

Prof. David Robbins, Ph.D., thesis opponent

M.A. thesis evaluation

Andreas Patenidis

Spatio-Temporality in Faulkner's *The Sound and The Fury*

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This M.A. thesis provides a puzzling melange of an intellectual curiosity that has led the author to undertake a project that is too large to be handled adequately in a master's thesis and, in repeated instances in which some aspects of the topic *were* manageable, a troubling unwillingness or inability to pursue investigations to fully articulated conclusions.

The critical apparatus with which Mr. Patenidis has made himself familiar for this undertaking seems adequate, and he frequently begins to draw on it to good effect, only to end with a glib and superficial summary of his application of a given resource to the text in question without having provided the more detailed and adequate analysis on which that summary needed to be based. This hobbling problem does not seem to result from any linguistic inability on the part of the author, nor from an insufficient general historical, philosophical, or literary knowledge of the core background information and material, nor from an inadequate understanding of the principal Faulkner text under examination. The problem appears, to this reader at least, to be rather with his rhetoric and his exposition of his positions regarding the relationships of those elements, and perhaps with an almost perverse unwillingness or incapacity to go as deeply into those relationships as the rich fund of information that he has put at his own disposal should have allowed him to do. Time and again, he appears in his exposition and analysis to be proceeding down a promising and interesting path, only to stop suddenly and summarize before he has presented sufficient evidence to support such a summary or conclusion. In general, he is not wrong in his general sense of tendencies and connections; but his presentation provides more evidence of good intuition than of detailed analytic reasoning regarding both his conclusions and the sources and authorities with and through which he seeks to connect them.

There is much insight and wisdom to be found in Mr. Patenidis's narrative, particularly in Chapter 5, on Caddy. But in the literary and philosophical introductory chapters, additionally in Chapters 8 and 9, and particularly in the Conclusion, the material presented is very frequently superficial at best, lacking the penetrating inquiry and fuller development which the issues raised justify and demand. Obviously, this problem is particularly acute in the Conclusion, where Mr. Patenidis provides inadequate, and even contradictory, support for his principal theses.

In case after case, one would have liked to see more attention to detail: as, for example, on subjects raised by Mr. Patenidis as diverse as Puritan, Transcendentalist, Bergsonian, and Faulknerian handling of determinism and free will; Puritan vs. Faulknerian typology; the mimesis of dissociation; the very complicated politics of *The Sound and the Fury*; Caddy as an implied/constructed (i.e., not self-articulating) character/device (and her relation to the situation of Gatsby in *The Great Gatsby*); and the Compsons as carpetbaggers (who made made their money and position in the *postbellum* (as opposed to *antebellum*) South. As noted above, such lack of expository development results necessarily from a somewhat overambitious topical ambition in the thesis, but it is typifies the author's hesitation (perhaps

based on intellectual modesty and a resulting reticence) on repeated problematical occasions in the thesis to enter into potentially clarifying or supportive detail.

I value Mr. Patenidis's comprehensive and ambitious problematization in this project; but his reach so much exceeds the grasp displayed analytically (as opposed to intuitively) in his text that I am led to conclude that this thesis merits an evaluation of "2, velmi dobre."

Thesis evaluation: "2, velmi dobre."

Signed:

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If the reader has any questions or needs additional information, please contact me at drobbins22@netzero.net.