

## Abstracts

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Le récit littéraire des années quatre-vingt et quatre-vingt-dix

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# Abstracts

« Le récit, émergence d'une pratique : le volet institutionnel » (Frances Fortier and René Audet)

This article testifies to the emergence of a series of texts speaking to a variety of issues, but given the common name of “*récits*”, and attempts to determine to what extent this practice is in the process of creating a distinct genre recognized by the Québécois literary institution. Sometimes included in the same category as the tale or short story, the *récit* does not seem to have found a specific definition authorizing a clear perception of its boundaries. Describing and questioning an unprecedented editorial phenomenon, the article provides a resolutely factual portrait of the *récit*. Who publishes *récits*, who writes them, what collections receive them, where and under what guise they are reviewed, at what pace is the production of *récits* progressing, etc. : questions such as these are intended to illuminate the existence and determinations of an expanding practice and, more generally, to illustrate the institutional component of a generic identity.

« Poétique du récit contemporain : négation du genre ou émergence d'un sous-genre ? » (Andrée Mercier)

Over 200 *récits* have been published in Québec since 1980, a *récit* being defined as any book bearing the generic term “*récit*” on its title page. The article proposes to identify the specific characteristics of this group (the poetics of the contemporary *récit*), arguing that the *récit*'s movement towards autonomy began in the mid-sixties and led, some time during the eighties, to a more definite generic awareness. Capable of encompassing autobiography and fiction, short and long forms, poetry and narrativity, the *récit* seems characterized by hybridity and the concerns of contemporary literature. However, the genre's historical evolution has also created a reading pact and a relation to subjectivity that have ensured its long connection with self-expression and the existential quest. Since the *récit* has never constituted a “strong” generic group, its present status is probably temporary. However, this analysis does lead to its removal from the category of strict narrative fictions.

« L'imaginaire symbolisé dans trois récits contemporains »  
(Christiane Kègle)

As a narrative genre among others, the *récit* differs from the novel or short story in that it includes several distinctive generic features. Specifically, it is characterized by its existential quest and by the fundamentally narcissistic dimension of its writing. The article focuses on this discursive practice and its constant elements with regard to form and substance (content and expression), on the basis of three contemporary *récits*: *Quand il pleut sur ma ville* by Pascal Sabourin, *Les images* by Louise Bouchard and *Sept roses pour une boulangère* by Négovan Rajic.

« Le je incertain : fragmentations et dédoublements » (Pierre L'Hérault)

Theory suggests that the *récit*, as opposed to the novel, tends to focus on the discontinuity — temporal, spatial, cultural or scriptural — of the *I*. This idea serves as a guide for reading three *récits*: *L'odeur du café* by Dany Laferrière, *À propos de Maude* by Lise Harou and *La vallée des épilobes* by Rose-Hélène Tremblay. Without being guilty of undue simplification or limiting the meaning of these *récits*, one may suggest that the first focuses on the spatio-temporal discontinuity of the *I*, the second on the discontinuity of the subject of the writing, and the third on the subject's break with cultural values. In all three, the uncertainties and contradictions of the *I* remain undiminished.

« L'art de l'esquive : quelques astuces du personnage en quête de soi »  
(Maryse Poirier)

The Québécois literary *récit*, privileged locus of the inner search, involves characters invested in an identity quest. This situation leads to a particular positioning of the subject in relation to time: his will to define himself requires him to locate himself in temporality, but it also leads him to envision a world outside of time that provides him with the space he needs to constitute himself. In the literary *récit*, the end is thus posited as both necessary and impossible. The article analyses this paradox while seeking to determine how the problematic of the end might contribute to the poetics of the literary *récit*.

« Paul Lejeune ou le missionnaire possédé » (Pierre Berthiaume)

During the winter of 1633-1634, the Jesuit Paul Lejeune accompanied some Montagnais on the "Côte-du-Sud" where he confronted Carigonan, the clan "sorcerer". However, Lejeune's "declared war" against the latter was not without bizarre aspects: instead of setting the "light" of faith against the superstitions of shamanism, it reveals the strange mental disorder of the missionary, who fell into the trap of the animist thinking that he opposed. Lejeune's *récit* illustrates his defeat at the hands of the

“miserable Sorcerer”, and yet, like other missionaries of the Company of Jesus, he hesitated to recognize the sorcerer’s diabolical status. Lejeune’s failure may be attributable to the kinship that existed between the inquisitorial procedures of the 17th century and the discursive basis of Amerindian shamanism.

« Lire l’image : *Le bruit des choses vivantes* d’Élise Turcotte »  
(Corinne Larochelle)

This article establishes relationships between the various types of images in Élise Turcotte’s first novel. Media images which create a new way of apprehending reality – making it more fragile and more virtual – are opposed to home-made images, made by the characters themselves with cameras or video cameras. As concrete evidence of existence, these home-made images counteract the derealization created by the ubiquity of the media. Formally, the thematics of representation appear as a fragmented narrative and numerous metaphors which, like home-made images, bring the concrete and the abstract worlds closer together.

« L’homme et l’œuvre : biolectographie d’Hubert Aquin »  
(Marilyn Randall)

In spite of the well-known importance of the marginal notes in *Trou de mémoire*, and in spite of the author’s insistence on what he calls “writing in the margins”, it is rare that the texts cited in the margins of *Trou de mémoire* are actually read. The reading of these texts, carried out in preparation of the critical edition of the novel, confirmed their importance: first of all, they constitute a kind of *marginal novel* where the fiction is prolonged and completed; secondly, they perform an autobiographical function by writing the reading history of the author, a kind of inscription of the authorial subject by means of this *biolectography*. By reading the documents quoted in the margins of *Trou de mémoire* in this double way, as both centripetal and centrifugal with respect to the novel, we propose, first of all, a rereading of the fiction, and secondly, a reading of the text as a kind of coded self-revelation, the autobiography that Aquin never wrote.