

# STUDIES IN TWENTIETH CENTURY LITERATURE

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## VOLUME 1 ● CONTENTS ● 1976-1977

BEAUJOUR, ELIZABETH KLOSTY. Proust-envy: Fiction and Autobiography in the Works of Iurii Olesha ... ..	123-134
BOND, DAVID J. Jewish Destiny in the Novels of Albert Cohen ... ..	7-25
BOUDREAU, H. L. Miguel Delibes' <i>Parábola de un naufrago</i> : Utopia Redreamed ... ..	27-46
CHAMPAGNE, ROLAND A. Anti-Structuralist Structures: The Avant-Garde Struggles of French Fiction ... ..	135-155
DOLAN, JOSEPH P. The Theory and Practice of Apolitical Literature: <i>Die Kolonne</i> , 1929-1932 ... ..	157-171
FRASER, HOWARD M. Points South: Ambrose Bierce, Jorge Luis Borges, and the Fantastic ... ..	173-181
KADIR, DJELAL. Same Voices, Other Tombs: Structures of Mexican Gothic ... ..	47-64
ROLLESTON, JAMES. The Expressionist Moment: Heym, Trakl and the Problem of the Modern ... ..	65-90
SCHILLINGER, JOHN. The Function of Love in Solzhenitsyn's <i>The First Circle</i> ... ..	183-198
TREMAINE, LOUIS. Breton's <i>Nadja</i> : A Spiritual Ethnography ... ..	91-119

## CONTENTS • SPRING

- Proust-Envy: Fiction and Autobiography in the Works of  
Iurii Olesha. ELIZABETH KLOSTY BEAUJOUR ... .. 123

*Abstract.* Iurii Olesha's works present us with a series of episodes for a fictional autobiography: the self-portrait of the artist as failure. Already early in his career, Olesha was committed to the achievement of success through the creation and manipulation of images of failure. These images are also dominant in his last work *No Day Without a Line*, which this article analyzes. Olesha declares in *No Day* that he wishes to "go backwards through life the way Marcel Proust succeeded in doing in his time." There are interesting similarities between the two writers, particularly the fact that *A la Recherche du temps perdu* is also in a sense based in the imagination of failure. But Olesha misunderstands Proust's procedure, and in so doing reveals much about the nature of his own talent and his inability to come to terms with time. (EKB)

- Anti-Structuralist Structures: The Avant-Garde Struggles of  
French Fiction. ROLAND A. CHAMPAGNE ... .. 135

*Abstract.* A reassessment of French literary "structuralism" is timely in order to understand the development of avant-garde fiction. Piaget's parameters of wholeness, self-regulation, and transformation for a "structure" are useful critical tools in appreciating the relationships of avant-garde writers, texts, and readers to one another during the 1950's and 1960's in France. However, the writers and texts of that literary avant-garde refused to be congealed into a specific movement called "structuralism." Instead, they continually realized new forms to lead their readers away from the static artistic labels or "myths" which the representatives of French society consistently sought to impose. Those new forms revealed linguistic "structures" which linked writer, text, and reader such that we can now look beyond "structuralism" toward semiology and semiotics to understand the ideologies inherent within the linguistic components of writing and reading. (RAC)

- The Theory and Practice of Apolitical Literature: *Die Kolonne*, 1929-1932. JOSEPH P. DOLAN ... .. 157

*Abstract.* The apolitical attitudes that made inner emigration possible were well established in Germany in the decade preceding 1933. Three main ideas from the tradition of "inwardness" were

used to justify the exclusion of politics from literature: the timelessness of the inner life, the notion of the genius as hero of society, and the religious function of art. These ideas were propagated especially by the Dresden literary journal, *Die Kolonne* (1929-1932), to which such leading poets as Günter Eich, Peter Huchel, and Elisabeth Langgässer contributed. Literature of the period reveals a preference for the themes of nature and of myth, insofar as these express the cyclical renewal of the cosmos, and for the motifs of childhood and of cultural pessimism. Apparently apolitical writers were actually politically conservative, and in at least one case, conservatism was associated with an authoritarian upbringing. This link may help explain the extraordinary survival of apolitical attitudes beyond 1945. (JPD)

Points South: Ambrose Bierce, Jorge Luis Borges, and the Fantastic. HOWARD M. FRASER ... .. 173

*Abstract.* The debt of Borges's "A Secret Miracle" to Ambrose Bierce's "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge" both in theme and technique has been noted in recent criticism. However, a careful study of the two works reveals striking differences, particularly with respect to the treatment of time. Based on Todorov's study of the fantastic, this article attempts to show how Bierce's influence on Borges parallels the general development of psychological realism and its transformation into surrealism. While it is true that the allusive qualities of Borges' work recall thematic and technical aspects of Bierce, nonetheless the American Hispanophile is a precursor of the Argentine Anglophile in only a limited sense. (HMF)

The Function of Love in Solzhenitsyn's *The First Circle*. JOHN SCHILLINGER ... .. 183

*Abstract.* Aleksander Solzhenitsyn, like Boris Pasternak before him, insists upon the primacy of life over any socio-political system. To lead truly meaningful lives, his characters must comprehend that they are responsible for their own actions; that they are engaged in an existential struggle which pits individual freedom against the will of authority.

In *The First Circle*, this struggle is clearly reflected in the theme of love which, when analyzed in terms of the suppression or triumph of its four basic elements (*sex, eros, philia, and agape*), offers a convincing allegory of man's existential self-definition by free choice. (JS)

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