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FAULKNER'S DOCTRINE OF NATURE: A STUDY OF THE 'ENDURANCE' THEME IN THE YOKNAPATAWPHA FICTION

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PART I: ARGUMENT: THE DOCTRINE OF NATURE

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

One of the principal undertakings of American literary scholarship in the last seventeen years has been the study of the fiction of William Faulkner. That there was a great deal of Faulkner criticism before 1950 and that it was as various in procedure and conclusion as what has appeared on the same subject since the Mississippian received the Nobel Prize, O. B. Emerson has demonstrated convincingly in his "William Faulkner's Literary Reputation in America."[1] But in the years following those covered in Emerson's study the volume, ingenuity, and disparity of Faulkner criticism has reached astonishing proportions. Many of the most practiced and reputable of American critics have exercised their talents upon Faulkner; and of this stream of studies there appears to be no end in sight--nor any consensus in the making.[2] All that has been (or can be) agreed is that Faulkner's achievement was considerable and will require further analysis and explanation.

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[1] Unpublished dissertation (Vanderbilt, 1962); some of the information contained in this study appears in Emerson's essay, "Prophet Next Door," which appeared in Reality and Myth: Essays in American Literature (Nashville, 1964), pp. 237-274.

It is the argument of this study that the aforementioned divergence of critical opinion concerning Faulkner's significance is in some measure attributable to the failure of most Faulkner critics to reach certain necessary pre-exegetical determinations as to the perspective from which he wrote. The result has been a peculiar species of anachronism, a provincialism _in time_. Faulkner has not yet been approached on his own terms, read as a Southerner of a particular generation, class, and experience; and until he is, not only the burden of his fictions but also the craft with which he developed them will not be readily understood or translated into discursive terms.[3] For reasons that I hope will be made obvious in the course of this study, much in the temper of our times conspires against the possibility of the type of sympathetic, "inside" approach to Faulkner's world view that is now required. In fact, the calculated hostility or contrived blindness of many critics to the sensibility operative in Faulkner's works and the "authority" of (or general acceptance given to) this criticism now block the way toward the reading those works deserve.[4] In my attempt to compose a tentative prolegomenon to further Faulkner studies, I do not propose to tilt endlessly in the body of my paper or in citations with examples of the commentary to which I object; I shall make reference to representative samples of all of its species as they provide my argument with a useful or necessary point of departure and when I write in contradiction of their findings. But the existence of such a body of misjudgments is assumed throughout and will solicit from me reiteration of certain invidious analogies which I use to reinforce that argument.[5]

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[2] For evidence of the volume of Faulkner criticism, see the bibliography of _William Faulkner: Three Decades of Criticism_, eds. Frederick J. Hoffman and Olga W. Vickery (New York, 1960); Irene Lynn Sleeth, _William Faulkner: A Bibliography of Criticism_, The Swallow Pamphlets Number Thirteen (Denver, 1962); Robert W. Daniel and John L. Longley, Jr., "Faulkner's Critics: A Selective Bibliography," _Perspective_, III (Winter 1950), 202-208; Oregon University Library, _William Faulkner: Bibliography and Criticism, 1951-54_ (Eugene, Ore., 1955); _Modern Fiction Studies_, II (Autumn 1956), 150-164; _Modern Fiction Studies_, XIII (Spring 1967), 115-161; and the regular listings in _American Literature_ and the May and/or June issues of _PMLA_ bibliography. The last six issues of the latter list over four hundred ten items. Since 1950, there have been at least thirty books of commentary on Faulkner published and over thirty-five dissertations completed; and this is to say nothing of portions of other studies devoted to Faulkner. Moreover, five or six major studies of Faulkner's fiction are shortly forthcoming.

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[3] I have expanded this argument in some detail in my "Faulkner Among the Puritans," Sewanee Review, LXXII (Winter 1964), 150. In it I follow Randall Stewart's "Poetically the Most Accurate Man Alive," Modern Age, VI (Winter 1961), 81-90.

[4] For a similar statement see James B. Meriwether's "Faulkner and the South," The Dilemma of the Southern Writer, ed. R. K. Meeker (Farmville, Va., 1961), pp. 143-162.

As I understand it, the foundation of Faulkner's world view, the central assumption implicit in the perspective from which he writes is what I shall call here his doctrine of nature. The expression of this doctrine (or definition of the estate of man and all its predictabilities) in Faulkner's fiction becomes more explicit as the Yoknapatawpha Cycle develops.[6] Although (like the Cycle itself, which in some form seems to have existed in Faulkner's mind even before the publication of Sartoris in 1929) it is not revealed with perfect consistency in all his works, its outlines take shape with repeated use and finally receive their definitive statement in the hunting stories written between 1935 and 1950.[7]

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[5] Cleanth Brooks extends his monumental William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country (New Haven, 1963) by almost one hundred pages with such corrections. My citations from Brooks' book and from other studies of Faulkner to which I am indebted will necessarily be extensive. But Professor Brooks has made much of the general demolition work of the variety I am tempted to undertake unnecessary.

[6] John L. Longley, Jr., The Tragic Mask: A Study of Faulkner's Heroes (Chapel Hill, 1963), p. 219. He in turn echoes Malcolm Cowley's introduction to The Portable Faulkner (New York, 1946), p. 8.

In the name of fictional strategies essential to his individual narratives, Faulkner broke off bits of his postage stamp universe and set them under a particular light, made them live in a particular context. Every time he used the Snopes material, its meaning was slightly changed; and there are many Ike McCaslins, each seen from a different perspective.[8] In similar fashion Faulkner emphasized or played down his doctrine of nature according to the demands his story teller's art imposed upon him. His exposition of it in comic works, though forthright, is often not at all apparent. In his more sombre productions it is frequently hedged or qualified by an admiration for sheer energy or simple patience. Even further, in his last years he did at times under the pressure of barbed interrogation or the kind of social context to which he, as a gentleman, adjusted make public remarks that seemed to imply just the opposite of what I believe was his characteristic position on the relation of nature and society.[9] But as Donald Davidson said of him

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[7] See a prefatory note by Faulkner to The Mansion and Faulkner in the University, ed. Frederick L. Gwynn and Joseph L. Blotner (Charlottesville, 1959), pp. 9, 24, 78-79; also Lawrance Thompson's William Faulkner: An Introduction and Interpretation (New York, 1963), p. 10; and James B. Meriwether's The Literary Career of William Faulkner (Princeton, 1961), p. 65. Meriwether indicates that some of Sartoris was probably written in 1926 and portions of The Hamlet even earlier.

[8] The changes in the character of Mink Snopes made from The Hamlet to The Mansion are obvious. Moreover, Flem and Eula are also seen from a different perspective at various points in the trilogy. Ike McCaslin is usually a very tragic or sombre figure as he appears in Go Down, Moses. But in The Reivers and "Race at Morning" this is not the case. These changes merely illustrate what Faulkner reiterated repeatedly, that the longer he knew some of his characters,

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the better he knew them and their stories. The Yoknapatawpha Cycle is something that Faulkner at once knew and also discovered progressively. As Andrew Lytle has suggested in "The Town: Helen's Last Stand," *Sewanee Review*, LXV (Summer 1957) 475, Yoknapatawpha is the "enveloping action," each of the parts of which Faulkner is trying to place in the great untold story, always by his own admission falling somewhat short; nevertheless it is through the telling of the individual stories inside the Cycle that the Cycle itself is partially discovered to the author's and to the reader's understanding. To the same effect, see a Faulkner letter and Malcolm Cowley's expansion on its suggestion in *The Faulkner-Cowley File* (New York, 1966), pp. 25, 39-40, 47.

[9] Examples of this observance of decorum in interviews are scattered throughout *Faulkner in the University*; *Faulkner at West Point*, eds. Joseph L. Fant, III, and Robert Ashley (New York, 1964); and *Faulkner at Nagano*, ed. Robert A. Jelliffe (Tokyo, 1956). Gwynn and Blotner (pp. 7-8), Murry Falkner (*The Falkners of Mississippi* [Baton Rouge, 1967],

some years ago, the writer was much wiser than the public man.[10] As I hope to show, the novelist's philosophical inconsistencies were inconsequential.

My interpretation of Faulkner's doctrine of nature very nearly hinges on the importance which I attach to his repeated use of three words: pride, humility, and endurance. By endurance--the most important of the three--Faulkner means something more than strength of will and stoic stubbornness, something more than the bravado of Hardy's thrush singing defiance to the winter wind. Endurance requires of those who practice it the judgment and the courage to define themselves in terms of their insufficiencies while yet resisting the temptations to fatalism. The enduring accept creaturehood and have what the theologian Paul Tillich calls the "courage to be finite." Before a numinous and theologically suggestive Nature, mysterious and "other," they are humble--as is the Puritan before his God of thunder. But they are not

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pp. 199-201), and Blotner again (in "William Faulkner: Roving Ambassador," International Educational and Cultural Exchange [Summer 1966], 1-22) venture some explanation of this Faulkner habit.

[10] This remark appears on p. 168 in a footnote to an essay entitled "Why the Modern South Has a Great Literature," included in Still Rebels, Still Yankees (Baton Rouge, 1957).

passive in their appraoch to life. Their attitude toward a "given" reality is ". . . reverential and creative at the same time; it worships the spirit, not the graven image; and it allows man to contribute his mite toward helping Providence."[11] In brief, endurance is the result of a balance of "pride and humility"; both excessive pride and excessive humility are forms of non-endurance. Both are the result of an imperfect relationship with nature, an invalid self-definition in the face of what is "fairly inscrutable."[12] And all non-endurance is rooted in cowardice, in a fear of what a full acceptance of creaturehood entails; often in Faulkner's fiction it takes the form of flight or attempted "escape."[13] Endurance is perhaps the best one-word definition of Faulkner's ethic; and like all ethics, his implies an order of creation and a conception of the place of man in that ordering.

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[11] Richard Weaver, "Up from Liberalism," Modern Age, III (Winter 1958-59), 28.

[12] *I'll Take My Stand*, by Twelve Southerners (New York, 1930), p. xxiv.

[13] My understanding of what is meant by "pride and humility" in Faulkner was first expressed in "Faulkner's 'Tall Men,'" *South Atlantic Quarterly*, LXI (Winter 1962), 29-39. The materials in that essay will subsequently be expanded in the body of this paper.

Faulkner's doctrine of nature has both its vertical (i.e., theological or semitheological) and its horizontal (social) implications. And though it is difficult to define and/or separate these implications and unavoidable that in some measure both kinds must be dealt with whenever either is spoken of, the attempt will here be made to sift and distinguish the two without distorting their dialectic and therefore to divide this study into two major sections: the first, speculative and philosophic; the second, pragmatic and exegetical. In turn, each of these sections will be of two parts: the first (including this introduction plus Chapters II and III), to establish the framework--either horizontal or vertical--for a portion of the discussion and to state inductively what is to be proved; the second (Chapter IV of readings and the concluding Chapter V), to defend that argument out of Faulkner's text and to project further labors in the same direction.

Chapter II (the first post-introductory subdivision of the essay) is entitled "The Discipline of the Numinous: Man's Self-Definition." Faulkner's understanding of man's proper relationship to the natural world involves both an ideal of man in nature, as a part of the created world, and a positive conviction as to how man should regard the natural side of his own make-up. The nature which man must endure and to which he must relate himself in "pride and humility" is both within and without; it is represented in his fiction by such great forces as floods, tempests, seasonal changes, and the brooding impenetrable wilderness. But it is also manifested in the demands which the human flesh makes upon itself and the imperatives imposed upon it by such providentially disposed features of our individual condition as parentage, age, and sex. Faulkner's admirable characters, those who represent the norm (whose violation occasions most of the action in his works) are able to come to terms with nature. They experience the discipline of nature--which is the subject of the forest sections of "The Bear," "Delta Autumn," "The Old People," "Race at Morning," and the other hunting stories; as well as "Spotted Horses," "Was," "Golden Land," and "Old Man." They pass through something like what William Wordsworth described in *The Excursion* as "communion, not from terror free"[14] and the "sanctified" discipline of

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[14] *The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth*: *The Excursion*: *The Recluse*, *Part I*, *Book I*, eds. E. De Selincourt and Helen Darbishire (Oxford, 1949), p. 12.

"pain and fear."[15] They recognize in nature, in the "given" within and without, the handiwork of something that is numinous and wholly "other," though they do not often attach theological specifications to their insight; and as a result they come to accept man's partial freedom within a framework of *a priori* limitations and refrain from exalting him into a pseudo-divinity. They accept the given aspects of their creaturehood and live in harmony with what they cannot avoid--without self-delusion or dismay. They make neither too much nor too little of the middle estate.[16]

According to Faulkner, the way in which men may learn to define themselves in relationship to an inscrutable and and sometimes numinous order of things is best exemplified in his stories of hunters, farmers, and woodsmen and of the game they pursue in ritual celebration of life's proud finitude. Therefore the discussion of the discipline of nature given here will have as its basis my understanding and analysis of these forest stories in which external nature acts almost as a character in making its presence felt either in the spirit of acceptance or rejection. But a similar learning process is implicit in his portraits of dignity and perseverance in suffering outside of the forest framework--and in the fate of those who refuse to acknowledge their limitation or the implications of their suffering. Faulkner's characters who understand endurance without experiencing the woodsman's initiation or the suffering which leads to self-discovery have had access to a tradition which embodies a pious acceptance of nature as norm and the experience of generations in discovering its pattern. Theirs are his novels and stories of family--of its establishment, preservation, and/or decline. Tradition may play (or, significantly, fail to play) a crucial role in the development of an individual's relationship to nature. Frequently the effects of these three disciplines (physical and external nature, suffering, and precept) commingle in shaping the development of a Faulkner character. But he seems to to feel that at least one of them is indispensable to the development of that variety of self-understanding, that balance of pride and humility which he refers to as endurance.[17] In consequence I will be led to comment on evidences of Faulkner's thinking on the status of individual man in nature as they are suggested by many of Faulkner's stories set outside of the forest world. The numerous printed interviews left to us by the novelist will also be levied upon, in some detail.

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[15] William Wordsworth, *The Prelude, or Growth of a Poet's Mind*, ed. E. De Selincourt (Oxford, 1926), p. 25. For a discussion of the "ministry of fear" in Wordsworth's thought, which I have found helpful in my treatment of a like theme in Faulkner, see R. D. Havens' *The Mind of a Poet* (Baltimore, 1941), pp. 39-53. Even more valuable is *The Idea of the Holy*, by Rudolph Otto (London, 1923). "Numinous" is Otto's term.

[16] The question of Faulkner's relation to the tradition of European thought to which he is obviously (if indirectly) indebted is reserved for the next two chapters of this paper.

The third section of this paper (and second half of my extrapolation of the theoretical argument of this introduction) is entitled "Endurance in Stewardship: Man in Society." It is the contention of this portion of my study that Faulkner's vision of the good society and of man's proper relationship to other men and to their "place" in the social order follows logically from his understanding of man's place in and relationship to the total creation of which he is a part. In other words, he conceives of the human community as a body properly governed by a natural law and as a reflection of man's understanding of his relationship to nature.[18] For the enduring are good citizens; and the social consequence of their endurance is stewardship, a variety of *noblesse oblige*, which they practice in whatever station in life or circumstance that confronts them. And the result of a general practice of this combination of endurance of place and stewardship is community. Faulkner would undoubtedly have agreed with Burke when the latter wrote, with reference to the making of society: "Art is man's nature."[19]

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[17] All finally refer to a conception of man's limited but free place in a given and partially mysterious order. Precept is tradition as guide. The function of suffering is to confirm the wisdom of tradition, the validity of precept.

Place, circumstance, or what is "given" or inescapable in the social situation which Faulkner's characters create, inherit, or simply stumble into, are all part of the nature of things which they as ladies or gentlemen must endure in pride and humility. There is a providential quality about place which Faulkner's admirable characters recognize and accept. These characters do not whine about how they have been disadvantaged or imposed upon by fate. They do not devote their time to an attempt to impose upon the world some self-conceived idea of justice for themselves. Instead, they "do the best they can" with those aspects of life around them which are within their sphere of influence. And their self-respect and inherent dignity are therefore not contingent upon status but rather are a result of their ability to live up to their own potential for responsibility in matters which they can do something about.

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[18] The understanding of natural law will be treated fully in Chapter III. Its most important source is the American and British Burkean or Old Whig neo-conservative tradition outlined by Russell Kirk in his *The Conservative Mind* (Chicago, 1953). Natural law as interpreted by this school of thought has its theological sanction made manifest to men by the good fortune which comes to those who abide by it; but it is basically experiential in origin, understood (by men and nations) through a long experience with trial and error.

[19] This observation appears in Burke's "Thoughts on the Cause of Present Discontent" and is reprinted on p. 61 of the organized compendium of quotations from the great conservative entitled *The Philosophy of Edmund Burke*, eds. Louis I. Bredvold and R. G. Ross (Ann Arbor, 1960). It is supported by John C. Calhoun in his *Disquisition on Government* (p. 45 of the edition of C. Gordon Post [N. Y., 1953]--with selections from "The Discourse").

There is nothing about this conception of place to contradict Faulkner's preference for independent men, nothing to conflict with his open hostility to the paternalistic Leviathan state. His republicanism is communal, not anarchistic. Within the communal framework he preferred to see men encouraged to be as independent as possible.[20] But the endurance or stewardship of place--assigned condition, working from where and what you are without being paralyzed by the idea of where you ought to be--is mandatory in a world where the simple accidents of birth, fortune, heritage, or the convolutions of history always leave some men with power over (and Faulkner believes, responsibility for) others. Stewardship and independence, humility and pride complement each other in the maintenance of community. And despite differences in station the relationship of characters in old Yoknapatawpha who understand "place" is "brotherly," offering no offense where manners are observed--even though it does not conform to the ideals of abstract equalitarianism.

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[20] His republicanism leads him to prefer a libertarian modification of the doctrine of the "chain of being"--which

In the communal family (and the communal society is by definition familial and patriarchal) social situation, like land on which it is often based, is something Faulkner realizes will always be given, somewhat arbitrary, unearned. But once it is given, it may be validated through stewardship. Not only social situation, but also sex, age, and family

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is what is meant by "Old Whig" above. Burke himself inverted the terms and referred to his fellowship as New Whigs, as opposed to Foxites or pro-Jacobins and their Commonwealth progenitors. On this distinction, see J. R. Pole's Political Representation in England and the Origin of the American Republic (New York, 1966).

connection (here in their social or what I have called "horizontal" dimension) are providentially given, to be endured and held in trust--for each thing and each person, a season and a use. In the same fashion, history is deposited upon each individual. Without stewardship of place in a world where ". . . there is no such thing as equality per se," society becomes a jungle.[21] And the events which Faulkner's fiction records are the chaotic and terrifying consequences of the choice by his characters, either in pride or passivity, of a defiant posture before that "awful" marshaller of men who is the "Author of our place."[22] In almost every case social disorder in Faulkner follows directly from an invalid self-definition and a flight from or presumption against finitude; this causal connection establishes the ultimate inseparability of the "vertical" and the "horizontal" implications of Faulkner's doctrine of nature.

Because they reflect so clearly the importance which Faulkner attaches to social order, stewardship of place, and the maintenance of community, the documentary portions of this chapter will refer briefly to his novels and stories about the pattern of life in the post-bellum South and the social disintegration which they record. The Snopes Trilogy, *The Unvanquished*, *Sartoris*, *Intruder in the Dust*, *Absalom, Absalom!*, *The Sound and the Fury*, *The Reivers*, and *Light in August* will be touched upon. But the account of the career of Isaac McCaslin outside of the big bottom as it is recorded in *Go Down, Moses* will draw attention back to the hunting stories. And Faulkner's affirmation of community appears in several short stories, *A Fable*, and indeed in most of his fiction. Discussion of it in this work will be selective, but broadly speaking, inclusive. However, interviews and other occasional prose will be called upon to serve my turn--even more than fiction.

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[21] William Faulkner, "On Fear: The South in Labor," Harper's, CCXII (June 1956), 34.

[22] From Edmund Burke's "Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs," which appears in Bredvold and Ross, op. cit., p. 54.

Chapters II and III will contain an outline for the context of the commentary which these secondary introductions precede and will establish and explain the terminology that will be employed in Chapters IV and V. With the assistance of A. O. Lovejoy, Peter Gay, and others, I will of necessity attempt to place Faulkner's conception of the meaning of "nature" in the troublesome history of the term.[23] For the composition of Chapter II, I have drawn heavily (even where I do not make direct acknowledgment) from the neo-orthodox protestant and conservative Catholic theologians, on Richard Weaver's and Eric Voegelin's studies of the diseases of the modern mind and spirit,[24] and on the productions of the Nashville Agrarians, particularly the preface to *I'll Take My Stand* and John Crowe Ransom's *God Without Thunder*.[25] Various works by other Southern representatives, contemporary and earlier, of the near-Stoic branch of the natural law tradition to which Faulkner seems to belong provide useful details and analogies--or state more plainly what the novelist is getting at than he does himself. And European or non-Southern American spokesmen for this same tradition, of which the South was one of the clearest expressions, will be utilized extensively where they may serve to connect or clarify other writers under discussion.

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[23] Especially Lovejoy's *Essays in the History of Ideas* (Baltimore, 1948) and his *The Great Chain of Being* (Cambridge, Mass., 1950) and Gay's *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation* (New York, 1966).

[24] The works of Weaver most useful to me are *Ideas Have Consequences* (Chicago, 1948); *Visions of Order* (Baton Rouge, 1964); *Life Without Prejudice* (Chicago, 1965); his essay, "Aspects of Southern Philosophy," which appeared in a volume entitled *Southern Renascence*, eds. Louis D. Rubin, Jr., and Robert D. Jacobs (Baltimore, 1953), pp. 14-30; and his unpublished dissertation, "The Confederate South, 1865-1912: A Study in the Survival of a Mind and a Culture" (Louisiana State University, 1943).

Voegelin's three-fourths completed dissection of the "gnostic mentality" is entitled *Order and History* (Baton Rouge, 1956-1957). A better introduction to his thought (ontology, epistemology, and teleology) is contained in *The New Science of Politics* (Chicago, 1952).

[25] John Crowe Ransom, *God Without Thunder: An Unorthodox Defense of Orthodoxy* (New York, 1930).

The substance of Chapter III will be derived primarily from a study of Southern social and intellectual history and from the application to that study of the "communal" social theory of Edmund Burke and his modern champions or compeers.[26] This chapter will also draw from the writings of Richard Weaver, from Eric Voegelin, from the Agrarians, and from other contemporary works which focus upon the connection of human self-definition and social order.

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[26] J. B. Hubbell (The South in American Literature [Durham, 1954], p. 189) quotes as typical of the Southern attitude toward Burke this passage from the April, 1860 issue of De Bow's Review: "Johnson, and Burke, and Sir Walter Scott, should have statues in every Southern capitol. Thus would our youth learn what are the sentiments and opinions that become gentlemen. . . ." The writings of Calhoun and John Randolph of Roanoke are full of praise for Burke.

Part Two (Chapters IV and V) will consist of an expanded comment on the implications of Faulkner's doctrine of nature to the strictly critical explication of his individual novels and short stories and a number of detailed readings grounded in that understanding. It is the place for comment on--and for specific contention with--other Faulkner scholars. The design of the Yoknapatawpha Cycle itself and more especially of the individual works which make it up reflect Faulkner's preoccupations with what he calls "endurance." By converting individual plots into discursive terms, I hope to demonstrate that the structure of most of his fiction dramatizes and explores the conflict within or between characters of impulses to escape or endure. Their escape or endurance may follow from either overweening pride or fatalistic passivity. The fictional resolution upon which their decision is a comment is a result of their choice, a choice of whether to accept or rebel against nature. To prevail, they must cope and endure.

Likewise in the total Cycle and in the "myth" of Southern history which it unfolds, there is a teleology at work which is, I believe, not to be understood apart from Faulkner's doctrine of nature; and insofar as the meaning of or the fictional strategies employed in most of Faulkner's works are conditioned by and completely comprehensible only in terms of their relationship to the Cycle, an understanding of the norms governing that teleology is necessary to their adequate explication. What I refer to here is my concept of an enveloping action more or less active in all of the Yoknapatawpha fiction. I will give it exposition in rounding off "Demonstration and Prospectus."

In this section I shall not be able to apply the findings of Chapters II and III in a critical evaluation of all of Faulkner's fiction. Instead I intend to employ them in the clarification of problems of interpretation provoked by some of Faulkner's best known and most thoroughly studied works and in a full length analysis of some of his more neglected productions. In Chapter V, "Conclusion," I intend to indicate how I would go about expanding the evidence of IV. I hope to contribute something worthwhile to the study of the structure, theme, and tone of Faulkner's work and to the elucidation of just what is meant by "The Yoknapatawpha Cycle." Perhaps this paper will demonstrate the advantages "historicism" and willing suspension of disbelief in the treatment of works which do not reflect "today's thinking."[27]

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[27] In his Visions of Order (p. 147) Richard Weaver uses

Most obviously this study belongs to the George Marion O'Donnell, Malcolm Cowley, Robert Penn Warren, Andrew Lytle, Cleanth Brooks line of Faulkner criticism--to whose influence and continuation William Van O'Connor objected strongly over ten years ago. As O'Connor observed, in this criticism ". . . the honorific word is Tradition."[28] Although

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this phrase; his full remarks read as follows: "When writers like William Faulkner and Robert Penn Warren do present in fiction the human dilemma, their works are often not read for what they are. The public, and in many cases the critics, seize upon some incidental aspect of them and interpret this as reflecting 'today's thinking.' The pressure [of contemporary ideology] against reporting the whole man in a moral situation has indeed not silenced such writers, but it has left them widely misunderstood."

[28] The Tangled Fire of William Faulkner (Minneapolis, 1954), pp. ix-x. O'Connor was anticipated in his demur by Irving Howe in his William Faulkner: A Critical Study (New York, 1962), p. 130 (the work to which I refer hereafter as Howe, op. cit.); and the same complaint has been reechoed frequently in the intervening years. See Richard P. Adams' "About These Moderns" in the New Series of Southern Review, I (Spring 1965), 456-460. See also Adams' discussion of 1963 Faulkner scholarship in American Literary Scholarship: An Annual, 1963 (Durham, 1965), pp. 71-80; and the unpublished dissertations, "The Theme of Responsibility in the Later Fiction of William Faulkner" (University of Washington, 1960) and "The Individual and the Community: Values in the Novels of William Faulkner" (Brown University, 1964) by Robert Berner and Donald Mordecal Kartiganer, respectively. The objective of Berner's and Kartiganer's papers is to discredit the traditionalists. All future citations to their work are to these papers unless I otherwise specify.

The existence of schools of Faulkner criticism has been widely recognized. R. Scholes in reviewing Brooks' study for The Yale Review, LIII (Spring 1964), 232-235, I differ in many details with the understanding of Faulkner's themes and strategies very nearly established as canonical by members of this distinguished company, I agree wholeheartedly with them that a determination of the relationship of Faulkner to the tradition (and the traditional world view) which he inherited is properly the first order of business for the student of his fiction.

The doctrine of nature here described and extracted from Faulkner's text was implicit in the traditional perspective which he, as a Southerner of his class and generation, inherited. As Weaver's "The Confederate South" demonstrates convincingly, to the near absolute currency of this world view among the members of that society can be attributed the much remarked and little understood intellectual homogeneity and solidity of the nineteenth-century South. It was at once the product of an age-old European ideal of community, a stern Augustinian theology, and, in the political and social sphere, a practical mixture of

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has written an amusing tongue-in-cheek description ("Understanding Faulkner") of the present alignment of forces on the "right" and "left." In a more serious vein is Allen Guttmann's inclusion of the "wars" of Faulkner criticism as a fact of the contemporary conflict of political ideologies within the American academic community (The Conservative Tradition in America [New York, 1967], pp. 71-74 and 158).

Jefferson and Calhoun, individualism and paternalism, which the Southerner has always lived by. It is not contended here that Faulkner's application of the attitudes and assumptions which, I have argued, organize his texts was entirely the result of a self-conscious intent. As axioms which the inhabitants of the world that produced him acted or reacted upon in their everyday lives, the details and implications of this doctrine took root, as a matter of course, in his own vision of life--and became a part of the idiom of his mind. They were revised and adjusted in accordance with Faulkner's private conscience, imagination, and experience, but not abandoned. That so little Faulkner criticism has been fashioned by intellects disposed (even when not functioning professionally as critics) to approach with anything like empathy or objective non-commitment the set of mind, historical experience, or philosophical tradition Faulkner was born to, in great measure explains why his doctrine of nature has been for the most part misunderstood or ignored. The mind of the South is "out of fashion"; and those interpretations of it now current and well received by contemporary opinion (the "today's thinking" of which Weaver warns) are, as I shall attempt to indicate in the following chapters--particularly in the explication of individual works--engines and instruments in the service of positions utterly inimical to the Faulknerian version of that mind. Moreover, (in interviews, fiction, and elsewhere) Faulkner's idiosyncratic, vague, and inconsistent use of certain terms or phrases to which he attaches great meaning has made the misunderstanding all the more likely--and has in part confounded even the "traditionalist" critics who had by disposition and temper been well equipped to comprehend what he was about. Much of the provocation for this study came out of an extensive examination, during a period of years, of all the varieties of Faulkner criticism which stand over against the traditionalist school: sociological; psychological; "historical" (*i.e.*, depending upon comparison with the works of other, usually modern, writers); political-economic; and (almost invariably) conspicuously "liberal." The genesis of this study was a somewhat leisurely survey of Faulkner's work as it stood in 1958-59 and a concomitant examination of modern orthodox theology, particularly that part of it which deals with the implications of the secularist definition of man. Some years later Randall Stewart's *American Literature and Christian Doctrine* convinced me that theological insights could be useful in the criticism of American literature.[29] Not long thereafter I came across Donald Davidson's suggestion to Harry Modean Campbell and Ruel Foster (quoted in their *William Faulkner*) that Faulkner's characteristic thesis is "nature as norm."[30] After pursuing this suggestion in conversations with Mr. Davidson, I found it to be even more significant; and in the hope of better understanding the teleology behind the handling of it in Faulkner and other figures in the Southern Renaissance, I commenced a study of Southern intellectual history and of the winds of doctrine (historiographies) that have swept across its pages. This undertaking was encouraged and assisted by Professor F. L. Owsley, Jr., Mrs. F. L. Owsley, Sr., and by the works of the late Frank L. Owsley, Sr., especially his *Plain Folk of the Old South* and Agrarian essays.[31] The works of other students of the mind of the South and of the "central themes" of

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[29] *American Literature and Christian Doctrine* (Baton Rouge, 1958).

[30] *William Faulkner: A Critical Appraisal* (Norman, Okla., 1951).

[31] *The Plain Folk of the Old South* (Baton Rouge, 1949).

Southern history--from Dunning and Phillips to Van Woodward, and from Gaines and Cash to William Taylor, Simkins, and Eaton--have proved useful.[32] And the time honored division of ante-bellum Southern thought into the traditions of Jefferson and of Calhoun in Vernon L. Parrington's Main Currents in American Thought was perpetually stimulating.[33]

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[32] The works of all the historians mentioned here offer some interpretation of the Southern mind. I refer specifically to: William A. Dunning, Reconstruction, Political and Economic: 1865-1877 (New York, 1907); U. B. Phillips, Life and Labor in the Old South (New York, 1929); C. Van Woodward, The Burden of Southern History (Baton Rouge, 1960); Francis Pendleton Gaines, The Southern Plantation: A Study in the Development and Accuracy of a Tradition of the South (New York, 1924); W. J. Cash, The Mind of the South (New York, 1941); W. R. Taylor, Cavalier and Yankee: The Old South and the American Character (New York, 1961); Francis Butler Simkins, The Everlasting South (Baton Rouge, 1963); and Clement Eaton, The Mind of the Old South (Baton Rouge, 1964). Other related documents are listed in my bibliography and in citations to Chapters II and III.

