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# STATES OF IDENTITY

*Limits and Possibilities  
of Writing "French"*



STATES OF IDENTITY  
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**Special Issue**  
**Paroles Gelées 15.2 1997**

*Selected Proceedings from the UCLA  
French Department Graduate Students'  
Second Interdisciplinary Conference*



# STATES OF IDENTITY

*Limits and Possibilities of Writing "French"*

SELECTED PROCEEDINGS FROM THE UCLA FRENCH  
DEPARTMENT GRADUATE STUDENTS' SECOND ANNUAL  
INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE. APRIL 25-27, 1997

*Ce serait le moment de philosopher et de  
rechercher si, par hasard, se trouvait ici  
l'endroit où de telles paroles dégèlent.*

Rabelais, *Le Quart Livre*

**PAROLES GELEES**  
Special Issue  
*UCLA French Studies*  
Volume 15.2 ❧ 1997

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Assistant Editor:    Heather Howard

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## Introduction

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When we began preparations for the Second French Graduate Student Conference at UCLA, we learned very quickly that the concept of "being late" is a phenomenon that haunted not only the Romantics. To follow an original event of any kind is a challenging task, but the successful outcome of our conference *States of Identity: Limits and Possibilities of Writing "French,"* documented by the high quality of the present proceedings, demonstrate that there can be original "seconds," as paradoxical as this might sound.

Our "Call for Papers" for a conference on "identity" in the context of 'French' writing generated national and international responses from students in different disciplines such as Art History, ESL, Philosophy, Theater, as well as French, German and Comparative Literature thus underlining the interdisciplinary appeal of this conference.

Denis Hollier's thought-provoking keynote address on the very timely and controversial question of teaching literature in translation inaugurated the three-day event. Hollier's talk was complemented by insightful responses from Janet Bergstrom and Andrea Loselle from the perspective of film and poetry. We want to thank all three of them for setting the stage for an intellectually challenging yet collegial discussion among students, faculty and the many guests from outside the academic community.

Though the papers presented by the graduate students in six panels contributed much to our knowledge regarding individual aspects of "identity" in different cultures and time periods, the subsequent discussions made it clear that attempts to reach "sameness" regarding a given problem were inevitably deferred by new questions and concerns. What remained was the realization that in spite of the plurality of opinions, we had achieved "identity" in the overarching collective gesture of intellectual



exchange. It is this discovery that justifies this conference and our work in the humanities in general.

This conference and the publication of its proceedings would not have been possible without the generous financial support from our sponsors and we want to thank the Borchard Foundation, the French Consulate at Los Angeles, the UCLA Graduate Student Association, the Center for Modern and Contemporary Studies and the Campus Programs Committee of the Program Activities Board. Last but not least, we want to express our gratitude to the UCLA French Department and its faculty, whose continued support, encouragement and presence during the panels was much appreciated by the graduate students. A special thank you is due to Jean-Claude Carron for his introduction of the keynote speaker and tireless personal *engagement* in the organization of this conference.

Our last acknowledgment goes to the graduate students of the French Department who contributed in many ways to the successful outcome of this event and sacrificed much precious time to meetings and other organizational tasks. We hope that the success of the first two conferences will serve as motivation and inspiration to those who are currently working on next year's conference, which we are all eagerly anticipating.

The Editors

*Diane Duffrin*

*Markus Müller*

# ***States of Identity***

## ***Limits and Possibilities of Writing "French"***

*Selected Proceedings from the UCLA French Department  
Graduate Students' Second Annual Interdisciplinary Conference,  
April 25-27, 1997*

### **Friday, April 25, 1997**

SOUTH BAY ROOM OF SUNSET VILLAGE COMMONS

#### **4:45 p.m. Introduction of Keynote Speaker**

*Jean-Claude Carron, UCLA*

#### **5:00 p.m. Keynote Address**

*Denis Hollier, Yale University*

"Blanchot, Speaking in Tongues: Otherness in Translation"

