

Editor's Notes

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In Volume 16 of *Initiales/Initials* we again present excerpts from recent departmental theses, the oldest of which dates back to 1992. For reasons of time and space, we must once more defer publication of some excellent work until the next issue. Despite this emphasis on thesis material, however, we wish to remind our readers that contributions of good papers by graduate students of this and other French departments are welcomed and, indeed, encouraged.

The present selection of articles reflects the usual diversity of perspectives and approaches, but it must be admitted that periods other than the twentieth century, and studies specifically dealing with linguistics, are unfortunately underrepresented in this volume. Rhonda Knubley's essay on the Renaissance constitutes the only exception, but even then she looks at Rabelais from a decidedly post-modern angle, underlining his linguistic and stylistic play with heterogeneity, pluralism, and paradox.

Five of our current contributions are oriented toward Quebec literature of this and the preceding generations. Jean-Claude Bergeron and Brigitte Faivre-Duboz both add significantly to our department's home-grown critical corpus on the by now classic author Jacques Ferron. Both of them, in fact, undertook, in the course of their elaborate analyses, the challenge of elucidating Ferron's progressive self-doubt. Bergeron follows the evolution of Ferron's national (Quebec) consciousness, linking aspects of his depression to his perception of the deteriorating political and social crisis. Faivre-Duboz traces the nuances of the physician's conflictual commitment to writing by documenting Ferron's relationship with Claude Gauvreau, a poet devoted to this art to the point of madness.

Michel Gagnon offers a meticulous structural, stylistic, and functional comparison of a relatively short sequence of incidents told and retold in various permutations in two works of Gilbert La Rocque. Gagnon's discussion is further enlivened by the fact that one of the works is a novel while the other one is a play.

Hildi Konok's analysis, while also structural and functional, focuses on a very different kind of genre. The parable of a spiritual quest

for enlightenment, written by the mystic René Daumal, affords her the opportunity to evaluate the metaphorical significance of spatial elements.

The articles of Colleen Boone and Natasha Nestman are distinguished by a more sociological approach even when they describe psychological parameters, because both deal with the problems of individuals initiated into a new environment. Boone examines the traumatic difficulties encountered by a child growing up in a hostile adult world in a novel by André Langevin. Nestman's concern is the language limbo experienced by Italian immigrants to bilingual and bicultural Montreal, as told by Marco Micone.

Our selection closes with a study of Andrée Chedid by Sabah Metlej, who reflects on the inspiration, genesis, and significance of poetry in the life of that impassioned Lebanese woman writer.

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