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La ronda de los generales by José B. Adolph
Review by: Wolfgang A. Luchting
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that technique and theme in fact are inseparable for a true understanding of this novel.

Villanueva divides his study into three parts: an introduction examining the development of the Spanish novel from Ortega y Gasset's *Ideas sobre la novela* up to the decade of the 1950s plus a biographical study of the novelist (including a brief analysis of his other novel, *Industrias y andanzas de Alfanhuí*); a second chapter analyzing the structure of *El Jarama* (point-of-view and spatial-temporal concepts); and a third chapter focusing on thematic considerations. The book concludes with a bibliography and an index.

This work is valuable not only as an analysis of *El Jarama* but also as a penetrating examination of novelistic techniques and canons of the postwar period in Spain. The author does an excellent job of defining neorealism—as advocated by José María Castellet and practiced by almost all the major novelists of the decade of the 50s—and of demonstrating its artistic applications. This is the best study to date for an in-depth understanding of what this movement attempted and achieved.

If there is a criticism of the book, it would have to be that it is so detailed at times that the reader has trouble connecting the various parts so as to form a clear picture of the novel's unity. Nevertheless this is a valuable study, and Darío Villanueva is to be commended for his scholarly and penetrating approach to the subject.

*Robert C. Spires*
*University of Kansas*

# fiction

José B. Adolph. *La ronda de los generales*. Lima. Mosca Azul. 1973. 159 pages.

Up to this title, Adolph had published only short stories (*El retorno de Aladino*, 1968; see *BA* 43:4, p. 564; *Hasta que la muerte . . .*, 1971; see *BA* 46:4, pp. 629–30; *Invisible para las fieras*, 1972; see *BA* 47:2, p. 329), most of which were remarkable for introducing into Peruvian and Hispano-American letters preoccupations not very frequent in them—namely, philosophy and science fiction. Yet, at no time did these concerns suffocate the narrative. Besides, there is Adolph's mimic gift of writing in different styles. *La ronda* is his first novel, a genre his readers have long waited for him to try out. It is a first novel and suffers accordingly, i.e., it is a little too epic. I even suspect padding in spite of its mere 159 pages. Thematically, *La ronda* is a courageous book; yet, in the present political phase of Peru, I cannot but find it ambiguous. In an interview, Adolph stated that *La ronda* dealt with what might have happened if the actual military government—of which Adolph is an active supporter—had not assumed power in 1968: a putsch by different brass, a *desarrollista* instead of a "revolutionary" one. For whoever does not know of this intention, the novel is likely to be simply one more psychological study of the ones "in," the ones ousted, and the ones waiting to get in, the whole constellation laced with women, rich, poor or intellectuals. The story is broken into *discours*, two of which reflect upon the narrator and the fable of the novel—a general putsches his way in, governs, finds it different from what he expected, gets ousted (here, assassinated by a woman who cannot make up her mind about whom she loves)—in either poetic prose or feuilletonistic milieu-caricatures. The style is acute yet often lyrical; Adolph's aphoristic vein has become more pronounced (some of his observations are splendid). An entertaining and shrewd book, whether Latin American revolutions interest you or not. *La ronda* should be read together with Guillermo Thorndike's *Las rayas del tigre*, and Vargas Llosa's *Conversación en la Catedral* and S. Salazar B.'s *Alférez Arce*, which are all about past Peruvian military governments. Adolph's novel is the first to deal with (an alternative to) the present one. But even alternatives, as do fictions, draw upon reality as given. Whether, narratively, anything has changed in Peru, revolutionwise, remains to be seen in a possible fiction about Peru's presently given reality. A montage of the images of Peruvian military politics contained in the novels mentioned, besides being devastating, would surely leave most readers baffled concerning the last five or so years in Peru.

*Wolfgang A. Luchting*
*Washington State University*

Demetrio Aguilera-Malta. *El secuestro del general*. Mexico City. Mortiz. 1973. 244 pages.

Aguilera-Malta enjoys an international reputation based on his work as playwright, novelist and essayist. A member of the generation of 1930, he established his reputation as a novelist early in his career with *Don Goyo* (1933), *Canal Zone* (1935) and *La isla Virgen* (1942). In recent years,

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