[33] This division is the organizing principle of the second section, "The Romantic Revolution," of Main Currents of American Thought (New York, 1930). The artificiality and the importance of this dichotomy to past misinterpretation of the Southern mind was called to my attention by Professor Donald Davidson and is developed by him in his essays, "Mr. Cash and the Proto-Dorian South" (Still Rebels, Still Yankees, pp. 191-212) and "The New South and the Conservative Tradition," National Review, X (September 10, 1960), 141-146.

This approach should, I believe, establish Faulkner's connection with other figures in the Southern Renaissance and confirm his place as the central and representative figure in it, as one of a group of Southerners who chose as their perspective the brink between two worlds, one dying--the other unable or unworthy to be born.

CHAPTER II

THE DISCIPLINE OF THE NUMINOUS:
MAN'S SELF-DEFINITION

As I have just indicated in commencing my study, the matter of this its second chapter is amorphous and top-lofty. To consequent objections to what I will make of it I submit in advance. For to avoid them would be to risk an even greater folly. The danger confronting anyone who expects to place and clarify what are here denominated the "vertical" implications of a writer's doctrine of nature is that his remarks are likely to swell (and with astonishing swiftness) into a makeshift history of philosophy and/or theology. Debts, distinctions, and affinities multiply; and while precision is yet undiscovered, confusion is compounded. Spatial terms are inadequate for the rendering of doctrine. But the systematic and historical thinker's procedures grapple no better with the evidences of esemplastic power. The mentality of the novelist or poet is, after all, by definition prephilosophic, precognitive.

His stock and trade is the image; and the image does not readily or satisfactorily submit to metaphysical translation. For it is otherwise intended--suited by its essential character to give to the reader or "beholder" impressions that will not formulate in the language or ordinary discourse. Criticism of the variety I now undertake is always a matter of approximation, a "sacrilege" in one sense and an impertinence in another. Nonetheless, at least a working draft on the first premise of Faulkner's world view is what is most needful at this point. I so contend because, if the bedrock of a man's outlook is usually a nexus of narratives and pictures, a tropology (and I suspect that this is also the case with philosophers, though in a more insidious fashion), then we must look to it first when we search for the purpose and meaning within his activity. Nothing more presumptuous is here intended. The context which I am proposing and the genetics for Faulkner's state of mind that I suggest will therefore, of necessity, appear to be rather spare. Both history--the distance of his stance from what his generation expected of the artist--and the healthy reluctance of my subject to fit himself within the familiar confines of abstraction make even this modest venture difficult; more than we would expect, *sui generis*. Yet if the end product "works" as a critical tool, it is, I believe, defensible.

What word in wide use is more ubiquitous or more resistant to straightforward definition than is that most familiar of counters, "nature?" Perhaps "God" or "the Good" are no less elusive--perhaps "love" and "Order" and "Justice." Certainly they are not more so. Nature is the portmanteau of portmanteaux. Over thirty years ago the distinguished philosopher and historian of thought systematic and informal, Arthur O. Lovejoy, identified sixty-six different meanings assigned to the term since Western man first began to record his self-consciousness, his view of what he is, proceeds from, and may (or is supposed to) become.[1] The late C. S. Lewis, in a somewhat less rigorous fashion, sifted out and reflected on the causes and consequences of such variety in in his brilliant analysis of the implications for philosophy of the ordinary (and often contradictory) usage given weighted abstractions.[2] He explained a few of Lovejoy's complications, but did little to resolve them. Moreover, with the new conceptions of space and matter given in modern physics (Bohr on subatomic particles, quasar theory, etc.) and such recent philosophic developments as existentialism and "the school of the absurd," the texts and glosses of Lovejoy and Lewis could probably be much extended. And this is to say nothing of oriental and Near Eastern notions. But in the face of the overlapping and conflicting "natures" now or once current, it is a word we cannot do without. Some conception of nature is (if not apparent) just beneath the surface in any serious discourse; and however vague they may be about the logical supports or implications of their "nature," people mean something serious and, in most cases, normative when they invoke its authority. Just so, but with his own engines of projection, does every author. It is utterly impossible to discuss literature in its totality without reference to the word. Fortunately for my purposes, a simple antithesis, a dichotomy between two versions of how and where and why men exist, will allow for identification and classification of all of its varieties.

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[1] "Some Meanings of 'Nature'" appears in *Primiitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity* (Baltimore, 1935), ed. Lovejoy and George Boas, pp. 447-456.

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[2] Studies in Words (Cambridge, 1967), pp. 24-74. On the same subject is The Idea of Nature (Oxford, 1945) by the philosopher R. G. Collingwood. He, like Lovejoy and Lewis, distinguishes roughly three versions of "nature" to which most uses of the word relate: nature as stasis, nature as process, and nature as some mixture of fixity and motion (as a beginning, an end, or the trip between the two, or all of these together)--Being, Becoming, and their Union.

According to the gifted (and ambitious) Peter Gay of Columbia, the civilization of the West took its irrevocable turn toward the pattern of things we now know as modern in the Northern Europe of the seventeenth century, an intellectual turn away from the "mythopeic" or "submissive" and toward the "critical" or "neo-pagan" view of the character, capacity, and destiny of the species. Since 1800 only a very small and ever decreasing number of pockets or enclaves of precritical, premodern thinking have survived. The essential difference separating "mythopeic" and "critical" doctrines of nature (and this is obviously the heart of his distinction) is that, as he understands them, the former posits an "enchanted" or "haunted" and fixed universe--a universe administered or inhabited by awesome, "numinous" powers not subject to the mandates of the human will or the categories of the human reason, a universe ready to reassert its integrity if violated; while the other assumes that the situation of man is completely malleable and imperfect or unsatisfactory to mortal conceptions of what is advantageous only by virtue of errors or ignorance--reparable insufficiencies. With the death of the former the Judeo-Christian (and all that is not Promethean in the Classical) tradition in ontology recedes from view--to be replaced by a self-confident and superbly equipped "I," which without any "rival" (save its supposed servant, that potential end-in-itself, scientific methodology) aspires to *make* its own being.[3] Gay's analysis is, apart from his loaded terminology, a fair one. A variety of other sources might have operated in his place as an equivalent, a point of departure. His synthesis, however, is orderly and impressive. Many scholars still would prefer to date his "turn" somewhat earlier: with the Renaissance, the Reformation, the rise of Humanism, Thomistic scholasticism, or even Saul of Tarsus.

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[3] Gay, pp. ix-xiv; 3-27; 127-132; and *passim*. His "Bibliographical Essay" (pp. 423-552) mentions over thirty theories concerning the date and cause of the triumph of modernism. Similar schema appear in *The Gospel of Christian Atheism* (Philadelphia, 1966) by Thomas J. J. Altizer; *Radical Theology and the Death of God* (Indianapolis, 1966) by Altizer and William Hamilton; and *The Secular City* (New York, 1966) by Harvey Cox. These "theologians" are of Gay's party and are as delighted as he by "the triumph of criticism." An earlier apostle of the same faith (though, like Cox, kinder to Christianity--perhaps because he believes that, once purified, it will join up) is Carl L. Becker in his *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth-Century Philosophers* (New Haven, 1932). Closely related are the more recent *Utopia and Its Enemies* (New York, 1963) by George Kateb and the even earlier *The Idea of Progress* by J. B. Bury (London, 1928). Further reinforcement is to be had from the more liberal commentary on the American tradition and its origins: Louis Hartz (*The Liberal Tradition in America* [New York, 1955]); Merle Curti (*The Growth of American Thought* [New York, 1951]); Ralph H. Gabriel (*The Course of American Democracy* [New York, 1956]); David Spitz (*Essays in the*

Liberal Idea of Freedom [Tucson, 1964]); Richard Hofstadter (*The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It* [New York, 1948]); and Max Lerner (*America as a Civilization* [New York, 1957]). As an example of a cautious literary ally, the reader might examine Lionel Trilling's "Our Hawthorne" (pp. 429-458 of *Hawthorne Centenary Essays* [Columbus, Ohio, 1964], ed. Roy Harvey Pearce). Trilling, for a comparison, mentions George Santayana as a "late survivor of old pain"--of the mytheopic mentality--and concludes with displeasure toward both Santayana and Hawthorne: ". . . the religious respect for God is at bottom the same thing [for both men] as our sense of dependence on an efficacious but largely unfathomed background of human experience: . . . when our naive ideas of God or Nature have been stripped of their pictorial and emotional accretions, what we are left with is the defiant core of both these ideas: the ineradicable conviction of primordial might that impinges upon and ought to control the distressed mind" (p. 350). Trilling's antidote for piety and the dispiriting submissiveness of older literature is an obvious one, mad Willie Blake, who supposedly proves how well off the artist is with "modernism." J. Hillis Miller of Johns Hopkins is examining the consequences for imaginative literature of the turn to an aggressive, critical doctrine of nature. Contrary to Trilling, he finds that the costs have outweighed the advantages. *The Disappearance of God: Five Nineteenth Century Writers* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963) and *Poets of Reality: Six Twentieth Century Writers* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965) are the first two of what promises to be a series on this subject.

But it is beyond question that a transformation was accomplished with the Aufklärung. And some such theory as Gay's is necessary to describe it. There are, of course, shadings between the two polarities. Yet, as Gay insists, once a primacy is assigned, either to the untrammeled will or to the faculty of observation (and I say will because his "critical reason" is always intent on reconstitution), the die is cast. What distinguishes his perspective on his subject (and that of most of his contemporaries) from William Faulkner's is that Gay stands well beyond the "turn" and the novelist, as a voice from one (if not the most persistent) of the laggard backwaters described above, at or just before it. In what the gentleman from Morningside Heights perceives as a fulfillment of man's long-only-potential glory, a fortunate choice for self-deification, the Southerner can recognize only a monstrous mistake. Specifically, it might be argued that Faulkner's theme and Gay's are one, the transformation of the cultivated garden of the old dream into the secular city of recent controversy. That this city was more likely to be Babylon than Jerusalem, the former (as an artist and a Southerner) never doubted; nor the latter (as an ideologue) ever suspected.[4]

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[4] For discussions of the course of Western civilization which agree with Gay and company on events but not on meaning or intellectual causes, I recommend first of all (because of their closeness to Faulkner in their doctrine of nature) John Crowe Ransom's _God Without Thunder_ and Richard Weaver's extrapolation of Ransom's argument in _Ideas Have Consequences_, plus the various papers of Andrew Nelson Lytle (in _The Hero with the Private Parts_ [Baton Rouge, 1966]; "A Wake for the Living," _Sewanee Review_, LXXV [Autumn 1967], 584-681; "The Hero and the Doctrinaires of Defeat," _Georgia Review_, X [Winter 1956], "How Many Miles to Babylon," _Southern Renasence_, pp. 31-34; and "Introduction" to _Bedford Forrest and His Critter Company_, rev. ed. [New York, 1960]), pp. xi-xvii. Related documents appear in other works by members of the same circle which I will cite hereafter. Other representative "doubters" are the Catholic theologians Dietrich von Hildebrand (_The New Tower of Babel_ [New York, 1953], pp. 9-20 _et seq._) and Thomas Molnar (_Utopia: The Perennial Heresy_ [New York, 1967]); and the intellectual historians and disciples of Burke, Louis I. Bredvold (_The Brave New World of the Enlightenment_ [Ann Arbor, Mich., 1961]; Basil Willey (_Seventeenth Century Background_ [London, 1934]; _Eighteenth Century Background: Studies in the Idea of Nature in the Thought of That Period_ [London, 1940]; _Nineteenth Century Studies_ [London, 1949]; and _More Nineteenth Century Studies_ [London, 1956]); Lester G. Crocker (_An Age of Crises: Man and World in Eighteenth Century Thought_ [Baltimore, 1963]); J. L. Talmon (_The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy_ [New York, 1952]); Norman Cohn (_The Pursuit of the Millennium_ [New York, 1957]); and Ernest Lee Tuveson (_Millennium and Utopia_ [Berkeley, 1949]). Voegelin (works cited) contains much to the same effect, as does Michael Oakeshott's "The Tower of Babel" (pp. 51-79 of _Rationalism in Politics_ [New York, 1962]). For the most sophisticated philosophical substantiation of the premodern view of Nature, I recommend Albert North Whitehead's _The Concept of Nature_ (Cambridge, 1920). And for scientific reinforcement, see Robert Ardrey's _The Territorial Imperative_ [New York, 1966]), pp. 325-332. Whitehead sums

The basis for Faulkner's doctrine of nature is his conception of what he calls "the human condition" in an apparently "ramshackle universe."[5] His adversions to this "stage" or "course" (for he sometimes describes life as an activity, usually in connection with his social philosophy) and its dimensions are scattered throughout his interviews.[6]

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up much of the post-1917 censure of the rationalist spirit. He writes (p. 73): "The materialistic theory has all the completeness of the thought of the middle ages, which had a complete answer to everything, be it in heaven or in hell or in nature. There is a trimness about it, with its instantaneous present, its vanished past, its non-existent future, and its inert matter. This trimness is very medieval and ill accords with brute fact.

"The theory which I am urging admits a greater ultimate mystery and a deeper ignorance. . . . It is impossible to meditate on time and the mystery of the creative passage of nature without an overwhelming emotion at the limitations of human intelligence."

And finally, of course, everything of Edmund Burke himself.

[5] For a beginning, I cite pp. 122 and 120 of the series of interviews, Faulkner at West Point (New York, 1964), eds. Joseph L. Fant, III, and Robert Ashley; "ramshackle" has reference to our perception of the universe, not its true character. The phrase also appears in Faulkner in the University (p. 26).

[6] For references to and indications concerning the *a priori* character of the "human condition," the reader might well look first to Faulkner's reworking of Genesis in "Address to the Graduating Class: Pine Manor Junior College" (William Faulkner: Essays, Speeches, and Public Letters, ed. James B. Meriwether [New York, 1965]), pp. 135-142. For

It is important that his ontology begins with the experiencing creature and reaches out only by indirection (and with

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Faulkner, Satan is the prototype of all "vertical" rebellion because he denied the "fact" and origin of creation: ". . . possessed the arrogance and pride to demand with, and the temerity to object with, and the ambition to substitute with--not only to decline to accept a condition just because it was a fact, but to want to substitute another condition in its place" (p. 137). Obviously Faulkner has herewith made a parable of the Archifiend and his minions. They are Gay's "moderns." That the novelist meant his use of their example in the negative is indicated elsewhere in the same volume: in a remark about the psychology of bad hunters (p. 13); in a commentary on the character of the Mississippi River in its relation to levee builders (p. 65); in a reference to man as, in certain respects, "doomed" (p. 65); in a description of the "implacable soil" of the earth (p. 185); and pp. 73, 103, and 104. Further evidence to the same effect is scattered throughout Faulkner in the University: to the "unalterable quality [of Being which] would knock your brains out if you did not accept or at least respect it" (p. 244); to respect for "your lot in life" (p. 44); to apparent injustice and arbitrariness as "one of the occupational hazards of breathing" (p. 31); and to the "condition" itself as a given (pp. 36, 38, 48, 54, 96-98, 122, 164, and 183). And even more emphatic are a few passages from Faulkner at Nagano: that there are problems which are not to be "solved" (p. 28); that the order of nature "has its rights" (p. 59); that there is a world we must learn to live with (p. 92); that some dreams are "impossible" (p. 101); that this condition is a "fate" (p. 177); that justice will not always "prevail" (p. 196). Also of interest in this connection is Faulkner's admiring (in Malcolm Cowley's Writers at Work: The Paris Interviews [New York, 1959]) of George Washington Harris' Sut Lovingood as one who "never cursed God" for troubles that were part of his lot (p. 137); and also p. 84 and elsewhere of Faulkner at West Point, that neither family nor sex nor generation is a matter of choice.

great caution) to things beyond man's ken. Paradoxically, Faulkner is more certain of "first causes" and of a hierarchy of powers and potencies between himself and them because he can say so little about the upper reaches of that superstructure. His eye is ever upon the "bare, forked animal"--an emphasis he would be expected to make as a Southerner, and an emphasis also recommended to him by what he saw of his fellows. For despite his man-centeredness Faulkner's world-picture regards, of his kind, not their expectations but their weaknesses, not their powers but their limitations. Nonetheless, if there is a "human condition," determinable from the good or ill fortune which befalls those who observe or violate its boundaries, then there is a constant to be applied in the composition of the frail but necessary ad hoc theological, political, ethical, and epistemological equations which the simple act of living forces us to develop for the description and judgment of behavior.[7] A human condition presupposes the existence of other conditions and their distinction, one from another--apparent ramshackleness or no: ranks, places, and degrees; assignment and assigner. Moreover, it posits a framework or point of departure which (however sketchy) makes intelligible these distinctions. In other words, the phrase assumes at least the outworks of an overall arrangement, not known but implied, within the

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[7] There is no intention here of attributing a specific theology to my subject. I do not wish to take a part in the embroilment over Faulkner's religion, or lack of it, now underway in the scholarship. What I argue is that there is proof in the fiction of his participation in what Weaver calls "the older religiousness of humanity" ("The Confederate South, 1865--1912," p. 2; and throughout "The Older Religiousness in

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the South," Sewanee Review, LI [Summer 1943], 237-249). If pressed, I would call the man not a Christian, but (by analogy at least) a good Old Testament Hebrew, even down to the uneasiness about the presumption in naming God (Faulkner at Nagano, pp. 24, 89, and 159; Faulkner at West Point, pp. 51 and 120; and Faulkner in the University, p. 161--to mention only six cases). In the first mentioned of these collections the novelist insisted that God be conceived of as order-giver or source of "harmony" (p. 30): an ontological definition of the oldest variety. Elsewhere he reasoned that no author could account for human experience, know its constants *as* constants, without predicating the reality of a source of those predictabilities (Faulkner in the University, pp. 149-161). However, he is far too careful about presumption to ground a systematic theology upon such evidence. He begins and ends with *this* point in a chain of being, at our point where we as mortals discover his oft mentioned "old verities" in their true and universal character through the "profitable" practice or "expensive" neglect of the law for men *and* things which they adumbrate.

In this connection see Faulkner's praise for "the masters" of his craft--Dickens, Fielding, Thackeray, Conrad, Twain, Smollett, Hawthorne, Melville, James (Faulkner in the University, pp. 243-244)--as standing above and beyond the easy relativism of facts to perceive the operation of "moral principle" in the "moil and seethe of mankind." Elsewhere (Faulkner at West Point, p. 84), he speaks to the same purpose of the good writer as one who reproduces "the universal patterns of man's behavior *inside* the human condition" (underscoring mine).

universe we inhabit and a piety toward its source as well as some will to make it "work."[8] Faulkner's understanding of that system (and the way he came to it) is precisely what Gay delights to report is all but dead. To it the key is the word endurance. To deny that the system exists is pride *in esse*; to ignore the need for effort in making it work, untoward humility (sloth and wastefulness). The enduring do neither: they affirm the order by accepting the exactions such affirmation imposes upon them and are therefore more than merely submissive in a passive sense (cf. Milton's Belial). They deny the modern forms which follow from both rebellion and abrogation (Statism and its pragmatic twin, technological utilitarianism). The former endurance is "vertical," the latter "horizontal." I treat of the first here and turn to the second in Chapter III in recognition of logical priorities. For all thoroughgoing endurance is, at bottom, "vertical."[9]

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[8] The word is Faulkner's own (*William Faulkner: Essays, Speeches, and Public Letters*, pp. 133 and 142). The dual character, as both an attitude and an activity, of full endurance, "coping" or "doing the best we can" is evident in almost every use Faulkner makes of these well nigh interchangeable expressions (not completely interchangeable because "coping," like "prevailing," often implies a higher degree of success than does "endurance" by itself [see Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech]). As I shall attempt to demonstrate in Chapter III, the activity follows from the attitude. For a sampling of the novelist's weighted and normative use of "endurance" or "endure," see *Faulkner at Nagano*, pp. 13, 29, 40, 95, and 183; *Faulkner in the University*, pp. 5, 18, 115, 133, and 138; *Faulkner at West Point*, pp. 54, 55, 64, and 65; and Warren Beck's "Faulkner: A Preface and a Letter," *Yale Review*, LII (Fall, 1962), 159. For a selection of his reiterations of "cope" and "coping," see *Faulkner in the University*, pp. 37, 48, 51, 98, 102, 111, 177, 223, 244-245, and 253; *Writers at Work*, pp. 138 and 139; *Faulkner at Nagano*, p. 51; *Faulkner at West Point*, pp. 77, 80, and 90; pp. 13, 46, 127, 133, and 135 of the Meriwether book; and Cynthia Grenier's "The Art of Fiction: An Interview with William Faulkner, September, 1955," *Accent*, XVI (Summer 1956), 172. A similar catalogue of "doing the best he [we, she, it, or they] can" may be compiled from *Faulkner in the University*, pp. 31, 39, 59, 173, 253, 269, and 286; *Faulkner at Nagano*, pp. 53 and 69; *Faulkner at West Point*, pp. 55 and 94; and *Writers at Work*, p. 137.

It is rarely disputed, even by scholars little disposed to speak well of the region, that the South into which Faulkner was born was in most respects an anachronistic pocket of premodernism. As one of the last component subdivisions of the West to cross over the divide which separates the classical/medieval from the modern world--and because that crossing was made under duress, it was a likely place for a young writer to develop old-fashioned ontology,[10] and therefore epistemology and teleology. One aspect of the "human condition" as Faulkner perceives it is the limited importance it assigns to the rational faculties.[11] His "Nature"--in detail, outline, source, and end--is not finally comprehensible. It is discoverable (questions of special revelation aside) only by means of cautious trial-and-error experiment made by groups, societies, and races of men in a particular place and over a period of many generations. What is natural or providentially intended is

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[9] A structure of being which was knowable, malleable, and providential would carry with it no imperative for endurance. Instead, it would call for Prometheanism.

[10] To this Faulkner testified himself, for an instance, to Richard N. Linscott (as reported in his "Faulkner without

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Fanfare," Esquire, LX [July 1963], 38). The medium of transmission was narrative, not doctrinal. The process and its product are, to my knowledge, best explained in Weaver's "The Confederate South, 1865-1912" [pp. 1-98, a chapter entitled "The Heritage"]; in his "Aspects of Southern Philosophy" and "The Older Religiousness in the South." Confirmation of Weaver is to be had on all hands, even in the writings of open Marxists such as Eugene P. Genovese (The Political Economy of Slavery: Studies in the Economy and Society of the Slave South [New York, 1965]).

[11] Disparagement of rationalism appears in Faulkner in the University (pp. 4, 10, 36, 167, 198, and 204); in Faulkner at West Point (pp. 77 and 122); jestingly in The Faulkner-Cowley File (pp. 15 and 168-69); and in Meriwether's omnibus gathering (pp. 72, 133, 135, 137-38). In the last of these, the aforementioned parable out of Genesis, Faulkner speaks of Satan as the archetypal rationalist. These passages of course link naturally with those collected in the next three notes in this chapter.

implied by the operation of natural law, as is the progenitor of that law. Faulkner is assuredly a rational antirationalist. Seeing what has been done in the spirit of rationalism, after the fashion of Pyrrho, Sextus Empiricus, Pascal, Montaigne, Dryden, Samuel Johnson, Burke, and Hawthorne he decides to call pride by its proper name. Another source of the same posture is the Augustinian or "hard-shell" religious ethos of Southern protestantism--or again, the rural perch from which he chose to overlook the drama of his times.[12] Cartwright and Robert Lewis Dabney, Kierkegaard and Karl Barth set well with the country man's suspicions of Sans Cullotte--especially among a people who have lived with the miserable aftermath of "closet meditation," "organized envy," and ignorance of the difference between "facts" and truth. Which brings me back to teleology. Unless he has been brought up to believe that "defeat" and "sin" are meaningless words, that the pattern revealed by man's movement in time is proof of the inevitability of "progress," unless he is told early and often that anything can be accomplished with ease, nothing so predictably makes a twentieth-century man a Spenglerian, distrustful of the liberated reason on rational grounds, as the record of his Faustian fellows regarded from the perspective of a defeated and pious society.[13] Unless he has willfully ignored what ruin can be brought on by faithful service to good and reasonable causes, nothing else could so swiftly engender in a sensible contemporary a distrust of systems. But no Southerner born before 1900 belongs to either of the categories I have excepted from my generalizations. To be cheerful and manly is one thing; the two attributes go together in the well spent life, in the full utilization of the limited freedom that belongs to "conditions" or "places."

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[12] See Faulkner in the University, pp. 86 and 203. Though he disavowed details of both heritages, he retained their essentials, often unconsciously. And he admitted as much.

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[13] Faulkner's teleology is discussed (or documented) by Malcolm Cowley in The Faulkner-Cowley File (pp. 21, 38, 41, and 47) and in the extension of the Genesis parable (Meriwether collection, pp. 137-39). Another good illustration of its character is in Faulkner in the University (p. 204). And it is of course supported by footnote sixteen below. Remarks to the contrary admittedly exist. Faulkner sometimes stressed what could be accomplished by confronting given circumstances and spoke of slow, careful "progress." But he was never sanguine about either. Faulkner's generation, we should remember, was also that of Oswald Spengler, of a pervasive uneasiness with the fond hopes of their Victorian forefathers. "Faustian" was Spengler's description of Western man in the century before his own (see particularly p. 377 *et seq.* of Vol. I of The Decline of the West, tr. Charles Francis Atkinson [London, 1932]).

But to be sanguine is unconscionable. Certainly Faulkner knew the difference. As I have been arguing, the distinction was his by right of inheritance; and more importantly--but perhaps consequently--confirmed by his experience and observation. Indeed, because it was so axiomatic (and because he was an artist and a Southerner), he never felt the need to order his grasp of it into a "position paper"; therefore the distinction may have been all the more useful to him.

Closely related to this vertical orientation--indicative of its depth--were Faulkner's attitudes toward the machine, the omnicompetent political or other institutional organization, and the place of suffering or difficulty in man's development of a proper self-understanding. As I mentioned earlier, Faulkner was suspicious of technology, *per se*: not of the instruments, but of the impulse toward self-deception or self-aggrandizement which called them into being.[14] Technology is in its metaphysical substance either man's attempt to avoid exactions imposed upon him with his contingency or an effort to abrogate that contingency. Likewise was he uneasy about modern man's tendency to shift from the individual to an impersonal collectivity all that

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[14] Faulkner's most memorable remarks on our machine culture made outside his fiction are reprinted in Meriwether's volume: a letter to the editor of the *New York Times* for December 22, 1954 (pp. 212-214); his review of *Test Pilot* by Jimmy Collins (pp. 180-192). In the latter

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he defines motion as a way of denying contingency and the literature of motion as a dehumanized literature. He regrets Collins' sentimentalizing of the airplane. In the former, the subject of which is the crash at Idlewild Field of an Italian airliner flying on instruments, he makes a projection of the future our civilization can expect if it continues, like the pilot of the crashed plane, to make a substitute religion out of veneration for infallible technology. In The Faulkner-Cowley File (pp. 79-81) there is a jesting letter in which the novelist speaks of Dismal Swamp abolitionists going North to liberate Yankees from their bondage: to machines. And there are other passages in Faulkner in the University (pp. 36, 68, 80, 98, 277) and in Faulkner at Nagano (pp. 4, 113). Faulkner's feeling about advanced technology (by his definition after the machine does more in a job than does man [Faulkner at Nagano, p. 90]) is obviously related to anti-rationalism. And his association of the North with the modern juggernaut is bound up with his teleology. Moreover, it is his strongest bond with the Nashville Agrarians: "Religion can hardly expect to flourish in an industrial society. Religion is our submission to the general intention of a nature that is fairly scrutable; it is the sense of our role as creatures within it. But nature industrialized, transformed into cities and artificial habitations, manufactured into commodities, is no longer nature but a highly simplified picture of nature. We receive the illusion of having power over nature, and lose the sense of nature as something mysterious and contingent. The God of nature under these conditions is merely an amiable expression, a superfluity, and the philosophical understanding ordinarily carried in the religious experience is not there for us to have" (I'll Take My Stand, p. xiv). For an expansion of this passage, see God Without Thunder, pp. 52-72.

he could of his duties to others and himself.[15] In his eyes both were attempts to avoid (or instruments for avoiding) the difficulty or even pain which is part of an assigned condition. Life in a place when conceived of dynamically, in ethical terms, is a test and trial.[16]

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[15] Faulkner's views on statism and the overgovernment or overcollectivization of men are scattered throughout almost everything he said or wrote. "Anonymity" was, for him, a term of reprobation. Losing individuality in some mass, mob, or group had for him vertical implications. For if life is a proving ground, then surrendering personal moral responsibility is a denial of life. Confederation, the form of cooperative activity he recommended, he set off against surrender of identity (Faulkner at Nagano, pp. 13, 29, 129, 130, 191, 195; Faulkner in the University, pp. 33, 80, 98, 100, 102, 187, 236, 242, 269; Faulkner at West Point, p. 109; and pp. 62-75, 122-124, 126-134, 135-142, 168-169, and elsewhere of Meriwether's William Faulkner: Essays, Speeches, and Public Letters.

[16] There are numerous passages to this effect. Most noteworthy is his observation that "disaster reminds man who he is, what he is" (Faulkner at Nagano, p. 38; and in similar but not identical words on pp. 37, 41, and 155). See also Faulkner in the University, pp. 177 and 198; William Faulkner: Essays, Speeches, and Public Letters, pp. 72, 136, 137, and 185; and Faulkner at West Point, p. 77. Closely connected to this body of material are his repeated insistences that no one can really teach anything to another: ". . . he's got to make his own mistakes, he's got to learn, himself" (Faulkner at Nagano, p. 165 for this quotation; see also p. 198 of Faulkner in the University and p. 31 of the New York Times, March 8, 1958). Likewise, once more, his private justification of God's ways to man in permitting Satan the liberty of tempting him (Meriwether collection, pp. 135-142). In a letter reproduced on p. 15 of The Faulkner-Cowley File he sums up a lot of this theory by referring to life as a "steeplechase."

Even the act of writing fiction, an essentially contemplative exercise, is an engagement with the world. Of fugitive and cloistered virtues and of lofty towers he spoke not at all with favor.[17] Each "place" to which mortals are assigned is both a bondage and a liberation. The distinctions which mark a place (generation, nation, and family [history]; sex; age; intellect and gifts or abilities; and coincidental encounters or involvements) open up certain avenues for action and close others: a challenge and a command.[18] The person who is enduring with all his being wills again, for his own part, what has been willed and disposed for him. And therefore he is not resentful or merely grudging in his submission to the propositions that "fortune, like nature [is] providential"; that "there is nothing written in the original bill of things which says that the substance of the world must be distributed equally"; that variety and inequity are "part of the inscrutable provision"; that "envy" and "uniformitarianism" are sins of the spirit--against God as well as man; and finally that, in some sense: ". . . the awful Author of our being is the Author of our place in the order of existence,--and that, having disposed and marshalled us by a divine tactic, not according to our will, but according to

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[17] On the duty of the writer to confront the "moil and seethe" of the world he inhabits, on his scorn for aesthetic escape and ivory towers of retirement, Faulkner expressed himself frequently. A writer is born with a "demon" which compels him to do his work: and that is to construct a refracted image of "the world's body." Such is his place which he must endure. It has the character of an assignment. There is no obvious reward guaranteed for those who utilize his or other places in his universe. But there is no peace for them if they refuse (cf. Faulkner at West Point, pp. 50, 55, and 56; Faulkner at Nagano, pp. 89-90 and 105; Faulkner in the University, pp. 159, 243, 245, and 266-267; and the entire interview in Writers at Work).

