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At the Outer Limits of Language: Mallarmé's *Un Coup de dés* and Huidobro's *Altazor*.

Nancy B. Mandlove 163

Abstract. While it is quite possible that *Un Coup de dés* served Huidobro directly as a formal, thematic and linguistic model for *Altazor*, the essential connection between the two poems lies in a parallel effort to repeat the act of the original Creation. To this end, both rely on basic archetypal patterns, resulting in parallel thematic development. These archetypal patterns are created not only thematically, but also linguistically. The fall, destruction and resurrection of Adam and Orpheus is simultaneously the fall, destruction and resurrection of language. Huidobro has taken up the challenge of Mallarmé to spin out of nothingness the abyss, the primordial sea of potential in which all reality is dissolved, another constellation/poem, which is at once the same and unique, another configuration of the eternal Poem: a parallel Orphic explanation of the earth. Both poems push language to the outer limits in an attempt to return to the original, Edenic language—the language of Adam and of Orpheus. (NBM)

Numa and the Nature of the Fantastic in the Fiction of Juan Benet

David K. Herzberger 185

Abstract. Perhaps the most rewarding critical approach to the novels of Juan Benet is one that encompasses the irrational and seeks to reveal the mysterious—one that can be closely identified with the notion of the fantastic. The view of the fantastic developed in the present study is based on a synthetic modification of the precepts of Todorov and Rabkin, and places emphasis on the hesitation of the reader when confronted with a diametric reversal of the laws of the text. Both the literary theory and prose fiction of Benet can be closely linked to the fantastic: the former through Benet's focus on narrative uncertainty and ambiguity; the latter in a variety of important ways, but most pervasively through the character Numa.

Numa recurs throughout Benet's fiction as an enigmatic and superhuman figure. He at once conforms to and transgresses the norms of the text, and inspires reader hesitation in the face of the marvelous. Through him Benet reifies many of his theoretical tenets, and also shapes the specific nature of his fantastic world. (DKH)

Writing as a Magician's Game:

The Strange Early World of Christoph Meckel

Heidi M. Rockwood 197

Abstract. The contemporary German author Christoph Meckel often introduces into his early short stories the metaphor of "playing a game" for creating a literary work. The paper investigates how Meckel uses this metaphor, what types of games he plays with the reader, and what kind of a world he creates through those games. On the basis of four short stories it suggests the conclusion that Meckel often introduces dangerous overtones and consequences, even though he likes to present himself as a happy and harmless storyteller, and that his stories share many characteristics with dreams and nightmares. Nevertheless, such game-playing is an important and positive activity, for it fulfills a definite social purpose. In the longer story "In the Land of the Umbramauts" Meckel describes a society in which the ability to play creatively has been lost. While the Umbramauts are not totally to blame for this situation, theirs is described as a society without hope. Despite the possible dangers inherent in play, Meckel seems to warn us: it is far more dangerous *not* to play, since it may lead to the loss of our basic humanity. It is a warning that he himself has heeded: his works continue to confront the reader with the elements of play and surprise. (HMR)

Circumscription: Proust's *The Captive* and the Problem of Other Minds.

Carol de Dobay Rifelj 211

Abstract. Central to Proust's *Remembrance* as a whole and to *The Captive* in particular is Marcel's attempt to discover what other people think and feel. But, as reading the work in the light of modern analytic philosophy shows, his efforts are thwarted by the deceptions of others and by his own irreconcilable views. The other is radically inaccessible, yet the object of our search; the self is a stable entity, yet multiple, changing, and a fiction constituted by language; language is communication, yet the source of error. These are the problems which confront philosophy and literature when they try to come to terms with the otherness of others. (CDR)

An Interview with Adolf Muschg.

