psyche: the working class identity, religion, community, deracination, [and] cultural impotence" (in Bowman 2003:

¹ Sato's translation was used for the Studio Life performance of Bouchard's play, which took place at Ryougoku Theatre X in 2007 (25 July- 5 August) as part of the 2007 Modern Canadian Drama Festival in Tokyo (*kanada gendai engekisai*). The *obi* wrapping the cover of Sato's published translation and functioning like a back cover blurb carries the endorsement of Kurata Jun, director of Studio Life.

39). But what would be the *pulsion* motivating the staging of a Quebec play in Japanese translation? If the Québécois language is of little relevance even to the translator, then the theme or story must be the source of interest in the play.

In Quebec, male homosexuality has been prominent and successful in mainstream theatre; between 1980 and 1990, 27 plays on that theme were published in Quebec (Rocheleau 1996: 115), with three or four produced in Montreal every year. Annie Brisset has suggested that translations from Anglo-Canadian plays reflected that interest. For example, of the mere three translated and published in Quebec in 1977, one was John Herbert's *Fortune and Men's Eyes*. Reasons Brisset:

Torontonians John Herbert's play brings to mind some of Michel Tremblay's plays, both in its theme of homosexuality and in its portrayal of the alienation of prison life. The characters use a type of language that is easily translated into joul. (Brisset 1996: 18)

Both Tremblay and Bouchard have had their plays translated and performed extensively, making them nationally and internationally representative of not only Québécois/Canadian theatre, but also gay theatre. David Kinloch has observed that despite the popular success of *Les Feluettes*, some Quebec critics were lukewarm about the play's simplistic representation of good gay characters and homophobic villains, and argues that Gaboriau's English translation supports the idea of the play as a structurally playful, thematically tragic love story (Kinloch 2007: 84) that can be exported as "a 'gay play' destined for the international English language theatre market" (2007: 88). The English translation certainly informs the Japanese production of Bouchard's play. However, in Japan, where traditional theatre is based on same-sex companies and the performance of gender, are cross-dressing characters received and understood as gay and is the story interpreted as tragic? Again, 'surface work' affects how this question might be answered. In Jennifer Robertson's study of the Takarazuka Revue, an all-female troupe founded in 1913 as a counterpart to the all-male theatre tradition of kabuki and its *onnagata*, she positions the revue as "a node of clamorous debates and contested ideas about the relationship of sexuality, racism, and nationalism" (Robertson 1996: 39) that suggest how a Japanese audience might receive Bouchard's play in translation:

While negotiating everyday life as a man or as a woman is an unproblematic process for most people, becoming conscious of the arbitrariness of convention

quickly leads one to doubt the very notion of an original or real femininity or masculinity. [...] But knowledge of the sociohistorical constructedness of gender need not preclude acting within those constructed parameters. Whether illuminating or subverting, passing – and by extension parody – depends on a context in which an audience by whom its transformational potential can be fully recognized and mobilized. In Japan, the Kabuki and Takarazuka theaters have long been two such receptive contexts, and popular culture in general constitutes a major site of change. The presence of a receptive context alone does not an epistemological revolution make, however. Such is the indeterminate politics of ambivalence and ambiguity. (Robertson 1996: 40)

The notion of an original as a convention suggests that in terms of translation, ambivalence can be a strategy, particularly where the intention of the translator, or translation theatre production, is to make space for further translation.

Multiple Gay References

Studio Life's Kurata was moved by *Les Feluettes* as a love story, not just a gay love story,² which may just be another way of saying that 'love' like 'gay' is an unstable term. She also was impressed by the cover of the English translation, and its power to provoke her creativity is evident in the production. I would like to consider the cover of Gaboriau's translation of Bouchard's play as crucial to Kurata's construction of JQ translation theatre. "There are several ways to 'homosexualize' a text," proposes Alberto Mira:

a gay-friendly image on the cover, or even an image which posits an explicitly gay gaze, extracts of reviews from gay publications on the back cover blurb, [or] camp style in general presentation. (in Harvey 2003b: 50)

