

Abstracts

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Henri-Raymond Casgrain

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Abstracts

« Henri-Raymond Casgrain et la paternité d'une littérature nationale » (Manon Brunet)

This article provides a sociocritical analysis of Henri-Raymond Casgrain's status as the father of the nation's literature. Nineteenth-century epistolary and critical sources show that Casgrain was committed to ensuring the material and symbolic life of national literature by establishing a literary tradition, defining its aesthetic and promoting exchanges through a national and international literary network. The precarious institutional position of Casgrain's first and only biographer, Camille Roy, prevented him from recognizing that his predecessor, who had occupied the centre of the literary network since 1860, was the father of the nation's literature. Since then, literary historiography has continued to project a narrow and distorted image of Casgrain.

« De l'usage des lettres : correspondances et mémoire chez Henri-Raymond Casgrain » (Vincent Dubost et Marie-Élaine Savard)

This article reviews the various relationships which Henri-Raymond Casgrain entertained with collective and individual memory through the conservation and re-use of his personal papers. The Abbé Casgrain preserved over 23,000 pages of documents. In sorting, classifying and organizing these documents, Casgrain acted not as a collector intending to show them to the public, but rather as an archivist who wanted to be able to use them easily, at the appropriate time, as a source of information about himself and the community. Thus, Casgrain made extensive use of letters received and sent in writing three texts analyzed in this article: *Notes relatives aux inscriptions du monument de Champlain*, *Octave Crémazie en exil* and *Souvenances canadiennes*.

« Pour une relecture des *Légendes canadiennes* de Casgrain » (Michel Lord)

Henri-Raymond Casgrain's *Légendes canadiennes* (1860-1861) were held in high esteem by the literary establishment for nearly a century. Around 1960, however, there was a decline in the fortune of these texts, which had been designed to form the basis of French Canadian literature through the recovery of old stories told by the people. After reviewing critical response to the *Légendes*, Michel Lord offers a rereading of three

texts by Casgrain, focusing on the very personal discursive strategies used by Casgrain to construct his “legends” and the figures of the Canadian and the Indian and to organize belief in the supernatural. The article attempts to show that under the guise of a simple form (the legend), Casgrain manipulates narrative discourse in a sophisticated way. The effect, however, is not one of dialogic abundance; instead, a form of monologism is established corresponding to the period’s unifying (ultramontane) ideology, which was ardently defended by Casgrain. Thus, Casgrain’s *Légendes canadiennes* should be viewed not so much as the outcome of a project to preserve old legends, but rather as illustrating an exemplary model of what Canadian literature at that time was expected to be.

« Henri-Raymond Casgrain, historien » (Maurice Lemire)

A literary man first and foremost, Abbé Casgrain began his career as a historian with a Providentialist view of Canadian history. However, his desire to refute the successive publications of the American historian Francis Parkman led him to change his methods. Rather than utter blanket denials in the manner of several of his contemporaries, he learned to consider his adversary’s arguments and base his refutations solely on documentary evidence. But despite significant progress (especially in his last works), Casgrain never lost his penchant for general propositions and gratuitous encomiums.

« Un discours “exemplaire”: la biographie de François-Xavier Garneau par Henri-Raymond Casgrain » (Hélène Marcotte et Yves Bourassa)

In his article “Le mouvement littéraire en Canada”, Henri-Raymond Casgrain delineates the future ministry of French Canadian literature: to fortify the nation’s identity and propagate Catholic doctrine. Biography, a genre that was considered an integral part of literary activity in the 19th century, served the same ideological purposes. This article attempts to show that Casgrain’s biography of a national historian — François-Xavier Garneau — embodies his dual commitment to national and religious edification, a commitment which is mainly expressed by two techniques: myth-building and critical examination.

« Les pèlerinages de Henri-Raymond Casgrain: de la référentialité à l’intertextualité » (Pierre Rajotte)

The dialectical tension between the space of the referent (as reality) and the space of its discursive construction is probably the most significant challenge posed by travel writing. Faced with this challenge, Henri-Raymond Casgrain uses various strategies of intertextual substitution to make space readable. His travel writings become travels in

time or through books. The experience of travel becomes a cultural pilgrimage, lessening the infringement effect created by the shift from referentiality to intertextuality.

« Expérience du ressouvenir et écriture palimpseste : le conte perdu de Jacques Ferron » (Ginette Michaud)

The author provides a comparative reading of two texts by Jacques Ferron — “Une fâcheuse compagnie” and “Les têtes de morues” — from Ferron’s first and last collections, *Contes* (1968) and *La Conférence inachevée* (1987). Through a microreading of textual details, and with borrowings from the psychoanalytic approach, Ginette Michaud focuses on the different aesthetics of the tale embodied in these two collections. She demonstrates the remarkable consistency of Ferron’s writing throughout the modifications and corrections he made from one version to the next, as he shifted the major signifiers of what might be termed his “autobiographical fiction”.

« Pour une nouvelle lecture des *Fous de Bassan* d’Anne Hébert : l’Amérique et ses parcours discursifs » (Lucie Guillemette)

This article analyzes the narratological devices used by Anne Hébert in her epistolary novel *Les Fous de Bassan* to establish a spatial antinomy between the story’s repressive locations (Griffin Creek) and the redeeming locations of discourse (the United States). Beneath this network of spatial oppositions, three underlying images of America are created by the male voices that dominate the story, with America being successively presented as *redeeming*, *fraternal* and *object of desire*.

« Le rythme dans la poésie d’Albert Lozeau. Contribution à l’étude du vers régulier symboliste » (Michel Lemaire)

This article on Québécois poet Albert Lozeau (1878-1924) locates his work in relation to French versification as it evolved from the Romantics to the Symbolists. As heir to the French Symbolists’ attempts to free regular verse, Lozeau developed a verse technique marked by varied trimeters and a complex use of enjambment at the caesura. His musical lines are remarkable for their fluidity, expressiveness and murmured softness.