Judith Ricker-Abderhalden. 233

Abstract. Adolf Muschg, a popular writer, teacher and aesthetician, is one of the comparatively few contemporary Swiss writers who has been able to establish himself firmly in Germany. In recent years, he has begun to attract the attention of American critics and Germanists as well. In the interview, Adolf Muschg deals with a wide spectrum of issues. He identifies the authors and works that mean most to him. He traces, for instance, his changing relationship to Goethe, whom he recently rediscovered. In Goethe's works, above all in his scientific studies, Muschg finds issues that are of central importance to the survival of our planet. He detects a kinship between Goethe and the "Greens" of the seventies and looks back critically on the turbulent sixties. He provides an analysis of the current tensions between the USA and Western Europe, while confirming his keen and very personal involvement with the USA. But at the core of the interview are his extensive comments on the creative processes and the perils inherent in writing fiction. There he deals with the complex relationship between literature and therapy, the therapeutic potential of literature for the writer and the reader. By describing the novelist's difficult journey on the narrow path between self-revelation and indiscretion, he also reflects upon the related issue of literary narcissism. (JRA)

Space and Salvation in Colette's *Chéri* and *La Fin de Chéri*.

Ann Leone Philbrick. 249

Abstract. Colette's critics often seem to dismiss all but her autobiographical creatures as whimsical and inarticulate. Her characters are frequently less eloquent than the spaces they create and inhabit; this observation offers an approach to *Chéri* and *La Fin de Chéri* that invites us to read them as two of Colette's most ambitious and authentic works. Here are stories of compromises with the containers of one's life and identity: streets, salons, boudoirs, and, ultimately, the body. Indeed, the self and its containers function symbiotically. *Chéri* makes no effort to direct this relationship, and kills himself when the world finally seems inscrutable and formless; his older mistress, Léa, responds joyfully—or with melancholic respect—to the surfaces and limits of her world. We are left with a harsher insight into Colette's vision than we are accustomed to. She suggests that survival lies not in the endless definition of one's place in the world, but in its recognition and a loving, even fearing, homage. (ALP)

Vital Space in the House of Buendía.

Nina M. Scott 265

Abstract. In terms of both narrative and thematic organization, Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* deals with tightly-closed structures. Whereas from the beginning Macondo has been interpreted in a variety of ways, critics have paid less attention to the meaning of the Buendía house itself. A close reading of the text shows that the way in which certain characters interact with the physical spaces of the house is highly symbolic and closely related to the thematic development of the entire novel. The rise and fall of the Buendía dynasty is presided over by three women, who function as the rulers of the house: Ursula, Fernanda and Amaranta Ursula. Each one of them affects the architecture of the structure, but as the house increasingly has a life of its own, is in turn shaped by the dwelling itself. The fall of the Buendía family is reflected in the loss of control not only of the lives of certain characters, but of the vital spaces within the house that they inhabit. (NMS)

The Doubles in Julien Gracq's *Au Château d'Argol*.

Andrée Douchin-Shahin 273

Abstract. In Julien Gracq's *Au Château d'Argol*, the resolution of a psychological double (as in the *Doppelgänger* novels) opens onto a metaphysical quest. In the process, doubling becomes so compounded that the narrative resembles a kaleidoscopic pattern of multiple reflections. Gracq's personal search into the nature of man is set against other hypotheses and formulations such as philosophical systems, religion, psychoanalysis, literature, music, etc. In the novel, man's dualism is viewed as an inescapable fact. However, even though the dogma of the Redemption is rejected, man, in spite of his "flaw," is held responsible for the acts he wills. (ADS)

Inverted Reality in Nabokov's *Look at the Harlequins!*

D. Barton Johnson 293

Abstract. *Look at the Harlequins!* presents itself as the autobiography of a famed Anglo-Russian writer who suffers from bouts of insanity that are connected with his feeling that he is the inferior copy of another, much better writer. The autobiography is devoted mainly to his four great loves and to his books. Close analysis suggests that the narrator's account is false and is essentially a record of his delusive life during periods of insanity. *LATH* is seen as an example of those of Nabokov's novels that have schizoid narrators, such as *The Eye*, *Despair*, and *Pale Fire*, and is set in opposition to another group of novels (*Invitation to a Beheading*, *Bend Sinister*, and *Ada*) in which the fictional worlds themselves are twinned. (DBJ)