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Editor's Column 3

The Writer's Audience Is Always a Fiction. WALTER J. ONG, S.J. 9

Abstract. Whereas the spoken word is part of present actuality, the written word normally is not. The writer, in isolation, constructs a role for his "audience" to play, and readers fictionalize themselves to correspond to the author's projection. The way readers fictionalize themselves shifts throughout literary history: Chaucer, Lyly, Nashe, Hemingway, and others furnish cases in point. All writing, from scientific monograph to history, epistolary correspondence, and diary writing, fictionalizes its readers. In oral performance, too, some fictionalizing of audience occurs, but in the live interaction between narrator and audience there is an existential relationship as well: the oral narrator modifies his story in accord with the real—not imagined—fatigue, enthusiasm, or other reactions of his listeners. Fictionalizing of audiences correlates with the use of masks or personae marking human communication generally, even with oneself. Lovers try to strip off all masks, and oral communication in a context of love can reduce masks to a minimum. In written communication and, a fortiori, print the masks are less removable. (WJO,SJ)

The Ceremony of Innocence: Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. ELLIOT L. GILBERT. 22

Abstract. Sophisticated readers of *A Christmas Carol*, moved though they may be by the dramatic reformation of Scrooge, are frequently inclined to question the psychological validity of the old man's change of heart. Far from being a sign of the story's inadequacy, however, this divided reaction is the key to its effectiveness. Dickens' chief target in *A Christmas Carol* is Scrooge's nineteenth-century rationalism, and the reader's skepticism about the old man's moral and spiritual recovery is an exact analogue of that rationalism. What the reader's delight, in the face of his skepticism, suggests, therefore, is that there is a level of the story on which Scrooge's regeneration is entirely authentic; that if *A Christmas Carol* is less than convincing as a psychological case history of an elderly neurotic temporarily reformed by Christmas sentimentality, it is certainly a success as the metaphysical study of a human being's rediscovery of his own innocence. (ELG)

Falstaff as Parodist and Perhaps Holy Fool. ROY BATTENHOUSE. 32

Abstract. Starting with Raglan's suggestion that Falstaff may be a "holy fool" and with Auden's belief that he is a comic symbol of charity, this essay explores the medieval tradition of wise fool, and especially Falstaff's always canny use of biblical allusion. His various jests, if read in relation to the political action of the main plot, reveal him as characterizing England's time of day and parodying the unchristian behavior of Hotspur, Henry, and Hal. By the time he dies mumbling Psalm xxiii to an uncomprehending Nell Quickly, there have accumulated many hints that he is, in fact, a candle to his age, a professional Fool with the heart of a faithful Lazarus, and destined to join Mowbray in Abraham's bosom. The merriment for which readers have found him lovable amid his masquerades of vice has its mysterious basis in his covertly Christian understanding of England's neo-Roman Caesars. (RB)

Cloaking the Self: The Literary Space of Gogol's "Overcoat." CHARLES C. BERNHEIMER 53

Abstract. Literary structure provided Gogol with a means to free himself from the restrictive definitions of life. As copying clerk, Akaky inhabits a nearly autonomous world of literal repetition, a world close to the timeless silence out of which fiction is born. He is happy, having next to no individualized desiring self. The acquisition of the overcoat causes Akaky's fall into the diachronic world of difference, a hostile world that overwhelms his recently objectified identity. As his letters demonstrate, Gogol himself feared just such an annihilation by the other. Hence his enigmatic, elusive character and his narrative strategy of hiding behind a multiplicity of constantly shifting masks. The "fantastic

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ending" of the story fulfills Gogol's most cherished fantasy: to exercise power against the world while remaining unconditioned within the play of literary metamorphoses. In psychological terms, this desire is symptomatic of the schizoid, ontologically insecure individual. (CCB)

The Rape of Gulliver: Case Study of a Source. SHEILA SHAW . 62

Abstract. The first translator of the *Arabian Nights* (Paris, 1704-17) was Antoine Galland. Almost immediately translated into English, Galland's popular collection remained the only version of the *Nights* known in Europe throughout the century. Convinced that Swift had read it, twentieth-century scholars Pietro Toldo and William A. Eddy show that the tale "Hassân-al-Bassri" was a source for Brobdingnag; the passages they quote come from the modern French translation of J. C. Mardrus, and bear a great similarity to Gulliver's second voyage. Swift, however, could not have known "Hassân" for it is omitted by Galland. Because of the differences between Galland's *Nights* and later versions, studies in eighteenth-century source criticism must work with early texts. Curiously, of all versions of "Hassân" only Mardrus relates the episode in question, which may explain why his translation is anathematized by Arabists as distorting the erotic content of the original. Recent inquiry also discloses that the episode is missing in known Arabic sources. It is almost certain that Mardrus fabricated the passages cited by Toldo and Eddy; it may even be argued that he plagiarized Swift. (SS)

