

Abstracts

- 734 **Bill Brown, The Dark Wood of Postmodernity (Space, Faith, Allegory)**
As a way of restaging certain questions about postmodernity (is it marked by rupture or repetition, or is it all illusory?), this essay imagines Fredric Jameson's iconic disorientation at the Bonaventure Hotel as a reenactment of Dante's crisis in the *selva oscura*. That imaginative act allows one to see how a nonmodern measure makes postmodernism visible (the concept of "cognitive mapping," for instance, derives from Kevin Lynch's appreciation of the urban fabric of Florence). And it allows one to perceive how Jameson's response to our contemporary condition assumes a Dantean cast, becoming an incorporative act of totalizing, manifest stylistically and conceptually, that deploys allegory to transcode phenomena into the terms of the dominant system. To what degree does the internalization of such a hermeneutic enterprise (a medieval Christian legacy) render religion as such imperceptible, compelling us to perceive acts committed in the name of Islam as merely a displacement of (proper) politics? (BB)
- 751 **Ed White, Invisible Tagkanysough**
Thomas Harriot's *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* has emerged as a paradigmatic "contact" text, in large part thanks to Stephen Greenblatt's canonical interpretation in "Invisible Bullets." The pair of texts is examined in terms of an implicit codification of the disciplinary tensions between anthropology and history. An alternative reading of an Algonkian ethnography of the English suggests new ways of revisiting the disciplinary rift in colonial studies. (EW)
- 768 **Lisa Surwillo, Representing the Slave Trader: *Haley* and the Slave Ship; or, Spain's *Uncle Tom's Cabin***
Uncle Tom's Cabin was one of the foremost texts of the American abolitionist movement, but its impact on politics was international. This article traces the reception of Stowe's novel in Spain, the last European empire with a slave economy, during the mid-nineteenth century. As an imperial power, Spain was the political and economic force behind the transatlantic slave trade; but as a nation of readers, it imported a narrative back across the Atlantic in order to fictionalize and contemplate the effects of its slave policies in the Caribbean. One such adaptation converted the novel into a play about a slave trader and recast Stowe's story of slavery in the Atlantic world in terms of Spain's role in the slave trade and in the imperial control of Cuba. (LS)
- 783 **Gang Zhou, The Chinese Renaissance: A Transcultural Reading**
This paper examines the ways in which the idea of renaissance was understood and appropriated by Chinese intellectuals in the early twentieth century. My discussion foregrounds Hu Shi, one of the most important intellectual leaders in modern China and the main architect of the Chinese vernacular movement.

I analyze his rewriting and reinvention of the European Renaissance as well as his declaration and presentation of the Chinese Renaissance in various contexts. Hu's creative uses of the Italian Renaissance and passionate claims for a Chinese Renaissance reveal the performative magic of the word *renaissance* and prompt us to ask what a renaissance is. The Chinese Renaissance and the fact that various non-European countries have declared and promoted their own renaissances invite a scholarly reconsideration of "renaissance" as a trans-cultural phenomenon rather than as a critical category originated and therefore owned by a certain culture. (GZ)

796 **Manuel M. Martín-Rodríguez, Recovering Chicano/a Literary Histories: Historiography beyond Borders**

This article underscores the need to reconstruct Mexican American literary historiography by locating and analyzing pre-Chicano/a movement critical sources. Consideration of how Mexican Americans saw their literature at different junctures in the past will ensure that we do not impose our own aesthetic and political criteria as we reinterpret older texts. I analyze a 1959 literary history of New Mexico and Colorado in order to explore how a recovery of this particular text would intervene in current debates in the field of Chicana/o studies, most prominently the tension between nationalism and regional studies, on the one hand, and transnationalism, on the other. My analysis demonstrates that Mexican Americans and Chicanos/as have shared literary tastes and cultural capital with other Latinas/os and Latin Americans and that consequently Chicano/a literary history should be a discipline that goes beyond borders. (MMM-R)

806 **Jonathan P. Eburne, The Transatlantic Mysteries of Paris: Chester Himes, Surrealism, and the Série noire**

This essay examines Chester Himes's transformation, in 1957, from a writer of African American social protest fiction into a "French" writer of Harlem crime thrillers. Instead of representing the exhaustion of his political commitment, Himes's transformation from a "serious" writer of didactic fiction into an exiled crime novelist represents a radical change in political and literary tactics. In dialogue with the editor and former surrealist Marcel Duhamel, Himes's crime fiction, beginning with *La reine des pommes* (now *A Rage in Harlem*), invents a darkly comic fictional universe that shares an affinity with the surrealist notion of black humor in its vehement denial of epistemological and ethical certainty. Rejecting the efforts of Richard Wright and the existentialists to adopt an engaged form of political writing, Himes's crime fiction instead forges a kind of vernacular surrealism, one independent of the surrealist movement but nevertheless sharing surrealism's insistence on the volatility of written and political expression. (JPE)