

## Abstracts

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Saint-Denys Garneau

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## Abstracts

### « Saint-Denys Garneau ou l'écriture comme projet de soi » (Jean-Louis Major)

The work of Saint-Denys Garneau today constitutes a more complex body of texts than what would have been indicated by the sole collection of poems published during his lifetime: *Regards et Jeux dans l'espace*. In light of writings published posthumously, his oeuvre becomes a sort of «writing of the self» in which the all encompassing form is that of the *Journal*. It is here that Saint-Denys Garneau situates all of his work, including his poems, correspondence and essays, inscribing them into a problematic of intimacy. In relocating his poetry within the formal conception of the *Journal*, rather than in a biographical or anecdotal perspective, both the awareness of a loss of intimacy with oneself and the progress of a writing of the self can be simultaneously detected. By way of diverse genres, subsumed by that of the journal, Garneau pursues a unique quest: «l'être-moi».

### « Journal, atelier, recueil » (Robert Melançon)

With a comparative reading of the two versions of Saint-Denys Garneau's *Journal*, the author questions the coherence behind the removal of many passages made by the first editors (Robert Élie and Jean Le Moyne) in 1954. He underscores the *effets de lecture* induced by the changes in the original text, which has something to do with the image of the writer that has prevailed since that time: a man withdrawn into himself and closed to the exterior world. The edition by Brault and Lacroix will, in part, correct the situation, but for many reasons, it won't completely succeed, causing in turn some insurmountable difficulties in reading.

### « Force de Saint-Denys Garneau » (Gilles Marcotte)

Saint-Denys Garneau wanted ardently to become a writer. He practiced his craft for many years as both his correspondence, particularly that which he maintained with Françoise Charest, and his *Journal* make manifest. Yet it was precisely at the moment that this desire was broken that he actually became a writer, a moment of intense

distress and loss, first and foremost of an image of himself. This article aims to measure the force required by Garneau to write from this state of destitution.

**« Le jeu du regard dans l'espace poétique de Saint-Denys Garneau »  
(Pierre Ouellet)**

«Vision» and its correlative «space» are important and well recognized features of the poetry of Saint-Denys Garneau. Expressions referring to the semantic field of visual perception abound in *Regards et Jeux dans l'espace*. Yet these references are often accompanied by a co-reference to motivity linked to acts of prehension and movement in space (ex.: «But my eyes are big in order to *take* everything»; «Yet *dance* is paraphrase for vision»; «The *path* rediscovered that the eyes had lost...»). The correlation between motivity and vision in Garneau's work will here be explored, showing the innovative role it plays at the heart of the discursive configuration of modern Quebec poetry, where were already taking shape the important changes that Quebec «sensitivity» would, from that era onwards, begin to experience.

**« Te voilà diptyque. Lecture de deux poèmes de Saint-Denys Garneau ("Saules" et "Pins à contre-jour") (Jacques Blais)**

The collection of poems *Regards et Jeux dans l'espace* indicates, right from its title, the attention given to the arrangement of each poem within the book with respect to overall textual economy, the different sections of the collection and, more specifically, the neighbouring poems. Among many diptychs, the juxtaposition of «Saules» and «Pins à contre-jour» reveals this structural concern and brings to the fore many formal and thematic parallels. Our analysis shows the predominance of oxymorons and attaches this interpretation to the existential malaise of duality and division that obsessively permeates the poetry and prose of Saint-Denys Garneau.

**« Métrique et prosaïsme dans la poésie de Saint-Denys Garneau »  
(Michel Lemaire)**

Having written a number of more traditional poems during his youth, Saint-Denys Garneau seems to have discovered poetry simultaneously with free verse. *Regards et Jeux dans l'espace* presents a type of free verse void of musical qualities: the rhythm wobbles, the verse gives the impression that it wants to reject the charms of lyricism and remain deliberately close to prosaicness. This article argues that

Garneau's free verse is defined by this opposition to regular verse, that the poet achieves poetry in shattering traditional rhythm, in removing its metric ornaments and in exposing it to «prosaic truth».

**« Quand "jusqu'à cette extrémité", c'est "jusqu'ici". Lecture d'un des derniers poèmes » (André Gervais)**

Traces of Saint-Denys Garneau's poem «Et maintenant», written circa 1938, can already be found in his private «épitexte» *Journal* and *Lettres à ses amis*. This poem can thus be read by way of such an «épitexte» which contains a radical calling into question of the relation to writing in the text itself (vocabulary and syntax) and in its intertext (DesRochers, Kafka), outside of a strictly religious framework.

**« Pour une lecture sociale de la correspondance de Saint-Denys Garneau » (Benoît Melançon)**

Can the correspondence published in Saint-Denys Garneau's *Oeuvres* (1971) and his *Lettres à ses amis* (1967) be read in a social perspective? Faced with letters that seem only to contain the expression of a sensibility torn between «exaltation» and «dejection», what possibilities are offered to the reader concerned with their inscription in the *polis*? Three reading strategies will here be illustrated. The first and most traditional consists in reading epistolary texts as a reservoir of analysis and narration using the socio-political world as its theme. The second involves a comparison of Garneau's epistolary prose with the «sociogramme» of 1930's Montreal such as it has been described by Pierre Popovic. Finally, the third supposes that the reading of correspondence renders possible a new interrogation of the Quebec social discourse of the Depression decade. None of these epistolary reading strategies is more legitimate than the others, nor exclusive of the others, but each one implies a different conception of the specific form that is the personal letter.

**« Vingt ans dans la vie du *Ciel de Québec*: histoire d'une consécration » (Marcel Olscamp)**

First published in 1969, Jacques Ferron's *Le Ciel du Québec* has known a remarkable critical trajectory over the course of the last two decades. After its initial commercial success, the novel, which bore witness to the preoccupations of its era, fell into relative neglect before being re-edited by Victor-Lévy Beaulieu. Since the beginning of the 80's, this text has once again generated interest and has become the object of several critical studies. An analysis of the «intermittences»

of the work's critical reception, with the aid of the concepts of Hans Robert Jauss, allows us to observe the evolution of a certain sector of the Quebec reading public.

**« Écriture et désir chez Gabrielle Roy. Lecture d'un récit de *La Route d'Altamont* » (Alain Roy)**

The writing of desire in the work of Gabrielle Roy warrants examining from a *poietic* and *psychoanalytic* viewpoint as well as a purely *thematic* one to which scholars of Roy's work have mainly restricted themselves. The *desire to write* such as represented by Roy will here be analyzed with the aid of the concepts of sublimation and reparation. The bringing to light of *unconscious desire* as the organizational principle in «Le vieillard et l'enfant» allows us to illustrate the tension between the concealing and unveiling of *unconscious forces* operating in her work and form which it draws its particular power.

**« Du modernisme au postmodernisme : le sort de l'intertexte français dans le roman québécois contemporain » (André Lamontagne)**

From the post-war period to the 1980's, between the conflict of codes described by André Belleau and the coming of a postmodern poetics, the role of intertextuality in the Quebec novel has undergone profound transformations. The present article analyzes the function of the word of others in two important contemporary novels: Hubert Aquin's *Prochain Épisode* in which a quest for identity must confront the French norm (Balzac, Simenon) and Francine Noël's *Maryse* that fictionalizes the legitimization of both Quebec's literature and its linguistic code. In modifying the relation that the Quebec novel maintains with the French intertext, these two works mark the passage from modernism to postmodernism.