The Verbal Gate to Paradise: Adam's "Literary Experience" in Book X of *Paradise Lost*. GEORGIA B. CHRISTOPHER . . . 69

Abstract. It is not Eve's reconciling gesture of "love" in Book X of *Paradise Lost* that leads Adam back to God. Instead, Adam is restored by a mysterious "literary" insight as he suddenly perceives his sentence as a promise. Adam's "opening" is the sacramental moment toward which the action of *Paradise Lost* is leading and reflects the Reformers' understanding that the first promise (*protevangelium*), like other promises in the Bible, constitutes an inner scripture that equalizes all ages. Thus, in the main, the Reformers appropriate Old Testament stories without resorting to typology, for they treat the patriarchs as the first Christians who embraced the word. They see the Old Testament narratives as a sacramental vessel through which the *viva vox Christi* can speak to the reader of any age as he identifies with the patriarch in the story. (GBC)

Ford's *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* and the Jacobean Tragic Perspective. LARRY S. CHAMPION 78

Abstract. Whether reflecting the social theme in a drama alive to contemporary issues, or reacting to the jaded taste of a theatrical clientele, or probing individually for the most effective delineation of man's tragic plight, the Jacobean dramatists explore a view of life more somber and pessimistic than their Elizabethan counterparts.

John Ford represents the culmination of this basic dramaturgical trend. In *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* he creates central figures whose affection, if unrighteous, is also intensely sincere and whose aberrant conduct must be weighed against the treachery and hypocrisy of the society whose morality the lovers have rejected. The anagnorisis as well as the protagonist is doubled, and the spectator is left to choose between the wisdom of Annabella's Christian repentance and Giovanni's stoic insistence on the sanctity of private values. The result is a fundamentally pessimistic view of life in which man's challenge is the ambiguity of moral values constantly frustrating his search for a meaningful life. (LSC)

Apollo versus Bacchus: The Dynamics of Inspiration (Rabelais's Prologues to *Gargantua* and to the *Tiers livre*). ALICE FIOLA BERRY 88

Abstract. Rabelais's two prologues are examined as *défenses et illustrations* of his theory of creativity, a theory largely influenced by the Platonic *furor divinus*, for in both chapters Rabelais describes the source of his genius as a state of madness. However, two kinds of madness confront each other in dynamic opposition. There is first the Bacchic mode which describes literary creation as joyful drunkenness and whose purpose is to provide pleasure and recreation. But another idea of creative writing intervenes to contradict the Bacchic injunctions, one that infers gravity of intent and of meaning. It is argued that this second

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mode be rightfully designated as "Apollonian," and that, in reducing Plato's tetrad of furors to Bacchus and his *frère ennemi*, Rabelais intuited that truth which Nietzsche would explore three centuries later in *The Birth of Tragedy*—that these two gods have stood eternally opposed as the archetypal poles of the tension vital to the creative process. (AFB)

"Life Studies"—Robert Lowell's Comic Breakthrough. GEORGE McFADDEN 96

Abstract. The fifteen "Life Studies" poems are distinguished as a separate work from the rest of the *Life Studies* volume. Their unicity arises from Lowell's use of the Freudian myths of maturation and the family romance, from a (largely Freudian) comic emphasis, and from a rhetorical, rather than merely confessional, project of the poet to vindicate himself by means such as Pound used in *The Pisan Cantos*. Lowell's parents are the victims of comic degradation in the poet's struggle to achieve maturity; his Grandfather Winslow is both a savior, as father surrogate, and a threat to dominate Lowell. A "plot" including parenthood, the loyal intimacy of his relationship with his wife, and Lowell's comic self-acceptance helps to give "Life Studies" a sense of renewed vitality. Also, Lowell's new, more open style reflects his response to the movements of the fifties in American poetry and supports the mythic and comic structures of renewal in the work. (GMcF)

The Mystery of Eros: Sexual Initiation in Coleridge's "Christabel." JONAS SPATZ 107

Abstract. Most interpretations of "Christabel" ignore the creative context from which it emerged. In his notebooks and letters, Coleridge developed a theory of the nature of human sexuality and its importance as the foundation of love and marriage. In a series of poems written from 1797 to 1801, Coleridge dramatized the problem of sexual maturation by focusing on the betrothal of a girl threatened by her own sexuality. "Christabel," the culmination of this period, traces the heroine's attempt to come to terms with her erotic impulses, to recognize their essential role in her love for her absent knight, and to progress from adolescence to womanhood. Geraldine, the projection of those impulses, is the woman she yearns and fears to become. Although the poem is unfinished, its fairy-tale structure, psychology, and symbolism, along with its relation to Coleridge's other poems and his ideas about sex, love, and marriage, indicate that the continuation summarized by James Gillman accurately describes Coleridge's intentions. (JS)

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