

Reading beyond Nothingness

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Abstract

Starting from interpretations of the concept of nothingness in Antiquity and modern philosophy, the article focuses on choice examples of Shakespeare's thematics of the void and emptiness in several of his tragedies. It tackles some 'nihil paradoxes' (Rotman) in the play on nothing which Shakespeare entitled "Much Ado about Nothing", shows how nothing begets nothing in "King Lear", and interprets the ghost's absence of a physical body against the certainty that a spectre does not exist in "Hamlet". Finally it takes a few examples of non-verbal signifying discourses in "Romeo and Juliet", "Much Ado about Nothing", and "King Lear".