In this regard, it is interesting to compare the covers of *Les Feluettes ou La Répétition d'un drame romantique* by Leméac Éditeur and *Lilies*, the English translation published by Playwrights Canada Press. The French language text takes a minimalist approach to the design of its cover, which is rendered basically in black and white, with the name of the playwright at the top in muted red and Bouchard's photograph on the front cover. On

² On the DVD of one of the performances, Kurata discusses the play and its background, as well as her responses to the playwright and the play.

the back, there is a quote from Jean Barbe, journalist and director of the publishing house, heralding the play as an innovative “retour de l’âme. Et de l’émotion. Brute, sauvage, cruelle. Comme l’amour”. The cover design, and even the ‘gay gaze’ of Bouchard’s photograph, appear indifferent to homosexualizing its promotion of the play. The flamboyant cover of the English translation, on the other hand, features a decorated reproduction of Andrea Mantegna’s painting of ‘gay-friendly’ Saint Sebastian on a vibrant green background. The title ‘Lilies’ is written in white capital letters, arranged like an extra halo around the saint’s head.

The back cover material is broader in its references, although it reproduces the head and feet of the Mantegna painting as separate smaller images. It cites the respected Montreal paper *Le Devoir*, which calls Bouchard’s play “the most beautiful show of 1987”,³ and the conservative French paper *Le Figaro*, positioning the play as broadly francophone rather than specifically Québécois. The second extract from a review in *Montreal Campus*, the student newspaper published by the University of Québec (Montreal), continues in this vein, comparing Bouchard’s play to those of Molière, Shakespeare, and to Jean Genêt “for the poetic portrayal of homosexuality”, the one explicit reference to the nature of the dramatic love story. The national English daily *The Globe and Mail* suggests the play is not only aesthetically pleasing but political, as well, and “a fascinating work of theatrical hallucination and trenchant social criticism”. As mentioned, Kurata loved the cover of the English translation, and it is presented in a special feature on the DVD of the Studio Life performance as if it were the original. In fact, the covers of all of Bouchard’s plays shown on the DVD are those of English translations of his works. But certainly, in this case, the translation does serve as both departure text and image for the production of *LILIES* by Studio Life in May 2002 and again in September 2003.⁴

Bouchard calls his play *Les Feluettes, ou La Répétition d’un drame romantique*, which Gaboriau renders as *Lilies or The Revival of a Romantic Drama*. In the same way that Baldwin embeds black speech in the title of his play *Blues for Mister Charlie*, Bouchard employs a specifically Québécois term, namely ‘feluettes’, in his title as well. *Les feluettes* does not mean ‘lilies’, but is rather a reference to those considered

³ The first performance of *Les Feluettes ou la Répétition d’un drame romantique* was staged at Salle Fred-Barry in Montreal on 10 September 1987 as a co-production by the Théâtre Petit à Petit (Montreal) and Théâtre français du Centre national des arts (Ottawa) under the direction of André Brassard.

⁴ *LILIES* was performed in Tokyo by Studio Life in 2002 (2-12 May) at Theatre Sun-Mall (*shiatâ sanmo-ru*), and again in 2003 (10-23 September) at Kinokuniya Theatre. There were also performances in Osaka in 2003 (27-29 September) at Theatre Drama City (*shiatâ doramashithi*).

physically too delicate or emotionally oversensitive. It is a noun derived from a modifier and its spelling reflects the Québécois pronunciation of *fluet/te* (thin), and perhaps the cultural conflation of the weak and women is enscribed in its feminine nominalization. In his description of the play's characters, Bouchard tells us Le Comte Vallier de Tilly is "[r]econnu pour son intelligence, mais également pour sa trop grande sensibilité, ce qui lui a valu le surnom de 'Feluette'" (Bouchard 1988: 12) – "[k]nown for his intelligence, but also for his delicate manners and excessive sensitivity which have earned him the nickname Lily-White" (Bouchard 1990: n.p.) – by Bilodeau, a local youth who despises, fears and envies the "lousy imported snob" (Bouchard 1988: 20) who doesn't talk like everyone else. Gaboriau translates Vallier's nickname as "Lily-White", a variant on her translation of the title of the play:

'Feluette' is a word someone of an older generation might use, a Quebec distortion of the word 'fluet' or 'flurette' which means frail or delicate. A mother might say it about a consumptive child, but it could mean effeminate or effete. It isn't necessarily pejorative. [...] I went back to the play [...] and saw how many Biblical allusions there were.

