

Barbara Mennel's "Masochistic Fantasy and Racialized Fetish in Rainer Werner Fassbinder's *Ali: Fear Eats The Soul*" critically discusses how masochism is racialized in the orientalization of Ali's character. The representation of the "mysterious exotic Oriental" as Mennel puts it, allows the film a masochistic aesthetics that foregrounds liberalism and the disavowal of racism. However, when closely scrutinized, the film repeatedly positions Ali as the fetishization of the racialized Other. Although postmodern, post-colonial and queer discussions of masochism have offered empowering readings of the film, Mennel argues that they privilege either gender or gay sexuality, and therefore read marginalization as feminization and subversive hypermasculinity respectively. For this author, the phallic masculinity is defined within the film as white and Western, since Ali's suffering body "offers a spectatorial masochistic fantasy situated in post-colonial and post-Holocaust West Germany, which reworks the colonial fantasy". Thus, whether deconstructing or reaffirming the stereotyped racial fetish, the film's masochistic aesthetics still lends itself to controversy.

Overall, this is a well laid out and thought-provoking collection which, not only details past and current views on masochism, but also raises many questions with its fruitful references to sexual politics and culture.

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Notes

1. It should be pointed out that although representations and images of S&M are gradually being accepted within (popular) culture as signs of identity, stigmatization and abomination are also the most common responses to them. For further information on this subject, see "Sodomy is a Crime" and the "Voice Of America Head: Homosexuality 'Morally Disordered'", both published in the year 2001 at the website <<http://www.sodomy.laws.org>>.

THE SOUTHERN INHERITORS OF DON QUIXOTE

Montserrat Ginés

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(by Marita Nadal. University of Zaragoza)

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At first sight, the title of this volume may seem far-fetched. Are we to infer that Southern writers are the progeny of Don Quixote? Ginés is cautious enough to answer this question on the first page of her preface: "The presence of the spirit of Don Quixote in southern literature is a phenomenon not of influence but of confluence" (xiii). After this clarification, things start to fit. As is well known, Southern writing has come to epitomize the spirit of the American South, which is the expression of a peculiar history and culture openly divergent from that of the North. Southern writing evokes notions of honour, chivalry, pride in lineage, grandeur and a patriarchal ethic, all of which is compounded by the sense of nostalgia, frustration and loss after the defeat of the Civil War.

As Ginés points out, these elements, which reflect the clash between the real and the ideal, can be traced back to Cervantes' novel. It is true that the echoes of Don Quixote are universal, as the author admits—and she mentions writers such as Dostoevski, Melville and Flaubert—but her contention is that the traces of that literary archetype are more visible in the literature of the American South. Her study, which also describes the peculiar relationship of each author to his/her ancestors and the South, covers approximately one hundred years, starting with Mark Twain and continuing with James Branch Cabell, William Faulkner, Eudora Welty and Walter Percy. These are the authors chosen, though, as the author explains, others could have been included. Although these remarks may appear

unnecessary, I think they are required in this kind of analysis, since if we agree that the Quixote themes are universal, any attempt to pin them down to a restricted set of works—in turn restricted in time and place—is bound to fail.

That is not the case in Ginés's volume, who conducts a valuable, methodic study of the writers selected in the light of the Quixote motifs discussed in the book's Introduction. Ginés also states that her focus is limited to white authors, since African Americans, for obvious reasons, would provide a completely different outlook on Southern history and culture. And she offers the example of Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* to illustrate her point.

In the chapter devoted to Mark Twain, Ginés emphasizes his fascination with chivalric values, which she relates to Twain's father's aristocratic pretensions, as a Virginian proud of his land and its past splendor. Like Twain's father and the fictional character Tom Sawyer, the young Twain experienced the discrepancy between aspiration and reality. In fact, Ginés contends, the basis of the parallels between Cervantes' and Twain's work lies in the problem of personal identity. Just as Don Quixote says, proudly but deluded, "I know who I am", Twain's characters reflect the conflict between what one is and what one wishes to be. In order to analyse this theme, Ginés focuses on two novels, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* and *Huckleberry Finn*. In the latter, Ginés explores the links between Don Quixote and Sancho Panza on the one hand, and Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn on the other, going beyond the clichés associated with these pairs of characters. To support her contention, Ginés makes reference to Twain's "multifaceted self", "a man inhabiting a personality he had never been totally sure was his own" (21). According to her, Twain could never get free from the tradition of respectability he despised; it seems he always kept a secret admiration for aristocratic distinction, for the chivalric spirit. Curiously, this view contrasts with that of other critics, who approach Twain simply as the apostle of progress and equality.

William Faulkner definitely constitutes the core of the volume: Ginés devotes two chapters to this writer, which are accordingly placed in the central pages. In Chapter 3, the author dwells on Faulkner's concept of the cavalier spirit, which he defines as "honor for the sake of honor". Taking this statement as a point of reference, Ginés illustrates this feature with a variety of Faulknerian characters, selecting as outstanding examples Quentin Compson from *The Sound and the Fury* and Gavin Stevens from *The Town* and *The Mansion*. Chapter 4 takes as a starting point Juan Antonio Maravall's *Utopia and Counterutopia in the "Quixote"*. Just as Maravall argues that Cervantes "articulates perfectly the two sides of the utopian coin, the pastoral and the chivalric, in order to turn them inside out by reflecting them in the mirror of irony" (106), Faulkner's view of his characters' utopian

dreams is also shaped by such Cervantesque irony, Ginés remarks. In keeping with this contention, the chapter is devoted to the study of Isaac McCaslin ("The Bear", "Delta Autumn") and Reverend Gail Hightower (*Light in August*): the former is taken to represent nostalgia for the pastoral and the latter the chivalric elements of the quixotic utopia. Even though Ginés discloses a variety of quixotic echoes in Faulkner's work and emphasizes Faulkner's deep admiration for Cervantes' novel—he confessed to reading it every year—she does not fall in the trap of establishing a direct influence: Faulkner's characters, she concludes, are eventually his own.

The chapter devoted to Eudora Welty studies the peculiarities of this writer and the aspects that separate her from the other authors analysed in the volume. Interestingly, Ginés points out that Welty's different vision may have to do with gender and geography. In contrast with other Southern writers, Welty was not raised in a genuine Southern family, since his father came from Ohio. On the other hand, Ginés contends that women do not have the same perception of heroism as men: in Welty's female characters we find individual impulse rather than historic grandeur. In her analysis of Miss Lotte Elizabeth Eckhart ("The Golden Apples") and Miss Julia Mortimer (*Losing Battles*) Ginés does not find fantastic dreams, but personal passion and the courage to live with defeat. The quixotic qualities of these female characters lie in their unwillingness to accept the limitations of the community and their refusal to give up: it is honour combined with despair, which Ginés calls "the nobility of failure" drawing from Torrente Ballester and Fernando Savater's study of Don Quixote. It is worth noting that such introductory quotations form part of Ginés's pattern of study in this book: the passages quoted are taken as a point of departure for the topics to be discussed and are also used in the wording of the chapter's title.

In that respect, the variety of sources consulted is noteworthy, especially necessary in this kind of research; together with Spanish critics—from Ortega y Gasset to Fernando Savater—Ginés cites well-known U.S. authors like Cleanth Brooks, Robert Penn Warren and Louis D. Rubin Jr. The latter, a specialist in Southern writing, has been the supervisor of her work in this volume, a conscientious study that will attract not only readers interested in the "confluences" between Don Quixote and Southern writing, but also those who would like to have a new perspective on the literature and culture of the American South.