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Tristan Vigliano, eds. Rabelais et l'hybridité des récits
rabelaisiens**

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[See table of contents](#)

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Desrosiers, Diane, Claude La Charité, Christian Veilleux, and Tristan Vigliano, eds.

Rabelais et l'hybridité des récits rabelaisiens.

Études rabelaisiennes 56. Geneva: Droz, 2017. Pp. 726. ISBN 978-600-04731-9 (hardcover) CFH 88.

In 2006, a conference was held in Montreal on the hybridity of Rabelaisian writings. This was the first international conference exclusively devoted to François Rabelais to take place in Canada, and it drew about a hundred of the greatest specialists on Rabelais from North America and Europe. The book under review results in part from this conference. Intended for specialist readers, it contains fifty articles that bring forth a new contribution to the question of textual hybridity in the work of Rabelais. Diane Desrosiers, who wrote the introduction, specializes in both Rabelais and women writers from the Renaissance. Claude La Charité is a prolific researcher on Rabelais, Christian Veilleux is a PhD candidate at the University of Toronto, and Tristan Vigliano is a specialist of the portrayals of Islam in French literature.

In her introduction, Desrosiers describes the conference that gave rise to this collaboration. She discusses the concept of hybridity and proceeds to define five hybrid forms: typographic, linguistic, intertextual, generic, and a form associated with intermediality. She notes that contributors have a literary focus and therefore examine generic, intertextual, and linguistic hybridity only. In her descriptions of these three forms, she details the texts that compose the corresponding sections of the volume. She concludes the introduction by suggesting that the enduring strength of Rabelais's oeuvre may be due to its hybrid nature.

The book then moves on to the theme of the first part: generic hybridity. In this section, Edwin M. Duval leads us to consider the notion of hybridity at the time of Rabelais. Jean-François Vallée shows that at the centre of Rabelais work is a dialogue between author and reader that resembles a sort of banquet. Claude La Charité demonstrates, in his excellent, clear, and precise article, the hybridity of what is called the "heavy" metaphor (an expression from Rabelais) contained in the "Briefve Declaration" attached to the "Quart Livre." The brilliant and easy-to-follow contribution of E. Bruce Hayes, on the other hand, shows the hybridity of Rabelais's work by considering it as a text punctuated with elements from farce. He employs examples from "Pantagruel" and the

“Quart Livre.” In another wonderful essay, François Paré shows that Rabelais was a writer whose subjectivity was shown in the wordiness that came from his erudition.

The next part deals with intertextual and linguistic hybridity. The first article in this section, by François Rigolot, is the only one in the book that treats both of these qualities. In a very enlightening study, he traces a subtle analysis of the ambiguous nature of the hybridity of the prologue to the “Tiers Livre.” Next, Mireille Huchon clearly proves that Rabelais was inspired by certain satirical authors like Macrobius and Jean Bouchet, creator of “La Nef des fols,” in the construction of his novels. In a clear and profound article, Florence Dobby-Poirson shows that the thirtieth chapter of the “Quart Livre,” which discusses the monster “Quaremesprenant,” is a hybrid text, fusing anatomical and travel writing through the use of analogy. Grégoire Holtz offers a clear and well-written proof that the most hackneyed clichés about the East magnify the metamorphosis present in Rabelais’s works. In this sense, the works’ hybridity comes to light: for example, by borrowing from texts like Philostratus’s “La Vie d’Apollonius.” Finally, in the part on linguistic hybridity, Claude-Gilbert Dubois proves that silence in the work of Rabelais is a hybrid silence of gestures and spoken words. The articles are complemented by an index of names and a table of contents.

The articles in this book are excellent, and uniformly well written (with some stellar examples), while the diversity of approaches tackled is noteworthy—as evidenced by the three types of hybridity analyzed. It is also certainly interesting to note the variety of subjects taken on: from a particular monster in a chapter by Rabelais to the question of lists in the “Tiers Livre.” Even Indian yogis are discussed. On the whole, this book puts forth a well-proven analysis of the question of hybridity in the works of Rabelais—with an especially noteworthy contribution by Mireille Huchon. Certainly, the authors bring forth a very nuanced and enlightening approach. If some articles lack depth, this is not the norm. This enormous volume should be read by Rabelais scholars everywhere.

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