I began thinking of lilies of the field, the 'fleur de lys', and lilies as the flower of royalty [...]. The play has a lot of the flamboyance of Oscar Wilde, who created a cult for lilies. Artists right up to Robert Mapplethorpe have drawn sexual imagery from lilies. It seemed to capture the same kind of allusive meaning as 'feluette', and may make some subconscious impact on the audience. (in Kinloch 2007: 98)

Gaboriau's explanation shows her thoughtful deliberation, but why would Kurata choose the English translation as the source of the title of the Japanese production or Vallier's nickname – *ririi howaito*, the *katakana* rendering of Lily-White – instead of using Japanese translations or Bouchard's untranslated French? To offer a possible explanation, it is necessary to consider the evocative impact the 'lily' has on the 'popular' imagination in Japan; we will find that it is very distant from the fleur-de-lys and its associations with France and Quebec, or the lily's symbolism in terms of the resurrection in Catholicism.

Keith Harvey has suggested how a translation can be constructively considered an event:

Conceived of as an 'event', a translation has the potential to reveal (and should

be probed for) challenges, transgressions, contradictions and fissures, all of which are outcomes of the interaction between, on the one hand, the underlying systemic configuration of values and assumptions and, on the other, the eruption of alterity within a domestic sphere. (Harvey 2003b: 45)

Theatre translation/translation theatre is exemplary in this regard as it is an event with an attentive audience. Further, it allows contradictions and challenges to occur within multiple productions of the same play. In the case of *LILIES*, the director clearly responds to Bouchard's play not just for its suitability as a Studio Life project as a play written for an all-male cast, but also because it resonates with recognizable Japanese icons and cultural productions. The image of Saint Sebastian on the cover of the English translation is a Catholic icon, but it also evokes the famous 1970 photograph by Shinoyama Kishin of Mishima Yukio as Saint Sebastian "complete with arrows piercing his torso in a recreation of Guido Reni's [...] painting of 1615" (Mackie 2005: 132), as well as intertextual references to Mishima's novel *Kamen no Kokuhaku* (*Confessions of a Mask*, 1949) where the Mantegna painting is a source of sexual arousal, and *Tennin gosui* (*The Decay of the Angel*, 1971), where a character names Mantegna as his favourite Italian artist. That is, the image of Saint Sebastian leads us then not only to Mishima himself but into his texts.

The suggestive impact of Gaboriau's translation rather than the original on the Japanese translation/production show how the English translation of the Québécois play, critically framed as problematic for assimilative or diglossic reasons, can carry within it "the forces of innovation" which allow Studio Life to mount a striking and successful production of Bouchard's play that transforms "speaking white" into "speaking lily-white", which both furthers the queer agenda of the play, but also opens it up to reading the play's representation of sacrificial martyrdom and the 'érotico-ecclesiastique' aspects of Catholicism in terms of the discipline and sacrifice of the samurai, which so inspired Mishima and his idea of death with honour. The image of a youth in a loincloth penetrated by arrows does not have to be read in terms of Mishima, but more broadly as a representation of sadomasochism (Mackie 2005: 139) or homosexuality. The citational nature of Quebec theatre and of 'gay' theatre is both furthered and derailed as another set of alternative cultural signs come into play, which includes that of the indigenous queer community, with its own sense of what 'queer' means. This kind of theatre translation is neither domesticating nor foreignizing, but receptive to possible and innovative meanings that do not separate the text from its translation or its performance but constitute them as

versions of each other.