[18] Of the implications of sex, age, and other personal characteristics that have direct social consequences I will have more to say in Chapter III. And the same will hold for the burdens and advantages of coincidence. Concerning the importance of history (in the threefold sense here employed) as an ingredient of place and a facet of the implacable face of nature there are many remarks in the interviews and in the occasional prose. Worth careful examination are pp. 140-142 of William Faulkner: Essays, Speeches, and Public Letters on the priority and inescapability of home obligations);

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pp. 47-48 of *Faulkner in the University* ("[of how] any man works out of his past, since any man--no man is himself, he's the sum of his past . . ."); and p. 23 of *Faulkner at Nagano* (on the duty of everyone "to approach [good order] from his own particular tradition and culture"). Also from *Faulkner in the University* and *Faulkner at Nagano* are supporting remarks on pp. 36, 59, 81, and 84 and pp. 77-78, 127, 192-193, respectively. And in very close relation are Faulkner's public admirings of the "cavalier tradition" (*Faulkner in the University*, p. 80); the samural "code" (*Faulkner at Nagano*, pp. 10 and 16); and the custom of primogeniture (*Faulkner at Nagano*, pp. 60 and 192-193). In examining them we must, of course, remember that Faulkner's feudalism was partial--subject to certain republican modifications. But that problem is another to be reserved for Chapter III.

His, He has in and by that disposition virtually subjected us to act the part which belongs to the place assigned us."[19] Saying, with Weaver and Burke, yes to this reasoning has a negative and vertical quality; and this, to repeat, is prior in necessity to all other reactions to a given place _within_ a given order. On the other hand, saying amen to the same is in ultimate consequence positive and horizontal. The understanding is not more important than the affirmation; in fact, it is not so impressive. But it must, like the recognition of ineffable mystery before tentative generalization from experience in epistemology, come first: discipline before motion.

Vertical endurance in both its primary (as piety toward Being and its source) and secondary (as _cheerful_ inclination toward cooperation with some detail of its proliferation in time and mutability) forms is, as I insisted in Chapter I, nowhere in Faulkner's work given more importance than in the hunting and forest stories. My explication of _Go Down, Moses_ in the first subdivision of

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[19] The shorter quotes are from Richard Weaver's "Aspects of Southern Philosophy," pp. 22-23. In rounding off their point I cite last, in its entirety, the passage from Burke which I paraphrased in Chapter I (_The Philosophy of Edmund Burke_, p. 54).

Chapter IV rests almost entirely upon the understanding of this variety of endurance developed here and in the preceding chapter. And, as I note there, "Race at Morning" doubles the point made in the McCaslin novel.[20] So does "Golden Land," though the principals in that story are Midwesterners and the setting California.[21] And so, for a certainty, do the "Old Man" sections of The Wild Palms and the chronicles of the Bundrens' struggle with the primordial triumvirate of death, flood, and fire (in As I Lay Dying) and of Mink Snopes' with the old, "waiting" earth.[22] In all of these the brooding "other," the "tremendous," "impartial," and "patient" unnamed intrudes.[23] Its presence is dramatically and (save in the next to last) verbally acknowledged. Usually it produces hesitation, awe, and even fear. And the attempt to evade or smother the attendant awareness of contingency and consequent humility is often given powerful and plainly admonitory negative consequences--as I remarked earlier, according to the predictabilities of a "natural law." In Requiem for a Nun a three-section lesson in Mississippi, American, and in general, "modern" (as Gay uses the word) history--a lesson pointed by Faulkner's choric, narrative "overvoice" against escapism and cowardice on the part of an entire people--is used as foil and envelope for the later adventures of that worst possible steward of her own sex and fugitive from the wages of sin, Temple Drake.[24] Endurance is the issue in both: not simply passive neglect but also willful refusal of duty: a kicking at the traces and at the "hands holding the reins" in this "steeplechase." The mythic and fabulous reverberations of the more or less social plots of Sartoris, Light in August, Pylon, the entire Snopes trilogy, and the title section of The Wild Palms affirm its importance--as do the "pride and humility" themes of the yeoman stories ("The Tall Men," "Two Soldiers," "Shall Not Perish," and "Tomorrow").[25] Finally (and again, as with Pylon, outside the Cycle) the character and importance of all decisions to endure or "relinquish"--the ontological grounds of "coping"--is the subject of the Corporal's climactic conversation with his father, the old General, in A Fable.[26] In truth, in almost any of the better stories or novels, even if their emphasis at first glance

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[20] Big Woods (New York, 1955), pp. 175-198; this and all subsequent citations to Faulkner's texts are to the Random House editions.

[21] Collected Stories (New York, 1950), pp. 701-726. The great plains, vast and unchanging, have a significance for the Nebraska Ewings of this story like that of the big woods to Faulkner's rural Mississippians: an objectification for all that is given in life and with which we must come to terms in "pride and humility" (Go Down, Moses [New York, 1942], p. 233). Samantha and Ira, Sr., purposefully define and measure themselves against the seeming indifference and otherness of a challenging nature and in their travail "gained a strange peace through fortitude and the will and strength to endure" (p. 712). Their son, on the other hand, is frightened by nature and makes the symbolic journey westward to California to escape its exactions and delude himself about the terms of his tenure on earth. He and his family pay a terrible price for his self-delusion. On this story, see my "Escaping Westward: Faulkner's 'Golden Land,'" Georgia Review, XIX (Spring 1965), 72-76. Vertical and horizontal endurance rarely are given such indisputable connection in Faulkner's other work.

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[22] The Wild Palms (New York, 1939), pp. 23-30, 61-80, 143-177, 229-278, and 325-339; As I Lay Dying (New York, 1930): in Faulkner in the University (pp. 86-87) the novelist identifies only two as "natural" (Addie's death *is* extraordinary); The Mansion (New York, 1959), pp. 5-6, 90-91, 100-102, and 402-436. Mink stands up against the "pull" of earth. But he never denies the right of the powers or "Old Moster" to toll him down toward extinction. After earlier impiety, he "taken it back" (p. 99) and rests "in confidence" (p. 100) that though the justice of his life is not clear to him, "Old Moster jest punishes; He don't play jokes" (p. 407). Mink soliloquizing on earth is a perfect example of pride *and* humility.

[23] Go Down, Moses, p. 181. It is also described as "omniscient" and our "source" from a sense of which we protect ourselves (p. 167) in a frantic effort to efface the mystery with axe, gun, slide rule, and bulldozer (p. 193). This pride/cowardice and its expense are the subject of this novel and are developed in my comment on it below. But the language applies everywhere in Faulkner.

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[24] Requiem for a Nun (New York, 1951), pp. 3-52; 99-111; 213-262. These discourses spell out what Faulkner had against the omnipotent state, industrial civilization, and the influence of his Northern neighbors as apostles of Gay's political philosophy. I withhold my comment for later.

[25] Sartoris (New York, 1929). The first edition by

Harcourt, Brace and Co.; I use the Random House edition of 1962. The overtones to which I refer appear on pp. 203-204; they describe the "hiatus" in young Bayard Sartoris' headlong rush to the peace of oblivion brought on by his submission for a season to "the sober rhythms of earth." He gets in a crop and, in his momentary "armistice," is the better for his effort. The normative impression is reinforced by the longer section of his retreat to the McCallum place in his darkest moments (pp. 305-339). Light in August (New York, 1932) I save for later. In Pylon (New York, 1935) my support is the entire narrative of Icarian mechanical madness and its tragic aftermath. Its original edition was from Harrison Smith and Robert Haas. I employ the Random House reprint of 1951. I have already cited The Mansion: the two earlier volumes in the series, The Hamlet and The Town were issued by Random House (New York) in 1940 and 1957, respectively. The title section of The Wild Palms runs on pp. 1-22, 31-60, 81-141, 179-228, and 279-324; it receives attention hereafter. The first three of these stories are printed on pp. 45-61, 81-99, and 101-115 of Collected Stories; the last on pp. 85-105 of Knight's Gambit (New York, 1949). I have published explications of the four works and an introductory essay toward a reading of the trilogy which connect these fictions to the subject of this chapter. All are listed in the omnibus bibliographical note to my conclusion.

[26] A Fable (New York, 1954), pp. 341-357.

seems to be very much to the contrary, some sort of rejection of creation as they find it is subsumed within the misfortune and misery of characters who fail to balance pride and humility, to observe the "armistice."[27] There is here space for comments on only a few of the more obvious examples of the discipline of the numinous. The readings in Chapter IV (especially *Absalom, Absalom!*) and the independent studies glanced at briefly throughout and listed in V will, I hope, supply the lack.

As I have indicated in the previous paragraph, in entitling this chapter I proceeded with conscious purpose. My objective has been to point from the first to the fictional use which my subject made of one facet of his doctrine of nature. In view of Faulkner's caution, reserve, and careful economy in invoking the numinous, baldfaced and unprefaced reference to vertical endurance, piety, or a premodern ontology would therefore have been misleading. And the same holds true for "pride and humility" and "cope." Set up against Faulkner's narratives there is an ambiguity about these words, even when they are considered in company.

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[27] *Faulkner in the University*, p. 178 and frequently elsewhere.

Their relevance is not always apparent where what they specify is only a hovering intimation, a shadow. "Discipline" is not thus evasive or slippery when applied to the image of the "Father of Waters" developed in "Old Man" or the severities of the seasons and elements in The Wild Palms. It is usually through a chastening encounter with the transcendent that Faulkner's people come to be aware of it. Never does he imply that men are born pious. An education, training contrary to the spontaneous promptings of inclination--the "Old Adam"--arranges the transformation: the hard teaching he spoke of in interviews.[28] Without such, ego will usurp judgment and usher in ruin, private and general. To recall Scripture, fear is before wisdom. On this point, if not in all details, Faulkner was, for his culture, very orthodox.

I will turn now to a consideration of specific passages from both halves of this contrapuntal novel.

In The Wild Palms proper (pp. 279, 313, and 324, for example) there is a leitmotif formed out of a regular punctuation of the last division of the narrative (the account of the final days of Charlotte Rittenmeyer and Harry Wilbourne in a small beach house on the Mississippi Gulf coast) with references to the ebb and flow of hot breezes from the sea. Our sense of the inevitability of the woman's death and her lover's destruction is heightened by these reiterations. It grows as the references become plainer and more directly connected to the action. The same holds true for the Utah mountains and snow which are the setting of Charlotte's conception and first step toward death at the hands of her impregnator/abortionist (pp. 179-208). Nature is defied in either case--to no avail. The harder the passionate isolators work at resigning from time and humanity (p. 83), the more profoundly are they involved in both. Like the palm trees, they are caught, willy nilly, in the surgings of the wind.

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[28] Faulkner in the University, p. 33. Faulkner often used the equation in just this way.

The "career" of the tall convict in "Old Man" is different, his motives dissimilar. Never does he defy the forces made manifest in the flood of the mighty river and its tributaries. Like some later day upcountry reincarnation of the original of his kind, he addresses himself first and last to the needings of the woman (et al) whom fortune makes his charge. But his heart is not in his work. He will keep the law, but he will not love it as his own. After a moment's temptation in the bayou country of South Louisiana, he withdraws to the woman-imposed security of prison and from the woman-defined complexities of adult male life. Save for his honor, he is humility without alloy, just as Charlotte and Harry are pride. Except for his daily rendevous with mule and Parchman furrows, he is dead alive. However, during the interval of his special assignment in a leaky ark, he is vital enough. Even then, however, he does not achieve the confederative balance of armistice. He takes the image, literally; rides the waves much more often than he pulls across or against a current (pp. 150-156). And even then, when he gets "too comfortable" _with_ the flood, he is tossed round about by its arbitrary and confusing shifts (pp. 145-146, 156-158, 163-164, 175-176). Here once more the figure points the nature of the fable and identifies the stake of the action in the question of what is vertical endurance.[29] Wind, winter, and wave: all pound home with a vengeance what _is_ and _is permitted_.

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[29] _Faulkner in the University_, pp. 171-172 and 183-184, supports my gloss on these passages.

This pairing (often, though not necessarily always, out of single novels or stories) could be, with references to the total body of Faulkner's fiction, reconstituted fifty times over. One extreme of possibility is the Satan of the Pine Manor Junior College speech (frequently alluded to above) or his human imitations in Thomas Sutpen and Joe Christmas.[30] The other polarity is epitomized in all its repellent familiarity in A Fable (p. 253): ". . . the entire earth one unbroken machined de-mountained dis-rivered expanse of concrete paving proturberanceless by tree or bush or house or anything which might constitute a corner or a threat to visibility, and man in his terrapin myriads enclosed clothesless from birth in his individual wheeled and glovelike envelope, with pipes and hoses leading upward from underground reservoirs to charge him with one composite squirt which at one mutual instant will fuel his mobility, pander his lusts, sate his appetites and fire his dreams; peripatetic, unceasing and long since no longer countable, to die at last at the click of an automatic circuit-breaker on a speedometer dial. . . ." Though such absolutes are rare, even rarely attempted by the big "scoundrels" of Yoknapatawpha, most Faulkner characters tend, at least for a time, toward one or the other. Their records intersect to form (or move inside of) larger ones--the enveloping actions that are the collective dramas of cultures and sub-cultures, clans, and families. Nonetheless, all together constitute an image of man in motion, a demonstration of the natural law which demands of its observers the postulation of its source: to repeat Faulkner's phrase, a reminder to man of what he is, a discipline.[31]

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[30] This aspect of Sutpen I attend to in reading Absalom, Absalom! As for Christmas, I refer only to that last act of his life after he swaps shoes with an old Negro woman (Light in August, pp. 288-297). His Satanism is unmistakable, as is its end when the woods through which he flees from law and fellowship no longer seem to him unfriendly or alien.

If not for the good of the race, at least for the artist the irregularities are necessary. They give him an occupation, a reason for being. But in fiction there must always be an ending. The difference with Faulkner is that it is usually more of a pause. We are left by him with an anticipation of sequels to come: of history in its ultimate and moral dimension. True, the drift of late has not been good. The civilization of the Western world, the Republic, even Mississippi: all have been swept along by the dream called "progress" toward a "plunging precipice" with "machine" and its master, "government," in the van, with "commerce" and "human rights" the words on their lips--"one universe, one cosmos: contained in one America: one towering edifice poised like a card-house over the abyss of the mortgaged generations."[32] The evangels of the chrome-plated eschaton, the party of hope and "enlightenment" (Gay's party) have, Faulkner would concur, told the truth--for the present. However, there will be further reckonings, further installments which will give the tale another (and older, premodern) burden. Because the necessity of vertical endurance comes home to man sooner or later, because he had faith in the power of nature to teach and man to learn or relearn (for he usually forgets what it is painful for him to believe), whenever challenged, Faulkner reaffirmed his faith that man would prevail. Nothing else, save human capacity to "stand it" thus encouraged him.[33] The prevailing of the immediate future will be difficult; but not until done will it again be likely that a favorable consensus may be obtained in support of Vernon Tull's private musings: "That's why it's worth anything. If nothing didn't happen and everybody made a big crop, do you reckon it would be worth raising?"[34]

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[31] The recognition of natural law is vertical endurance; the abiding by it, horizontal.

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[32] This sequence is drawn or paraphrased from Requiem for a Nun, pp. 220, 225, 228, 238-39, 241, 243-248, and 250. In its connection of American and modern "progress" in general, cowardice (lack of the courage to face a contingent status), "bargaining," and "shortcutting" with the rise of the commercial welfare state, Faulkner recalls the judgment of contemporary Richmond and all it bespoke rendered by Allen Tate's Confederate veteran in "To the Lacedemonians" (Collected Poems [New York, 1960], p. 18: "All are born Yankees of the race of men/ And this, too, now the country of the damned."

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[33] In this matter, and in broad interpretation, only a few Faulkner scholars have done more than anticipate me in passing in my stress on the importance of the word "endure" to an explanation of Faulkner's vision. I cite at this point only those who make a gesture toward explaining the novelist's use of the word--a sensible gesture: John Hunt in _William Faulkner: Art in Theological Tension_ (Syracuse, 1965); Albert Gerard in "Romanticism and Stoicism in the American Novel: From Melville to Hemingway and After," _Diogenes_, XXIII [Fall 1958], 95-110; and Martin Christalder in _Natur und Geschichte im Werk von William Faulkner_ (Heidelberg, 1962).

[34] _As I Lay Dying_, p. 85.

CHAPTER III

ENDURANCE IN STEWARDSHIP: MAN IN SOCIETY

The argument of this chapter, even more than the preceding one, is a predictable source of vexation and resistance. Though less an exercise in systematized conjecture and reconstruction from recalcitrant material, though well nigh obvious to the open mind, it is much further from general acceptance than the foregoing ontological hypothesizing. For what was just finished is, despite its primary and fundamental significance to this paper, too abstract and metaphysical, too knowing and comfortable with the transcendent to do more than irritate the unregenerately modern reader or critic. His rationalist and positivistic assumptions are too firmly established for his mind to consider the questions which that unfolding raises with anything beyond impatience. Such questions have no meaning or viability in quarters where the possibility of a "mytheopic" conception of nature is not admitted--no meaning, that is, unless or until it occurs to these disbelievers that, in some veiled fashion, propositions concerning nature have issue in and purchase upon political considerations. About these the modern will, by definition, have decided, reflexive "opinions." They constitute his faith, the word he lives by. And if he is automatically hostile to a "submissive" ontology, he is even less inclined to recognize in an author he expects (or is expected) to honor and take comfort from a social vision radically different from his own. My proposition here is that the polity affirmed by Faulkner as fictionist embodies and follows from such a vision, from his already established anachronism. It is not a new contention. Tentative venturings in its direction were first heard in the Thirties.[1]

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[1] I refer to the "school" of Faulkner criticism which takes as its chief point of departure George Marion O'Donnell's "Faulkner's Mythology," Kenyon Review, I (Summer 1939), 285-299 (identified in footnote twenty-eight of Chapter I). My chief difference with earlier exponents of the view that Faulkner is by and large a traditional Southerner, typical of men of his class and generation in his attitudes on most subjects (and closely related to them even where he deviates) comes over their specification of Faulkner's white gentlefolk (and sometimes a few black retainers or house Negroes) as the repositories of that tradition. In the post-bellum South my choice among various groups as collectively the strongest and most consistent

And their like is the subsidiary thesis of the most important study of the novelist thus far to appear.[2] Indeed, it is the implied target of something close to half of the dissertations done on Faulkner in the last decade and a half--a target the demolition of which is often more important to these scholars than is the exposition of their texts.[3]

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supporters of tradition is the yeomanry. I have developed this view in "Faulkner's 'Tall Men,'" *South Atlantic Quarterly*, LXI (Winter 1962), 29-39. Good support comes in Elmo Howell's "William Faulkner and the Plain People of Yoknapatawpha County," *Journal of Mississippi History*, XXIV (Spring 1962), 73-87; and in his other papers.

[2] I refer to Cleanth Brooks' *William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country*, and to its adumbration in *The Hidden God* (New Haven, 1963).

[3] Four of these researches are now conveniently available in book form: *Faulkner: The Major Years* (Bloomington, Ind., 1966) by Melvin Backman (originally a Columbia University dissertation); *William Faulkner: A Study in Humanism, From Metaphor to Discourse* (Norman, Okla., 1966) by Joseph Gold (originally a University of Wisconsin dissertation); *Faulkner's Twice Told Tales: His Reuse of His Material* (The Hague, 1966) by Edward M. Holmes (a Brown University dissertation); *Force and Faith in the Novels of William Faulkner* (The Hague, 1967) by Kenneth E. Richardson (a Claremont Graduate School dissertation). Of their fellowship are the Berner and Kartiganer studies cited in footnote 28 of Chapter I and the dissertations of Walter Marion Brylowski, Shirley Parker Callen, Glenn O. Carey, Stanley L. Elkin, Carol Dee McLaughlin, and William Patrick Sullivan ("Man's Enduring Chronicle: A Study of Myth in the Novels of William Faulkner" [Michigan State University, 1964]; "Bergsonian Dynamism in the Writings of William Faulkner"

While recognizing the danger of entangling my discourse among the thorns of a priori passion entailed in the venture, I here reassert what is thus familiar and (to many) disagreeable--as part of a discussion of the endurance theme in the Yoknapatawpha books and after an analysis of the philosophic or theological background that determines the word's meaning for their collectivity--because I believe that by no other means may that argument be justified to the doubting: and therefore by no other means an accurate reading facilitated.

In the above acknowledgment of the potent and self-sustaining impediments now before me there is no pleasure or presumption. Although I do not look to it to secure exemption from the reasonable skepticism that my differences with a mass of detailed and exhaustive Faulkner commentary might expect to arouse, what I have set for myself may be fairly described as no straightforward critical task. Because of

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[Tulane University, 1963]; "William Faulkner: Critic of Society" [University of Illinois, 1963]; "Religious Themes and Symbolism in the Novels of William Faulkner" [University of Illinois, 1961]; "Religion in Yoknapatawpha County" [Denver University, 1962]; and "William Faulkner and the Community" [Columbia University, 1961], respectively). In wrath at Brooks' tremendously influential study, the list is growing rapidly.

its nature I have taken occasion to labor and define the undertaking before commencing with its execution; for not only the problem itself but also the roadblocks forestalling its solution have governed my practice and exercised my sense of the strategic in all that follows. Here, as in beginning Chapter II, the calculation of rhetoric works in harness with the logic of analysis: given the milieu in which I write, there is no separating the two.

The primary difficulty, serious enough in itself, is, however, further aggravated by the method for circumvention and/or resolution which it calls into being. In the train of the procedural and rhetorical necessities I have defined, regretted, and promised to confront, one other issue must at this point be joined: joined and (I hope) put to rest. Lest reference to "social vision" or "politics" be misunderstood, I must here once again (as I have in Chapter II) insist as vigorously as possible that it is an image or fable that is here under discussion, not an argument in the usual sense of that word: the sides and bottom of a trope, not a syllogism. In attempting to counter the invidious distortions of politicized criticism, I do not propose to compound, after my own fashion, its basic error. The confusion of categories and kinds of discourse revived by the Puritans of every age (and most recently by the now well masked but still unchanged singlemindedness of newer, small-"m"-for-cautious marxists) is herewith, for the record, eschewed: eschewed by name in deference to their contemporary resurgence under other now acceptable labels: eschewed for aesthetic/philosophical, not political, reasons--but not out of aestheticism. The gesture is at this time called for because this criticism's methodological and linguistic straightjacket is as difficult to escape as is its protean political source; indeed, is called for whenever and however a work being done in countering its ill effects appears, in idiom and objective, to be akin. What I am saying is that in writing about Faulkner's opinions concerning stewardship and place and community, I am not discussing politics at all. I can assert this much, and more, can half-retract and cancel my purist testimonial as an act of supererogation, because the ontological barriers confining the scope of my discourse, restricting what I can attribute to Faulkner, remain intact in Chapter III as in Chapter II. The politicizing of all the weighted words in our language which once drew their authority from metaphysics and theology, the secularized eschatology of of the age, make my subject to appear to be what it is not when I descant of good and natural order among men. The horizontal echoes of Faulkner's doctrine of nature are not political as in "modern" political theory the term is used (concerning a position on how things may best be "fixed").[4]

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[4] The rise (and weakness) of what is nowadays called "political science," of the generations of "sophisters and economists" (political) as Burke called them, is the subject of Eric Voegelin's *The New Science of Politics*. To the same purpose are the writings of Leo Strauss of Chicago and of several of his pupils (cf. especially Strauss' *Thoughts on Machiavelli* [Glencoe, Ill., 1958], *Natural Right and History* [Chicago, 1953], and *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes* [Chicago, 1952, first edition from The Clarendon Press, Oxford, England, 1936]). Another supporter of the same view of his discipline is Michael Oakeshott (cf. his essay "Rationalism in Politics" [*Rationalism in Politics*, pp. 1-36]). It is not without significance that these open conservatives prefer to speak of "politics" and not "political science." They date from the early Renaissance the conversion of their subject into a gnostic strategy for imposing "the pure idea" on an uncooperative world. All political thought since Machiavelli they label as "modern," thus denoting the difference in spirit between *a priori* constructs and the patient results of unprejudiced observation. Hobbes and Machiavelli have no utopian eschatology. But they are the fathers of the gnosis ("I know [the secret]," rendered roughly) in their distrust of any notion that the natural order is even partially self-sustaining. Eric Voegelin spells out the pedigree of modern gnosticism, connects and identifies its varieties, in "Ersatz Religion: The Gnostic Mass Movements of Our Time," *Politeia*, I (Spring 1964), 2-13 (translated into English and reissued from *Wort and Warheit*, XV [January 1960], 5-18). Voegelin describes "the gnostic trait in the strict sense" as "the belief that a change in the order of being lies in the realm of human action, and this salvational act is possible through man's own efforts" (p. 4). His gnostics are clearly Faulkner's "non-enduring."

For the strictly vertical implications of that doctrine, as announced in Chapters I and II, deny that any such politics are possible and hence preclude with them an exhortive or prophetic poetics. Malleability is not, in the universe of Yoknapatawpha, posited; neither is the potential omniscience of human reason assumed. Programmatic fiction makes no sense without both. In their lieu we can look to Faulkner for literature of who and what and where and how we irrevocably are and about what we can best do with the information. Faulkner *makes* what is consistent with his perspective--not the contradiction which the majority of twentieth century writers bring into being. And if his Southernness is at all implicated in the revelation, it is so only in his poetics: in the pattern followed by his imagination in "accepting" its subject. Nor hope nor speculation nor even theory is its source, only observation.[5] Without failure he offers a mirror of life, not an assertion concerning it, thus misconceiving of neither the purpose nor the origin of his art. Given his affinity for or commitment to attitudes described in Chapter II, he was not at liberty to imagine that it was his right as a novelist to advise men on what course they should follow in matters open to disputation. In a providentially circumscribed universe most of the decisions which absorb the energies of the gnostic are made before their potential consequences are even well defined. A man's most important choice is whether he will be a partner (proud and humble), a rebel (simply proud), or a bystander (simply humble) in the great frame of things. Natural law will maintain itself in any case; and human selection among alternatives (real though limited) affects only the fortune of the choosers (persons or groups)--the way in which history moves toward its inevitable periodic and "instructive" consummations. To his understanding of the spectacle the novelist cries, "Behold!" His "moving" subject, the human condition in operation or men in relation to one another, has only oblique connection to events somewhere at sometime (qua a Mississippi county or group of counties between 1800 and 1960). For he reproduces only the paradigm, dramatically defines th species in the localized subspecies: human, not Southern (or Irish, or Thai, or Bantu) history; the archetypal action (to fall back on that by now tired but still useful phrase). All history is thus one in point and pattern, is so because a natural law exists. By reconstituting and projecting this permanence out of and in the context he knows best and thereby revealing its simplicity and oneness behind all of its innumerable maskings, he is (to paraphrase him further) reporting on what is. The activity is political as it is moral, in that it posits the existence of the archetype, rests upon the ancient doctrine of nature as a metaphor that is meant.[6]

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[5] Donald Davidson has argued that this quality of "acceptance" is at the heart of almost all of the productions of the Southern Renaissance (*Still Rebels, Still Yankees*, pp. 168-171). Andrew Lytle argues similarly (*The Hero with the Private Parts*, pp. 181, 194, and *passim*).

In searching out the sources and analogues of Faulkner's social vision, it is possible to reach as far back as one would like. Two distinct but equally ancient streams of thought blend in his perspective: the communal and the individualistic. The first of these is the older, so far as the history of systematic thinking on man as a social animal is concerned. It begins with the primoridial source of group consciousness, the family, clan, or interlocking combination of families and clans into tribe. But it is the intellectual elder of the individualistic only because harsh necessity and the problems of survival which called it into being also called for its rationalization and defense. They did so in recognition of the indestructible drives for self-realization which men were compelled to sublimate in their natural combinations--drives recognized by Faulkner (and his forebears in this combining) as coeval with the social impulse. These two streams, for purposes of convenience (and in keeping with earlier American and English practice), I will here refer to as Tory and Whig. Political thought in the English-speaking world has almost from the first been a dialogue between them.[7]

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[6] I suppose the most important source of this conception of history is the Old Testament record of Jewish ups and downs. Its burden, as is Faulkner's, is cyclical and apocalyptic--by turns. For Faulkner's attitude toward the Old Testament, see Faulkner in the University, pp. 50, 56, 76, 150, 167-168 (especially), and 285-286; Faulkner at West Point, pp. 66 and 104; Faulkner at Nagano, pp. 42, 45-47; "The Art of Fiction: An Interview with William Faulkner, September, 1955," pp. 168 and 175; and William Faulkner: Essays, Speeches, and Public Letters, p. 213.

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[7] See Lord Percy of Newcastle, The Heresy of Democracy (Chicago, 1955), the writings of Burke and Samuel Johnson plus Herbert Butterfield's The Whig Interpretation of History (London, 1931), and Louis I. Bredvold's The Brave New World of the Enlightenment for substantiation of this paragraph's summary. To the same effect are most of Eric Voegelin's and Leo Strauss' commentary on the origins of political philosophy.

Sir Eustace Tillyard's guidebook to the mind of Renaissance England and C. S. Lewis' more recent supplement to that scholarly landmark are workable sources for a beginning study of the first of these positions. Because their focus is on the country and century which fathered the American South, these studies are singularly suited to my purposes.[8] But as both Tillyard and Lewis indicate clearly, the structured image of the human family entertained by Shakespeare's countrymen--the so-called "Tudor myth"--had its enemies in their midst.[9] Actually, Toryism was more "at home" in a somewhat earlier time--before the "murderous Machievel" became a figure of reference in northern Europe. The English Tory model is truly native to the medieval experience--is properly localized there even though anticipated in Scripture (the Biblical teaching on family and kingship), classics (the Greek political philosophers), and (perhaps) the tribal habits of pagan Germania. Louis B. Wright has convincingly described how that mentality was transplanted in the Old Dominion, and with what Renaissance modifications.[10] It is easy to be puzzled by the transaction --to be diverted by the middling or humble. However, the important fact is that, regardless of its origins, remote or near, the non-egalitarian understanding of brotherhood took root swiftly in the James River valley and its environs, as it did later in the Carolinas, Maryland, and Georgia. For those who bore it thither had no casual commitment to their intellectual and moral progenitors.[11] Circumstance made only one difference. The ideal of the gentleman affirmed by the early South was always more functional than decorative, more work than worth--which brings me to Whiggery.[12]

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[8] The Elizabethan World Picture (New York, 1944) and The Discarded Image (Cambridge, England, 1964). A great body of scholarship has grown up "between" these two books. Recent studies of Pope and Johnson give evidence of how long the synthesis survived.

[9] Hiram Haydn, The Counter Renaissance (New York, 1950) and (for two other instances) Irving Ribner's The English History Play in the Age of Shakespeare and Edward W. Tayler's Nature and Art in Renaissance Literature (New York, 1964).

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[10] The First Gentlemen of Virginia (Charlottesville, 1964), pp. 1-62; 348-353. To a similar effect are various essays in I'll Take My Stand; the Davidson, Weaver, and Lytle material mentioned above; John R. Alden's The First South (Baton Rouge, 1961); Simkins' The Everlasting South and A History of the South (New York, 1956); Avery O. Craven's The Repressible Conflict (Baton Rouge, 1939); Allen Tate's Stonewall Jackson: The Good Soldier (New York, 1928) and Jefferson Davis: His Rise and Fall (New York, 1929); Lytle's "John Taylor and the Political Economy of Agriculture," American Review, III (Sept., 1934), 432-447; III (Oct., 1934), 630-643; and IV (Nov., 1934), 84-99; Ransom's early Agrarian essays (particularly the seminal "The South Defends Its Heritage, Harper's Magazine, LIX [June 1929], 108-118; Clement Eaton's The Growth of Southern Civilization (New York, 1959); David Bertelson's The Lazy South (Berkeley, Calif., 1967); William H. Nicholls' Southern Tradition and Regional Progress (Chapel Hill, 1960); Keith F. McKean's "Southern Patriarch: A Portrait," Virginia Quarterly Review, XXXVI (Summer 1960), 376-389; and, in this, even W. J. Cash. William R. Taylor (Cavalier and Yankee) argues that the transportation came later--under pressure and after a "democratic period" in the days of early settlement. More of the same (but in a milder fashion) is implied in Richard Beale Davis' Intellectual Life in Jefferson's Virginia (Chapel Hill, 1964) and badly assorted in a great many recent works such as Carl Bridenbaugh's Myths & Realities: Societies of the Colonial South (Baton Rouge, 1952).

