

# **UCLA**

## **Paroles gelées**

### **Title**

UCLA French Department Dissertations

### **Permalink**

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/5xj6q4jx>

### **Journal**

Paroles gelées, 5(1)

### **ISSN**

1094-7264

### **Author**

UCLA French and Francophone Studies Graduate Student Association

### **Publication Date**

1987

### **DOI**

10.5070/PG751003209

Peer reviewed

## UCLA FRENCH DEPARTMENT DISSERTATIONS

---

Louise A. Jones. *Realism and Naturalism in the French Theater, 1870-1900: An Examination of the Portrayal of Women* (Ph.D. Dissertation: Hassan el Nouty, Chair, UCLA, 1986)

This document-based analysis of realist/naturalist plays during the period of 1870 to 1900 was undertaken in order to discern whether or not these plays accurately reflected reality, as their playwrights intended. The approach was to focus on woman's role in family and society at the time and to compare the findings with the images of women found in the plays.

The study is broken into two parts. The first part examines the social history of women in France through the first three decades of the Third Republic (roughly 1870 to 1900). Materials used in the research included a variety of woman-generated documents such as journal entries, speeches, letters, manuals, and pamphlets, as well as secondary source materials. The objective of this part of the study was to chart the course of change for women during this time of great change for France. The areas of analysis are education, legal status, medical history, family life, and feminism.

The second part of this study focuses on a variety of plays from 1870 to 1900, with special attention paid to plays from the realist/naturalist school. The naturalist playwrights claimed that their plays revealed a "slice of life." Drawing upon conclusions from the first part, this second part of the study explores the playwrights' efforts to achieve their aims, specifically in their depiction of women. The plays provide their own documentation. The images of women that detach themselves from these plays are used to form a context around which to analyze principal female characters from selected plays.

The last decades of the nineteenth century heralded some profound changes for the women of France. To name just two of great impact: the education laws were enacted (1880's), and the divorce law was reinstated (1884). This study revealed that, in general, contemporary social attitudes toward women were slow to change, often lagging behind legal advances made. Most of the playwrights of this era, while sticking to easily-recognized "types" when drawing their portraits of women, showed varying degrees of awareness of the difficulties women faced in contemporary society. Some, however, particularly toward the end of the period in question, depicted the emergence of a "new" woman. These playwrights were perceptive and daring in their portrayals of women who challenged long-held beliefs in the role of the sexes.

Jane Ann Claire Rush, *Carnaval et modernité: le comique chez Diderot* (Ph.D. Dissertation: Stephen D. Werner, Chair, UCLA, 1987)

The importance of the comic element in Diderot's works has often been neglected in critical circles. Our study analyzes the comic vision of Diderot's later fiction and traces the evolution of the comic mode in three major works: *Rameau's Nephew*, *D'Alembert's Dream* and *Jacques the Fatalist*.

These masterpieces are governed by an aesthetic of "carnival" which M. Bakhtin discusses in his theoretical writings and is used, in our work, as a springboard to underscore Diderot's modern view of literature. Each work reveals a "carnavalesque" structure or "formal" comic space. In *Rameau's Nephew*, the pantomime which starts out as a simple classical imitation of nature becomes an organic phenomenon that splits the nephew in two and brings forth a spirit of grotesque irony. In *D'Alembert's Dream*, the dream experienced by the mathematician sweeps all the non-dreamers up into the realm of the fantastic and the visionary. In *Jacques the Fatalist*, the text itself becomes a carnivalesque space. An encyclopedic parody of comic forms, from the French *fabliau* to the great Spanish novel *Don Quixote*, gives the work a burlesque flavour. Nature and culture, which had remained apart in spite of Rameau's "grande pantomime" and which had attained a certain synthesis through the dream, are now viewed as a paradoxical pair embodied in the "great scroll."

Nevertheless, these works contain an underlying unity that sheds light on Diderot's role as an innovator in the field of aesthetics. All three texts question the very nature of their discourse and can be classified as comic anti-texts.

Antoinette Mayer Fournier, *Structures mythiques dans "L'Eve future" de Villiers de l'Isle-Adam* (Ph.D. Dissertation: Hassan el Nouty, Chair, UCLA, 1987)

This dissertation recognizes the importance of the emerging science of mythology in the thought and literature of late nineteenth-century France, particularly in the life and work of Jean-Marie-Mathias-Philippe-Auguste, count of Villiers de l'Isle-Adam. The study focuses on the mythical structures found in *L'Eve future*, Villiers' only complete novel. Evidence of the mythological orientation of Villiers' thought can be discerned most especially in the study of the characters as well as the setting of the novel. The study proceeds on the premise that all characters in myth find their authenticity not in any psychological depth but rather in their imitation of specific paradigmatic models, and the various aspects of the archetypes which serve as patterns for each particular character in *L'Eve future* are examined. The study of the diverse feminine roles in the novel reveals the complex nature of the author's attitude towards women.


Both the physical and the metaphysical aspects of the novel's setting are discussed. The description of the three major locations which comprise the physical setting betrays Villiers' obsession with certain images which are further evidence of a mythological interpretation of the novel. In addition, the interplay of the multiple images connoting light and darkness creates a background against which much of the novel's drama is played out. The analysis of the many ambivalent images of the novel, notably fire, water, silence, shadows, and the moon, reveals the eschatological themes which, rooted in myth, also play a major part in the orientation of the book. The study concludes with an analysis of the significance of myth in the life and work of Villiers de l'Isle-Adam.



# PAROLES GELEES

UCLA French Studies



Volume 5  1987




# PAROLES GELEES

UCLA French Studies

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

Rabelais, *Le Quart Livre*

Volume 5  1987



Editor: Susan Delaney

Assistant Editors: Atiyeh Showrai  
Janice White

Consultants: Charles de Bedts, Kathryn Bailey, Guy Bennett

*Paroles Gelées* was established in 1983 by its founding editor, Kathryn Bailey. The journal is managed and edited by the French Graduate Students' Association and published annually under the auspices of the Department of French at UCLA. Funds for this project are generously provided by the UCLA Graduate Students' Association.

Information regarding the submission of articles and subscriptions is available from the journal office:

*Paroles Gelées*  
Department of French  
160 Haines Hall  
UCLA  
Los Angeles, CA 90024  
(213) 825-1145

Subscription price: \$6—individuals, \$8—institutions.

Cover: untitled monoprint by Simon Leung,  
UCLA Art Department, B.A. 1987

Copyright © 1987 by The Regents of the University of California.

# CONTENTS

---

## ARTICLES

The Logic of the Undecidable:  
An Interview with René Girard ..... 1  
*Thomas F. Bertonneau*

Faire: "dire" ~~est~~ dire: "faire"  
dans *Dom Juan* et *George Dandin* ..... 25  
*Atiyeh Showrai*

Ghost-Ridden Authors/Ghost-Written Texts:  
Female Phantoms in Two Works by André Breton  
and Georges Bataille ..... 37  
*Vicki Kirsch*

REVIEWS ..... 55

Georges Daniel, *Le Style de Diderot. Légende et  
Structure* [Stephen Werner]

Thomas M. Greene, *The Vulnerable Text. Essays on  
Renaissance Literature* [Susan Delaney]

UCLA FRENCH DEPARTMENT DISSERTATIONS ..... 61