

Valdés's phenomenological thesis is that the reality of literature is to be found in the individual's reading experience, that is to say, that the reader re-creates the meaning of the text in his reading; in so doing he becomes more aware of himself and his world. This relationship between the reader and the text is essentially a dialectic. The logical consequence is that there can be no definitive, objective interpretation of the text; the individual reader becomes a full partner with the author in the creative act "by providing not only the referential fulfilment of discourse but also the very context through his associations" (p. 80). The stress on the reader's role in the fabrication of the textual meaning runs counter to currently fashionable structuralist theories, as Valdés readily admits: in the phenomenological order of things the text is not the end in itself. Valdés develops his central points in a logical sequence in chapters 2-6 (phenomenological premises for literary criticism; the narrative text; the author; the reader; the critic).

It is the presence and position of the remaining chapters, however, which present some difficulty and perhaps point towards the only drawback of Dr. Valdés's book (providing, of course, that one accepts the phenomenological approach to literature): the structural arrangement of the material. Chapter I (Unamuno, the point of departure) is really intended as an introduction to his theory of the phenomenological approach, but really it is a detailed analysis of an obscure 1918 article by Unamuno, and the definition of theoretical terms is awkwardly avoided, presumably postponed to later chapters. Chapters 7-10 (a structure of inquiry; a method of inquiry; commentary on *Don Quixote*; heuristic models of inquiry) seem at times to repeat, albeit unintentionally, the main outline of his preceding argument (see especially pp. 107ff.) Chapters 8, 9, 11 also differ from the others in that there are no footnotes, although references to sources are made in the text. Valdés's more usual practice is to use the footnotes as occasions to make lengthy quotes from his major theoretical sources (Ricoeur, Husserl, and Merleau-Ponty).

This problem of material arrangement may be the result of the series of revisions the book underwent during the past decade, with theoretical ballast being added at various stages and, then, individual chapters being published separately in various journals. Putting the pieces back together again does produce the examples of repetition noted above and the gaffe in the very first line of the text proper when it is stated that the aim of the book is to examine in depth a relatively undeveloped aspect of Unamuno's thought! Valdés obviously tries to dovetail his various pieces by constantly referring to future discussions, but somehow, by overusing the technique of anticipation, he reinforces the fragmentary nature of the book's composition. It is a pleasure to record that in a book whose type is eminently readable there are very few typographical errors, although Vallaamil (p. 90) and *Don Quixote de la Mancha* (p. 142) should have been caught at the proofreading stage. It is a minor point, but surely there is a difference between Part I and Volume I of *Don Quijote*.

Despite these minor quibbles of construction, *Shadows in the Cave* remains a highly readable and stimulating book, pitched at a suitably intellectual level. If the student of Hispanic literature becomes more aware of the uniqueness and complexity of his or her reading experience, then Dr. Valdés's efforts will not have been in vain.

Hugh M. Ruppensburg

VOICE AND EYE IN FAULKNER'S FICTION

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Reviewed by K. J. Phillips

Ruppensburg discusses point of view in *Light in August*, *Pylon*, *Absalom, Absalom!*, and *Requiem for a Nun*, with some mention of most of Faulkner's other books. He starts by replacing the labels "first- and third-person narrator" with *character narrator* and *external* (uninvolved) *narrator*. Ruppensburg cautions against confusing the external narrator with Faulkner. The external narrator possesses a usually effaced personality, but his distinctive fictional nature is sometimes marked, as in the case of the "bloodless bibliophile" who, Faulkner said, narrates

the Compson appendix (p. 14). At various temporal, spatial, and emotional removes from his subject, the external narrator does not claim omniscience, often employing conditional phrasing. Yet the external narrator still displays more objectivity than the character narrators and thus provides context and balance.

In the most interesting and subtle aspect of his book, Ruppensburg investigates ways in which an external narrator may speak from a *focal character's* point of view. The external narrator may (1) report only words and actions; (2) enter the character's consciousness in a process which Ruppensburg calls *internal narrative*; or even (3) enter the character's subconscious, explaining motives of which the focal character may not be aware or lending him words which he could not articulate. Ruppensburg calls this fusion of the external narrator and the focal character *internal translated narrative*. When the external narrator reports conscious thoughts, the focal character's own idiom prevails, but in translated narrative "the typical voice of a Faulknerian narrator" takes over (p. 39).

Ruppensburg says, in fact, that *The Sound and the Fury* and *As I Lay Dying* imply the presence of an external narrator who treats Benjy, Quentin, Dewey Dell, and the rest as focal characters, reporting their thoughts and saying for them what they never would or could (p. 21). The advantage of Ruppensburg's approach is that we learn not to expect realism, but instead to appreciate the external narrator's access to subconscious thoughts and his powers of organization and poeticizing.

After *The Sound and the Fury* and *As I Lay Dying*, Faulkner provided narrating characters with listeners in *directed narration*. While the characters now have a social motive for talking, realism still does not prevail. In *Absalom, Absalom!*, for example, Rosa and Mr. Compson talk longer than one would expect, yet the purposeful departure from realism allows deeper characterization and an evocation of the poetic, tragic, and mythical aspects of the story (p. 95). In *Pylon*, on the other hand, Ruppensburg sees Faulkner's attempts to break the Reporter's conversation with constant notices of realistic setting as a flaw, since the Reporter could not maintain his rhetorical flights at such length (p. 74). But in *Requiem*, where the directed narration is *openly* ritualistic, with only stylized setting, Ruppensburg again approves (p. 145).

While some of these insights are not new, Ruppensburg underlines just how many narrative strategies operate in a single book. In *Light in August*, Faulkner uses multiple character narrators, focal perspectives, community consciousness, and a neutral, semi-omniscient narrator, who in combination thrust final conclusions onto the reader. *Pylon* alternates internal narrative focused on the Reporter (the main focal character), internal narrative focused on other characters, and an external narrator. The strategy in *Pylon* is complicated, since "Retrospective narratives by Jiggs, the Reporter, and the external narrator chronicle the early lives of Laverne and Roger. Jiggs ultimately provides the information in these narratives: he either talks himself, serves as a focal character, or passes information to the Reporter, who later relays it to Hagood" (pp. 71-72). These switches have thematic effect: the juxtaposition of Roger's perspective with the Reporter's serves to emphasize the latter's tragic isolation (p. 79). Ruppensburg's effort to untangle point of view is valuable here in that it corrects any tendency on the part of the reader to misjudge Laverne by too close identification with the Reporter. Ruppensburg's method also clarifies that any misogyny in *Pylon* belongs to the Reporter, in *Light in August* to Christmas, and in *Absalom, Absalom!* to Mr. Compson and Shreve.

Despite the remarkable variety of strategies in his books, some narrative strategies characterize Faulkner's whole career: the preponderance of narrating characters, focal perspectives, and the hearer-teller relationship. These three strategies directly contribute to theme. Conflicting viewpoints show the impossibility of ideal truth. But they also show "the supremacy of the individual," through whose being the world acquires significance (p. 152). At the same time, the hearer-teller relationships link the individual to the community. Dialogue expresses conflicts but also interdependence. Thus Ruppensburg interprets the "metaphoric potential of narrative structure" (p. 152). He does so in a prose which is occasionally bland, always clear, jargon-free, and repetitious only in the last chapter.