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[11] The strongest evidence of Southern indebtedness to English Tory thought appears--even though the doctrine arrived here before the institution--in discussions of slavery and its "peculiar" sequels. Paul Conner ("Patriarchy: Old World and New," American Quarterly, XVII [Summer, 1965], 48-61) traces the Tory rhetoric of slavery's defenders to Sir Robert Filmer's Patriarcha (ca. 1653) and the Eikon Basilike of Charles the Martyr (1649). I rather think that the whole body of feudal apologetics which feeds into these are also behind the region's affirmation of community--certain Encyclicals of the fifteenth and sixteenth century Roman Catholic Church and the entire literature of chivalry, historical and imaginative. For example, Stark Young's essay in I'll Take My Stand (plus his occasional papers scattered elsewhere); William Alexander Percy's Lanterns on the Levee (New York, 1941); Fitzhugh's Sociology for the South (1854) and Cannibals All! or Slaves Without Masters (1856), reprinted in Harvey Wish's collection, Ante-Bellum (New York, 1960); two great compendiums popular in the nineteenth-century South, The Pro-Slavery Argument (Charleston, 1852) and Cotton Is King, and Pro-Slavery Arguments (Augusta, Ga., 1860); the lesser lights summarized in William S. Jenkins' Pro-Slavery Thought in the Old South (Chapel Hill, 1935); Avery Craven's Edmund Ruffin, Southerner (New York, 1932), pp. 49-72, 120-141; Calhoun's "Disquisition" and speeches; Eric McKitrick's introduction to his Slavery Defended: The Views of the Old South (Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1963); William W. Ball's The State That Forgot: South Carolina's Surrender to Democracy (Indianapolis, 1932); Susan D. Smedes' A Southern Planter (New York, 1890); J. V. Ridgely's William Gilmore Simms (New York, 1962), Weaver's

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"The Confederate South, A Study in the Survival, 1865-1912" (particularly on Bledsoe and Raphael Semmes); and Russell Kirk's John Randolph of Roanoke (Chicago, 1964)--especially the selections from Randolph's letters and speeches appended to this second edition. As a summary of Southern Tory feeling, I will quote from one of the letters (Kirk, p. 231), to Harmanus Bleeker of New York, November 16, 1818: "The Nature of the property that I hold obliges me to endeavor to extort from the labouring portion of my slaves as much profit as will support them and their families in sickness and health, in infancy and when past labor; reserving to myself, if practicable, a fair rent for my land & profit on my stock. To do this without severity to the slaves or pinching them in the necessaries of life is an arduous problem. . . . I am in a manner 'fixed to the freehold.' The master's presence is the only check (& that insufficient) upon the malpractices of the overseers and of the negroes too, poor creatures. I have often bewailed the lot that made me 'their keeper.' I now bow with submission to the decree of Him who has called me to this state, & pray to be enabled to discharge the duties of it." In this comment Randolph echoes Burke's assertion that ". . . [I am] convinced that neither [I], nor any man, or number of men, have a right (except when in necessity, which is out of and above all rule, rather imposes than bestows) to free themselves from that primary engagement into which every man born into a community as much contracts by being born into it as he contracts an obligation to certain parents by having been derived from their bodies. The place of every man determines his duty. . . . [For] out of physical causes, unknown to us, perhaps unknowable, arise moral duties, which, as we are able perfectly to comprehend, we are bound indispensably to perform" (Bredvold and Ross, The Philosophy of Edmund Burke, pp. 55 and 54).

[12] As to the Whiggish cast of Southern Toryism, almost as useful as Wright are the chapters "Status and Function"

Like the Tory view, the Southern cult of Liberty has strong classical grounds--in fact probably stronger than

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and "Forms and Social Cruelty" in Weaver's *Visions of Order* (pp. 22-39; 73-91) and his address, "The American as a Regenerate Being" (forthcoming in a form edited by Professor George Core and this writer in *Southern Review*, IV, N. S. [Summer 1968]). Of similar interest are Owsley's *Plain Folk of the Old South*, pp. 90-140; the discussions of the yeomanry in *I'll Take My Stand*; Cash; the early chapters of Leo Marx's *The Machine in the Garden* (New York, 1964); and Bell Irvin Wiley's *The Plain People of the Confederacy* (Baton Rouge, 1943). With reference to the last, it seems reasonable to assert that in the peculiar quality of the Confederate army in the field--its likeness to a Scots Highland clan in its social organization and in its dynamics as a fighting unit--we have the most complete comment on and revelation of the culture as a whole, its amiable conjoining of apparently hostile political impulses. For this army (especially Lee's part of it) was thoroughly structured and, at the same time, in its structuring, inoffensive to the proudest Hotspur in its ranks. What Faulkner calls "confederation" is the only possible explanation of the phenomenon--something the region's political leaders found more difficult to accomplish because of their long tenure in abstract rhetorical stances, assumed and then "grown into," while the South remained in the Union.

Finally, as telling a brace of arguments for the pervasiveness of what I have called the "working synthesis of men and ideas" are the apologies prepared after-the-fact by the President and Vice-President of the Confederate States of America and the words of "Sharon," an old folk hymn beloved of the plain people. Jefferson Davis' book is *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government* (2 vols.; New York, 1881) and Alexander H. Stephens', *A Constitutional View of the Late War Between the States* (2 vols.; Philadelphia, 1868-1870). Neither Davis nor Stephens leans heavily upon the old Tory rhetoric. Both make much ado about "liberty." "Sharon" (*The Sacred Harp*, ed. B. F. White and E. J. King [Philadelphia, 1860], p. 212) is the other side of the coin. What it declares is the "pleasant" union of "kindred and friends" who "move . . . each in his proper station . . . and . . . fulfill his part, with sympathizing heart."

its hierarchical opposite. For the South Rome was ever the model: Cicero, Polybius, and the Latin republican historians--all honored names. Furthermore this admiration for classical republicanism came even more into vogue after the Revolution. From the Bible old Rome drew reinforcement, from the Christian assertion of individual spiritual worth and dignity. English Whiggery was, nonetheless, the primary source. It too found good examples in Cato (elder and younger), the Brothers Gracchi, Cincinnatus, and Scipio Africanus; likewise quoted chapter and verse in allusions to the swords of the just and the breastplates of righteousness. But even more importantly it acknowledged a native ancestry, the Saxon myth of a nation of free men marked in the blood by a beneficent providence to be the vessel of its will.[13] Honored assuredly--but again with reservations! No people preoccupied with kinship and family or inclined to give first priority to the fifth commandment can ever be thorough Whigs. For self-realization and self-definition are the Whig's first priorities; and clannish folk never attempt to fulfill or define themselves apart from the inclusive whole in which they live, move, and have their being--absolutely never if their clannishness is as much a part of their religion as their view of the soul's value to God.[14]

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[13] For discussion of the English Whig tradition, its teleology, and its antecedents, good sources are George F. Sensabaugh's _That Grand Whig Milton_ (Stanford, 1952); J. R. Pole's _Political Representation and the Origin of the American Republic_; Zera S. Fink's _The Classical Republicans_ (Evanston, 1962); M. J. C. Vile's _Constitutionalism and the Separation of Powers_ (Oxford, 1967); and Jefferson's occasional expressions of his limited, selective Anglophilia. All of these testify to the South's indebtedness to this body of thought, as do Davis' _Intellectual Life in Jefferson's Virginia_; G. H. Guttridge's _English Whiggism and the American Revolution_ (Berkeley, 1963); H. Trevor Colbourn's _The Lamp of Experience_ (Chapel Hill, 1965); and Daniel J. Boorstin's

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The Lost World of Thomas Jefferson (New York, 1948). The importance of classics to the early South is too conspicuous to require demonstration. Interesting in this connection are P. H. Johnstone's "In praise of Husbandry," Agricultural History, XI (Spring 1937), 80-95; Kenneth MacLean's Agrarian Age: A Background for Wordsworth (New Haven, 1950); and Weaver's dissertation.

[14] Andrew Lytle is correct in maintaining that the South constituted itself as something in between the medieval Godsweal and the Renaissance or modern Commonweal (The Hero with the Private Parts, pp. 118; 139-141). Yet it contained no inherent potential for drift toward the simple commonwealth. For its Whiggery was more old-fashioned than New England's. It did not forsee the creation of a City of God in Dixie; if there was to be a new Eden in Kentucky, it was to be found, not made. Southerners, as Anglo-Saxons, as Orangemen, or as Scots Highlanders (and I neglected to mention earlier that the three strains combined with ease to produce one effect), hearkened back to a bygone, pre-Norman, pre-Heptarchy--even pre-medieval--passion for local or tribal self-government and clan particularism. Community as they instinctively desired it to be must rest upon distinct-even-when-combined autonomies--landed autonomies. It proceeds

Of course, even in the mother country Whig and Tory have rarely existed in simple purity. In the staunchest English champions of either position is always an admixture of the other--particularly in an earlier day. A king--an English king--may confirm the species of equality shared by men-at-arms who, each in his own station, perform their masculinity; or, on the other hand, a stout Parliament man and roaring anticlerical may (as did Faulkland and Hyde) set loyalty to prince above his very life. There is nothing

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from patriarchy and withdraws from statism _because_, according to a process defined in Burke's view of natural law, its order of priorities moves outward from near kindred or close neighbors to nation, "mankind" or the like (Bredvold and Ross, p. 207). Too great an investiture of dignity, sanctity, or authority in a remote temporal power precludes such patriarchy. But "fierceness in the blood," as Stark Young's Hugh McGehee affirms it (_So Red the Rose_ [New York, 1951], p. 151), at one and the same time forestalls disrespect for the judgment or precept of the fathers--antitraditionalism--and strictly private personal autonomy, levelling and/or social Darwinism. Such in between orders may come together in a union of all of their proud components to fight a common foe--come in unbelievable oneness of spirit under a great chieftain, a patriarch of patriarchs. And the authority of that chieftain may be as a king's, or even more absolute (a Lee, a Harold of Wessex, a Cincinnatus). But it is a father's authority over a family whose honor he personifies--a family which defines him, that _grants_ him such hegemony.

The logic of this social composition is well defined by Voegelin, who hammers away in all three volumes of _Order and History_ at the connection between a people's political philosophy and its view of human nature and theology.

exceptional in the admonition to his comrades at Agincourt given by Shakespeare's Henry V:

> We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
> For he today that sheds his blood with me
> Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,
> This day shall gentle his condition:
> And gentlemen in England now abed
> Shall think themselves accursed they were not here,
> And hold their manhood cheap whiles any speaks
> That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.
> IV.iii.60-67.

Nor is there reason for surprise in Sir Edmund Verney's declaration to the House he loved: "I have eaten the King's bread and served him thirty years, and will not do so base a thing as to forsake him; and choose rather to lose my life--which I am sure I shall do--to preserve and defend those things which are against my conscience to preserve and defend; for I will do freely with you [as] I have no reverence for Bishops, for whom this quarrel subsists."[15]

For these good men bound in agreement on many fundamental questions never made a religion of their politics.

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[15] Quoted from G. M. Trevelyan's England Under the Stuarts (London, 1965), p. 222. Burke is by far the most articulate spokesman for this seeming division (cf. Bredvold and Ross, pp. 49-131). He is also proof of its compatibility with the natural law tradition (cf. Peter Stanlis' Edmund Burke and the Natural Law [Ann Arbor, 1958] and Louis I. Bredvold's The Brave New World of the Enlightenment for an exposition).

The terms Tory and Whig describe a language--a posture--and not an ersatz fanaticism of the ideological variety. To take one instance, the greatest English Whig of the Eighteenth Century, Edmund Burke, has come down to us as the formulator of the Tory position. Likewise, the writers and readers of the English conduct books which follow the examples of Plutarch and Castiglione (Spenser, Fulke Greville, and Sidney to name but a few) were usually conservative Whigs. The South of the early Republic loved Burke and the conduct literature--emulated it in a passion for biographical *heldenleben*. As had their originals--with impetus from their situation as colonials, the aboriginal, an unpredictable Nature, and the Negro--that South fused the two positions here under discussion. Verbalized hostility directed toward the region from one extreme or the other of my English version of a universal antithesis elicited from it an equally calculated response: a response disposed to tap the constants in an equally universal human sensibility but easily taken as Whig or Tory, *solus*. These necessary posturings are thus misleading. Faulkner's understanding of the natural operations of society is therefore in the Mississippian historically predictable--altogether of his birthright as a well-born Southerner.[16] As I have remarked in Chapter I, he, like his predecessors, leaned "away from the bevel" and into the simplifications of disputation as circumstances demanded. But (also resembling those predecessors in this) his contradictions explain away swiftly when seen against that backdrop of circumstances and the version of the natural law tradition which was also his patrimony. Let us look directly at his syncretism--first in interviews, speeches, and the like; and then in fiction.

Almost everything from Faulkner's casual discourse quoted and employed above is of use here. However, in gathering evidence to support my argument in the preceding chapter, I purposefully neglected one highly relevant document. And I did so reluctantly. For it has unusually weighty significance in the study of the ontological implications of Faulkner's doctrine of nature. Yet more

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I have developed this contention at length in "Faulkner, James Baldwin, and the South," *Georgia Review*, XX (Winter 1966), 431-443. Much of my thinking here and in that essay is indebted to the model of Russell Kirk's chapter on "The Politics of Prescription" in *The Conservative Mind* (pp. 1-79) and, of course, to the already over-mentioned Weaver essays, "Aspects of Southern Philosophy," "The Older Religiousness in the South," "The American as a Regenerate Being," and related materials in *Visions of Order*.

importantly, it combines these "vertical" overtones with a specific commitment to a particular view of what should be the rule followed by the individual "enduring" in their interrelation. Said another way, to this item we may comfortably turn when looking for a bridge _from_ where we have been _to_ where we are--and are going: from comment on one kind of endurance in Faulkner to discussion of the other; from Faulkner's acknowledgment of the source of our place and an affirmation of that placement to his approbation of a willingness to live _through_ the placement in an order intended by and with it--a social order sustained by a reciprocity of regard exchanged by those who live _in_ their place _out of_ a piety toward being. The piece to which I refer is Faulkner's brief 1952 _Shenandoah_ review of Ernest Hemingway's _The Old Man and the Sea_. The most important portion reads as follows:

> This time, he [Hemingway] discovered God, a Creator. Until now, his men and women had made themselves, shaped themselves out of their own clay; their victories and defeats were at the hands of each other, just to prove to themselves or one another how tough they could be. But this time, he wrote about pity: about something somewhere that made them all: the old man who had to catch the fish and then lose it, the fish that had to be caught

> and then lost, the sharks which had to rob the old man of his fish; made them all and loved them all and pitied them all. It's all right.[17]

In substance, what Faulkner praises in _The Old Man and the Sea_ is the shadowing forth in its fable of an attitude toward the pattern of creation, toward the disposition of roles within that structure, and toward the submission, courtesy, and (finally--to our point) mutual respect between creatures positioned within the arrangement necessary to its all-sustaining operation--a sense of the transcendent pity (_i.e._, grace) contained in disposition, parts, and their interaction. Phrased another way, what delights him is a fresh affinity between Hemingway's "philosophy"--his view of man's place as a contingency among contingencies, a small component in the frame of things which he must recognize and confront if he is to be complete--and the doctrine of nature which undergirds the Yoknapatawpha Cycle.[18]

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[17] Essays, _Speeches and Public Letters_, p. 193. In a valedictory note contributed to _Transatlantic Review_ (Spring 1961 [reprinted on pp. 113 and 114 of Meriwether's collection]), Faulkner theorized that Albert Camus was, as a novelist and a man, on his way to "discovering God" at the time of his death. The content of the Hemingway review is also repeated in _Faulkner in the University_ (p. 149).

[18] I have examined this review in "On the Importance of Discovering God: Faulkner and Hemingway's _The Old Man_

The vertical "yea-saying" and its connection with the matter of Chapter II require no additional comment. Of course, what is more noteworthy is, as I argued in beginning, the corollary of this nod heavenward: the amiable feeling toward the rest of creation about its appropriate business, the embracing of all else that endures and a consciousness of the brotherhood of finitude with this creaturely kaleidoscope which Faulkner is pleased to find projected in Hemingway's fisherman protagonist. Such awareness of a common mortal lot, shared by all living creatures and given them in love, engenders in those who submit to and confront it with courage and reverence for both order and source all the traits which lend meaning to their own and (by imputation) others' lives. Put another way, in praising his fellow novelist, Faulkner says plainly that only among the enduring is community possible. On the other hand, with them it is even predictable. Admittedly, not all of Faulkner's position on stewardship of place is spelled out in the Shenandoah paragraph. A responsible scholar might read into it an

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and the Sea," Mississippi Quarterly, XX (Summer 1967), 158-162. Some of the content of this essay is reproduced in this paragraph and below. Professor Brooks (letter of April 20, 1968) confirms my reading of this unusual piece.

"oh, the pity of it" social Darwinism capable of undergirding nothing more momentous than politeness among combatants. For this note, like Faulkner's hunting stories, dwells overlong upon the relationship between separate species in their mutual competition/ testing of one another, not on "confederation"--the prescribed pattern for most intraspecies-activity. Yet this should not surprise, if we remember that he was convinced no danger facing contemporary man was greater than that of being "gelded" or "desouled" into "anonymity."[19] Therefore was "fair liberty all his cry." In making this commitment, in "preaching" the indispensability of courage and self-respectful independence, while at the same moment continuing in his creation of a private universe which is his Southern version of the unchanging story of the race, he acted out no paradox.[20] For the conflict between self-realization and devotion to a dream of community properly understood (as a group possession), of hierarchy and complexity without resentment or scorn, is not a necessary one. Because of the drift of the times, Faulkner in his interviews and non-fiction prose emphasized more often the imperatives of individualism than the duties of stewardship. So acted Edmund Burke in his earlier career--before the French Revolution--while defending the prerogatives of Parliament and of the colonies against royal usurpations of legitimate authority.[21] The best evidence that Faulkner affirmed *both* liberty and order is in short stories such as "There Was a Queen," "Race at Morning," "My Grandmother Millard and General Bedford Forrest and the Battle of Harrykin Creek," and the distinctive series on Indians and the yeomanry.[22] To it (and to related material in other fiction)

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[19] *ulkner in the University*, p. 242, 245. See also *Essays, Speeches and Public Letters*, pp. 123 and *passim* (in speeches to the Delta Council and to two classes of graduates of which his daughter made a member).

[20] *Faulkner in the University*, p. 269. Faulkner claimed that for the sake of no other public cause was he comfortably a platform partisan.

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[21] See Carl B. Cone's *Burke and the Nature of Politics: The Age of the American Revolution* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1957).

[22] The hunting stories are listed in footnote 25 of Chapter II (and in 20, if "Race at Morning" is counted as one of them). The Indian stories are in section three ("The Wilderness") of *Collected Stories* ("Red Leaves" on pp. 313-341; "A Justice" on pp. 343-360; "A Courtship" on 361-380; "Lo!" on 381-403) and in scattered spots in longer works (*Go Down, Moses* particularly). "There Was a Queen" and "My Grandmother Millard and General Bedford Forrest and the Battle of Harrykin Creek" are printed on pp. 727-744 and 667-799 of *Collected Stories*, respectively.

I will return in concluding this chapter. Nevertheless, if we "peep shrewdly," Faulkner's modified paternalism is discoverable in several passages in the interviews and in the Meriwether collection--passages which provide a context for my use of the Hemingway review. The most important of these was his last public performance, the "Address to the American Academy of Letters upon Acceptance of the Gold Medal in Fiction" (May 24, 1962):

> This award has, to me, a double value, It is not only a comforting recognition of some considerable years of reasonably hard and arduous, anyway consistently dedicated work. It also recognizes and affirms, and so preserves, a quantity in our American legend and dream well worth preserving.
>
> I mean a quantity in our past: that past which was a happier time in the sense that we were innocent of many of the strains and anguishes and fears which these atomic days have compelled on us. This award evokes the faded airs and dimming rotogravures which record that vanished splendor still inherent in the names of Saint Louis and Leipzig, the quantity which they celebrated and signified recorded still today in the labels of wine bottles and ointment jars.
>
> I think that those gold medals, royal and unique above the myriad spawn of their progeny which were the shining ribbons fluttering and flashing among the booths and stalls of forgotten county fairs in recognition and accolade of a piece of tatting or an apple pie, did much more than record a victory. They affirmed the premise that there are no degrees of best; that one man's best is the equal of any other best, no matter how asunder in time or space or comparison, and should be honored as such.
>
> We should keep that quantity, more than ever now, when roads get shorter and easier between aim and gain and goals become less demanding and more easily

> attained, and there is less and less space between elbows and more and more pressure on the individual to relinquish into one faceless serration like a mouthful of teeth, simply in order to find room to breathe. We should remember those times when the idea of an individuality of excellence compounded of resourcefulness and independence and uniqueness not only deserved a blue ribbon but got one. Let the past abolish the past when--and if--it can substitute something better; not us to abolish the past simply because it was.[23]

These remarks are the equivalent of a postlude to or clarification of Faulkner's numerous but especially qualified insistences upon a greater equity in distribution of opportunities among his less fortunate countrymen. Though they have often been otherwise understood (monotonously when they treat of race) in such affirmations he was always careful to avoid any suggestion that there was (or could be) a parity of ability or achievement among the mass of men. But such ranking does not, he tells us in making an end, cancel or undercut that variety of equality provided for by a providence which is, by definition, both just and mysteriously arbitrary--nonegalitarian in its purposeful marshalling of the creatures and stations at its disposal: of character or worth as revealed in making optimum use of such place or condition. There is an ancient rightness and proportion in this moral equity, that of the parables of the talents and the widow's mite.[24] By it the spirits of envy and arrogance are neutralized and a foundation is established for the exchange of "saving" services, the "confederation" which endangers neither dignity nor selfhood is encouraged.[25] Given a fundamental difference in the power of individuals, any other equality would involve an injustice to the gifted--a defiance of natural law as Faulkner had (in honesty) perceived it. Any other equality would even constitute a reflection upon the source of that law, a sacrilege. Furthermore, any less would amount to injustice--and like the levelling zeal of the uniformitarian, further reduce all the world toward a flat and artificial sameness, a simple collective appetite, by giving substance to the collectivist's rhetoric. Faulkner was delighted to see effort and achievement honored, awards for each of the varieties of best. For he recognized all too well that the drift of his contemporaries was the other way, toward a thinking which sees no significance in stewardship of place (and therefore of opportunity). Said another way, he anticipated that in lieu of these submissions a system might soon come into operation under which no one is free to endure. There is competition, victory, and defeat within the microcosmic county fair; but it is not such as will fracture the festivity itself, the union in separateness which it epitomizes. In truth, the fair makes what it celebrates. And all the skills acknowledged there with prizes insure not only the stature of single victors but also that their triumphs will guarantee their usefulness to one another. Faulkner's point is plain enough. A balance of individuality and community is required. In this address he emphasizes how the combining or reconciling he calls for is made possible, how destructive conflict need not always follow from the performance of their nature by the differently endowed units within a given frame of things.[26]

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[23] William Faulkner: Essays, Speeches and Public Letters, pp. 168, 169.

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[24] Matthew 25:14-30; Mark 12:41-44.

[25] Here again the illuminating parallel is to The New Science of Politics (Voegelin)--a parallel whose incidence Weaver's "The Confederate South" helps to explain. For Faulkner's use of "confederate" or his discussion of the doctrine, see Faulkner at Nagano (p. 196) and Faulkner in the University (pp. 23, 81, 211, 213, 218, 235, 244, and 277). Reference to salvation in interdependence appears on p. 236 of Faulkner in the University; talk of confederation is recurrent in all of Faulkner's commentary on the race problems (see particularly relevant sections in William Faulkner: Essays, Speeches and Public Letters, pp. 102, 106, 142, 144, 147, and 151).

It is against a backdrop of his enthusiasm for the here defined variety of community that Faulkner's occasional criticisms of "rigid systems of caste" or ossified "degrees of equality" can be understood (see Faulkner at Nagano, p. 188; William Faulkner: Essays, Speeches and Public Letters, pp. 106 and 151). Though he affirmed that there was "no such thing as equality per se" (Meriwether collection, pp. 105 and 150), that society can grant to a citizen only "what equality he's capable [of] and responsible for" (Faulkner in the University, p. 223), that there will always be "second class citizens" (Faulkner in the University, pp. 210, 219), Faulkner had a concern for the dignity of those confined to less than exalted stations--a concern that followed from his total view of the dynamics of good social order.

The gentleman (or his equivalent in lesser stations or among women) is the predictable--I might even say inevitable--vehicle, defender, and instructor of and in the syncretic tradition Faulkner represents--the Cavalier or Southern equivalent of the samurai.[27] He arranges for and cements confederation--reciprocal loyalty that insures dignity.[28] By means of his private noblesse, by courtesy and submission to a particular "lot in life," he encourages in every man he meets a determination to "begin at home."[29] In a word, he _makes_ and _keeps_--or keeps _by_ remaking, in embodying and propagating the pride and humility of which he is a living summary. Where the discipline of the woods, a knowledge of history, and/or the discipline of suffering are missing, the gentleman (as in my trio of initiation novels in Chapter IV) provides this lack. Or perhaps it is from the exemplary spectacle of the special kind of suffering that comes with being a gentleman that the lesson is learned by the people he "connects." In any case, the word occurs to us quickly in association with whatever Faulkner wrote or said. In supporting what I argue here concerning the importance of the order or kind to the survival of good social composition in Yoknapatawpha, I will conclude by commenting briefly on several representatives of it that appear in the novelist's fiction.

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[26] The fair's competition is obviously something more fruitful than polite life struggle; for it gives a future to the equivalents of fisherman, sharks, and game fish--makes of their competition a sacrament, a series of acts toward a common goal.

[27] Faulkner's favorable allusion to the Cavaliers appears in Faulkner in the University (p. 80 and passim). I have mentioned it in the previous chapter--as I have the public admirings of the samurai (Faulkner at Nagano, pp. 10 and 86). His defense in Japan of primogeniture (Faulkner at Nagano, p. 66) is even more impressive.

[28] Compare Faulkner in the University (pp. 23, 65, 81, 235); Faulkner at Nagano (pp. 13 and 134); and the Meriwether collection (pp. 65 and 86).

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[29] The phrase inside quotation marks is from _Faulkner at Nagano_ (p. 54); the second is from _Essays, Speeches and Public Letters_ (pp. 140-142) and is supported in many other remarks scattered throughout the interviews (_Faulkner at Nagano_, pp. 23, 127, 192-193; _Faulkner in the University_, pp. 48, 84, 139; and _Essays, Speeches and Public Letters_, p. 19 [sympathy for the old Klan of the 1860's]).

In part because of the emphasis put upon him by the scholarship-- and in part because of the investment of his powers and preoccupations which Faulkner deposited in that one characterization--an investment which commanded the scholarship it received, Isaac McCaslin, is the obvious point of departure for comment on horizontal endurance as a theme in the works in question. I say this not because Ike is an epitome of this virtue. Quite to the contrary; though he promises well and is fully nurtured in the ethics of endurance, he ends up being more of a negative than a positive illustration. But it is not his education, his errors, or his fortune alone that makes Ike important to this division of my study. What counts about Ike is how well he crystallizes and verbalizes matters at stake in the lives of his less articulate, less philosophical counterparts--what he says about endurance, not just what he does.[30]

As I argue below, Go Down, Moses is Ike's book--or rather, the book in which he, and his family through him, are the vessels and hope of everything that can be meant by "community" and "gentleman." To "get at" Ike, to serve the illustrative ends I must now honor, it is not here necessary to adumbrate, prematurely, my full explication of the McCaslin chronicle. Without making a tautology, however, of what is reserved for a more appropriate occasion, it is possible for me to abstract part of that work's essential burden from the fictional matrix in which it inheres. For though troublesome to those who decline to confront it as it was made, the construction of _Go Down, Moses_ affords the inquirer after its social implications a certain convenience. Fortunately--given my intentions--this novel's heart is a passage which makes plain indeed that irreconcilable views of "horizontal endurance" are at stake in surrounding purely narrative divisions. The debate of Ike with his cousin McCaslin (or 'Cass) Edmonds in section four of the _Go Down, Moses_ chapter entitled "The Bear," the debate in the commissary store at McCaslin, is obviously over the nature of the good society and the appropriate means of bringing, out of something less than promising in the way of given human materials, that society into being: about the ontological basis necessary to that disposition of things: about the costs, according to the natural law, that result from any violation of that basis.[31] Together these kinsmen explore most of the possibilities open to them and their people in the aftermath of military defeat, economic ruin, and social revolution.

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[30] Because Ike is all of these things at one and the same time, I read Go Down, Moses first in Chapter IV.

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[31] _Go Down, Moses_, pp. 254-315.

Ike's position in this dialogue is, I contend, symptomatic--an acting out of what brings on the collapse of the Whig/Tory balance earlier described. A breakdown of the equipoise which gave strength and substance to the Old South has occurred--and could occur only--*under* the aforementioned pressures *and with* the encouragement of more modern, "critical" (in Gay's sense) notions. Young McCaslin is a test case for what I believe Faulkner perceives as the principal paradox of our time: that the more we concern ourselves with ambitious social schemes for securing economic or political justice as if they could be isolated for special treatment, the further we have removed ourselves from genuine fellowship.[32] That Ike talks about these things at all, theorizes concerning the proper (or providentially intended) structure of community, is in itself a bad sign. Were he one of the enduring, axioms and mere example would (usually) have been enough. Duty, in the traditional system, reveals itself as the simple concomitant of situation well understood. No explanation or grasp of ideological niceties could serve so well to shore up the walls of *res publica* as did that pious reflex. Sam Fathers' teaching of his charges--and especially of Ike--amounts to little more than this: axioms, example, and piety. If it had "taken" in the case of his last, best pupil, then we would see in the boy more of action than language to demonstrate the high level of moral illumination to which he has been transported.

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[32] This connects with what I have observed above concerning the rise of a discipline called "political science." In support of those observations and my subsequent generalizations at this point, see also Allen Tate's "The New Provincialism" (*Collected Essays* [Denver, 1959], p. 287). Be it fair or unfair of him that he did so, one of the names by which Faulkner calls this mania is "North!" But for more on this, see the readings in Chapter IV.

But something went wrong. Ike is only a philosopher of virtue, after the fashion of Diogenes the Cynic. His merits (apart from certain monologues of reproach for others and justification for himself) are inward. His doctrine, first of all, denies the inexorability of historic inheritance. Secondly, he uses the word "free" to signify "freedom from." Finally he couples "anonymous" with "brotherhood" and "communal" in detailing what result he hopes to get from a general resignation from involvement and freedom from the past. Ike's excuse for all of this nonsense is, on the surface, a good one: his horror, as a man of honor, at the taint on his patrimony--a taint put there by his Grandfather Carothers' miscegenation and incest. The Civil War itself, its local aftermaths (public and private), the death of Sam and the totemic bear, and the sale of the "holy" timberlands to crass commercial interests compound that horror and sap away Ike's will to confront it. These too he pleads indirectly. As persuasive as his excuses may seem, it is nevertheless what young McCaslin combines with them that explains why he misuses normative expressions and marks him as deserving of patient and detailed analysis. His pose is not merely that of the man paralyzed in seas of trouble; instead he assumes the additional sanctity of the nowadays familiar hungerers and thirsters after isolated righteousness--a pose which tells us that the mentality of the conqueror has, in the Mississippi of the 1880's, won a larger than military victory denied it in the field. While contending that there is no liberty from the contamination of his name except in declaring that the McCaslin plantation belongs to "everyone" (as at one time had all the land in "the communal anonymity of brotherhood"), he belies his noble posturing. For at the same time he turns the place over to his cousin (the cousin he has indirectly accused of moral brigandage) for benign management, reserving to himself only talk, certain selected (and gratifying) short-term responsibilities, and a small income from his successor.[33] That Ike is making a serious error with his little exculpatory formula is hammered home in the portions of *Go Down, Moses* which follow the commissary exchange--indeed is admitted in action by the boy himself in the very year of his "resignation." Furthermore, when we see him at his best, in "The Old People," in the hunt sections of "The Bear" and "Delta Autumn," he does not prate of freedom or scorn teleology. Instead he seems very old-fashioned. This evidence is, however, the business of Section A in Chapter IV.[34] How McCaslin came to make the error, to embrace a set of contradictions, is what should occupy us at this point.