#### **Respondents**

*Janet Bergstrom, UCLA*

*Andrea Loselle, UCLA*

#### **7:00 p.m. Reception**

### **Saturday, April 26, 1997**

NORTHRIDGE ROOM

#### **9:00 a.m. Panel #1**

##### ***Grafting Past to Present: Hybrid Identities***

Moderator: Michael Stafford

1. "Norman French, Latin and Scots English: Three versions of the *Leges inter Brettos et Scottos*," *Kristen Over (UCLA, Comp. Literature Program)*
2. "Verlan: An Expression of Beur Identity or Reversal by Inverse," *Amy Wells (Texas Tech University, Dept. of Classical and Modern Languages)*

3. "Marcel Mauss on Nationalism: An Approach to *The Gift*,"  
*Luke Bresky (UCLA, Dept. of English)*

**10:45 a.m. Panel #2**

***The Politics of Pedagogy: Translating Culture in the Classroom***

Moderators: Natalie Muñoz, Marcella Munson

1. "Silent Words: Language as an Obstacle to Immigrant Integration and Identity in French Society," *Katharine Harrington (Texas Tech University, Dept. of Classical and Modern Languages)*
2. "*The Guest in the Classroom: The Voice of Camus in Multicultural Academic Discourse*," *Ajanta Dutt (Rutgers University, ESL Program)*
3. "Radical Chic(k): The American Roots of Marie de France,"  
*Susan Purdy (University of Western Ontario, Dept. of French)*

**2:30 p.m. Panel #3**

***Bodies in Writing: Feminine Identity and the Literary Text***

Moderator: Heather Howard

1. "Discordant Locations for the Me-ospheric Void: Théophile Gautier vs. *La Sylphide*," *Regina Fletcher Sadono (UCLA, Theatre Arts Dept.)*
2. "The Bodypolitics of Feminist Science Fiction: Elisabeth Vonarburg's *Le silence de la cité*," *Lorie Sauble-Otto (University of Arizona, Dept. of French and Italian)*
3. "The 'I' Which Is Not One: Dual Identity in the Case of Simone de Beauvoir's Autobiography," *Kim Carter-Cram (Idaho State University, Dept. of Foreign Languages)*

**4:15 p.m. Panel #4**

***War and Remembrance: National Epitaphs of Self***

Moderator: Stacey Meeker

1. "Proust's Poetics of Recontextualization," *John S. LaRose (Louisiana State University, Dept. of French and Italian)*
2. "The Body and the State: Fantasies of Identity in Genet's *Pompes Funèbres*," *Leslie Ann Minot (UC Berkeley, Dept. of Comp. Literature)*
3. "Ecriture et Mémoire: Identity and Collective Memory in Jorge Semprun's *L'écriture ou la vie*," *Marcus Keller (California State University Long Beach, Dept. for German, Russian and Romance Languages)*

**Sunday, April 27, 1997**

SOUTH BAY ROOM

**9:00 a.m. Panel #5**

***Lieux de Mémoire: Negotiating Boundaries of Francophone Identity***

Moderator: Anne-Lancaster Badders

1. "Exile and Identity in the Plays of Maryse Condé," *Melissa McKay (University of Georgia, Dept. of Romance Languages)*
2. "Personal and National Narrative in *Une vie de crabe* by Tanella Boni," *Laura K. Reeck (New York University, Dept. of French)*

**10:45 a.m. Panel #6**

***Representation and the Reconsideration of Identity***

Moderator: Diane Duffrin

1. "Classical Aesthetics, Modern Ethics: Lacan, Kierkegaard, Sophocles, Anouilh," *Joseph Jenkins (UCLA, Comparative Literature Program)*
2. "The Stage of the Stage: Representation from Corneille to Diderot," *Ben Kolstad (UCLA, Comparative Literature Program)*

**Open Discussion**

**Closing Statement**

*Markus Müller, UCLA*

