SPEAKING POWER
Black Feminist Orality in Women’s Narratives of Slavery
DOVEANNA S. FULTON

Analyzes Black women’s rhetorical strategies in both autobiographical and fictional narratives of slavery.

In Speaking Power, Doveanna S. Fulton explores and analyzes the use of oral traditions in African American women’s autobiographical and fictional narratives of slavery. African American women have consistently employed oral traditions not only to relate the pain and degradation of slavery, but also to celebrate the subversions, struggles, and triumphs of Black experience. Fulton examines orality as a rhetorical strategy, its role in passing on family and personal history, and its ability to empower, subvert oppression, assert agency, and create representations for the past.

In addition to taking an insightful look at obscure or little-studied slave narratives like Louisa Picquet, the Octoroon and the Narrative of Sojourner Truth, Fulton also brings a fresh perspective to more familiar works, such as Harriet Jacobs’s Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl and Harriet Wilson’s Our Nig, and highlights Black feminist orality in such works as Zora Neale Hurston’s Their Eyes Were Watching God and Gayl Jones’s Corregidora.

“In this book, Fulton provides an engaging and pedagogically commanding investigation of the interconnection between Black women’s oral agency and literary representation. Her study documents and celebrates the oral continuum that describes the merger of African American folk and literary cultures. Speaking Power emerges as a point of reference for nineteenth-, twentieth-, and twenty-first-century African American literary analysis.” — Joyce A. Joyce, author of Black Studies as Human Studies: Critical Essays and Interviews

DoVeanna S. Fulton is Associate Professor of English at Arizona State University.

JANUARY | 176 pp.
$50.00 hc 0-7914-6637-X

FEATURED TITLE
REWITING EARLY CHINESE TEXTS
EDWARD L. SHAUGHNESSY

Explores the rewriting of early Chinese texts in the wake of new archaeological evidence.

Rewriting Early Chinese Texts examines the problems of reconstituting and editing ancient manuscripts that will revise—indeed “rewrite”—Chinese history. It is now generally recognized that the extensive archaeological discoveries made in China over the last three decades necessitate such a rewriting and will keep an army of scholars busy for years to come. However, this is by no means the first time China’s historical record has needed rewriting. In this book, author Edward L. Shaughnessy explores the issues involved in editing manuscripts, rewriting them, both today and in the past.

The book begins with a discussion of the difficulties encountered by modern archaeologists and paleographers working with manuscripts discovered in ancient tombs. The challenges are considerable: these texts are usually written in archaic script on bamboo strips and are typically fragmentary and in disarray. It is not surprising that their new editions often meet with criticism from other scholars. Shaughnessy then moves back in time to consider efforts to reconstitute similar bamboo-strip manuscripts found in the late third century in a tomb in Jixian, Henan. He shows that editors at the time encountered many of the same difficulties faced by modern archaeologists and paleographers, and that the first editions produced by a court-appointed team of editors quickly prompted criticism from other scholars of the time. Shaughnessy concludes with a detailed study of the editing of one of these texts, the Bamboo Annals (Zhushu jinian), arguably the most important manuscript ever discovered in China. Showing how at least two different, competing editions of this text were produced by different editors, and how the differences between them led later scholars to regard the original edition—the only one still extant—as a forgery, Shaughnessy argues for this text’s place in the rewriting of early Chinese history.

Edward L. Shaughnessy is Creel Professor of Early China Studies at The University of Chicago and is the editor or author of several books, including Before Confucius: Studies in the Creation of the Chinese Classics, also published by SUNY Press.

A volume in the SUNY series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture
Roger T. Ames, editor

MARCH | 300 pp.
2 b/w photographs
$85.00 hc 0-7914-6643-4
THE FLOOD MYTHS OF EARLY CHINA
MARK EDWARD LEWIS

Explores how the flood myths of early China provided a template for that society’s major social and political institutions.

Early Chinese ideas about the construction of an ordered human space received narrative form in a set of stories dealing with the rescue of the world and its inhabitants from a universal flood. This book demonstrates how early Chinese stories of the re-creation of the world from a watery chaos provided principles underlying such fundamental units as the state, lineage, the married couple, and even the human body. These myths also supplied a charter for the major political and social institutions of Warring States (481–221 BC) and early imperial (220 BC–AD 220) China.

In some versions of the tales, the flood was triggered by rebellion, while other versions linked the taming of the flood with the creation of the institution of a lineage, and still others linked the taming to the process in which the divided principles of the masculine and the feminine were joined in the married couple to produce an ordered household. While availing themselves of earlier stories and of central religious rituals of the period, these myths transformed earlier divinities or animal spirits into rulers or ministers and provided both etiologies and legitimation for the emerging political and social institutions that culminated in the creation of a unitary empire.

“This is a superb example of the best of contemporary studies of early China. Every page in every chapter of this book is a feast. The scholarship is impeccable, the sense of order deft, and the narrative argument compelling.” — John H. Berthrong, author of Concerning Creativity: A Comparison of Chu Hsi, Whitehead, and Neville

Mark Edward Lewis is Kwoh-ting Li Professor of Chinese Culture at Stanford University and the author of Writing and Authority in Early China and The Construction of Space in Early China, both published by SUNY Press.

A volume in the SUNY series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture Roger T. Ames, editor

JANUARY | 288 pp.
$70.00 hc 0-7914-6663-9

STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN
A Journey to the Summit of Mount Emei
JAMES M. HARGETT

A consideration of China’s Mount Emei, long important in Chinese culture and history and of particular significance to Buddhists.

