

PMLA

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Princeton University Press

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Contents • March

Editor's Column	107
Notes on Contributors	109
Forthcoming in <i>PMLA</i>	109
Special Topics	110
Joseph's Bones and the Resurrection of the Text: Remembering in the Bible. REGINA M. SCHWARTZ	114

Abstract. The Hebrew Bible depicts interpretation as a continual process of losing and finding, of forgetting and remembering. Texts are lost and found, and in the Joseph story (Gen. 37–50), Joseph himself is abandoned and recovered, with all memory of him repressed until it is dramatically recalled. His story demonstrates that repression is the condition of interpretation, and that interpretation—not resurrection—holds forth the promise of a future life. Nonetheless, the repeated losses that punctuate the Joseph narrative have inspired the opposite conclusion: that Joseph is a type of Jesus, that his descents and ascents prefigure the final one. Typology, a mode of biblical interpretation that prevailed during the early church, has enjoyed a recent revival in the context of literary studies; but I argue that the typological language of “fulfillment,” of shadows and truth, is alien to Hebraic—and postmodern—understandings of textuality. (RMS)

Feminist Thematics and Shakespearean Tragedy. RICHARD LEVIN	125
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Abstract. The thematic approach adopted by a number of feminist critics of Shakespearean tragedy raises serious problems. Some of these are inherent in thematism itself, such as the need to select the facts of the play to fit the theme and to manipulate the theme to fit the facts. But other problems are peculiar to their choice of “gender conflict” or “patriarchy” as the central theme that is the subject of these tragedies and the cause of their outcomes. This leads to the confusion of a necessary condition with a sufficient cause and to difficulties in their treatments of the protagonists, the emotional effects, the tragic genre, and the role of the author, who is supposed to be condemning “patriarchy” in these plays. Further problems arise because of the particular conception of masculinity that some of these critics bring to their readings. (RL)

A Vampire in the Mirror: The Sexuality of <i>Dracula</i> . JOHN ALLEN STEVENSON	139
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Abstract. Vampire sexuality, as represented in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, reveals itself both as a phenomenon that is terrifyingly foreign to typical experience and, paradoxically, as a distorted mirror of human behavior. On the one hand, the vampire inspires a xenophobic response because his needs violate the normal limits of exogamy: he is physiologically dependent on women who are foreign to him. On the other hand, the novel undermines the very idea of the “foreign” by suggesting that even the most bizarre aspects of a vampire's sex life are strangely familiar—usually because they parody or literalize human sexuality. (JAS)

History and Romance, Sympathy and Uncertainty: The Moral of the
 Stones in Hawthorne’s *Marble Faun*. JOHN MICHAEL 150

Abstract. Hawthorne attempted not only to change his readers’ understanding of historical events but also to undermine their complacency about historical understanding. In *The Marble Faun*, he questions the positivistic assumptions and complacent moralism of nineteenth-century historiography by representing sympathy and estrangement as principles of knowledge. The story of Kenyon and Hilda, Miriam, Donatello, and the model, set amid the ruins of Rome, indicates that both the truths of history and the truths of the human heart are produced in narratives that reflect the affective links between the tellers of tales and the objects described. For Hawthorne history and romance are not morally or epistemologically distinct. Sympathy does not solve the problem of historical knowledge but reposes it in a form more proper to the ambiguities of romance as Hawthorne used the genre than to the certainties of history as traditionally conceived. (JM)

“Don’t Tell”: Imposed Silences in *The Color Purple* and
The Woman Warrior. KING-KOK CHEUNG 162

Abstract. *The Color Purple* and *The Woman Warrior* exhibit parallel narrative strategies. The respectively black and Chinese American protagonists work their way from speechlessness to eloquence by breaking through the constraints of sex, race, and language. The heroines turn to masculine figures for guidance, to female models for inspiration, and to native idioms for stylistic innovation. Initially unable to speak, they develop distinctive voices by registering their own unspoken grief on paper and, more important, by recording and emulating the voices of women from their respective ethnic communities. Through these testimonies, each written in a bicultural language, Walker and Kingston reveal the obstacles and resources peculiar to minority women. Subverting patriarchal literary traditions by reclaiming a mother tongue that carries a rich oral tradition (of which women are guardians) the authors artfully coordinate the tasks of breaking silence, acknowledging female influence, and redefining while preserving ethnic characteristics. (KKC)

Forum 175

Forthcoming Meetings and Conferences of General Interest 177

Index of Advertisers 179

Professional Notes and Comment 190

Announcements 190 Journal Notes 194 Meeting of the MLA Executive Council 196
 In Memoriam 198

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