LILIES and Roses

The cover illustration of the 2003⁵ programme of *LILIES* shows the silhouettes of two young “men” about to kiss; superimposed on each shadowy head is an image of a lily. In queer literary circles in Japan, gay and lesbians are associated with flowers: *barazoku* (rose tribe) and *yurizoku* (lily tribe) are their respective signs. The origins of *bara* as a sign for male homosexuality are obscure, but it was in use in 1963 as the title of a publication targeting a male homosexual readership (McLelland 2005: 140-41). James Welker speculates that the origin of the use of *bara* might be found in translation, linking it to *Bara no kiseki*, Horiguchi Daigaku’s translation of Jean Genet’s *Miracle de la rose* (1951), which appeared in 1956. However, 1963 is also the year that *Barakei (Ordeal by Roses): Hosoe Eikō Shashinshū* was published in Tokyo. Hosoe Eikō’s famous collection of photographs of Mishima in various arrangements with roses suggests another possible inspiration, if not source (Mackie 2005: 140), for the popularization of *bara* as a queer term.

The rose also resonates in Japanese theatre in the title of *Berusaiyu no bara (Rose of Versailles)*, staged from 1974-76 and again in 1989-91, by the Takarazuka Revue and considered “by the Revue and fans alike as the most memorable and successful postwar revue to date” (Robertson 1998: 74). The cross-dressing narrative, based on a best-selling comic of the same name by Ikeda Riyoko, is about Oscar, a girl raised as a boy, and is a reworking of *Ribon no kishi (Princess Knight)* by Tezuka Osamu, a fan of the Revue. Robertson explains:

The Rose of Versailles dwells on the adventures of Oscar, a female raised as a boy in order to ensure the patrilineal continuity of a family of generals. The late cartoonist Tezuka Osamu’s popular post-war comic, *Princess Knight*, doubtless inspired Ikeda’s Oscar just as Takarazuka inspired Tezuka. In that earlier comic, *Princess Knight*, or *Sapphire*, is raised as a son, having been born to a royal couple in need of a male heir. (Robertson 1998: 74)

There is much of interest here, but I would like to single out the use of the name as a

⁵ *LILIES* has been staged twice, using multiple casts, by Studio Life. The cover of the programme of the 2002 performance is dominated by the image of a cross. It is interesting to note that the cover image of the 2003 performance of *Tōma no shinzo* is a church with a towering steeple.

queer sign. ‘Oscar’ is a beautiful boy (*bisshonen*) who is really a girl; that is, the male body can be a trope for femininity (Welker 2006: 855). Both ‘Oscar’ and ‘Versailles’ may be recognized as specific references, but simultaneously it must be seen that there is and there is not a decadent Oscar Wilde or a baroque Versailles in these fuzzy citations of the ‘the West’ as an imaginative construction which is “not about specific countries and cultural areas grouped under that rubric but about contemporary social transformations in Japan; it was invoked as a discursive space for a range of adversarial cultural and political critiques” (Robertson 1998: 100), as well as alternative identities.

In Hagio Moto’s *Tôma no shinzô* (*The Heart of Thomas*), another popular boys’ love *manga* for girls in the 1970s, the lily and the rose appear as signs of same-sex love for those who choose to read them as such. Lily (*yuri* or *riri*) is imbricated in the name of the hero, Juli:

While the elongated vowel used to spell Yuli (Yûri) differentiates its pronunciation from the Japanese word for lily (*yuri*), the aural similarity between the two is noteworthy, particularly because the other characters constantly address him as Yûri. Further, Juli’s proper name is Julusmore (in Japanese *Yurisumôru*) [...]; the pronunciation of his full name begins with the sound *yuri* (lily) rather than *yûri* (Juli), making *yûri*, in fact, a marker for *yuri*. Whatever the author’s intention may have been, the pronunciation of this fantastic moniker tempts us to read the character of Julusmore as ‘*yurismall*,’ or a little lily. (Welker 2006: 861-63)

The beautiful boy here is both a rose under the sign of lily and a *yuri* that is not simply the female version of ‘*bara*’. Given the ubiquity and popularity of gender performance in Japanese theatre, the *onnagata* in kabuki, the *otokoyaku* (trouser roles) in Takarazuka, or the performance of women by male actors in Studio Life performances, beautiful boy characters can be read by the audience as male, female, somewhere in between, or beyond. The body then is an imaginative departure point: delicate beautiful boys might earn the soubriquet of *fêlurette* in the parochial Catholic Quebec of 1912, but in contemporary Japan they are lilies, or roses by another name, who fall in love with each other. It is not surprising to find that Studio Life’s 2003 schedule, along with *LILIES*, included a production of *Tôma no shinzô*.