As I have already indicated, the key to Ike's difficulty lies in his juxtaposition of certain weighted words--good words that, if well arranged, clarify what is (and what is not) the task of the horizontally enduring. "Freedom" and "anonymous" (i.e., of privacy) are Whig terms of honor; "brotherhood" and "communal" have a Tory ancestry. They belong principally to distinctive sets of mind--conflicting judgments as to priorities. Only in one relation, as defined in the symthesis put together in the early South (and in a few other places even earlier), are they comfortable in solution. Moreover, detached from their historic moorings, these counters are more than just hostile. In the limbo of contemporary political jargon (like Milton's Satan) they claim a self-generated authority as competing absolutes and possess explosive power to drive men to and fro in pursuit of artificial transcendence. What the hero of Go Down, Moses does with his Whiggisms and Toryisms is neither Whig nor Tory nor both in company. Instead it is the other thing that borrows and distorts from either or both--by turns.

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[33] *Go Down, Moses*, p. 257. Hanging in the air between Ike and Cass is the injunction of Luke 12:48: ". . . For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."

[34] *Go Down, Moses*, pp. 163-187; 191-254; and 335-365, respectively.

Ike's mistake in seeking freedom through abnegation is in part the result of his up-to-date interpretation of "brotherhood." His assumption that no man ever really owns land or property unless he is himself owned by them is a sound one. Land (property, place) is, to use Ike's own words, a "fief," a grant "suzerain" to be held in trust, in a spirit of stewardship. Along with sex, age, and all that inevitably appertains to a human condition, it is to be endured in "pride and humility." Both as a planting McCaslin and as keeper of the hunt ritual he has a right to these words. But the proprietary doctrines of feudalism, of property, place, and an interlocking order of authorities and responsibilities can have nothing to do with conceptions of anonymous brotherhood. Neither are they conformable to the type of "freedom" Ike claims he has earned in hunting the big woods.[35] When asked in one of his conversations at Charlottesville if Ike's predicament is typical of his generation's loss of their moral bearings, Faulkner replied:

> Well, there are some people in any time and age that cannot face and cope with the problems. There seem to be three stages: The first says, This is rotten and I'll have no part of it, I will take death first. The second says, This is rotten, I don't like it, I can't do anything about it, but at least I will not participate in it myself, I will go off into a cave or climb a pillar to sit on. The third says, This stinks and I'm going to do something about it. McCaslin is the second. He says, This is bad and I will withdraw from it. What we need are people who will say, This is bad and I'm going to change it.[36]

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[35] *Go Down, Moses*, pp. 299-300.

[36] *Faulkner in the University*, pp. 245-246.

And elsewhere in the same series, when asked what a good wife could have done to restore lost conviction in Isaac, to direct him without compromising his honor, Faulkner speculated (in a similar spirit):

> I would say, since we are supposing, if she had been that sort of woman, she would have understood his hatred of that condition, she might have been practical enough to say, This is the way we'll do it, we can't abandon these people, but let's do it this way, and he would have said, You're wiser than I, let's try it your way. That's possible, I would like to think that. But he would have stuck to his position, that I will not profit from this which is wrong and sinful.[37]

What Faulkner appears to be telling his audience in these comments is that Ike wrongfully abandoned his place as "The Man," The McCaslin; and in reaction to his own rhetorical emphasis upon certain (at this time) magic words he allowed himself to be seduced into a shining vision of prelapsarian human amity in an immutably flawless world--seduced into believing that these words intoned in a priestly fashion will without effort on his own part secure the transformation for which they express a desire. What happens to him and his is, I say again, as much a gloss on the gnostic rhetoric as it is on its bemused McCaslin victim.

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[37] Faulkner in the University, p. 245.

Ike confuses brotherhood with the arbitrary understanding of equality now part of the common parlance; or rather, he imagines that the one presupposes the other. That his error is epidemic does not make it harmless. To forestall the likelihood that this intellectual infection may distort our view of Ike, we must remember that Faulkner never had any use for anonymous conglomerations, that he identified as the writer's chief duty "to save the individual from anonymity . . . being desouled." A brother is one whose relationship to others is by no means anonymous; it is defined by kinship, by blood, marriage, and a whole network of responsibilities, dependencies, obligations, and affections. Members of a family may be equal in their love for one another, in the valuation they place on one another. But there is nothing further from the ideals of doctrinaire equalitarianism than the structure of the family unit--Faulkner's model of the natural (*i.e.*, patriarchal) society. Cain's "Am I my brother's keeper?" posits the modern equality in anonymity. On the other hand, Ike's agony at the events recorded in the old commissary house ledgers over which he and Cass argue their views has meaning only in terms of a brotherhood of family and community, a brotherhood which (to borrow from Albert Schweitzer) recognizes elder and younger, recognizes that some men are inevitably responsible for others and cannot merely "abandon them" to an equality that does not (and cannot) exist. It makes sense only to those who share the old assumptions about the authority under which men have a place and the identity of that place with their very being.[38]

Unlike Isaac McCaslin in Go Down, Moses, the elderly Negress, Dilsey Gibson, in The Sound and the Fury is equal to the challenge of her "place." She is Ike's antitype in most respects. Where he has the advantages of support and approval from his kindred and neighbors (of all classes and colors), the advantages of sex, education, race, and (of course) time, Dilsey has no support but her character and her faith. She is never deluded into imagining that success or lesser rewards will crown her efforts. For her law is no longer the law of her Jefferson. And she has no talk, no theory, or "politics." Perhaps sex, or color, or religion--or all together--protect Dilsey from "notions." Yet the evidence we get from her deeds brings us back to character.

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[38] The foregoing paragraphs on Ike and patriarchy echo my "Brotherhood in 'The Bear'," Modern Age, X (Summer 1966), 278-281.

Like Elnora, Molly Beauchamp, Louvinia, Clytie (and Faulkner's own Mammy Callie)--to mention only a few of her kind, Dilsey "attacks the basic situation [before her] with the tools at hand."[39]

Despite much nervous disputation to the contrary, the logic of Faulkner's portrait of Dilsey is this simple. Never does she approve of the chaos in the household of her white "family."[40] Neither does she enjoy the indifference

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[39] John Hunt, William Faulkner: Art in Theological Tension, p. 98. For identification of these Negro women see below.

[40] Instructive examples of this uneasiness with the black female paladin appear in Irving Howe's William Faulkner: A Critical Study (pp. 123-125) and in Robert Penn Warren's "Faulkner: The South and the Negro," Southern Review, I. N.S. (Summer 1965), 507 and 512-513. Howe is probably correct (insofar as he addresses his own kind) when he describes Dilsey as a "historically unavailable . . . moral archetype or model." Yet his observation is a reflection on himself and those likeminded--not on Dilsey or her emulators. Warren's attempt to set Dilsey off from Faulkner's subsequent Negro characterization (and Faulkner the novelist from Faulkner the Mississippian) is less explicable. He knows better.

The point to be remembered when considering Faulkner's old style Negroes is that he did not approach the difficulty of being Negro from one perspective and other difficult conditions from another. Boundless and all absorbing ire with any condition or any injuries received, real or imagined, of man or God, was in his eyes culpable--an error if it paralyzed in those restive the ability to address themselves with strength toward the world that offended their sense of personal worth and merit. The enduring are never so and/or hostility which her struggle with that disorder provokes in the household's surviving members. Dilsey's own family shames and vexes her. The dead or departed Compsons (whose name she defends) have failed her. Jason and his mother find in her only an unbearable reproach and a check upon their particular kind of selfishness; and Miss Quentin, who stands most in need of her support and protection, thoughtlessly repays them by calling her a "damn old nigger."[41] Only Benjy appreciates her benefactions; and his affection brings to her only greater and more futile heartache. Nonetheless, Dilsey does not allow her frustration or anger at losing fights and being treated badly to push her into either the aggressive or passive forms of conduct often labeled by members of her race with that epithet. She sums up her rule of life as well as anyone could: "I does de bes I kin."[42] And she is never ashamed of what that best

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concerned with what they ought to be to forget what _is_ and that they must begin _where_ they are. Environment is always bad--in one sense or another. Excessive impatience with it can be impious or even sacrilegious.

[41] _The Sound and the Fury_ (New York, 1946), p. 230. I cite this Random House edition as a duplicate of the original 1929 Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith publication, save for the genealogical appendix.

[42] _Ibid_., p. 296.

accomplishes in that her dignity does not depend on how she is valued by those around her. It comes chiefly of her performance of her duty in the only way she has available. There is no one else; hence, she must be Dilsey, must endure, for her own sake, for the sake of her callous charges, and for the honor of Compsons long dead (for instance, the old General in "The Bear") whom she alone represents in this last chapter of the family's history. Compson is the ideal that has given stature to her life. At the end she comes close to giving voice to her wisdom: "I seed de first and de last."[43] What she refers to in it is, I believe, the natural law and its revelation in history. But the expression is characteristically terse and simple. What she has attempted to *keep in doing* is all the more impressive. When Faulkner recapitulates her story by saying (in a note that he has attached to recent editions to *The Sound and the Fury*) only that she endured, he is not ambiguous.[44]

Though a disapportionate percentage of Faulkner's enduring are women, white and black (and I will have more to say of this), three of Dilsey's most impressive counterparts are the very men Ike inherits from most immediately: his father and his uncle, Buck and Buddy McCaslin, and his already mentioned foster father/cousin, Cass Edmonds. Ike, insofar as he acts at all to rectify the wrong done by his grandfather, acts in the footsteps of his father and his uncle, the role of elder brother to Carothers' colored descendants and to the various Edmonds boys who come after Cass. But once he rejects the twins' (and, in some measure, his cousin's) example, Ike cannot play that role fully. After he has recited, "This is bad and I will withdraw from it," he no longer has the power or position to assume the brotherly-fatherly duties that he was born to. He cannot at the same time assume an equality of place with and still be responsible for the rest of his clan or for his poorer neighbors, the descendants of those people whom Buck and Buddy had looked after--the people who would follow only the twins' leadership in the Civil War.[45] Buck and Buddy are as much repelled by their father's ways as is Ike. Yet they are not disarmed by their effulgence of virtue; and neither is Cass. No more than Ike does Edmonds take pleasure in what he reads in the ledgers. But as Professor John Hunt asserts, if there is any hero in "The Bear," it is Cass; for ". . . he accepts the guilt as a burden, [and] unlike Isaac . . . is not immobilized by it."[46] His courage is Dilsey's and Buck's and Buddy's--armed by a prideful self-respect that is unlikely, even incapable of collapsing in a fake humility or "wounded will"; self-respect that is (because it is informed by a sense of history, by painful experience, and by his own time in the woods) even less prone to Sutpenlike inflation. They are the pride and humility Ike was unable to bring out of the big bottom: the living embodiments of a stability of which he says, in retiring from the course they followed, there are never enough to suit God's purposes.[47] Or rather, they are its "active," male version.

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[43] *Ibid.*, p. 371.

[44] *Ibid.*, p. 427.

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[45] See the discussion of The Unvanquished in section B of Chapter IV.

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[46] In a letter quoted on p. 374 of William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country.

[47] For representative use of these words, see Go Down, Moses, pp. 165, 191-192, 196, 226, and 295; they appear frequently in other fiction from the same hand. The identification of the McCaslin twins as chosen agents of Providence occurs on p. 283 of that book. The irony of the passage is that it is spoken by a man who denies the logic of what he says. But, as I have argued, such is that man's (Ike's) wont.

Rare though they may seem (to the Deity), the enduring McCaslins do have their analogues in other stations: Gavin Stevens--most of the time--in Go Down, Moses, Requiem for a Nun, Knight's Gambit, and Intruder in the Dust; V. K. Ratliff in the Snopes trilogy; Eck Snopes in The Town and his son Wallstreet Panic Snopes in The Mansion; Byron Bunch and Gail Hightower (more or less) in Light in August; Mr. Poleymus, Ned McCaslin, Uncle Parsham Hood, and the Priests in The Reivers; Cash Bundren and Vernon Tull in As I Lay Dying; the Reverend Tobe Sutterfield and "Mr. Harry" in A Fable; Mr. Ernest in "Race at Morning"; Horace Benbow (in his own half-hearted way) in Sanctuary; the big convict in "Old Man"; Brother Goddyhay in The Mansion; Saucier and Francis Weddel in "Mountain Victory" and "Lo!"; Wade Hampton and the Mallisons in Intruder in the Dust; Loosh Peabody (almost everywhere); the Griers in "Two Soldiers" and "Shall Not Perish"; Stonewall Jackson Fentry in "Tomorrow"; the McCallums in "The Tall Men," Sartoris, and The Town; and, of course, Sam Fathers and the other not-before-mentioned hunters in De Spain's camp in Go Down, Moses; and at other ages in life: Sarty Snopes in "Barn Burning"; Mr. Ernest's ward in "Race at Morning"; Bayard and Ringo in The Unvanquished; Charles

Mallison and Aleck Saunder in Intruder in the Dust; Lucius Priest in The Reivers; and, of course, Ike at the time of Sam's death in "The Bear." And so does Dilsey: her Negro "sisters" mentioned above; Maggie Mallison in The Town and Intruder in the Dust; Marthe Demont in A Fable; Mrs. Ewing in "Golden Land"; Mink Snopes' wife Yettie in The Hamlet; Ruby Goodwin in Sanctuary; Miss Habersham in Go Down, Moses and Intruder in the Dust; Granny Millard in The Unvanquished and "My Grandmother Millard and General Bedford Forrest and the Battle of Harrykin Creek"; Everbe Corinthia in The Reivers; Mrs. Armistid and Mrs. Hines in Light in August; Mellisandre Backus Harriss in Knight's Gambit and Lena Grove in Light in August (despite their passivity); Mrs. Wallstreet Panic Snopes in The Town; Margaret Powers in Soldiers' Pay; and finally, Mrs. Virginia Du Pre--in almost half of the Yoknapatawpha books.[48] The social or horizontal endurance of these ladies is in nature and degree, more difficult to pinpoint than are the virtues of Buck's and Buddy's: harder to talk about and more easily confused with animal fatalism or simple selfishness because their actions are not always so obvious, because their providentially assigned role is indeed more passive or indirect. With Dilsey, Aunt Jenny of *Sartoris*, *Sanctuary*, and "There Was a Queen" is certainly the most impressive of the lot. Perhaps the non-enduring women, in their destructiveness, are more forceful arguments for the wisdom of endurance than are the just catalogued paragons. For they mark in indelible terms how much the health of a society depends upon the character of its women, be they passive or not. If Faulkner's best are women, so are his worst: Narcissa Benbow Sartoris (in *Sartoris*, *Sanctuary*, and "There Was a Queen"); Cecily Saunders (in *Soldiers' Pay*); Elly (in the short story of that title); Temple Drake (in *Sanctuary* and most of *Requiem for a Nun*); Patricia Robyn and Jenny Steinbauer (in *Mosquitoes*); Candace Compson (in *The Sound and the Fury*); and Charlotte Rittenmeyer (*The Wild Palms*).[49] And these worst, it is worth noting, are mostly young.[50] According to Faulkner's version of the story, "feminism" or the "emancipation" of women played a large part in the collapse of the traditional Southern social order. The novelist disapproved of the development so fiercely that it produced passages of his most angry and savage satire as well as moments of his darkest melancholy: disapproved almost enough to blame the entire decline on the one dislocation.

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[48] In the masculine sections of this catalogue the works not heretofore cited are Intruder in the Dust (New York, 1948); The Reivers (New York, 1962); Sanctuary (New York, 1931; I use the Random House edition of 1962, printed from the original J. Cape and H. Smith plates); from Collected Stories "Mountain Victory" on pp. 745-777 and "Barn Burning" on pp. 3-25; The Unvanquished (New York, 1938). The new reference in the feminine list is to Soldiers' Pay (New York, 1926; I cite the 1954 reprint by Liveright of the original Boni and Liveright text).

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[49] "Elly" appears on pp. 207-224 of *Collected Stories*. *Mosquitoes* was first published by Boni and Liveright (New York, 1927). I cite the Liveright reprint of 1954.

Yet if young women are ruining or helping to ruin the modern South (and the modern world as a whole), Faulkner is constant in his attribution to their mothers and grandmothers of the credit for keeping the communal order in operation for as long as it lasted. It is to women who followed after and sustained the older ideal, that of the family and clan culture--of "hearths" and "rooftrees"--to whom he looked for a norm. In their positive capacity they are formidable champions indeed, as impossible to challenge as a good lion tamer and as at home on earth as an archfiend. Cleanth Brooks puts it properly: Faulkner was "old-fashioned" on the subject, with opinions that owe as much to the experiences and recollections of his youth as to any conscious illiberality--to the older women in the Maury and Faulkner connection.[51] Their fictional totem is the anchor/matriarch. She is the custodian of civilized life who uses her affinity with things elemental, her natural dignity, and her freedom from abstractions (plus the privileged position given her [as long as it survives] according to chivalry _and_ her natural authority as life-giver) to manipulate, regulate, and hold together her society through men and (to a lesser extent) younger people of both sexes.

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[50] I have purposefully omitted Mrs. Caroline Compson (The Sound and the Fury) from this collection. She is not young; but she otherwise belongs, in every respect. Indeed, she might belong at the head of the class. I have also left out Joanna Burden and Addie Bundren (plus several lesser figures--particularly the excessively proper) because, though flawed, their cases are complicated. I have a little more to say on Temple, Addie, and Charlotte in Chapters II and V.

Aunt Jenny will do very well for a prototype of the kind. Faulkner has made no individualist who is more completely a public, social, family-centered person--no other character who more fully projects the synthesis of traditions identified in the first half of the chapter. For almost sixty years she keeps alive "Sartoris" (the family and the ideal)--lives in and through her kinsmen and perpetuates their sense of duty and destiny even while she mocks them affectionately. Because her station is high, her duties are large. Her menfolk (again in view of their status) are extremely difficult: touchy, hagridden by pressures, and demanding in what they ask of a woman. In "There Was a Queen" she is near ninety--and juxtaposed against an insidious, low key version of the arch modern, the solipsistic Narcissa Benbow (now the widow of her great-great-nephew Bayard). Miss Jenny cannot help Narcissa raise her son, Benbow, because after the big young matron in the perpetual white dress trades her favors for some obscene love letters written to her years before, it would be pointless and degrading (to herself and her family) for her to share a house with the younger woman. Only one outlet for witness is open to her; and of it she avails herself in dying. The story is both tragic and elegiac--and has power in either mode. It leaves us with no doubt about Aunt Jenny's "quality" --or Faulkner's social views.[52]

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[51] _William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country_, p. 381; also _The Hidden God_, p. 27. I have expanded on Brooks' insight in "Certain Ladies of Quality: Faulkner's View of Women and the Evidence of 'There Was a Queen'," _Arlington Quarterly_, I (Winter 1967-1968), 106-139.

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[52] Elnora identifies Miss Jenny with that word

This survey of Faulkner's enduring could of course be greatly extended. Operating somewhere within the range of possibilities strung out between the Whig and Tory simplicities--the extremities of Jason Compson III's utter fatalism and the pure gnostic will of Joanna Burden, between the calm acceptance of Lena Grove and the fierce rebellion of Charlotte Rittenmeyer, between the unexpected _noblesse_ of low born Sarty Snopes and the angry resentment of his condition by young Thomas Sutpen (Faulkner's most asocial creature)--are most of his creations. In greater or lesser degree, the enduring live up to the demanding rule that ordinarily recognizes the right of children to the repose of their childhood, of women to respect and protection, of the

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(_Collected Stories_, p. 732). Miss Jenny, of course, never classifies herself as a "lady"; instead, she acts. Her antithesis is probably Mrs. Compson in _The Sound and the Fury_. She _does_ assert her gentility--and nothing else (p. 374).

Professor Cleanth Brooks, who has examined evidence for my view of Faulkner's Burkean attitudes, has written me (letter of February 27, 1967): "You are right in claiming for Faulkner that conception of society." For further support I refer the reader to Elmo Howell's "William Faulkner and the New Deal," _Midwest Quarterly_, V (July 1964), 323-332; and Floyd C. Watkins' "William Faulkner, the Individual, and the World," _Georgia Review_, XIV (Fall 1960), 1-10; plus, of course, the overall argument of Brooks' _William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country_. "Lo!" is a fine dramatization of both of its halves.

aged to honor and authority.[53] Birth and education, sex and social condition, ability and accident come down on them with unrelenting certainty. But Faulkner measures (or rather, allows to measure themselves) all according to the same rule --as he did the fisherman and his creatures, as he did the competitors in his beloved old-time fairs. And many seem to know, without being told or slapped down by natural law, what the old Negro porter says to Margaret Powers as they care for the helpless Donald Mahon: "We got to look out for our own folks, ain't we?"[54]

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[53] For Sutpen in comparison to Sarty I refer to his meditation after he has been turned away from the door of the "big house" (Absalom, Absalom! [New York, 1936], pp. 245-246).

Faulkner's view of the place of children is not complicated. They are adults-in-the-making. He does not sentimentalize them (cf. Faulkner at Nagano, p. 104). But he does believe the best of them can be rushed up in their maturation if necessity requires. And he expects well of the more recent generations of young men because they are not broken in spirit--in contrast to their forefathers after the Civil War. But he prefers that they have time to grow.

Good illustrations of what Faulkner believes should be the function of the elderly in the communal society are Samantha Ewing in "Golden Land"; the narrator, Lucius Priest in The Reivers; and (certainly) Sam Fathers in "The Bear": their job is to transmit the tradition.

[54] Soldiers' Pay, p. 34. Their activity is a fine example of endurance of accidental circumstance.

But I have offered already too much assertion. It is time that I give proof. There is no proving arguments about fiction without analysis of complete works, analyses which account for their every component part. To that labor I now turn.

PART II: DEMONSTRATION AND PROSPECTUS

CHAPTER IV

PROOF

As was announced at the beginning of the study, the burden of proof for what I have argued concerning Faulkner's doctrine of nature rests upon the usefulness and applicability of my *a priori* synthetic reconstruction of a world view in the examination and translation of his fiction into expository and discursive terms. What follows is the promised after-the-fact demonstration in a series of readings of five Faulkner novels and a brief prospectus for further mining of the same vein. The sequence is not natural and *chronological*, but rather arbitrary and *logical*. *Go Down, Moses* is approached first because so much of the doctrinal substance of the Yoknapatawpha Cycle, muted or only tangentially revealed in Faulkner's other works, comes to the surface in that most curiously designed volume--and because its emphasis is (contrary to his usual practice, but indispensably for the pattern of my argument) as much on the basic "vertical" as on the subsidiary "horizontal" overtones of that substance. The three novels of successful "initiation" come next in recognition of the truism that their common emphasis, matter, and theme are closer to what appears in *Go Down, Moses* than are the contents of any other Faulkner fiction: because Ike McCaslin fails at what their heroes accomplish. These novels, in the shadow of *Go Down, Moses*, illustrate my calculus at its operational best; for they provide me with an inescapably plain and straightforward body of raw material for expansion and extrapolation of critical assumptions introduced out of *Go Down, Moses* (material to be had nowhere else in the canon), while at the same time supporting the choice of a point of departure for the development of that machinery in the just completed critique. *Absalom, Absalom!* appears last in that it is most readily understood in the context provided by *Go Down, Moses* and the *bildungsroman*--and in view of its accepted status as a finished work of art. The critical difficulties with which it confronts a reader are so much larger than those engendered by the other books and these same problems are so much reduced by the comparison and connection of its protagonist with Ike, Bayard, Chick, and Lucius that there is no more appropriate and functional preparation for its explication than the four readings which bring me to it. Finally, to conclude the section (and study), I will indicate in brief how I might apply my understanding of what Faulkner purposed with "endure," "cope," "pride," and "humility" in approaching other fables from the same hand.

A. *Go Down, Moses*

Despite the importance he attached to it, the success which it has had with his readers, and the dignity which reams of criticism plus much teaching have guaranteed it, *Go Down, Moses* is assuredly not Faulkner's most obviously constructed book, is not in any sense his best constructed. Neither a "novel," according to the customary uses of that term, nor so neatly or so well put together as its counterparts worked up out of more or less separately conceived shorter fictions (*The Hamlet*, *The Town*, *The Mansion*, even *The Sound and the Fury* and *A Fable*), it is nonetheless no mere after-the-fact random collection. On the contrary, I believe this volume to be a novel of some special sort, belonging to a class between the categories of that dramatic counterpoint of monologue and monologue/narrative, *As I Lay Dying*, and the demi-genre so much preferred by many other recent Southern writers: the suite of stories on a single theme. For the seven individual sections of *Go Down, Moses* do not constitute an unbroken action, are not informed by a single stage-by-stage chronologically strung plot; yet, by inference and some reversed shifting of focus in time, a fable may be reconstructed from them: an envelope itself contained by another still less obvious envelope. Though vivid enough, the singly entitled portions of this composite are a chronicle of what befell one family in one place: of the McCaslins--kith, kin, and connection--who are in their suggestive collectivity, their effectual summation, better projections of what Faulkner understood by "South" than any of his other clans, better than Sartoris or De Spain, Snopes or Compson.

In other words, I contend that this Faulkner creation appears as "curiously and wonderfully made" chiefly because we who thus perceive it too often expect the wrong things in and from it: because its components are disposed according to an order and purpose of their own. The book's dynamic would not exist if the sequence, length, and emphasis of its parts were replaced by a more commonplace arrangement. Its movement, even if only a little diluted with concessions to our habits and tastes, could not unfold with the purchase present in its published pattern of halting and passionate groping among intransigent and unsubmissive complexities--could not render Faulkner's vision with the force or immediacy it was designed to achieve. Music (and not earlier traditional fiction) could be the best source of analogy. Another possibility is the anti-drama of masque-like, explosive, and vaguely connected episodes. However, even these fail in the end. Of this book the parts make a whole--make it by being sometimes conventionally comic, sometimes elegiac, and sometimes even tragic in themselves. _Go Down, Moses_ is _sui generis_. Both for its own sake and for the sake of what the author reveals and finishes in it--as the center-piece of the entire Yoknapatawpha Cycle--it must be considered an entity.[1]

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[1] The full title of the text employed here, the 1942 first edition, was _Go Down, Moses and Other Stories_. Apparently, the subtitle and the chapter titles were assigned without the author's permission or against his preferences. The representatives of his publisher obviously had as much difficulty in calling it a novel as have the critics. Millgate (_op. cit._, pp. 203 and 328) gives us a report (drawn from an Albert Erskine letter) of what Faulkner thought of his editor's procedure and of how swiftly he protested it. For Faulkner was insistent that _Go Down, Moses_ be taken as a novel (_The Faulkner-Cowley File_, pp. 112-113; _Faulkner in the University_, p. 4; _Faulkner at West Point_, p. 102). Cowley (_vide_ p. 5 of the _File_) seems to support my view of its form.

As I have already acknowledged, there is much commentary on Go Down, Moses--whole and parts. It is possible to group all of it under three large headings, breaking two of the three into subdivisions. The first is the most common: it ignores, slights, or disparages everything but "The Bear." The next empahsizes that "chapter" (*qua* Henry Lloyd Garrison) and bits of this or that in the others in order to moralize Faulkner's song with laments for the downtrodden and petulant mutterings of "the Slave Power." The last is more recent and more sophisticated. Its object is to undermine Faulkner's stature as an artist; and its tactic is to emphasize the discrepancies between the magazine and/or manuscript versions of the chapters and their appearance in the 1942 volume. One and two are, of course, the schools with branches. Three is of later origin, and more invidious.[2] Further exfoliations of this three-forked tree

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[2] Of the first species there are innumerable specimens, most of them referred to below. A very few belong only to this category. They are such papers as concern themselves narrowly with the peculiarities or interaction of components in the construction of "The Bear"; Carvel Collins' "Are There Mandalas?" *Literature and Psychology*, III (November 1953), 3-6; Collins' "A Note on the Conclusion of 'The Bear'," *Faulkner Studies*, II (Winter 1954), 58-60; Ruel E. Foster's "A Further Note on the Conclusion of 'The Bear',"

Faulkner Studies, III (Spring 1954), 4-5; Hugh MacLean's "Conservatism in Modern American Fiction," *College English* XV (March 1954), 322-325; Irving D. Blum's "The Parallel Philosophy of Emerson's 'Nature' and Faulkner's 'The Bear'," *Emerson Society Quarterly*, No. 13 (1958), 22-25; Richard J. Stonesifer's "Faulkner's 'The Bear': A Note on Structure," *College English*, XXIII (December 1961), 219-223; Thomas J. Wertenbaker, Jr.'s "Faulkner's Point of View and the Chronicle of Ike McCaslin," *College English*, XXIV (December 1962), 169-178; H. H. Bell's "A Footnote to Faulkner's 'The Bear'," *College English*, XXIV (December 1962), 179-182; E. R. Hutchison's "A Footnote to the Gum Tree Scene," *College English*, XXIV (April 1963), 564-565; Eric Jensen's "The Play Element in Faulkner's 'The Bear'," *Texas Studies in Literature*, VI (Summer 1964), 170-187; William V. Nestrick's "The Function of Form in 'The Bear,' Section IV," *Twentieth Century Literature*, XII (October 1966), 131-137; and certain other studies of Faulkner's language in "The Bear" proper, which will be cited on better occasion.