Located in a remote area of modern Sichuan province, Mount Emei is one of China’s most famous mountains and has long been important to Buddhists. Stairway to Heaven looks at Emei’s significance in Chinese history and literature while also addressing the issue of “sense of place” in Chinese culture.

Mount Emei’s exquisite scenery and unique geographical features have inspired countless poets, writers, and artists. Since the early years of the Song dynasty (960–1279), Emei has been best known as a site of Buddhist pilgrimage and worship. Today, several Buddhist temples still function on Emei, but the mountain also has become a scenic tourist destination, attracting more than a million visitors annually.

Author James M. Hargett takes readers on a journey to the mountain through the travel writings of the twelfth-century writer and official Fan Chengda (1126–1193). Fan’s diary and verse accounts of his climb to the summit of Mount Emei in 1177 are still among the most informative accounts of the mountain ever written. Through Fan’s eyes, words, and footsteps—and with background information and commentary from Hargett—the reader will experience some of the ways Emei has been “constructed” by diverse human experience over the centuries.

“I am impressed by the extensive use, contextualization, and painstaking translation of primary materials as a means of rendering a multilayered, intimate, insider perspective on Emei. The intellectual contribution of this work is that it makes clear as no other study has the significant role Emei and, by extension, mountains in general have played in Chinese culture.” — William Powell, University of California at Santa Barbara

James M. Hargett is Professor of Chinese at the University at Albany, State University of New York.

A volume in the SUNY series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture Roger T. Ames, editor

FEBRUARY | 304 pp.
2 maps, 5 figures
$75.00 hc 0-7914-6681-7
Confucianism and Women argues that Confucian philosophy—often criticized as misogynistic and patriarchal—is not inherently sexist. Although historically bound up with oppressive practices, Confucianism contains much that can promote an ethic of gender parity. Attacks on Confucianism for gender oppression have marked China’s modern period, beginning with the May Fourth Movement of 1919 and reaching prominence during the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s and 1970s. The West has also readily characterized Confucianism as a foundation of Chinese women’s oppression. Author Li-Hsiang Lisa Rosenlee challenges readers to consider the culture within which Confucianism has functioned and to explore what Confucian thought might mean for women and feminism.

She begins the work by clarifying the intellectual tradition of Confucianism and discussing the importance of the Confucian cultural categories yin-yang and nei-wai (inner-outer) for gender ethics. In addition, the Chinese tradition of biographies of virtuous women and books of instruction by and for women is shown to provide a Confucian construction of gender. Practices such as widow chastity, footbinding, and concubinage are discussed in light of Confucian ethics and Chinese history. Ultimately, Rosenlee lays a foundation for a future construction of Confucian feminism as an alternative ethical ground for women’s liberation.

“This book offers conceptual and historical evidence to challenge the stereotypical perception that Confucianism systematically oppresses Chinese women. This is a sharp and insightful work that will make a good contribution to current scholarly work, especially in the field of feminist theory.”
— Robin R. Wang, editor of Chinese Philosophy in an Era of Globalization

Li-Hsiang Lisa Rosenlee is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the University of Mary Washington.

A volume in the SUNY series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture
Roger T. Ames, editor

March | 256 pp.
$65.00 hc 0-7914-6749-X
THE TALMUD’S THEOLOGICAL LANGUAGE-GAME
A Philosophical Discourse Analysis
EUGENE B. BOROWITZ

Analyzes the structure and logic of aggadic discourse in the Talmud.

In this pioneering effort, noted Jewish philosopher Eugene B. Borowitz opens up the rules by which the language-game of aggadic discourse is carried on in the Talmud, the foundational document of rabbinic and all later Judaism. These findings are compared with the aggadah (the realm in which almost all explicit statements about classic Jewish religious belief occur) of some other early rabbinic writings. Two issues drive Borowitz’s inquiry: What, if anything, constrains the unprecedented freedom of this realm? and How might one positively characterize the aggadah? Borowitz introduces us to the rabbis not only in their amazing profundity, but also in their unguarded humanity. He concludes with a reflection on how this old Jewish language-game should influence contemporary Jewish thought, and, perhaps, other religious thought as well.

“This is an important study of rabbinic methodology applying contemporary philosophical hermeneutics to help sort out the unique attributes and content of aggadah. Borowitz provides an excellent review of secondary scholarship in the modern and contemporary period on the nature of rabbinic thought, logic, and discourse.” — Yudit Kornberg Greenberg, author of Better than Wine: Love, Poetry, and Prayer in the Thought of Franz Rosenzeig

“Borowitz’s book offers much-needed insight and is simply an invaluable contribution to Jewish philosophy.” — Robert Gibbs, coauthor of Reasoning After Revelation: Dialogues in Postmodern Jewish Philosophy

EUGENE B. BOROWITZ is Distinguished University Professor and the Sigmund L. Falk Distinguished Professor of Education and Jewish Religious Thought at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. He is the author of many books, including Studies in the Meaning of Judaism and The Mask Jews Wear: The Self-Deceptions of American Jewry, winner of the National Jewish Book Award in the realm of Jewish thought.

A volume in the SUNY series in Jewish Philosophy

Kenneth Seeskin, editor

MARCH | 320 pp.
$75.00 hc 0-7914-6701-5