Quebec Literature in Translation

Our country is at the age of the earth's first days. Life is still to be discovered, still to be named. Ann Hebert, 1960

We imagine a future which would be the synthesis of our entire past and present. We believe in it. And we are doubtless also beginning to believe in it no longer, in this time of 'decomposition of the Great Stories.' Pierre Nepveu, 1983.

We will examine the evolution of Quebec literature from the traditional novel of the soil to post-modern feminist texts. Even the novel of the soil contradicts its own traditions and, like subsequent forms, contains the seeds of its demise, thus preparing the ground for its successors. Consequently, a lively dialogue between tradition and innovation permeates the literature. We will analyse this dialogue by focussing on

1. the narrative strategies writers use to promote and subvert tradition,
2. the changing representation of women,
3. the construction of the subject, always a problem in Quebec literature, and
4. the shifting definitions and boundaries of gender and genre.

Prerequisites: Credit or standing in any two of Engl. 101, 102, 103 or 104 and in any one of Engl. 204, 205 or 206.

Required Texts:

Louise Hémon

Gabrielle Roy

Hubert Aquin

Anne Hebert

Nicole Brossard

Michel Tremblay

Maria Chapdelaine

The Tin Flute, trans. Alan Brown

Prochain episode, trans. Penny Williams

Kamouraska, trans, Norman Shapiro


These Our Mothers

Les belles soeurs

Macmillan

M & S

M & S

New Press

U Sherbrooke

Coach House

Talonbooks

Recommended and on Reserve:
Larry Shouldice  
Contemporary Quebec Criticism  
Toronto 1979

Nicole Brossard  
The Aerial Letter  
Womens' Press 1988

Nicole Brossard  
L'amet.  
Quinze 1977

Marine Leland  
"Quebec Literature in its American Context"  
in The Canadian Imagination  
Cambridge 1977 xerox

Kathy Mezei  
"The Literature of Quebec in Revolution" in  
The Human Elements  
Ottawa 1978 xerox

Pierre Nepveu  
"A (hi)story that refuses the telling: Poetry and the Novel in Contemporary Quebecois Literature," "The Language of Difference"  
Yale French Studies 65, 1983  
1983 xerox

Room of One's Own 4 1&2 (1978)  
(on Quebec women writers)  
Tessera 1-7

Recommended:

Amazing Space  
Longspoon

Gynocritics  
ECW

in the Feminine  
Longspoon

Requirements:

5 page paper, 20%; 10 page paper, 40%; class participation, 20% final exam, 20%.

Seminars will be held during the first week of classes.