Much more common are papers and chapters from books which consider "The Bear," exclusively or chiefly, while making out a case for its subject's being that of The Great Southern Repentance. Such moralizing depends upon extraction of "The Bear" from *Go Down, Moses*--as a related habit of praising Faulkner's primitivism depends upon the removal of part four from its place among the hunting narratives. These procedures (of my "schools" one and two combined) are far less popular than they were a decade ago. An expanding familiarity with the body of Faulkner's achievement, the appearance of the Faulkner scholar as a respectable variety of specialist in the study of American literature (a specialist who can influence and direct such reading), and Faulkner's own aforementioned warnings undid their authority. But thanks to the biases of textbook compilers and the kindred willfulness of certain professional literary historians (who even now insist on taking American literature as if it were of a piece and therefore insist on coming to Faulkner by way of Emerson, Thoreau, and Whitman), they still crop up here and there. Since the error perpetuated is pleasing to the custodians of our literary Pantheon, the already numerous company remains a growing one: Cowley's *The Portable Faulkner*, pp. 1-24 and 225-226 (selected in 1946 from his earlier "William Faulkner's Legend of the South," *Sewanee Review*, LIII [Summer 1945, 343-361--the essay which initiated the cult of "The Bear"]); Kenneth LaBudde's "Cultural Primitivism in Faulkner's 'The Bear'," *American Quarterly*, II (Winter 1950), 322-328; Harry Modean Campbell and Ruel E. Foster's *William Faulkner: A Critical Study*, pp. 76-79, 146-158; R. W. B. Lewis' *The Picaresque Saint* (New York, 1959), pp. 179-219 (a revision and expansion of a 1951 *Kenyon Review* essay); Walton Litz's "Genealogy as Symbol in *Go Down, Moses*," *Faulkner Studies*, I (Winter 1952), 49-53; Lohn Lydenberg's "Nature Myth in Faulkner's 'The Bear'," *American Literature*, XXIV (March 1952), 62-72; Ursula Brumm's "Wilderness and Civilization: A Note on William Faulkner," *Partisan Review*, XXII (Summer 1955), 340-350; Irving Malin's *William Faulkner: An Interpretation* (Stanford, 1957), *passim*; Walter Fuller Taylor, Jr.'s "Let My People Go: The White Man's Heritage in *Go Down, Moses*," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, LVIII (Winter 1959), 20-32; Otis B. Wheeler's "Faulkner's Wilderness," *American Literature*, XXXI (May 1959), 127-136; Hyatt Waggoner's *William Faulkner: From Jefferson to the World* (Lexington, Ky., 1959), pp. 199-211; Lynn Altenbrand's "A Suspended Moment: The Irony of History in William Faulkner's 'The Bear'," *Modern Language Notes*, LXXV (November 1960), 572-582; Neal Woodruff, Jr.'s "'The Bear' and Faulkner's Moral Vision," in *Studies in Faulkner* (Carnegie Series in English, VI [Pittsburgh, Pa., 1961]);43-68; Walter Patrick Sullivan's 1961 dissertation, "William Faulkner and the Community," pp. 162-164; Ihab Hassan's *Radical Innocence: Studies in the Contemporary American Novel* (Princeton, 1961), pp. 56-58; Robert L. Dorsch's "An Interpretation of the Central Themes in the Work of William Faulkner," *Emporia State Research Studies*, XI (September 1962) 5-42; Carol Dee McLaughlin (*op. cit.*, pp. 104-151 [1963]); John L. Longley, Jr. (*op. cit.*, pp.,79-101 [1963]); Monique Nathan's *Faulkner par lui-meme* (Paris, 1963), pp. 147-159; Chester E. Eisinger's *Fiction of the Forties* (Chicago, 1963), pp. 178-186; Francis Lee Utley's "Pride and Humility: The Cultural Roots of Ike McCaslin" (pp. 233-260 of the Utley, Lynn Z. Bloom, and Arthur F. Kinney casebook, *Bear, Man, and God* [New York, 1963]); Alexander C. Kern's "Myth and Symbol in Criticism of Faulkner's 'The Bear'," (pp. 152-161 of *Myth and Symbol: Critical Approaches and Applications*, ed. Bernice Slote [Lincoln, Nebr., 1963]); Ronald G. Rollins' "Ike McCaslin and Chick Mallison: Faulkner's Emerging Southern Hero," *West Virginia Philological Papers*, XIV (1963), 74-79; Vernon T. Hornback, Jr.'s "William Faulkner and the Terror of History: Myth, History, and Moral Freedom in the Yoknapatawpha Cycle" (St. Louis University unpublished dissertation, 1963), pp. 118-206; Edmond L. Volpe's *A Reader's Guide to William Faulkner* (New York, 1964), pp. 230-252; Thomas E. Connolly's "Fate and the Agony of Will: Determinism in Some Works of William Faulkner" (pp. 47-49 of *Essays on Determinism in American Literature*, ed. Sydney J. Krause [Kent, Ohio, 1964]); Richard Lehan's "Faulkner's Poetic Prose: Style and Meaning in 'The Bear'," *College English*, XXVII (December 1965), 243-247; Robert Harrison's "Faulkner's 'The Bear': Some Notes on Form," *Georgia Review*, XX (Fall 1966), 318-327; and Kenneth E. Richardson (*op. cit.*, pp. 45-61 [1967]).

Of school two the other half is of fairly recent provenance. Its development is readily explained by what distinguishes it from the moralist criticism of earlier times: explicators have begun to read "The Bear" in context. More specifically, they have read "Delta Autumn." Ike McCaslin's insistence in that chapter that "brown America" will be at least a millenium in coming cost him most of his champions. But the righteous did not, at that point, give up on "The Bear." Instead, they simply inverted its point to make of it a demonstration of how the indigenous wickedness crops out in even the most promising Southerners: Olga Vickery's *The Novels of William Faulkner: A Critical Interpretation* (Baton Rouge, 1959), pp. 124-134; Robert L. Berner's "The Theme of Responsibility in the Later Fiction of William Faulkner," pp. 160-174 (dissertation, 1960); Herbert A. Perluck's "The Heart's Driving Complexity: An Unromantic Reading of 'The Bear'," *Accent*, XX (Winter 1960), 23-46; Stanley Sultan's "Call Me Ishmael: The Hagiography of Isaac McCaslin," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, III (Spring 1961), 50-66; David H. Stewart's "The Purpose of Faulkner's Ike," *Criticism*, III (Fall 1961), 333-342; Frederick J. Hoffman's *William Faulkner* (New York, 1961), pp. 96-99; Peter Swiggart's *The Art of Faulkner's Novels* (Austin, 1962), pp. 173-179; Irving Howe's *William Faulkner: A Critical Study*, pp. 88-92; Richard E. Fisher's "The Wilderness, the Commissary, and the Bedroom: Faulkner's Ike McCaslin as Hero in a Vacuum," *English Studies*, XLIV

(February 1963), 19-28; Arthur F. Kinney's "Delta Autumn: Postlude to 'The Bear'," *Bear, Man, and God*, pp. 384-395 (1963); Walter M. Brylowski's dissertation (pp. 195-221 [1964]); Donald Mordecai Kartiganer's dissertation (pp. 42-44 [1964]); John M. Muste, Jr.'s "The Failure of Love in *Go Down, Moses*," *Modern Fiction Studies*, X (Winter 1964-1965), 366-378; Charles H. Nilon's *Faulkner and the Negro* (New York, 1965), pp. 13-24, 32-38, 54-59, and *passim*; Leonard Gilley's "The Wilderness Theme in Faulkner's 'The Bear'," *Midwest Quarterly*, VI (July 1965), 379-385; Melvin Backman's *Faulkner: The Major Years*, pp. 160-174 (1966--originally a 1961 *PMLA* article); and Joseph Gold's *William Faulkner: A Study in Humanism, From Metaphor to Discourse*, pp. 49-75 (1966).

William Van O'Connor's 1954 *The Tangled Fire of William Faulkner* (pp. 125-134), though it also belongs to the list in the preceding paragraph, is even more important as a commencement of the third kind of scholarship on the 1942 volume. O'Connor's complaint that the sections of the McCaslin book do not dovetail, and his comparison of them with the magazine versions, have led the way to considerable mischief: Edward M. Holmes' *Faulkner's Twice-Told Tales*, pp. 58-79 (1966--based on a 1963 dissertation); Marvin Klotz's "Procrustean Revision in Faulkner's *Go Down, Moses*," *American Literature*, XXXVII (March 1965), 1-16; and H. Alden Ploegstra's "William Faulkner's *Go Down, Moses*: Its Sources, Revisions, and Structure" (University of Chicago unpublished dissertation, 1966). The purpose of these studies is either to disconnect "The Bear" from the rest of *Go Down, Moses* by demonstrating that the chapters in their collectivity are an arbitrary patchwork, or (more likely) to discredit that collectivity (even "The Bear") for fear that it might be understood (and admired) as I suggest below. Professor James B. Meriwether's forthcoming book on *Go Down, Moses*--a book based on a comprehensive, unmatched knowledge of Faulkner's manuscripts, proofs, and habits of composition--should put an end to this sequence. For, as Meriwether has assured me (personal letter of June 21, 1967), O'Connor and his abettors all make one basic error. They assume that the finished Random House *Go Down, Moses* was made up *out of* the periodical versions of its chapters. On the contrary, however, the magazine stories (the early "Lion" excepted) were drawn from an already completed manuscript and then prepared for separate appearance.

of "knowledge" can be anticipated--almost by the day. For like all such "wisdom-giving" plants, it feeds upon itself. I insist, nonetheless, that an altogether untried approach is possible, an approach which confronts valid objections to the book's formal difficulty while incorporating what is valuable in previous speculations as to its moral burden or the recent close examination of its text.

Just above I brought forward as a premise of this critique the assumption that there is one protagonist in Go Down, Moses, the family-- whose bondage together under one history is the immediate referent for the spiritual from which the book's title is borrowed. Yet, their oneness in kinship and fortune aside, the branches of that family must be identified and distinguished before the manner in which their differences produce its structure can be traced. Each of the three fragments of the family seems to carry with it one of the novel's three principal themes: the main blood line, which gives to the clan its name, is connected with the matter of the hunt; the female line, the Edmondses, are usually concerned with the land and its keeping; and finally the Beauchamps and the other part-Negro McCaslins (or even the McCaslin slaves and former slaves) raise the question of social stewardship whenever they appear. Certain of the aforementioned "authorities" in their criticism of the book have complained that its chief weakness is not the episodic and broken relationship of its seven chapters, but rather the discontinuity between those portions which treat of the land or the Negro (and, of course, women--who are ever associated with the other two when Faulkner raises the question of social order), and the other divisions concerned with the initiation ritual. What resolves this hiatus is a grasp of Faulkner's doctrine of nature: an understanding of the causal link between "vertical" and "horizontal" "endurance" or "non-endurance"--or, more briefly, a sound view of Ike McCaslin's errors in part four of "The Bear."[3]

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[3] In coming to my own view of Go Down, Moses, I have received stimulation and instruction in Brooks (William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country, pp. 244-278); Lytle (The Hero with the Private Parts, pp. 117-119); Hunt (op. cit., pp. 137-168); Michael Millgate (The Achievement of William Faulkner [London, 1966], pp. 201-214); Lawrance Thompson (op. cit., pp. 81-98); Dorothy Tuck (Crowell's Handbook of Faulkner [New York, 1964], pp. 95-106); Stanley Tick ("The Unity of Go Down, Moses," Twentieth Century Literature, VIII [July 1962], 67-73); Lewis P. Simpson ("Isaac McCaslin and Temple Drake: The Fall of New World Man," pp. 88-106 of Nine Essays in Modern Literature, ed. Donald E. Stanford [Baton Rouge, 1965]); and James M. Mellard (both his dissertation [pp. 173-205] and his essay

Themes, family subdivisions, and their conflict are all thoroughly and pointedly introduced in the first chapter of Go Down, Moses. "Was" is Faulknerian comedy at its best. Its narrator is the formal protagonist of the whole book--a narrator who, it is significant, is used openly only in this beginning and is apparently replaced thereafter by the Faulknerian overvoice. The elegiac and retrospective Uncle Ike McCaslin first comes before us with an image of "the old times, the old days" (p. 4). The assignment of this one task to Ike is Faulkner's way of specifying early the place he will occupy and the kind of history he will bring to fruition in its remainder. In addition, the tense of these first two pages, when seen from the perspective provided by the narrative sequence that follows them, helps to infer the teleological vista to which the McCaslin chronicle is prologue. Remembering is always part of what Ike does--and part of why he often does nothing. There is a hunt in "Was," in fact, many hunts. And most assuredly there are women and questions of social duty raised by them.

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expanded from it, "The Biblical Rhythm of Go Down, Moses," Mississippi Quarterly, XXI [Summer 1962], 135-147). To Brooks, Lytle, and Hunt I am especially indebted, as I am in lesser ways to the readings of Gold and Backman and certain other pieces cited in the previous note.

Furthermore, there is a young Edmonds being instructed in the function of the gentleman. And finally, Negroes (McCaslin and McCaslin-to-be) are much in evidence in the chapter. They serve as catalysts reconciling (or pointing toward the reconciliation of) the dichotomy of women versus woodsmen, hearth versus hunt, pride *versus* humility. McCaslin, the patriarchal ideal, the doctrine of *noblesse oblige* in a providentially ordained place, is here sustained. Community, resting upon a sound ontology and a premodern eschatology, is given a fresh influx of vitality--given it immediately after it has been confronted with extreme danger from an untoward purity. And that purity, issuing from an ontological submission so severe that it precludes all but the most minimal accommodations with time and space, is subjected to a considerable embarrassment. Rephrased, what I am contending is that "Was" affirms the necessity of horizontal endurance in and by a mild and loving exposé of its most pious and mytheopic non-enduring alternative.

In a sense, "Was" thus described is a structural and thematic miniature of *Go Down, Moses*. The book is, in the highest sense, finally comic. It moves from order to disorder and back to order. And outside of "The Old People," "The Bear," and portions of "Delta Autumn" its import is, first of all, social. Indeed its overriding concern is with the nature of community and the appropriate method of rebuilding it out of the collective and private ruins deposited in Jefferson by the process of natural law (plus perhaps a few special dispensations)-- of rebuilding it *now*. At its heart is a struggle between women and notions, the world's body and an abstract prideful "doctrine": an irresolution about the compromises morality requires of honorable men who know themselves to be less than gods and yet called upon by the particulars of their own finitude to act in an imperfectible, contingent world.

The comedy which is concluded by the chapter that gives the novel its name, is, however, of a variety different from that of "Was." McCaslin the clan is, in the closing, either its chorus or its antagonist. And this reminds us that the difference between "Was" and the entirety of *Go Down, Moses* is as noteworthy as their similarities, reminds us once again that history is real. The flame is kept burning in the hearth, the dead are brought to rest with their fathers, and confederation is celebrated in cemetery, sitting room, and even on the public road. But Roth Edmonds (and therefore Ike through him) has made the ceremonies funereal, not matrimonial. Gavin Stevens and Miss Worsham (elsewhere Habersham) can accomplish nothing like what was possible to old Buck's boy. That McCaslin (the ideal) has vehicles in Jefferson who are not part of the McCaslin family is encouraging. Something else again is the indication that community's basic unit has, in one important case, been broken up irrevocably. As it finishes, _Go Down, Moses_ looks forward--but not as "Was." To these considerations I will return in rounding off this reading.[4] Thus prologued, it is time to treat in the order of their appearance the individual chapters which render this uncertainty.

"Was" has been generally abused and misrepresented by the little comment it has provoked.[5] Though the story, like its companion pieces, is plainly enough taken up with "freedoms" which were lost to man even before the Fall, it has been too often assumed that its subject is black slavery and its human cost: the evil of Negro "unfreedom."[6]

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[4] In examining the beginning and end of _Go Down, Moses_ as keys to its design, it is appropriate to remember that "Go Down, Moses" and "Was" were the first chapters of the book to be written--an early, very different version of "The Bear" excepted. According to Dan Brennan ("Faulkner Revisited," _Writer's Digest_, Vol. 48, No. 2 [February 1968], 50-54 and 74) and the evidence he collected on a boyhood (1940) trip to Mississippi (Russell Roth's "The Brennan Papers: Faulkner in Manuscript," _Perspective_, II [Summer 1949], 219-224) both date from at least two years before their book publication--and probably more.

[5] "Was" appears on pp. 3-30 of _Go Down, Moses_. We

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have had intelligent discussion of this story from Brooks, Longley, Thompson, Hoffman, Mellard, Berner, McLaughlin, and Klotz. (I refer to items catalogued in the second and third notes to this reading). Less satisfactory glossings appear in Walter Fuller Taylor, Jr. (in the aforementioned "Let My People Go: The White Man's Heritage in Go Down, Moses," pp. 113-120; his unpublished dissertation, "The Roles of the Negro in William Faulkner's Fiction" [Emory University, 1964]; and in his recent essay, "The Freedman in Go Down, Moses," Ball State University Forum, VIII [Winter 1967], 3-7); Waggoner, Tick, Volpe, Nilon, Muste, Howe, and Walter J. Slatoff (Quest for Failure [Ithaca, 1960], p. 114). Two other essays devoted exclusively to "Was" have been published in the last few years: Thomas N. Walters' "On Teaching William Faulkner's 'Was'," English Journal, LV (February 1966), 182-188; and Daniel Weiss' "William Faulkner and the Runaway Slave," Northwest Review, VI (Summer 1963), 71-79. They are as uneasy about humorous and benign treatment of slavery in the tale as are Taylor et al.

The writer's understanding of "Was" here developed is a reworking of an essay, "All the Daughters of Eve: 'Was' and the Unity of Go Down, Moses" (Arlington Quarterly, I [Autumn 1967], 28-37).

[6] Taylor (dissertation), Tick, Volpe, Vickery, and Mellard (dissertation) are the most "race-ridden" of previous commentators on "Was." Taylor calls the story "tragi-comic" and a "tragedy" (pp. 120 and 114); Tick describes it as "disturbing" and an "inhuman adventure" (p. 72); Volpe's word for it is "horrible" (p. 233); Mrs. Vickery (p. 126) labels it an offensive "parody" of the commonplace flight and chase of abolitionist moralities; and Mellard (p. 177)

The emancipation sought here is not, however, for Negroes; nor is it, any more than the other intense preoccupations with "freedom" in the Yoknapatawpha Cycle, an admirable goal. Action antecedent and inferentially bound to the time of this particular embroglio has already established the connection of colored and white McCaslins--action returned to in the following chapters. As I have earlier indicated, their involvement here is part of a situational matrix which frames the exploration of an even more fundamental question --and, aside from its fortuitous impact on the narrative in motion, not a very important part of that matrix. Old Carothers McCaslin, the founding father and slave-acquirer for the family, is, however, a big influence on his and the story or chapter's protagonists, the lovable bachelor twins, Amodeus and Theophilus. These delightful curmudgeons have (we learn in "The Bear") seem in the life of their father that the ultimate violation of high place is often connected with the abuse of women; that the ladies, even more than land or other property, are, in their power likely

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complains that its "serious thematic implications" are "obscured." The Vickery book and the Taylor and Mellard dissertations are the works from their hands to which I refer (by author's name only) hereafter, unless I indicate otherwise.

to toll their "owners" into presumption, dangerous "holdings."[7] In an assigned place and given disposition of powers and dependencies, Buck and Buddy (as I shall identify them from now on) accept everything but women and the basic social arrangements and customs which they (with the land, other human differences, and the fact of mortality) compel men to sustain. Though they are not agitated by the loss of a Negro *per se*--in truth have more than they know what to do with--the twins are in "Was" set in motion by a runaway of sorts, but only because one black boy's departure may bring to them what they do fear: acquisition, not loss--acquisition of a female connection, which is a loss of a sort, an end of their "freedom" from part of their father's problem. Like Frank Meriwether in John Pendelton Kennedy's *Swallow Barn* (1832), Carothers McCaslin's boys are, in

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[7] I refer in this division of Chapter IV primarily to men's endurance or relinquishment--failure to endure--because, though women exert a constant and often even controlling pressure on male conduct in *Go Down, Moses* (in the title story, "The Fire and the Hearth," "Pantaloon in Black," and the flashbacks in part four of "The Bear"), it is upon the choices made by males and upon men's understanding of their proper role that the collection turns. This is, of course, more or less true of all five novels read in this chapter. I will refer to this generalization as I read through the texts and when I make some final comments in Chapter V.

Cleanth Brooks' phrase, "singularly undoctrinaire abolitionists," interested in getting rid of slaves, not in getting them.[8] It is difficult to say who owns whom on the McCaslin plantation. Buck and Buddy take and keep their people as a responsibility, not all of whom are ready for freedom (they free those who are--if they are willing to leave); but they never use them to serve private designs or to promote schemes for self-aggrandizement. Their attitude toward their slaves is a corollary of the use of the land they own, a matter of stewardship, a question of patriarchal tenure for the common good.[9] But they do not want their mulatto half-brother, Tomey's son, Terrel, visiting his girl on the Beauchamp plantation. And their reasons have nothing to do with slavery as such.[10] For Warwick, always the destination of his flights, poses a threat to their untroubled way of life far more serious than the most unruly Negro--marriage, a marriage which could (and would) involve them more deeply in the abusive potential of the plantation system than any innocent attempt to avoid such involvement. And the necessity of that involvement to the plan of social and economic reformation for their own community which they have undertaken they cannot perceive. In their antagonist, however, they have a foolproof instructor.[11]

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[8] William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country, p. 248.

[9] Vide The Unvanquished, pp. 52-57, and my discussion of those pages in section B of this chapter below.

[10] It is recorded that only once did the McCaslins buy a slave, one Percival Brownlee. They purchased him from the fabled Nathan Bedford Forrest--this Negro who was supposedly very "handy" in everything. However, he proves to be their "spotted horse." The painful results of this purchase (considerable financial loss, waste of time, disruption of plantation routine--and another mouth to feed after the worthless slave refuses freedom) do nothing to encourage Buck and Buddy to be sanguine about the advantages of slaveholding (Go Down, Moses, pp. 263-265).

Miss Sophonsiba, the reason why the twins feel threatened, is a hilarious figure, a middle-aged virgin with a roan tooth and somewhat ludicrous airs. But she has one thing in common with most of Faulkner's respectable women, a quality which makes Buck and Buddy take her quite seriously. She is anxious to get (and manipulate) a husband. And as Buck and Buddy realize, life on their plantation cannot continue as they would have it if one of them accommodates her. Sophonsiba is not comic to the twins; she knows how to use the "rules" and the forces on her side--"rules" and forces whose general power or validity the McCaslin boys, as their conduct as hunters, poker players, and gentleman callers makes plain, never deny. The inverted version of the stock _amour courtois_ pattern (something which Faulkner, after Bernard Shaw, sometimes suggests that men invented in their delusion and women keep up in their practicality), forced on the puzzled Buck while he is at Warwick, suggests that this "lady," just like most of her kind, is a formidable creature.

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[11] Faulkner himself (Faulkner in the University, p. 46) implies that the story's point is the "inevitability" of women: that, like other facets of man's condition, Buck and Buddy (and we) "might as well quit struggling" against them. Elsewhere (p. 131 of the same collection of interviews) he adds: "The germ of the story was one of the three oldest ideas that man can write about which is love, sex."

Miss Sophonsiba cannot endanger Buck and Buddy unless one or both of them are at Warwick or she is at their place. And they are never at her home except for one reason--to fetch home Tomey's Turl. They (or rather, Buck--Buddy never leaves the McCaslin place unless there is an emergency) have to fetch him home--formally--or face a prolonged visit from their neighbors; hence all the ritual of the hunt. Turl's "visits" across the county line usually come about twice a year (p. 5). They are part of a calculated strategy on the young Negro's part. He is, by his own admission, in league with women and the earth, with the elemental forces of nature which he knows to be irresistible; indeed, there is even some suggestion that the compact has been formalized in conversation with Miss Sibbey (p. 13). He does not push his elder kinsmen. He runs off frequently enough to keep the pressure on, and no more. But he wants Tennie Beauchamp for his wife. And he expects the McCaslin twins' fear of the way her owners persist in taking their visits to Warwick (not as attempts to retrieve a Negro but as "courtly" calls upon Miss Sibbey) to force them into purchasing Tennie. Turl (or Terrel), like another of Faulkner's wise men, old Ephraim in Intruder in the Dust, knows what world he is living in.[12] Buck and Buddy, two idealists, have to learn the hard way.

The trek to Warwick described in "Was" is climactic. In the story all of the "hunts" which have been going on simultaneously (Turl's for a wife, the McCaslins' for a restraint on the mulatto boy, Hubert Beauchamp's for a brother-in-law, Sophonsiba's for a husband) are resolved--

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[12] Intruder in the Dust, p. 112. Ephraim's words (addressed to another young gentleman who is learning, Chick Mallison) are: "If you got something outside the common run that's got to be done and cant wait, dont waste your time on the menfolks; they works on what your uncle [Gavin Stevens] calls the rules and the cases. Get the womens and the children at it; they works on the circumstances." For more on Ephraim in this passage, see below (section C).

or almost resolved. With it Turl's design is accomplished and Miss Sophonsiba's is put well on its way toward completion--even though Uncle Buddy's fabled skill at poker postpones its ultimate fruition for a while. In brief, by prolonging Uncle Buck's stay at the Beauchamp Plantation until darkness falls, Turl arranges an opportunity for the old man's innocence to betray him into a compromising situation. He anticipates that it will be one thing if not another (a word, a look, or a gesture) that will trip Buck up and make him want to be certain that he will not have to visit Warwick again. And the Beauchamps help all they can. Exhausted from pursuing his runaway kinsman, the "woman-weak" member of this droll tandem and his nine year old nephew (McCaslin Edmonds) wander into a darkened plantation house (an action itself symbolic of Buck's condition in the designing clutches of his hosts) and stumble into Miss Sophonsiba's bedroom. Cass, though more wary than Buck (and forewarned by both Turl and Buddy), is too young to be on his guard against this snare. As the story indicates, he knows nothing of women. There is more than a little suggestion here of a trap (conscious or unconscious). With a guest on the place, the Beauchamps should not have put out all the lights and gone to bed before the McCaslins returned to the house. Miss Sophonsiba's door is left unlocked; she is not asleep (at least not snoring--and we are told that she does snore); and she says nothing when man and boy enter her room--until Buck gets into bed. Once before on a visit to the McCaslin plantation, Mr. Hubert had attempted to compromise his sister (with her apparent approval) by leaving her under the McCaslin roof (p. 6). With Buck caught, sans trousers, Hubert of course demands that his neighbor do the honorable thing (p. 21). Buck panics, tries to get out of his trouble with cards, loses his freedom again (and a dowry), and Cass goes for Buddy. The calmer twin for the time being (since he is dealing only with Hubert--another man) manages to extricate his brother from what Beauchamp calls "bear country." For no man can beat Buddy at his game. But though the master of Warwick loses at poker (in a hand over which Turl "presides" as dealer), in the long run he is a winner (p. 29). The McCaslins acquire Tennie--and something of a broken spirit. The fulfillment of the prophecy made by Tomey's Turl to young Cass, that women get what they want (at least in such matters), foreshadows Buck's ultimate surrender. This narrow escape from matrimony leaves the twins with much less will to resist the inevitable Miss Sophonsiba. Later on in "The Bear" we learn of her marriage to Buck. She is to become the mother of the central character of *Go Down, Moses*, Isaac McCaslin, in whose recollection this story lives.

Andrew Lytle, in a passage referred to earlier, has called our attention to the fact that women in Faulkner's fiction are the instruments and preservers of community.[13] And for the male, community means compromise. At times Faulkner seems almost to imply that man's involvement with womankind is a *felix culpa*, at once death to his private and/or idealistic dreams and innocent freedoms and a wisdom-bringing adjustment to "the body of the world." All human relationships have, in proportion to their strength, a delimiting effect on those whom they involve--particularly that of a man to a woman. Because insofar as women represent community and its basic units, family and clan, they establish an order of priorities in a man's obligations to his fellows, an order which may set him at odds with either his own plan for life or with those to whom he might otherwise be well disposed. The interests which women represent are particular, not general. And necessarily so. The species and civilization depend upon the power of the maternal drive to command men's loyalties to what Edmund Burke calls their "own little platoon."

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[13] "The Town: Helen's Last Stand," pp. 475-484. Of the responsibility of Ike and the rest of the McCaslins to the "place" into which they were born Andrew Lytle has written that he (Ike) is "the exemplum of the Puritan hero, who holds in fee simple the body of the world, and who is incapable, as are all men of this responsibility" ("The Son of Man: He Will Prevail," pp. 127-128). I contend that Faulkner's point, in "Was" as elsewhere, is that capable or not, man must try; for this reason he is put here, to test himself and to be tested in responsibility. To fulfill himself he must endure, in pride and humility, land, women, and position--all.

Buck and Buddy are forced by Buck's marriage to Miss Sophonsiba to violate their personal code of ethics and to end their prolonged adolescent (and adolescent it is, however worthy) idyll. They finish the big house (their slave quarters) and become somewhat more conventional planters.[14] To some it might seem that, in the process of responding to their changed status after Buck's marriage, they have put the survival or need of family (and especially the continuation of a family dynasty) above common humanity.

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[14] Go Down, Moses, pp. 300-302.

But perhaps the point of "Was," and one of the principal themes of Go Down, Moses (and the lesson which Cass Edmonds must have learned in the story), is that the value of any man's virtue is slight unless it has an after life among his descendants. And descendants may require him to compromise that virtue, probably not as much as Miss Sophonsiba would have the twins to, but at least a little--at least as much as Cass does in continuing Buck and Buddy's work and by preparing Ike to continue it after him.

As Faulkner reiterates over and again (in The Wild Palms, in the Houston story in The Hamlet, in the lives of Joe Christmas and Byron Bunch in Light in August, and in the experience of Ike McCaslin with his wife recorded in part four of "The Bear") the consequences of trying too hard to escape from that natural human condition or "fate" which includes women may be worse than that fate itself. Grand and well-meaning schemes and understandable fears notwithstanding, nature will eventually either have its way or exact its price. Community makes possible the continuance among men of the human values which Buck and Buddy affirm--and depends upon the partial violations of those values which women occasion for its persistence. This is the point of the story with which this complex book begins, a point which, as Brooks writes, provides "perspective in which we shall have to view . . . Ike's act of renunciation [in 'The Bear']."[15] Here already we are informed that idealism must be tempered by realism, that there is a complexity to true endurance which righteously simplistic readings of "The Bear" (and through it, of the rest of Go Down, Moses) ignore. The irony is that the story survives (from Cass) only with the very McCaslin whose life is an attempt to deny its point.

In "Was" we get considerable intimation of what we are told in detail elsewhere in the Yoknapatawpha Cycle, that Amodeus and Theophilus McCaslin are exemplary characters, a little roughhewn and plain-spoken, but solid as the timbers in their bachelor cabin. They hunt, play cards, "hurrah" each other, try to run their place well enough to feed their people; and on the side lend a hand to their poor-white neighbors. They are Huck and Tom both. Their raft is their plantation. Before this story begins they have already resolved their problems of conscience vis-a-vis all their Nigger Jims. But their raft too must put into shore and their full manhood begin. Buck has escaped to the territory on more than his share of occasions. And what he has wrongfully escaped is not particularly Miss Sophonsiba but rather what she stands for. The lady of Warwick is perhaps his just punishment for doctrinaire bachelorhood.[16] Yet, had his son done as well in his compromise with life, Go Down, Moses would be an altogether different book.

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[15] William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country, p. 248. If he had understood the story from the "old times" which he cherished, he might have had the son he desired--or else more sense than to expect to get one after he has turned away from his devoir. His wife's attitude toward him (recorded on pp. 311-315 of Go Down, Moses) is apparently very much like his mother's toward his father.

With the second chapter of Go Down, Moses, the focus shifts from white to colored McCaslins. The tone (at least in the first division of this subnarrative) darkens.

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[16] Actually the entire story of "Was," and not just its central episode, has to do with the danger of defying nature. It begins and ends with Buck trying to run a fox in the house with hounds. Buddy is incensed at this innocence. And just before Buck is "caught" in the "hen house" (i.e., like a foolish fox), he gets himself bowled over and his hip pocket filled with bits of broken whiskey bottle, forgetting something "even a little child would have known: not ever to stand right in front of or right behind a nigger when you scare him. . . ." Buck's innocence always goes hard with him. That he remains as oblivious at the end of his adventure as he had been with its inception is another foreshadowing that it will finally play him into Sophonsiba's hands.

Imprisonment and murder are likely prospects. And the shortcomings of the white members of the family (as proprietary figures--stewards of their dusky kinsmen's and confederates' well being) are given close, unflattering attention. But the racial theme is still subsidiary. For "The Fire and the Hearth" is, as its title announces, like "Was": first of all interested in the problem of family--both in its limited and in the larger communal sense; and with the distinctive roles of the sexes in the establishment and sustenance of families. Moreover, as befits its character as a continuation of the novel's "complication" and prelude to the high drama of Ike at the commissary, its effect is muted. Comedy is again the word for describing it apart--social comedy often as amusing as the chapter preceding it.[17]

"The Fire and the Hearth" first introduced to his readership Faulkner's most admired male Negro. Lucas Beauchamp is the protagonist in this story. And he is a

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[17] Go Down, Moses, pp. 33-131. Though the time of "The Fire and the Hearth" is present, it is, with "Was" and "Pantaloon in Black," part of the background for Ike which opens the novel they belong to. With "The Old People" the book is ready for Ike himself and continues with him (with brief intervals of additional antecedent information) through the end of "Delta Autumn." "Go Down, Moses" is a postulde to these two movements.

