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# Abstracts

**Susan Schibanoff**, Botticelli's *Madonna del Magnificat*: Constructing the Woman Writer in Early Humanist Italy 190

While Botticelli's unusual figuration of the Virgin as writer in his *Madonna del Magnificat* (c. 1483) testifies to an important event in literary history—the appearance of the woman author in quattrocento northern Italy—it also testifies against her, employing a pictorial equivalent of the humanists' "rhetoric of impossibility," which construes the female writer as a miraculous, hence ephemeral, phenomenon. At the same time, however, Botticelli's painting reveals the emergence of a competing imperative in the late quattrocento Latin and vernacular defenses of women by Laura Cereta, Bartolomeo Goggio, and others: the construction of the woman writer as ordinary, thus "possible." (SS)

**Olga Lucía Valbuena**, Sorceresses, Love Magic, and the Inquisition of Linguistic Sorcery in *Celestina* 207

In recent years critics have contested the traditional understanding of *Celestina*'s "enchantment" of Melibea as diabolically assisted. Yet rhetorical, feminist, and poststructuralist readings have not explained *Celestina*'s discursive practice in the wider context of other Spanish sorceresses of language. I argue that *Celestina*'s protracted appeal to Melibea and allusion to a prayer or charm of Saint Apollonia correspond to the language and methods of other Spanish and New World sorceresses investigated by ecclesiastical courts and the Inquisition. I draw from unedited conquest-era documents to compare *Celestina*'s "linguistic sorcery" with that of women who transformed Catholic prayers and narratives of saints' tortures into erotically charged love philters for subduing men. Like the women examined by inquisitors and inspectors (*visitadores*), *Celestina*, far from requiring diabolical intervention in her discursive practice, draws on the culture's language of submission as she explores the continuity between suffering and ecstasy. (OLV)

**François Rigolot**, Rabelais, Misogyny, and Christian Charity: Biblical Intertextuality and the Renaissance Crisis of Exemplarity 225

Renaissance symbolic representations of gender identity and sexual difference appear firmly grounded in the medieval and Neoplatonic misogynist tradition, no matter how unacceptable the terms of that tradition may be to modern sensibility. In Rabelais's works the exemplarity of Christian humanist discourse often coincides with what today is considered profoundly disturbing behavior. The recurrence of trickery, obscenity, and violence against women does not seem to bother the Rabelaisian narrator, who gleefully presents his writings as "beaux textes d'évangilles en françoys" 'fine gospel texts in French.' I concentrate on a single episode of *Pantagruel*, the one devoted to Panurge's and Pantagruel's twin amatory adventures with a lady of Paris. Although the episode has been the object of some probing critical scrutiny, little attention has been paid to the biblical intertext, which Rabelais's humanist entourage must easily have recognized and which can be read in the context of what modern critics have come to recognize as the Renaissance crisis of exemplarity. (FR)

**Tricia Lootens**, Hemans and Home: Victorianism, Feminine "Internal Enemies," and the Domestication of National Identity 238

In Felicia Hemans's reception, if nowhere else, Victorian culture, and particularly Victorian patriotism, may still seem stable, enviably simple, and almost threateningly immediate. Hemans was no Victorian, however, and as her notorious "Casabianca" suggests, even the Victorians' favorites among her verses could be deeply disturbing. Through a wide, complex, and self-contradictory range of patriotic poetry, Hemans

consistently sought both to reconcile militarism with “the domestic affections” and to mediate between Enlightenment and Romantic conceptions of patriotism. Relying on the symbolic power of soldiers’ graves and using a Hegelian dialectic in which mournful femininity is the constitutive “internal enemy” of the state, her verses attained powerful resonance within Victorian attempts to domesticate imperialism. Nonetheless, her visions of feminine patriotism remain revealingly self-divided, often presenting relations between familial and state power as both unstable and potentially terrifying. (TL)

**Audrey Jaffe, Spectacular Sympathy: Visuality and Ideology in Dickens’s *A Christmas Carol* 254**

Dickens’s *A Christmas Carol* exemplifies the literary and cinematic use of visual representation to reinforce ideological values in Western culture. The story positions Scrooge and its readers as spectators of a series of culturally valorized scenes; access to the spectator’s idealized self depends on the ability to perceive and desire (to identify and identify with) the values embedded in those scenes. Scrooge saves his life by recovering what the story posits as his natural ability to identify with representations, an ability that characterizes both his ideal, sympathetic self and the ideal subject of commodity culture. (AJ)

**David Spurr, Myths of Anthropology: Eliot, Joyce, Lévy-Bruhl 266**

The emerging science of anthropology created myths of the primitive that became important to literary modernism’s mythic interpretation of contemporary history. T. S. Eliot and James Joyce in particular were attracted to the work of Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, whose theory of the *mentalité primitive* appeared to offer alternatives to prevailing modes of Western logic. Eliot took this myth of anthropology and other ones at face value insofar as they contributed to his theories of poetic origins and to his attacks on modern civilization. He opposed a primitivist ideal of tradition to the notion of a corrupt civilization embodied in the figure of the Jew. In contrast, Joyce treated anthropology ironically as a discursive construct rooted in colonizing enterprises of European institutions and thought. He satirized anthropology’s pretensions while exploiting its material for his artistic ends. (DS)

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