

PMLA

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Fabulation and Metafiction

The special and important features of the fabulative movement are explored in this expanded treatment of a classic earlier work in which the author introduced the word "fabulator" into modern critical discourse. Scholes devotes special attention to Jorge Luis Borges, to the experimental or metafictional dimension of fabulation in both short stories and in longer works, and to fabulation that confronts historical materials. More than half of the material in this volume has been written since *The Fabulators*; this includes essays on Borges and Fowler, García Márquez, Gass, Malamud, Merwin, Coover, Reed, Sarraute, Steinbeck, Vonnegut, Pynchon, among others. Cloth, \$12.50; paper, \$4.50. Warhol, among others. Cloth, \$12.50; paper, \$4.50.

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CULTURAL CHANGE

Ihab Hassan. In this provocative new work, Hassan explores those forces which are shaping the "postmodern," even "post-humanist," world. March.

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Abstract. In the history of literature the change from the idealized worlds of the shepherd and the knight to the world of the pícaro; from arcadia and chivalry to the desolate urban landscape of misery and hunger; from romance to irony—in fact, the Copernican revolution that produced a new genre—could only have been born of an upheaval that affected men's lives and forced educated writers to see conditions they had so far ignored. This change stemmed from an increased awareness of human misery, which the urban growth of the Renaissance had made highly visible. The genius of the Spanish author of the *Lazarillo* consists in his having found the literary voice for such a profound transformation of European society. The *Lazarillo*, of course, did not annihilate the past, but it gave artistic form to the all-pervading crisis that was destroying the basis of the traditional order. (JH)

Blow-Up: A Reconsideration of Antonioni's Infidelity to Cortázar. TERRY J. PEAVLER 887

Abstract. Antonioni's *Blow-Up* is one of the most significant and controversial films of the 1960s. Its success brought increased international recognition not only to its director but to Julio Cortázar, the author of the story that inspired the film. Because of the extreme complexity and ambiguity of both *Blow-Up* and its source, "Las babas del diablo," critics have been unable to agree in their interpretations of either work, and they agree even less on the extent of Cortázar's influence on Antonioni. A close analysis of the two works, with careful focus on the relationship between the creators and their protagonists and on the tension between the narratives and their self-conscious forms, reveals that many of the difficulties in interpretation are due to a priori assumptions of readers and viewers alike and that the similarities between the film and the story are far greater than has been supposed. (TJP)

Sequence and Theme in Victor Hugo's *Les Orientales*. RICHARD B. GRANT 894

Abstract. Critics have traditionally viewed the individual poems of Victor Hugo's *Les Orientales* (1829) primarily as exercises in innovative versification and exotic local color. But if the poems are read sequentially, a significant pattern emerges. The apocalyptic cataclysm of "Le Feu du ciel" introduces the theme of sudden death and destruction that emerges as central to the entire volume. Hugo's preoccupation with sudden violence needs to be understood in the light of his attitude toward the French Revolution. Attracted by the freedom that it brought but repelled by its excesses, Hugo could not decide during this period whether the Revolution was morally good or evil, with the result that at the end of *Les Orientales* he avoided taking a political stance and found refuge in art for art's sake. It was only many years later that he was able to resolve his political doubts and complete his vision of human destiny. (RBG)

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