McCaslin, another foil to Ike: one of the grandchildren (by way of Tomey's Turl) left a thousand dollars through old Carothers' will (pp. 105-106). As the story begins, Lucas is presented as the resident patriarch of the Negro McCaslins--a constant reminder to them of their history and to the Edmonds boys, who, in sequence, inherit (much to Lucas' disgust) charge of the plantation from the real (and runaway) McCaslin heir: a reminder of the cruel strong old man whom he, in many respects, must call to their mind, and of Buck and Buddy, to whom he is also closer than to Zack, Roth, or even Ike. Unlike the two other black McCaslin grandchildren acknowledged in the will, he does not leave the place of his birth. By choice, he puts down his roots there--where he belongs by right of inheritance and character. Furthermore, he lives at McCaslin (the place) as a man of station and some property--as a supporter and pressure on his "womanmade" kinsmen and overlords.[18]

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[18] What Lucas thinks of the Edmonds boys (Cass halfway excepted) is complicated: at one and the same time by his exaggerated hauteur, by the self-consciousness as to their unworthiness displayed by these heirs of old Carothers' daughter, and by their genuine efforts to be "The Man"--efforts recognized as such by Lucas. What Lucas thinks of Ike (and with a justice that the saintly "pensioned" elderly uncle accepts) is a far different matter. There is no irony in what Roth has Ike thinking when a young

Faulkner is still withholding and unfolding his meaning in "The Fire and the Hearth," quietly building a world and preparing his reader for Ike's performance at its center. The total chapter has rarely received independent attention; but portions of it are often remarked.[19] After

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Lucas comes to get his patrimony on the day he is twenty-one (pp. 108-109). That Lucas did despise Ike for his weakness we know from elsewhere (pp. 56-57). This evidence (which supports my reading of Ike's error in Chapter III above and my comment on "The Bear" and "Delta Autumn" below is ignored by almost all discussion of these stories; and this is puzzling in view of the esteem for Lucas which saturates this criticism.

[19] Generally speaking, the critics listed in my first three-part catalogue of authorities on Go Down, Moses dwell on Roth (Carothers) and Lucas' son Henry and on the end of their boyhood fellowship (pp. 110-116). They ignore the remainder of the tale. The critics listed in my second (favorable) catelogue usually do somewhat better.

I comment on Roth/Henry in my reading of Intruder in the Dust (section C of this chapter). For the present it is enough to say that Roth on Henry is a judgment upon abstract, ideologically doctrinaire overinsistence on racial difference--not upon the natural and spontaneous observation of the importance of these differences which gentlemen of any color can be expected to make for the sake of confederation. It is the knowledge that he has done needless injury to this confederation that pains Roth, especially after Henry's mother, Molly, has raised him and Henry's father, Lucas, proved himself a man upon Zack. Roth's error is a conscious repetition of what his father did unthinkingly when he affronted Lucas by taking him for granted, as "just a nigger."

It is this indifference to abstractionist exaggerations that makes Lucas what is rare in Faulkner: a commencing with Lucas at age sixty-seven (pp. 33-45), the scene (in Lucas' mind) shifts back to his early manhood, the moment when he proved he deserved the appellation (pp. 45-59), and then returns (with a few more fragments of retrospection from Roth [pp. 104-118]) to the present and the full revelation--and cure--of his folly (pp. 59-131, minus the passage of interlude). Hearth building and lighting are in the offing in "Was." In "The Fire and the Hearth" that stage is past. At issue is whether or not a long-established hearth (i.e., family) will remain intact, survive the McCaslin in its creator. Abuse of or rebellion against women is furthermore, once again important to the story--an abuse related but antithetical to the one developed in "Was." Lucas has, by natural right, always made a little whiskey on his place; and he has proudly held himself apart from ordinary shameless "niggers" (as he calls them). His Carothers-like pride (whose excesses, as we learn in the flashback, almost caused him to kill his cousin Zack) has, along with his contempt for those who lack such pride,

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successful mulatto (cf. p. 104). But it has nothing to do with denial that blood and class are important. Everything about Lucas bespeaks his awareness of both, especially his challenge to Zack.

driven him to scorn any lesser independence. But in his last years, a final explosion of that generally admirable quality (in a man of his time and color) has jeopardized the things of value it made possible, especially the one thing that justified its ordinate form: his marriage with little Aunt Molly. Not flight from natural law, but hubris in its face is the probability here--a presumption that is likely to destroy what it has established, to put out, not preserve, the lighted hearth. Because he is Lucas Beauchamp, complete with a bigger bank account than the plantation owner, his grandfather's toothpick, the manner (and some of the vesture) of a gentleman, he thinks to turn away or reduce George Wilkins, his totally black and simple son-in-law to be. He refuses a proper dowry to his daughter Nat, refuses to help the feckless fieldhand and the girl who sees good raw material in him. In addition, Lucas develops an urge to discover hidden pride-nourishing riches in the bottom of the creek where he runs his still. With help from the resident Edmonds (and with covert assistance from Molly), Nat forestalls him in the one; and Molly (alone) by threatening a "voce" checks the other. Lucas' pride, his private Sutpen-style dream, is fortunately, in the end, balanced by his humility, his awareness of the truth that women embody: that man has "three score and ten years" and "can want a heap in that time" but that "that money ain't for me" (p. 131). He has to be "the man in [his] house" (p. 121). And that is impossible if he affronts Molly's piety by imposing his place-defying vision of unearned riches upon her, filling her with a sense of corruption.[20] Stated simply, the very manhood that made him bring a new bride home to light a not-to-be-extinguished fire in their home, that compelled him to misread Zack's offhand expropriation of his wife as a fixture in the newly womanless "big house"--that manhood which at first makes him ignore Molly's warning that she will leave him or rule him (in this), finally commands that he honor his investment, his history, and turn away from the example of his grandfather.

There are other matters introduced or foreshadowed in "The Fire and the Hearth": the overtones of the already often mentioned struggle of Lucas with Zack over Molly; Molly's theory of wealth (as it relates to Ike's speculations on property); Roth Edmonds' painful inheritance of the many faceted McCaslin mantle; and (further) the early discussion of Ike's renunciation of his place. Certain motifs established in "Was" are also sustained. To all of these I will return as they take on importance in later chapters of Go Down, Moses. But the background for Ike's three chapters, the climax of the book, must first be filled out. And "Pantaloon in Black" is Faulkner's instrument for that purpose.

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[20] Lucas and buried treasure is reminiscent of the one time Snopes gets the best of Ratliff, in "The Peasants" section of The Hamlet (pp. 341-373).

The little tragedy of Rider bereaved has disconcerted most admirers of Go Down, Moses. The chapter's relevance to the book is obscure. Not until recently, when Faulkner's remark to Malcolm Cowley that Rider (the formal protagonist in "Pantaloon") was a McCaslin Negro found its way into print, has a connection existed in the minds of most critics.[21] "Pantaloon in Black" is Go Down, Moses's third insistence on the importance of women. Furthermore it is a nadir toward which the other two build: like "Delta

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[21] The Faulkner-Cowley File, p. 113. The story appears on pp. 135-159 of Go Down, Moses. Rider is particularly unusual in one respect; he is unique as an all-black man chosen as the subject of a Faulkner narrative.

Autumn" after "The Old People" and "The Bear," a situational and tonal nadir. It takes the reader out to the limits of "woman trouble"--and to the limits of the McCaslin world (indeed, ends beyond its boundaries). Like its predecessors, it carries an implicit censure of whites, but this time a censure that really has more to do with the manner in which the action proper is received than with the course of that action. What occurs in "Pantaloon" is not the fault of any white man. Rider is betrayed by his inability to endure one of the most unendurable of the ills the flesh is heir to--an excusable weakness, but still his own. Nonetheless (and in a manner functional as regards the design of the novel) this section of the McCaslin saga is less commanding as a drama of love and death than it is when reaching far beyond the family in its condemnation of Rider's non-Negro neighbors. It is in fact Faulkner's sharpest critique of white obliviousness (or indifference) to the essential humanity of Negroes.

Confusing as its purpose and structure may be, the title of this chapter occasions even further difficulty, a puzzle within a puzzle. Yet it is also a good point of departure for close examination of the narrative's composition and support of my foregoing introductory remarks. In my opinion it is profitable to approach that title against a backdrop of the governing symbol of these first three chapters. A house is once more important in "Pantaloon in Black"; and in it is place for a fire. Rider's hearth fire has _just_ gone out as his tale begins. In most of his twenty-odd years he has been what Lucas calls a "wild buck." But his wife Mannie "domesticated" him. After long resisting women, the ebony giant becomes all the better husband when he surrenders to one of their number: the marriage of Mannie and Rider is an idyll. However, the girl dies mysteriously only a few months after their union. And Rider, despite the sanity-encouraging ministrations of his aunt and uncle, is inconsolable. His grief is in proportion to his love. No longer does he have an independent being. Therefore, after a brief visit to the scene of his former happiness, he runs amok, insures his own death (under a suicidal compulsion), _and_ in the process acts out the universal ritual of Pantalone, the suffering clown.[22] Rider is an animated figure from a bizarre Punch and Judy show, not for the reader but in the eyes of the lawman commentator and completer of the story. Blackness and the spontaneous honesty about love, faith, and death that goes in Faulkner with the pigment disguises the grieving "criminal" from the inside observer. The young Negro's conduct after his wife's death seems comic only because its desperation (in hurrying the burial, in a manic burst of laboring, in drinking, gambling, and killing) is automatically unintelligible to the spectator who forgets that the black boy is in the essential things also a man. Rider might still appear to the officer (as he does to the reader) a grotesque, bizarre child if that representative of white authority moderated his assumptions only so far as to admit that he and his charge share, with meaningful and important differences, a measure of common humanity. Then Rider would be no "clown" to him. Then "Pantaloon in Black" would be a story with partially hopeful implications; then it would

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[22] Tuck (_op_. _cit_., p. 99) identifies the title with the stock figure in old Italian comedy and with its English

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variant, Pantaloon-Pierrot: "a tall gangling clown who hides behind a comic mask"--a clown who is "visited" and driven out of his composure by his dead wife. Nilon (op. cit., pp. 33-34) and Volpe (op. cit., p. 235) puzzle over the chapter in a confused fashion. Taylor (dissertation, pp. 130-152) is better. He recognizes that its last pages control the story's meaning. But such recognition has been rare.

augur confederation. For only a partial equation of men with men is needed for such union. Anything more will disappoint, even destroy--as will anything less. But, as the title specifies, no such hopeful signs, signs of reciprocity within an _a priori_, self-sustaining mystery, exist. The befuddled racism of the deputy (and of his wife with whom he demonstrates his simplistic and social calculus) instead reinforces the effect of kindred errors made by Zack and Henry in "The Fire and the Hearth"--and readies us to determine with accuracy just what is at stake in the life of the one McCaslin most understanding of the brotherhood of finitude. Together this couple forecasts what will happen to community without the patriarch, the man in high place who looks both up and out, saying yes. After Civil War, Reconstruction, poverty, and regularly renewed threats of social chaos it would take real McCaslins in every portion of the county, real eradication by education of people like the deputy and his wife to prevent the triumph in Yoknapatawpha of the "Face" which threatens in _Intruder in the Dust_.[23] The most important implication of "Pantaloon" is that there are none such place-keeping and other place-respecting souls available.

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[23] I comment on this "Face" in section C of this chapter. It is referred to here because the deputy in "Pantaloon" projects so much of the "Face" mentality in his perplexity over Rider.

"The Old People" and the first three sections of "The Bear" make up, more or less, a unit within the second three-part movement of Go Down, Moses. In these pages the strictly personal (as opposed to the earlier communal) framing of young Isaac and his cousin debating over the commissary ledgers is thrown up. They contain some of Faulkner's finest, most magical prose--written in a hieratically lofty language suited better to oral chant than silent perusal. They are also, as I have insisted throughout this study, the clearest expression we have in the canon of Faulkner's view of "vertical endurance."

"The Old People" is the first stage of Ike's education.[24] Its story is simple. After being well prepared to do the proud deed in the proper humble spirit by Sam Fathers, Ike stalks and kills his first deer. Once the kill is accomplished, Sam marks Ike as a hunter (and as a novice surrogate for the "Old People") with the blood of the young buck (pp. 163-164 and 177-179). Then in a moment of special confirmation in the faith, there is a sign of grace and favor when Ike shares with Sam a vision of the great spirit buck which presides, by implication, over the entire ritual, priest and candidate for priesthood, game and other hunters (pp. 183-185). Finally, back at the plantation, Ike and his guardian talk of God's plan for His creation and His disposition of the dead. This is, indisputably (if considered by itself), Faulkner's best hunting story. However, there is nothing in "The Old People" that is not, at least by implication, in "The Bear"--nothing, that is, except information concerning Sam Fathers and the values he keeps alive.

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[24] Go Down, Moses, pp. 163-187. There is one fine essay on this story, Glauco Cambon's "Faulkner's 'The Old People': The Numen-Engendering Style," Southern Review, I. N. S. (Winter 1965), 94-107. It is one of the few studies of Faulkner that anticipate my emphasis on his doctrine of nature--though his concern is with the formal and stylistic consequences of the posture he discovers in that work.

Robert Penn Warren has recently had somewhat to say to the same effect and on the same subject in "Introduction: Faulkner: Past and Future" (pp. 1-22 of Faulkner: A Collection of Essays [Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1966]).

Faulkner's use of the Indians is a subject much in need of careful independent study; and to that subject I will return in commenting on "The Bear" and "Delta Autumn." For the present there is, however, a need for a few words on the "religion" Sam teaches and the language with which

Faulkner surrounds it. First there is the aura hovering about the old mixed-breed (mostly Indian with white and Negro thrown in): his often stressed repose, his laconic directions and explanations, his features and bearing, his primitiveness, and his present antiquity (as Cass remarks, "When he was born . . . [he] knew things that had been tamed out of our blood so long ago that we have to live together in herds to protect ourselves from our own sources" [p. 167]).[25] Of similar weight is his conduct in the major episodes of the story, his actual work: his calm sacramentalizing of the stand, shot, marking, and aftermath report to the elders (a blast on the horn and a quiet "he done all right" [p. 165]); his recollection of the earlier tutelage of little Ike; his sessions with Jobaker; and then, his enactment of the most secret of its mysteries _with_ the boy, the keeping of the promise, "you'll be a hunter. You'll be a man" (p. 176). Finally are the woods themselves, the dwelling place of Sam's real master (and Ike's and that of all the hunting fellowship), the presence saluted with

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[25] It is especially significant that Cass gives us this description of Sam because through it we _know_ that Sam's pedagogy has not been reserved for Ike alone--and that Ike is not the only one on whom it is not lost.

"Oleh, Chief" and "Grandfather" (p. 184). Sam is in the flesh, the mytheopic premodern spirit at its purist. He performs his nature by training, in series, all the younger men who hunt the bottom with him "to love the life [they] spill" (p. 181). By being Sam in the forest he "does the best he can." He stays there because he has no other place. And the burden of his example is plainly enough that vertical endurance is the best possible basis for horizontal and that there can be no social problem among the vertically enduring. The hunt is Sam's parable of endurance, Faulkner's fictional double of the fisherman's passion he admired in Hemingway's The Old Man and the Sea.[26] The brooding presence of the "ancient and immortal Umpire" felt by all who enter the woods enforces its point (p. 181). There *is* an overarching frame of things, a frame requiring both conflict and co-operation. Within it men and creatures are mustered and assigned by their built-in capacities and limitations--by their nature--and by history. In using their station and respecting the use made by others of different stations, those "mustered" show their respect for (and avoid the wrath of) "the tremendous, attentive, impartial, and omniscient" Numen. Such is the lesson left through Sam for their dispossessors by the "Old People." Faulkner supports it with the idiom of the Old Testament, with a stylistic hint of "revelation." Ike gets part of the point perfectly. But he resists its remainder--a fact which brings me to "The Bear."

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[26] See Chapter III above for discussion.

The first three parts of "The Bear" are perhaps Faulkner's best known work. As I have said, they finish what was begun in "The Old People." But they also introduce something new--a note of foreboding, loss, and ruin. They stand in relationship to the first movement of _Go Down, Moses_' second three-part progression as does "The Fire and the Hearth" to "Was": a mixed middle of a careful darkening and beclouding of a largely happy beginning. The best way to read the hunt sections in "The Bear" is to approach them from the perspective afforded by part five of that chapter, through the aftermath of Ben's death in parts one, two, and three and of Ike's choosing in the dialogue of four. After finishing with the procedure thus outlined, I will turn to the second nadir of _Go Down, Moses_, to "Delta Autumn" and the proof that Ike went wrong--with a few afterthoughts on the commissary confrontation.[27]

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[27] _Go Down, Moses_, pp. 191-331.

The scene that concludes "The Bear" provides both a summary of and a judgment upon the action preceding it. The theme of this chapter, even more obviously than that of _Go Down, Moses_, is the importance to individuals and to societies of their capacity to sustain that balance of "pride and humility" which Faulkner calls "endurance." The episode in which Isaac McCaslin comes upon a manic Boon Hogganbeck beneath a great tree full of frightened squirrels dramatizes the consequences for man of the failure to practice the endurance which the total story (as well as _Go Down, Moses_) "recommends." It is the capstone of and the key to a large design. "The Bear" develops toward this particular resolution by regular and organically related stages, each of which follows from what has immediately preceded it and makes more inevitable the shape which that resolution will assume.[28] Distracted by the pleasure they take in the character of Isaac McCaslin or the merit of his _de post facto_ theorizing, some critics have found a stumbling block in this conclusion. Though eager to extract from the tale some sanguine counsel for troubled times, they sense in its ending something other than a promise of easy hope. And they should. For, like the interior monologue of Ike (sixty-plus years after) which closes its sequel, "Delta Autumn," the last two pages of "The Bear" (pp. 330-331) imply an ominous future for any who would approach Nature as Boon does when Ike finds him seated beneath that tree; and, again like that monologue, these pages indicate that no other future can be expected, given the impious spirit which Faulkner believes has possessed our age.[29]

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[28] The following comment on "The Bear" is a redaction of my article, "The Gum Tree Scene: Observations on the Structure of 'The Bear'," _Southern Humanities Review_, I (Summer 1967), 141-150.

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[29] Of the relation of structure to meaning in Faulkner's fiction, Lawrence Thompson (op. cit., p. 17) has well said, "His [Faulkner's] technique of ordering, whether conscious or unconscious, whether original or borrowed or adopted, did create effects which (when noticed) help to guide and control the reader's awareness of the relationship between how he told the story and what he made that story mean." Unfortunately this relationship in Go Down, Moses and "The Bear" has not often been noticed. Two exceptions are John L. Longley, Jr. (op. cit., pp. 94-95) and Richard J. Stonesifer (op. cit., pp. 210-223). Both agree that section five of "The Bear" has, by virtue of its placement at the story's conclusion and by virtue of the way in which Faulkner prepares the reader for that conclusion, a right to our serious attention; both see in it the key to the interpretation of the entire work. But they focus on Ike at the knoll and ignore the structural implications of section five as a unit. And other critics, even when they suggest, as Malcolm Cowley at one time did, that it not be printed with the rest of the chapter, concentrate their

In order to reconstruct the framework which makes fully intelligible this grotesque tableau of the maddened woodsman, his broken gun, and the lone tree full of game in whose shadow he raves, we must look back to section four, to the already oft mentioned exchange in the commissary in which Ike tells McCaslin Edmonds what he has learned about man's proper relationship to Nature from his training and experience in the forest--from Sam, Old Ben, the other elder woodsmen, and the wilderness itself. Ike finds in the hunt, in the true hunter's reverent approach to the game he pursues and sometimes kills--and especially in the mutual testing, measuring, and self-renewal which the big bear and the men who keep annual rendevouz with him share--a miniature of the preordained and providentially intended role of man as steward of a creation and a particular place in creation with which he must "cope," though dominate or utterly control it he cannot. He tells Cass (and in this statement he articulates the assumptions in terms of which the

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attention on section four and the developing character of Ike. Few take any note of the existence of an enveloping action which in the end contains the initiation fable; and apart from the enveloping action, the Gum Tree Scene is merely an ironic, comic coda to a simple bildungsroman.

pattern of history in Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha Cycle are teleologically interpreted), "He [God] created man to be his overseer on the earth and to hold suzerainty over the earth and the animals on it in his name, not to hold for himself . . ." (p. 257). For the hunters the game in the forest, and especially Old Ben, are counters for the "Umpire" and "Arbiter," (p. 181) whom, like the mystery of the land itself, man must have the courage to face and the humility to acknowledge if he is to achieve genuine self-knowledge. He must "endure" his position in relation to this ill-defined but transcendent presence if he is to "cope" with his contingent status in a universe arbitrarily arranged to suit something other than his convenience, endure *and* prevail over his condition. The alternatives are passivity (fatalism) and aggression (Promethean self-assertion), either humility or pride *alone*. Despite his wise words Ike takes the former of these disastrous courses; perhaps because his sense of his own contingency is *too* strong, his ontology overdeveloped, he ignores the necessary connection of stewardship or the holding of place, property, and position in "fee simple"--for God--and power over what is held. But from Boon's words and actions in the Gum Tree Scene, we can infer that he, like the leaders of his culture, has chosen the latter.

But if Ike's long dialogue with Cass explains much about the significance of the final pages of "The Bear," an examination of the fictional order or total sequence of episodes of which these pages are climacteric tells even more. Sections one, two, and three of the chapter are, so far as structure is concerned, a unit. They form together the double story of the last years of Old Ben and of the concomitant emergence of Isaac McCaslin, the last of his line, as a man and a hunter. The one undercuts the other. The enveloping action of historical change and cultural decline or disorientation represented by the passing of the wilderness and its presiding spirit sets in sharp relief and gives poignancy to Ike's inheritance of the mantle of Sam--of his priestly place as spokesman of the norm. The spirit of reverence, the courage to accept and endure the human condition according to the terms of the God-given covenant, is lost by most of his elders just as Ike begins to understand and share in that spirit. And even he, because of his hunger for a private purity, is unable or unwilling to transfer it from the shelter of the hunting camp to the arena of the great world outside the big bottom. Section four gives us not only a philosophical explanation of the elusive elegiac implications of the death of a single bear but also an insight into why Ike's apprehension of the teleological pattern suggested by these melancholy auguries will come to nothing, why he will hereafter in the McCaslin saga serve only as a gloss and chorus on and to the further progression of the Zeitgeist toward and apocalypes which he deplores. Ike, like Sam, might have served as at least a stay against such confusion. As "The McCaslin," the patriarch, he would have been of great use to all those in his world who had need of a man of his humanity; he might even have forestalled the return in the history of his family (in "Delta Autumn") of the very infamy which made him want to "stand aside." But once we have witnessed his refusal to "endure" history and his resignation from it in search of an impotent "freedom" and purity, we are prepared to see the shadows deepen (pp. 299-300)--to see the public and general triumph of the forces whose advent had made it time for Ben to die. In section five the darkness falls; the enveloping action finally encapsulates and negates the lonely hunter and the hopeful narrative of his "education_--though even here, perhaps to clarify in unmistakable terms the full burden of the Gum Tree episode, the "freedom" of the protagonist from the self-assertive implications of the non-enduring spirit are once again affirmed.

The structure of section five itself reflects the design of the entire chapter. It moves from a reconsideration and recapitulation of Isaac McCaslin's "progress" toward perfect fellowship with a given and inscrutable natural order to a qualification of the hopeful suggestions of this communion and from thence to a total denial of them. And in this ordering of its contents and the straightforward juxtaposition in that order of materials or themes already developed earlier in "The Bear," it offers in dramatic terms the plainest possible indication of the entire sequence's burden. Section five begins with the announcement: "He [Ike] went back to the camp one more time . . ." (p. 315). After adverting briefly to a conversation of young McCaslin with Major de Spain, in which the former makes arrangements for his trip, and after assuring us that the death of Ben *did* mean the end of an era, that the trip will be valedictory, the narrative moves swiftly to depict the journey itself. Boon, who, as arranged by De Spain, will join Ike at the camp, is now serving the lumbering company as marshal of Hoke, the railhead of the company's short line where Ike will leave his horse. His new employment, like the earlier assurances that the doom which hangs over the old balanced code will not be revoked, further prepares us for the section's (and the story's) conclusion. But Boon does not meet Ike at Hoke, or even at the place where the wagon road to the old camp meets the tracks. Instead Ash, the camp cook and Negro handyman, picks him up. As he leaves the train, Ike is troubled with the new meaning the "diminutive locomotive" and its incursion into the wilderness has taken on for him. He reflects on earlier trips he has made on it and observes, "It was harmless then" (p. 320). Now it puts him in mind of "the lingering effluvium of . . . death" or a "snake" (p. 321).[30] When Ike gets into the wagon, Ash tells him that Boon is in the woods and expects to meet him at the gum tree. With this announcement the last thread is spun out and we are readied for the denouement. The young huntsman moves up into the woods toward the grave of Sam Fathers and falls into a recollective reverie. The stage is set.

As he muses, the memory of Faulkner's protagonist takes him back to the day when he slew his first deer, and especially to Ash's reaction to his success. Like the hound in section three, the little bitch who had to go in on Old Ben just once to prove "herself a dog" (p. 199), Ash is provoked by the action of another to reach out after the token of his right to a place among his own kind which a part in the hunt would give to him. There is nothing particularly "racial" about his dilemma. His place in the camp is and has been what his role there has earned for him. Sam Fathers, who outside the woods has little more social status than Ash, is the peer or even (at least in an unofficial way) patriarchal chieftain of the white hunters in the camp. And Ash is normally too down-to-earth to be interested in pitting his energies, much less his life, against wild creatures for which he has no need. But, as the shells he saved over the years make evident, he has felt the impulse to participate in the ritual at least once. After Ash sulls and refuses to cook, he is indulged; but the results of his hunt are abortive. No deer are taken; and on the way back to camp he loses his ancient, unmatched cartridges firing at a little bear he finds in his path. Ike recalls the old Negro, whose self-respect has been threatened by the manly accomplishments of a boy, searching in the cane near the spot where he misfired. His impotence as a huntsman, coupled with his attachment to the useless old shells (which in possession he converts into a pathetic prop for his pride--a means of asserting that he could hunt if he so wished, act if he so willed) make of Ash, as young Ike remembers him, a burlesque and a counterpoint to what he (Ike) is becoming and to what he will shortly behold. With Ash and his impotent weapon, his fat little bear, and his fumbling rage, we edge still closer to the apogetic moment.

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[30] Leo Marx, in his The Machine in the Garden, has given us convincing evidence that the appearance of a locomotive in an American "pastoral" is never to be taken lightly.

Ike's reverie moves easily from past to present: from thoughts of the old Negro's pathos to reverential tributes to the awesome order of nature, as he realizes he has reached, not the gum tree, but the knoll where Sam and the great dog, Lion, lie at rest. The memory of Ash on the hunt (pp. 323-326) and the Gum Tree Scene, in one sense, frame the moment at the grave (pp. 326-330). This is not to say that the series of three parts is not a progression. Ash's comic gesture of pride and Ike's recommitment to that species of endurance which enables him to celebrate in the cycle of seasons his own finitude--a humility which, he again makes clear, is not in his nature balanced with pride in responsibilities--begin the rapid narrowing of focus upon and specific dramatization of the disintegration of a moral order. This narrowing and concretizing concludes only when we come to the scene beneath the tree. It is most natural that Ike should think of the discipline he acquired there as he moves through the woods, that he should think of Ash's relation to that discipline as he leaves him to enter the woods, and that he should give us his most lyric and impressive expression of the "understanding" of the human condition with which that discipline has endowed him as he reaches the "temple" of his faith, the burial ground. And nothing could make plainer that the final episode of section and story mark the victory of a vision not at all like that of the protagonist than the placement of it immediately after Ike's moving restatement of his position. But the dynamic of section five (like that of the entire chapter and, indeed, of all of _Go Down, Moses_) is not simply linear. Lines of force run back and forth, zigzag, through the story as they move it forward. And by setting the boy's tribute to his spiritual birthplace and to the ordered immortal sequence, the "deathless and immemorial phases of the mother" (p. 326) which he has learned there to accept (and by including in the vista of woods, graves, and mutilated paw above which he accepts in that affirmation the new totem of the wilderness, the snake) between the parody of endurance and tableau of violent and utter non-endurance, Faulkner draws in and ties together the threads he has run out. He thereby makes the Gum Tree Scene a thematic as well as a dramatic climax of the chapter and not of just its fifth section. Their juxtaposition in this particular three-part pattern at the end of this particular five-section sequence should convince us that, for the time, non-endurance has won out, that something more than Ben died in and with Ben, that the Numen which once wore the visage of the bear or the many-pointed stag now wears the aspect of the serpent which, as Allen Tate writes, "counts us all."

Isaac's salute to the huge rattlesnake which guards the graveyard knoll immediately precedes the Gum Tree Scene. His very words (the to-be-expected "Chief" . . . "Grandfather") are affirmations of allegiance both to Sam's legacy and to the authority Sam served. They complete his identification with the old Indians' spirit of coexistence with nature which Sam had cultivated in him. The Indians of the old South had a "traditional reverence for rattlesnakes."[31]

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[31] Jack F. Kilpatrick and Anna G. Kilpatrick, Friends of Thunder: Folktales of the Oklahoma Cherokees (Dallas, 1964), p. 153. Leslie Fiedler (who has recently written a study of the Indian in American literature) has another theory on the passage--a theory vaguely suggestive of primordial buggery (The Return of the Vanishing American [New York, 1968], pp. 116-117).

Their "Umpire" or "Arbiter," like the one to which Faulkner and his characters often refer, took on various forms (which depending upon the role he is to play in an encounter with man)--an eagle in council, a great bear to young men in search of their manhood, a stag in the hunt for meat, corn to the farmer--and often appeared as a snake when scourging or death was in the offing. As Sam had earlier accepted the necessity of Ben's death, Ike accepts the snake; and with it he accepts (and prepares the reader to accept) the justice of a more concrete and yet elusive trope which follows. The lifted hand and the honorific words in the old tongue tell us plainly that the Fall has been reenacted in this garden. Natural providence, God, or the Great Spirit (it is unwise to be too specific about the name) has now appropriately punitive implications which are hopeful only insofar as they bespeak an ultimate justice: a justice which is potentially redemptive _by_ being punitive. Here and elsewhere Ike places his hopes for the future of his people with this justice. But this discussion takes us beyond "The Bear" to the stories which stand immediately after it in _Go Down, Moses_. Only the severity of the judgment of the Gum Tree Scene can therefore give occasion for comfort.

It is particularly appropriate that Faulkner used Boon in the dark conclusion of "The Bear." For Boon is an unselfconscious victim of the spread of the virus of non-endurance around him, a spread made possible in part by the dereliction of his society's natural leadership; and Boon had once been given a place of the highest honor as the instrumental cause of Old Ben's assumption, a place which could have belonged to him only as one who was totally free of the new presumption and yet ignorant of the great beast's meaning. Boon's performance under the gum tree indicates how far and how rapidly the toxin has spread.

And now to consider the final scene itself. We have been reminded throughout section five that Ike will eventually meet Boon in the woods. But the spectacle of his fury and his snarl at his young friend, especially as it comes hard after the religious calm of the scene on the knoll, is nevertheless surprising. The total rhythm of the section gives to the ultimate moment all possible impact and purchase upon our imagination.[32] But its intensity, however well prefaced, would be unendurable if prolonged. Ike's attention is called to Boon by the noise the giant woodsman is making while smashing the barrel of his shattered gun upon its stock. His hysteria is of frustration born. The gun was for him (in his new connection as the co-worker of the locomotive and the lumber mill) a means of establishing a dominion over Nature, represented in all her bounty by the squirrel-filled tree above him. The association of guns and other mechanical devices with the prideful attempt to dominate or "own" was established much earlier in "The Bear" when Ike had his first face to face encounter with Ben (pp.