Les Feluettes, Lilies and LILIES

Québécois is embedded in the title of *Les Feluettes*, along with the linguistic tension between Quebec French, the French spoken in France, and the literary French of the theatre. In Japanese translation, Bouchard's play "encapsulates the stock features of shows staged by Takarazuka today: an exotic foreign setting, a triangulated love affair, a tragic ending" (Robertson 1998: 25), although these elements are reconstituted in Studio Life's production. *Les Feluettes* opens in 1952 with a confrontation between Simon Doucet, who has been in prison for forty years, and his former schoolmate, who is now Bishop Bilodeau. The bishop becomes Simon's captive audience while Simon and other inmates dramatically revive 'real life' events of forty years earlier that begin during the rehearsal of Gabriele D'Annunzio's play *Le Martyre de saint Sébastien* at the college Saint-Sébastien in Roberval, Quebec. The two main characters in the reenactment, Simon as a schoolboy and his friend Vallier, are Québécois and French, respectively, a difference that resonates in the dialogue between them alongside the theatrical language of D'Annunzio's play, which they share as actors.

The cover of the DVD recording of the 2003 performances offers multiple titles: the DVD is variously entitled *Simon & Vallier*: Studio Life 'LILIES'; and, in tiny script, there is also the full title of Bouchard's play in French. A title written in Japanese is absent, which linguistically distances the Japanese viewer who is left to rely on his or her sense of the play through images or 'foreign' words. Studio Life also offered two versions of Bouchard's play with different casts, the 'blanc' and the 'rouge'. The multiple casts, with names of wines or fruit, are reminiscent of Takarazuka's rotating troupes, variously named Hana Flower (*hana*), Moon (*tsuki*), Snow (*yuki*), Star (*hoshi*) and Sky (*sora*), which were originally formed to organize the Revue school's applicants and meet the growing demand for performances (Robertson 1998: 9-10). According to this model, actors can play different parts in different performances, so for example, Kai Masahiko, an actor who plays Simon in Studio Life's 2002 production, plays Simon's fiancée, Mademoiselle Lydie-Anne de Rozier, in the 2003 'blanc' performances, emphasizing the fluidity of gender performance in this theatre translation. In doing so, Kurata was again influenced by the title of Bouchard's play and the notion of '*la répétition*' or 'revival' by revisiting the play in different somatic guises in each performance.

I have said that the Japanese translation seems to rely mainly on the English translation rather than the French, but Gaboriau's translation is overall a careful one, and the translated actor's script does not stray far from Bouchard's text. Although the Japanese translation opts for the English title and the derisive nickname for Vallier is a

rendering of the English translation, traces of the French remain in the long and convoluted names, such as Le Comte Vallier de Tilly, or his mother La Comtesse Marie-Laure, which are written in *katakana* and pronounced phonetically, but the Japanese audience may not recognize them as somewhat excessive as well as exotic. There is no attempt to adapt the story to Japan by changing names or places; Roberval is as remote and romantic as Versailles, and even less specific. Although Kurata recognizes the great humour of *Les Feluettes*, the Studio Life production renders *LILIES* as clever melodrama.

The story *is* melodramatic, of course. It is set in a Quebec prison in 1952; in the Studio Life production, we here footsteps echoing in corridors, keys rattling, and doors opening and clanging shut before Bishop Bilodeau appears on the upper tier of the stage. Simon Doucet, once one of the most beautiful boys in Roberval, is now Vieux Simon, who is about to be released after 4 decades in prison. In the theatricalization of his memories (Dickenson 2007: 10) in order to address the gaps, Vieux Simon forces at knifepoint to return to at College Saint-Sebastien, a Catholic boys' school, where they were both students, and watch the rehearsal of another play that is the prelude to Vallier's death and Simon's incarceration. The play being rehearsed within the play within the play is D'Annunzio's 'Le Martyre de saint Sébastien', which is causing concern in the homophobic and homosocial Catholic community of Roberval. Vallier, called Feluette in Bouchard's play and Lily-White (*riri howaito*) in the English and Japanese translations, is a young Frenchman who lives with his deranged mother in destitute circumstances. They have been abandoned by Vallier's father, but his mother refuses to accept this, and in her own theatrical translation of not only her past but her present, lives in a dream world waiting for her husband to return (it's been five years) while Vallier tries to make ends meet by working as a fishing guide. He is in love with Simon, but the latter is uncomfortable about his own interest in Vallier. Bilodeau, who has given Vallier his nickname, is both interested in Simon and repelled at the thought, and deeply envious of and disgusted by the relationship between Simon and Vallier. He constantly seeks to expose the relationship in order to force Simon to give up Vallier, and makes Simon's father aware of it.

