

around her, serious scholars have always concentrated on the genuine artist behind the facade. This desperately ill, desperately lonely, enormously gifted woman, this artist whose talent ultimately cost her everything, deserves better than to be memorialized as a painted clown, an aging coquette fawned over by "groupies," a willing prisoner of vanity and delusion. If any artist ever kept a clear eye on reality and a steady finger on her own pulse, it was Isak Dinesen. Pelensky must know this, and she probably intends no disrespect. More's the pity.

Richard C. Moreland

FAULKNER AND MODERNISM; REREADING AND REWRITING

Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990. Pp. 259. \$14.75 & \$37.50

Reviewed by Jerry A. Varsava

In its preoccupation with broad sociohistorical concerns, *Faulkner and Modernism* continues a healthy trend in recent Faulknerian scholarship, one established by the work of, among others, Richard Brodhead and John T. Matthews. Richard Moreland makes effective use here of insights drawn from various poststructuralist theories to investigate power relations in selected major works of Faulkner.

Some critics, Michael Millgate for example, have viewed Faulkner's repetitions of events and themes and characters as simple tautology and hence pointless. Contrariwise, Moreland's thesis is that Faulkner's much-discussed repetitions are in fact repetitions with revision and difference. Further, Moreland holds that after *Absalom, Absalom* Faulkner places increasing emphasis on such marginalized constituencies as blacks, women, and the poor at the expense of those white male founders of Yoknapatawpha who effectively expelled the latter's indigenous peoples and colonized the region.

Moreland identifies "Barn Burning" (1939) as a transitional work between those earlier novels with their patriarchal protagonists—notably the male members of the Sutpen and Compson families—and later works that focus on marginalized groups. The reading of "Barn Burning" that Moreland advances in his introduction is a familiar one. The arson of Abner Snopes is viewed emblematically as the desperate act of a member of an economically oppressed underclass. In telling Ab's story, Moreland maintains Faulkner reveals his sensitivity to class conflict in the Old South.

The interpretation of *Absalom, Absalom* that makes up the first and second chapters is more nuanced. Importantly, Moreland debunks the notion of a gentle, humane "Southern aristocracy," one eschewing the hard materialism of Northern-style capitalism. In repudiating this sort of nostalgic reading of the Old South, Moreland is far more observant of the plentitude of actual social practice than are Cleanth Brooks and other Agrarians and New Critics who have consistently privileged the white male perspective at the expense of other

voices in Faulkner's vast and vastly diverse fictional universe. The second half of *Faulkner and Modernism* completes Moreland's comparative study by emphasizing the new thematic emphases of class, gender, and race that are elaborated in *The Hamlet*, *Go Down, Moses*, and *Requiem for a Nun*.

Moreland's approach to Faulkner is a rewarding one in that it calls attention to issues that have often been neglected or obscured in the past. There are nonetheless a couple of shortcomings that somewhat diminish the persuasiveness of his project. At the outset, he properly indicates that he will practice a "close reading" strategy (and acknowledges the influence of both deconstruction and New Criticism). Unfortunately, "close reading" comes to mean in the interpretation of *Absalom, Absalom* tedious, needlessly protracted analysis. Fully ninety-nine long pages are devoted to the novel, nearly one for each of Sutpen's hundred. Predictably, this kind of coverage brings with it repetition but, in contradistinction to Faulknerian repetition, not always with difference.

A more balanced and better approach would have been to consider at shorter length not merely one exemplar of the early mode of Faulkner's fiction but rather two. While the Compsons and the Sutpens are discussed here, the Sartoris and Benbows are not. A consideration of *Flags in the Dust*—a novel not mentioned by Moreland though *Sartoris*, its inferior abbreviated version, is cited once—would have served as an effective complement to reduced coverage of *Absalom, Absalom*. Clearly, any discussion of power relations in Yoknapatawpha County needs to consider those who established the local railroad and who ran the local bank, and who, at the same time, figure prominently in the fiction. Similarly, the social function of the patrician Benbows needs also to be considered. A more rounded discussion of the evolution of capitalism in Yoknapatawpha would have enhanced the legitimacy of Moreland's critique.

Faulkner and Modernism is a significant contribution to Faulkner studies. It highlights important themes that have not received careful critical scrutiny. Equally noteworthy is its measured application of insights drawn from various poststructuralist camps. There is talk these days of the eclipse of theory, of literary studies entering a posttheory age. *Faulkner and Modernism* demonstrates that serious contemporary scholarship is not so much beyond theory as simply more adept at using it to interpretive advantage.

Manuel Zapata Olivella

A SAINT IS BORN IN CHIMÁ

Translated from Spanish by Thomas E. Kooreman

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Reviewed by Evelio Echevarría

Multifaceted Manuel Zapata Olivella, a Colombian doctor, anthropologist, folklorist, and novelist, is almost unique within the Spanish-American literature of protest in that he offers perspectives both from inside and from below. Of