After being severely beaten by his father over his involvement with Vallier, Simon becomes engaged to Mademoiselle Lydie-Anne de Rozier, a beautiful French woman and "*specialiste du mensonge*" (Bouchard 1988: 13), who is staying at the hotel in Roberval. They publicly announce their engagement, but Simon (who is a pyromaniac) also sets fire to various buildings in Roberval to express the burning desire he cannot

otherwise articulate. Vallier cannot express his feelings easily either, so at the engagement party for Simon and Lydie-Anne at the hotel, he arrives in the role of Caesar, draped in curtains and wearing a diadem of leaves. Using the lines from the D'Annunzio play, he addresses Simon as Sebastian. Everyone except Vallier's mother is appalled, but Simon responds, but only to let Vallier know that he has made his choice and it is Lydie-Anne.

On Vallier's birthday, Simon comes by to say good-bye and winds up in the bathtub with Vallier, declaring his love. Bilodeau alerts Lydie-Anne, who shows up and finds the two lovers in the tub, and accuses Simon of betraying his love and sabotaging her aerostat. She also tells Vallier's mother that she is mad and that the husband she waits for will never return. This revelation leads to Vallier's mother's decision to 'go to France' and leave the world behind, and her son aids her departure by burying her alive in the forest. Simon and Vallier then decide to die together in the attic room where they used to secretly meet. Simon shows his wedding rings to Vallier and they each swallow one. After a mutual declaration of love, Simon knocks the oil lamp to the floor, and, with Bilodeau banging on the door, they collapse in each others arms amidst the flames. The epilogue returns us to the prison and the present, with Bishop Bilodeau admitting he saved Simon and left Vallier to die. He now asks for Simon to kill him, but Simon refuses the bishop's request.

Among the relationships imbricated in the plot is the tense linguistic connection between two French languages. To return to Fujii's question, 'How can you translate the subtle difference in Quebec French from the French spoken in France without resorting to the use of dialect?', *LILIES* uses language which indicates different degrees of masculinity, apparent in the choices of first person references, to render Québécois 'tougher' than French. "Without resorting to the use of dialect", the diglossia functioning in Japanese in terms of speech levels and "the stratification of language in terms of address" (Lindsay 2006: 10) allows the play to translate the hierarchical relationship between not only 'cosmopolitan' or literary French and Quebec 'vernacular', but also the diglossic relationship between French and English, and the West and Japan. At the same time, it is also able to emphasize the literary quality of oral camp style, which aids "the deconstruction of the binarism "spoken/written" as an analogy of "natural/constructed"" (Harvey 2000: 454). The politics of the play float in the translation but remain about identity.

An accommodating (*tekigôtekinataido*) translator/adaptor such as Kurata anticipates an audience which will be watching the play for a variety of reasons and

offers openings that make space for the viewer to engage in their own making of meaning. *Les Feluettes* leans away from explication and language towards suggestive creativity, a theatricalization of translation that allows itself to be influenced by more than just the departure text. The axes may seem very familiar and a Western translation theorist might reduce them to foreignizing and domesticating translation practices, but they can be reconstructed in a suggestively different way. The accommodating translator is seen as a visionary, introducing the work to the reader as read through the lens of his or her own understanding. Further, the distinction between theatre translation and translation theatre allow the accent to fall on the text or its performance, and consider the affect of the body on the tongue, and vice versa.

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