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[32] It is for the sake of the emotional, tonal, or "dramatic" unity of "The Bear" that Faulkner violates strict chronology to place an account of Ike's last trip at sixteen to the old camp after the dialogue with his cousin which

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occurred on his twenty-first birthday. The oft noted incongruity of the arrangement of the chapter's five sections is illusory. Section five, if set before section four, would make the latter anticlimactic. And the other sections without four just where it is would lack depth and focus. The first two portions of the account of Isaac McCaslin's visit to the grave of Sam stand in the same relation to the third as do the first four sections of "The Bear" to the fifth. The effectiveness and aesthetic justification for the structure of this fiction have most often been denied by those who insist on giving unqualified approval to Isaac's side of his argument with his cousin. And what I say of the pattern of "The Bear" holds true also for Go Down, Moses (cf. Conrad Aiken's "Faulkner: The Novel as Form," Atlantic Monthly, CLXIV [November 1939], 650-654, for support of my argument; he was the first to note Faulkner's habit of withholding his meaning in order to sharpen his effect).

208-209). That Boon has, like his Indian forefathers, learned from his more "civilized" associates to desire full and single possession of Nature as a sanction for his pride we are assured by what he says to Ike as the boy approaches: "Don't touch them. . . . They're mine!" Though his impotence with a gun is proverbial throughout the canon, Boon had earlier shared with the regulars in the hunting camp a sense of the decorums which made possible their fellowship with one another and, together, with the great bear. But the "greeting" he here gives to a member of that company is proof that he is now of another fellowship; from the immediate context in which his words appear we can determine that he has become part (and a type) of the presumptuous and cowardly attempt to escape creaturehood, the attempt which leads the "new" men to abuse the land, to "gnaw at the flanks" of the wilderness in fear of what it suggests to them about their importance and place in an ultimately mysterious order (p. 193). What has happened to him at the end of "The Bear" is what an older Ike (perhaps thinking back to this moment) foresees in "Delta Autumn" will happen to all who would cancel their tenure upon the land in and with a spirit of self-aggrandizement, who would acquire an artificial sense of importance at the expense of what they were given in trust. Their success will be their scourge, a Sisyphean torment appropriately created by their wrongful use of the gifts of God and followed by a discovery that these gifts have (because of their crime) become at once theirs and not theirs. As Ike puts it, "The people who have destroyed it [the land] will accomplish its revenge" (p. 364). Ike believes it must be so because God has discovered of His creations that "apparently they can learn nothing save when underlined in blood" (p. 286). Human attempts to halt the spread of the non-enduring spirit (which the first four sections of the story affirm) having failed, providence will have to restore the old order of pride and humility from without. Then the "saving remnant" spared in the general ruin may enact once more the natural law. With that note, looking forward to a more general punishment and backward to the end of an "enduring," prelapsarian time, "The Bear" concludes.

In "Delta Autumn" Ike tastes personally of the bitterness he foresees at the end of "The Bear"; once again he accepts this as just and awaits God's further correction. The wilderness is almost gone. In their fear of what it recalls to them, the new Southerners have cut the woods, tried to tame it. The hunt is a travesty; does are the favorite targets of his companions. The novices in his charge treat him with disrespect. The entire Western World is collapsing. And the old woman trouble has returned to his family. Roth Edmonds, after criticizing Lucas for abusing Mollie in "The Fire and the Hearth," repeats the sin of the founder. He has begotten a child upon a Negro woman of his own blood. And what is worse, he has acted in an underhanded, sneaky fashion--not out of ruthless strength. He even refuses his colored son that little which Carothers gave Tomey's Turl: acknowledgment. Ike is alone in the camp when the abandoned girl comes to him for justice. But, though his vision is even clearer now than in the Gum Tree Scene, Ike can do nothing for her but to check her woman's fancy and indifference to questions of ethics with talk of patience--and give her (for the child) a totem of the old enduring and patriarchal order, General Compson's horn.[33]

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[33] Go Down, Moses, pp. 335-365. Critics agitated by Ike's advice to Roth's mistress that she marry a black and wait some two thousand or so years have imputed an irony to his remarks that has no support in Faulkner's public statements on the pace or probability of racial amalgamation. Furthermore, it is difficult to see what in Uncle Ike's life experience would have encouraged him to identify miscegenation with anything but exploitation, sorrow, and misery. The girl's last words to Ike, about love, call to our mind not Ike's racism but the indifference of women to necessities

His impotence at this moment is the bottom of my second progression.

At intervals in this story Ike recapitulates much of what almost eighty years have taught him, and while so doing verbalizes the thematic matrix of _Go Down, Moses_. What he says recalls his discussion of land tenure in section four of "The Bear" (plus Cass' part of the same discussion, Mollie's horror at rebellion against station in "The Fire and the Hearth," Mr. Ernest and his ward in "Race at Morning," and many similar episodes elsewhere in the Cycle). Women and land, Ike learned from his wife, go together. Place _is_ place. Violation of it leaves little but the chance to act the "Ancient Mariner," a frustrating role. Ike is now right, but at the wrong time.[34]

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rooted in history and close moral speculation--and to the need for responsible males to protect them from their natural weaknesses in these matters, even as they in turn protect men from the characteristic male follies (p. 363).

[34] Through women, what has happened to Ike's conception of landholding as part of place (a change we are prepared for as early as "The Fire and the Hearth") is that he has abandoned a travesty of the "Old People's" notion of stewardship/ownership for something closer to what their view really was. Ascription to Ike of a variety of primitive communism in part four of "The Bear" ignores, of course, his fifty dollars a month from the Edmondses, his honoring of old Carothers' will, and his intense concern with how his

A moral man's suffering may produce saintliness. However, what the old man's Mississippi needs--Roth needs,

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"replacements" behave in his stead. But it also ignores the fact that, in his rationalization for "freedom's" sake, he distorts the Indian view of property and authority, ownership and leadership; and that view is patriarchal and premodern. A fictional summary of it is available in "Lo!" --and of its corruption in "Red Leaves." But for the moment it is enough to observe that the Southeastern "civilized tribes" believed in communal holdings. The land of the tribe belonged to _all_ of the tribe--and to none of it (save for appointed periods, usually a lifetime). Only the tribe, in the person of its chief, could sell the land. The chief, in turn, had it from the Great Spirit--as he had the tribe--for _his_ appointed time. Only God owned it. But one man (even an outsider, if favored by the tribe) did own a particular piece of it vis-a-vis another man, as did one more than any other. It was not anonymous (even though tribal apportionment matched worth and need).

As late as 1897, Chief Dennis Bushyhead urged the Oklahoma Cherokees (and other tribes) against modern style private holdings, urged them, it appears, with reason (John Collier, _The Indians of America_ [New York, 1947], pp. 216-219). And even now the oil-rich Tyonek Indians of Alaska persist, on religious grounds, in opting for tribal property. Indeed, these Athabascans go even further. They are willing to help other tribes toward financial independence, but only if they promise to hold the tribe together by keeping to the old way, to tribal holdings (personal letter from Thomas H. Pillifant, Superintendent of Anchorage District, Office of U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, January 25, 1968). The analogy for these Indian practices is feudal, medieval--not communist.

For earlier representative comment on Faulkner and property see Dale G. Breaden's "William Faulkner and the Land," _American Quarterly_, X (Fall 1958), 344-357. For further correction of such misrepresentation see the transformation of Mr. Ernest, from private value to patriarchy, in "Race at Morning"--a transformation begun when the old hunter adopts a waif and concluded when he tells the boy that "the farming business and the hunting business ain't enough" (_Big Woods_, pp. 192 and 196). He admonishes the boy that he will have to prepare to assume those duties that go with property.

the girl needs--is a patriarch, not a Francis of Assisi. Yet at the end of a man's life cycle, if he is a good man and has been in error, there ought to be wisdom and an impulse to witness. Such is part of what Ike's prophecy of fruitful punishment implies.

Ike's argument to Roth and the other young men picks up out of their own banter with the Edmonds boy, banter about what he fears to encounter in the bottom: the "aftermath" of earlier careless hunting. Ike's metaphor, and theirs, is "woman equals doe." Women are what men's activity is all about--war, work, even religion. At the heart of a culture's doctrine of nature is its view of (and conduct toward) women. When Roth brings a slain doe into the camp, after Ike has dispatched his mistress with the horn (and the money Roth had prepared for her expected visit), he is only confirming Ike's anticipation of his sin. He has denied his history, his station--as man, lover, McCaslin. But Ike, too, we remember, failed a woman: expected too much of her, did too little for her. And, as his praise of love indicates, he wishes now it had been otherwise, that he had made a marriage for her, a hearth. If he gives a witness, there is hope that Cass may repent. Or at least with the memory of that witness in his mind, he may be readier to repent once providence begins to "encourage" the transformation.

From women and the social order the old man, "uncle to all and father to none," turns again to argue for vertical endurance, its part in supporting the communal and familial impulse which is like its importance to the hunter's code. Roth denies free will, conscience, and honor. His words are bitter echoes of the Compson fatalism, of the old prattle of celestial dicing that so infects Quentin in _The Sound and the Fury_. Moreover, he insults the rightful head of his clan. This behavior alarms his less irreverent (and less troubled) younger companions. Ike, however, is unperturbed. He reasserts the parable--the hunter as the symbol of man enduring (pp. 348-349). This life is a proving ground. For its satisfactory conduct there are rules--and violation of them brings suffering, for violator and for victim. Even so, suffering can be good because it is corrective. The total arrangement is to man's advantage, even though it exerts great pressure upon him. It is ultimately what God would have wanted for Himself had He been a man. Mississippi, the United States, even the world may be caught up in a seizure of Promethean pride and/or cowardly relinquishment. What is in motion will have to run its course--burn itself out. But it is not too late to prepare intellectually and morally for what comes next, to entertain the possibility that deeds have consequences and the natural law the capacity to reassert itself.

This argument is broken, or rather interrupted, by night, the next day's hunt, and the mulatto girl's visit. But Ike picks it up again after all three of these have reinforced its burden. He continues as chorus (and envelope) of his own history, as connecter of the various narrative threads in the first six chapters of his novel. Furthermore, he points beyond it to the teleological system which gives private and collective coherence and meaning: the people "who have destroyed . . . will accomplish . . . revenge (p. 364).[35]

"Go Down, Moses," as I remarked in commencing this reading, is a coda, a postlude, to the two major connected and parallel movements of _Go Down, Moses_: of the background-establishing series and of the account of Ike which the earlier stories "set up."[36] Furthermore, I have already described the story as, in one sense, comic. This book comes early in Faulkner's so-called "affirmative" phase--is probably its ground; therefore neither the placement nor the tone of "Go Down, Moses" should surprise. However, it is most certainly inappropriate to ignore the story or to write it off as a Faulknerian afterthought. Once more connection is the problem, function--at least until we note the return of the hearth symbol (Mollie and her white and Negro connection around it), the reassertion of a dominant (and "highborn") feminine influence, and an especially revealing imagery. In these, the _story_ and the book come together.

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[35] A recollection of the discussion in Chapter III of this study of Ike's early errors is assumed in the foregoing comment on his three chapters.

Roth Edmonds is still making trouble in "Go Down, Moses." But he is here present only by inference, as a remote influence on the action. Old Aunt Mollie Beauchamp is the one in motion here. Her grandson, a very bad colored boy, is to be executed in Chicago. She discovers (or rather, intuits) that he is in difficulty and calls on the daughter of her mother's onetime master, Miss Worsham, to inquire into the matter and then (once the worst is known) to insure that the body of Samuel Worsham (Butch) Beauchamp is brought home to rest with his people.[37] Mollie then mourns, grieves herself out (again in company) with an old-fashioned whole-heartedness. Samuel Beauchamp is buried in style. However, her duty discharged, Mollie is once more her old benign self--full of wise passiveness. Roth failed Mollie when he expelled her thieving grandson from the McCaslin plantation--sold him into "bondage" to "Pharoah" (p. 37). She would have accepted harsh punishment for the boy, would even have encouraged it; for Sam had a weakness and Roth's place was to check it, to reform, encourage him in endurance. But by throwing out one of his own "family," Edmonds does what his father and his grandfather never did--denies the connection. He leaves the young Negro at the mercy of habit: "Getting rich too fast" (p. 370). Furthermore, he deprives him of his birthright in a community where brotherhood means hierarchy, a community which in some measure protects men by "binding" them to one another in well defined roles. The North is Egypt to Mollie--a place of heathens where irreligion leaves the weak with no recourse save to an impersonal law and the liberty-born vagaries of their own impulses. And no one in Jefferson who helps Miss Worsham and Gavin Stevens to honor Mollie's request denies the propriety of her poetic assertion: her youngest, her "Benjamin," _is_ in Pharoah's power. And in Yoknapatawpha one part of community is dead. True, the town honors Mollie--honors her claim upon it; upon Gavin, as a representative of the old patriarchal justice at the level just above Roth's; upon Miss Worsham, who murmurs words from the Book with her onetime playmate and "sister." "What's fittin'" is done. Grief, in being made "our grief" (p. 381), sacramentalizes the social order into the old "human coherence and solidarity" (p. 380). But there is no assurance that it can survive such folly for long--only the possibility.

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[36] _Go Down, Moses_, pp. 369-383. Faulkner told Brennan (_op. cit._, p. 54) that this story led to his effort to make the book--and that its genesis was in his observation of a Negro coffin coming in by train to Oxford for burial.

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[37] "Miss Worsham" is "Miss Habersham" in Faulkner's other fiction, notably in Intruder in the Dust. "Mollie" Beauchamp is "Molly" in the rest of Go Down, Moses.

What is and what is not endurance _among_ men is left by the story indelibly clear, as is the fact that such endurance still has a few champions, is still possible and efficacious. Also plain is the implacability of the natural law in smiting down the non-enduring person or people and the probability that "Pharoah" will get us all unless we submit to being bound together. "Go Down, Moses" recapitulates quietly the action and matter of the six chapters which precede it. It spells everything out, clearly and calmly. Furthermore, it should convince even the most skeptical that Faulkner's doctrine of nature has something to do with the design of the memorable and powerful book which it concludes.[38]

I have begun my proof-by-explication with Faulkner's deepest and most many-sided consideration of the meaning of endurance, with his most extensive development of both dimensions of his doctrine of nature; the necessity of this connection requires, if I am to continue, early and full fictional verification. And evidence is not otherwise readily available in a major work. But Go Down, Moses is not, by itself, unique. It is my contention that almost all of the Yoknapatawpha material (to say nothing of writings outside of the Cycle) contains something of the outlook and emphasis expressed most powerfully in the seven-part history of the McCaslins. Just as *Go Down, Moses* opens up to our comprehension the tensional dialectic of less elusive Faulkner compositions, so do these simpler productions reinforce our impression that a related dynamic animates the teleologically "haunted" novel/suite. Nowhere is the homogeneity of the novelist's creation projected more convincingly than in his three extraordinary narratives of education in stewardship--the centerpieces of his affirmative maturity and dramatic alternatives to the examples of Thomas Sutpen *and* post-commissary Ike McCaslin.

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[38] This study of the design of Go Down, Moses is, in some respects, similar to Mellard's "The Biblical Rhythm of Go Down, Moses." However, it was near completion before I saw Mellard's piece. And his view of the seven-chapter sequence as formal pattern does not rest on anything like my view of Faulkner's theme. Olga Vickery and Millgate (see catalogue above) have been of more help to me than Mellard's recent analysis.

B. The Unvanquished

The Unvanquished, Intruder in the Dust, and The Reivers are structurally the three most closely related of William Faulkner's novels. Unlike the near or semi-novel, the suite just considered, not one of this trio depends for its significance upon interplay between man's sense of his relation to the Giver of Order and his awareness of how he fits in that order. Their glance is outward, not upward. Each of the three is in genre a bildungsroman--a novel and not a romance. Each depicts the education of a young Southerner in the horizontal or social implications of the doctrine of nature, in the obligations of his place. Each is more restrictively focused on a single character or group of related characters and on the question of what constitutes maturation than are other Faulkner novels--and is therefore less complex in form than they. And each ends on a positive note with the will to endure and the understanding of why that will, that balance of pride and humility, is necessary on the way toward being triumphant in the life of an admirable protagonist. None of these three has been very much praised, perhaps because their common theme has been either misunderstood or intentionally ignored. By building upon what has been said about Go Down, Moses, I will in this division of my exploration of the importance of a comprehension of Faulkner's doctrine of nature to the analysis of the patterns of design in his fiction first consider these novels separately in the order in which they appeared. Then, I will revert to the subject of their similarity and to a consideration of the light that they shed on one another and on their closest relatives among Faulkner's other works.

The imperception and shallowness of most comments on The Unvanquished are interesting studies in themselves. It was reviewed in the backwash generated in respectable literary circles by the uncritical enthusiasm with which the American "reading" public received Gone with the Wind. Then it was ignored for almost two decades. A few of the early reviews were perceptive.[39] And Malcolm Cowley included and spoke well of certain portions of the book in his The Portable Faulkner.[40] Later, Charles Anderson and Hyatt

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[39] See particularly Donald Davidson's "The South Today: Report on Southern Literature," Dallas Times-Herald, July 17, 1938, Section I, p. 6; and R. C. Beatty's "The Vitality of a Code," The Nashville Banner, Magazine, April 23, 1938, p. 2.

[40] The Portable Faulkner contains reprints of "Raid"

Waggoner (in greater detail) gave serious and favorable treatment.[41] Finally, in the last decade there has been a respectable if modest upsurge of interest, most of it resulting in general comment rather than explication. In the midst of this lot appeared James B. Meriwether's superb Princeton dissertation, "The Place of The Unvanquished in William Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha Series" (1958)--a work whose impact has been reinforced by Carvel Collins' "Foreword" to the Signet Classics edition of the novel; by chapters in Cleanth Brooks' *William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country* and in his *The Hidden God*; by portions of Andrew Lytle's "*The Town*: Helen's Last Stand" and "The Son of Man: He Will Prevail"; and by William E. Walker's essay, "*The Unvanquished*: The Restoration of Tradition."[42] But

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(pp. 133-168) and "Odor of Verbena" (pp. 186-223). An awareness of the importance of *The Unvanquished* to the Yoknapatawpha Cycle is evident throughout Cowley's "Introduction" (pp. 1-24).

[41] Charles Anderson, "Faulkner's Moral Center," *Etudes Anglaises*, VII (January, 1954), 48-58; Waggoner, *op. cit.*, pp. 170-83.

[42] Meriwether's dissertation (mysteriously still unpublished) is indispensable for the study of *The Unvanquished*. Collins' widely read essay (pp. vii-xii of the New American Library publication [New York, 1959]) quotes from it and may be said to have done more to give

this useful and intelligent criticism is still the exception where The Unvanquished is concerned; and what there has been of it has not gone down in most quarters. It appears to this writer that the chief concern of many who have commented on the novel has been either to make certain that it not be understood or to insure that it not be taken seriously. But perhaps the process which produced such comment has not been so self-conscious as has just been implied. Critics whose first loyalties are political and/or ideological, not objective or scholarly (and their number is legion), might be expected to feel a "right-thinking" compulsion to strike at the Sartoris world through a discussion of its fictional unfolding by Faulkner; this novel, as I intend this discussion to show, was bound to produce some reflexive liberalism. Or perhaps the simplicity of The Unvanquished's burden, indicated by the title itself, did not provide these critics sufficient

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currency to Meriwether's reading of The Unvanquished as a unified novel than any other discussion of it. Pages 476-79 of the former of the Lytle essays and pp. 130-34 of the latter [citations from the Sewanee Review] deal masterfully with the novel. Walker's essay appears on pp. 275-97 of Reality and Myth. Other valuable comment on The Unvanquished will be referred to as occasion demands. The above list is selective, not exhaustive.

opportunity to display their ingenuity and therefore they manufactured a fashionable burden for it. In some cases, however, we are left by the monstrous proportions of the wrongheadedness of particular judgments of this novel with no choice but to conclude that it has been read well enough and that the readers have consciously essayed to convince the world of its triviality and of the slapdash and popular or slick quality of its craftsmanship.[43] At any rate we have to keep very close to the text and discern carefully its relationship to his best known and most respected fiction if we are not to be diverted by the air of mastery with which we are assured that it belongs to his "second-best work";[44] is "slick magazine stereotype";[45] not "serious";[46]

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[43] Some openly political (and often Marxist) reviews which this novel received upon first publication do more honest justice to The Unvanquished than has the disguised political animus of recent "academic" criticism. For instance, see Kay Boyle's "Tattered Banners," The New Republic, 94 (March 9, 1938), 136-37 and Alfred Kazin's "In the Shadow of the South's Last Stand," New York Herald-Tribune, Books, Feb. 20, 1938, p. 5.

[44] Richard P. Adams, "About These Moderns," p. 457.

[45] William Van O'Connor, The Tangled Fire of William Faulkner, p. 100.

[46] Howe, op. cit., p. 42. Also Kartiganer (op. cit., pp. 42-43).

a "mere collection of stories with little thematic unity other than a general treatment of Southern courage and foolhardiness";[47] a "distinctly minor . . . collection of 'tall tales' of heroic Southern resistance" whose component parts "tend to remain in the memory as independent units";[48] a display of "grating sentimentality" to be forgiven only because it contains (supposedly in repentance) Faulkner's "declaration of loyal independence from the past";[49] a "romanticized . . . uncritical picture of Southern aristocracy" which "casts critical light on John Sartoris";[50] and finally, a "comparatively minor work . . ., less than Sartoris."[51] However, in the face of this self-constituted syllabus of errors, it should be asserted that The Unvanquished, though well made and representative of Faulkner's craftsmanship at not far below its best, presents to the critic who would read the novelist from inside his moral and intellectual milieu and discover the author's meaning in terms that belong to it less serious difficulty than any of his other novels; and it is therefore an excellent book to use in introducing Faulkner's work to those who do not know it.[52] Moreover, it is for those who know him better, if considered in conjunction with Go Down, Moses and certain of the stories, a useful checking point for reference in keeping their own bearings while tracing out the design of his more complicated productions. In other words, the novel serves well as a point of departure in reading Faulkner for theme.

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[47] Swiggart, op. cit., p. 36. C. Hugh Holman, on p. 335 of his Three Modes of Modern Southern Fiction (Athens, Ga., 1966), is guilty of the same mistake as are Slatoff (op. cit., p. 203) and Robert D. Jacobs, in "William Faulkner: The Passion and the Penance," South: Modern Southern Literature in the Cultural Setting (New York, 1961), edited by Jacobs and Louis D. Rubin, Jr., p. 170.

[48] Millgate, The Achievement of William Faulkner, pp. 169-70.

[49] Volpe, op. cit., pp. 76, 86.

[50] Tuck, op. cit., pp. 69-70

[51] Carrol Dee McLaughlin, "Religion in Yoknapatawpha County," p. 95. More or less to the same effect are Mellard's dissertation, "Humor in Faulkner's Novels: Its Development, Forms, and Functions" (pp. 56-65) and Backman (op. cit., pp. 113-126).

The thematic implications of The Unvanquished were, at the time of its publication, more hopeful than anything to be found in what Faulkner had brought forth theretofore.[53] The triumph of the enduring spirit in _As I Lay Dying_ is too parodic and too thoroughly hedged by comic qualifications to be said to suggest that a full-fledged endurance (as it has been defined above) is truly possible. Dilsey's strength in _The Sound and the Fury_ is finally ineffectual; that novel is, we must remember even as we admire her, not her story--though she serves as a measure of the weakness of its principals. The same is true of Byron Bunch and the Rev. Gail Hightower in _Light in August_; they stand in the background and frame the major action. And even if Lena Grove be taken as co-protagonist with Joe Christmas, her endurance, like that of some of the Bundrens, is too mindless and instinctive for us to group her with Bayard Sartoris, Chick Mallison, and young Lucius Priest.[54] Other pre-1938 Faulkner novels and short stories push toward affirming the possibility of responsible action in an assigned place or given situation; but not until The Unvanquished is Faulkner able to bring himself to portray an effective coping with all the circumstances and obligations of life at the center of an extended plot. After 1938, he rarely does anything else, except when he turns to a related pattern to portray the workings of a regular and predictable teleology through a non-enduring protagonist, individual or collective, for whom endurance is always an apparent possibility.[55]

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[52] Several have anticipated me in this suggestion; the first was probably Robert E. Knoll in his "The Unvanquished' for a Start," College English, XIX (May 1958), 338-343. My own classroom experience confirms the wisdom of Knoll's suggestion.

Faulkner himself (Faulkner in the University, p. 2) advised a student proposing to go through his Cycle to read this novel as an opener.

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[53] All citations in the following discussion of this novel are from the Random House edition of 1938. The general assertion of this sentence refers to Faulkner's novels. An argument could be made that _Sartoris_ concludes hopefully--but not as hopefully as _The Unvanquished_.

[54] Joe Christmas' transformation is too belated for him to be included in this group.

Bayard Sartoris (later called the Young Colonel) is the man Quentin Compson, Horace Benbow, and Gail Hightower would like to be. He is the man Cash Bundren, Byron Bunch, the Tall Convict, and Gavin Stevens (with a little more fire and/or intelligence--or in a more propitious context) might have been.[56] Bayard is, figuratively speaking, a bridge across which passed emblems from Faulkner's imagining of hope for the survival of his inherited communal tradition in the post-bellum South. But Bayard does not become all of this at once or without reason. Indeed, the manner in which he arrives at and the experiences which make for his emergence as a type of completeness are as important a key to his paradigmatic final virtue as are the dimensions of that virtue itself.

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[55] I refer to Go Down, Moses, much of the Snopes trilogy, Requiem for a Nun, several short stories, The Wild Palms, and the last two sections of A Fable. This general observation on the shift in the responsibility represented in Faulkner's fiction by the appearance of The Unvanquished is adumbrated in Ward L. Miner's The World of William Faulkner (Durham, N. C., 1952), p. 157. Brylowski (op. cit., pp. 156-161) admits that The Unvanquished is a turning point, but makes little of the fact.

[56] It is the rule (to which there are a few notable exceptions) that Faulkner's mind turns backward--to their

If we must pick out one character and so denominate him, Bayard Sartoris is the protagonist of The Unvanquished. In the last section of the novel, it is with the completion of Bayard's education as The Man, The Sartoris, that all the threads of theme and action spun out in the rest of the

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generally enduring if sometimes overly aggressive progenitors --or outward--across social lines to the respectable Negroes or white yeomen among whom old values survive--from the modern day representatives of the well established families who usually occupy the center of the stage in his Yoknapatawpha chronicle to discover examples of the enduring spirit with which to measure and define these moderns. It is for this reason that I am forced to conclude that the prevailing mood in much of the Yoknapatawpha Cycle is elegiac, even though Faulkner's ironically guarded nostalgia is more and more tinged by hope as he grows older. I will return to this speculation in my conclusion. Evidence in support of it is implicit in the total body of this paper.

book come together and the title which Faulkner has given to it takes on its full meaning. This novel is, however, like _Go Down, Moses_, a _bildungsroman_ with a difference, a difference that makes it especially important to a study of the horizontal implications of Faulkner's doctrine of nature. For Bayard Sartoris "unvanquished" is, to repeat, a pious, living transmission of experience and example into another era of the essentially old-world qualities summed up in the word "Sartoris." Bayard, in "An Odor of Verbena," is more than a fine young man come into his moral majority. He is the recovery of Sartoris, of all those who have given the name meaning and whose struggles live on in him, from the poison which had infected it during its neccessary but nonetheless near fatal involvement in the just concluded era of war and reconstruction, a time of _total_ violence. Sartoris, the family and the idea, a concept of order, place, and stewardship made flesh, gives unity to _The Unvanquished_; and "Sartoris" is a social, not a private ideal.[57]

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[57] Meriwether, in his dissertation (pp. 128-29), observes that the title of this novel refers "not only to the women, or to the boys, or to the Bayard Sartoris who won the biggest battle in the last chapter, but to a spirit which animated them all and was possessed in part even by the characters who were defeated." Drusilla and Col. John

The external pressure exerted on "Sartoris" in the novel is that of an enveloping action upon what would otherwise be a semistatic pastoral tableau. And the pressure continues throughout the novel, even after it has set the fable proper in motion by engendering difficulties within individual members of the Sartoris family, between those members, and in the world the Sartorises inhabit. The book is, in one sense, the dialectic of private and family efforts to remain in character with the impersonal handiwork of an impersonally destructive and corrupting invader. Representing the antagonist faced by Sartoris the idea--not the North as a piece of geography or the North as a population of so many millions but also as an idea--are varieties of mania and varieties of fire. The former are results of the

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share in the title insofar as they bequeath something to Bayard. The Unvanquished anticipates in this respect (in that a great many characters have a stake in the maturation or non-maturation of its hero) Go Down, Moses (as was noted above) and Intruder in the Dust. The developments of Temple Drake in Requiem for a Nun and of Lucius Priest in The Reivers (to some extent) are more personal in significance--not generally social. Go Down, Moses differs from The Unvanquished in that the origin of the enveloping action under pressure from which its principals move is primarily external, an enemy as opposed to an inherited guilt. Chick Mallison's situation in Intruder in the Dust involves some of both.

internalization of the latter. And finally only the former threaten to vanquish "Sartoris."

I have already touched in the foregoing analysis of *Go Down, Moses*, in Chapter II, and briefly elsewhere on the ominous place occupied by the North as a frame of mind, an ideological, philosophical bent in Faulkner's teleology, and most particularly in its role as inadvertent scourge (of the South and of itself) in the War Between the States.[58] To the question of the North (by which should usually be understood the urban Northeast, Middle West, and California) as it poses a danger to the contemporary South, I will revert when considering *Intruder in the Dust* and certain of the short stories. It is a little remarked aspect of his work, in conflict with the good manners (unless provoked) of his public remarks, that in Faulkner's fiction the North is almost invariably represented as the repository of a spiritual disease as deadly as black slavery at its worst. Attractive characterizations of individual Northerners (such as Colonel Dick in *The Unvanquished*, Mr. Van Tosch in *The Reivers*, or Mac McCord in *The Wild Palms*) are beside the point in determining what significance Faulkner found in the "mind of the North." James Meriwether has reminded Faulkner scholars that the novelist held a rather unreconstructed view of the noble experiment of 1866-77. As I have tried to demonstrate elsewhere in this paper, he might have expanded his comment to cover more than the one brief period of Northern influence on the South.[59] It is, however, enough for our purposes to remember at this point Gavin Stevens on the "coastal spew of Europe"; Joanna Burden and family in Light in August; "The Courthouse," "The Golden Dome," and "The Jail" sections of Requiem for a Nun; the dialogue of Ike and McCaslin Edmonds in Part IV of "The Bear"; and related stories, addresses, and remarks printed from interviews--and then go on to consider how Faulkner objectifies aspects of the North-as-Spirit in their impact upon "Sartoris."[60]

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[58] This second meaning of "North" is not suggested in *The Unvanquished*.

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[59] "Faulkner and the South," pp. 160-161. Meriwether goes on, quite properly to point out that (save in Faulkner at Nagano, pp. 185-186) Faulkner avoided making statements on the first Reconstruction and that his brief fictional treatments of the period never wave a "bloody shirt" or descend to the level of partisan diatribe. The novelist's interest is in searching out the meaning of the history of his "postage stamp," not in making rhetoric. Even the framework for this exploration is in a moral sense international.

[60] Intruder in the Dust, pp. 152 et seq., pp. 215-217; Requiem for a Nun, pp. 12, 20, 43, 108-109, and 237-248; Go Down, Moses, pp. 274-280.

Matt Levitt in The Town (pp. 183-186; 188-191; 194-

Fire burns the Sartoris home and most of Jefferson, as it blazes from the guns of soldiers, civilians, and bushwhackers--not on battlefields but in the streets and backyards of little towns and in the midst of the ordinary round of Southern domestic activities, in semi-private acts of violence. It softens railroad tracks for twisting around trees and guts all the homes along the road traveled by Granny Millard, Bayard, and Ringo on the way to Hawkhurst. The locomotive the old Colonel introduces into his scarred rustic paradise is propelled by fire. And this fire is

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197); Linda Snopes' husband, Barton Kohl, in The Mansion; the portrait of modern California in "Golden Land" (see below); Homer Barron in "A Rose for Emily" (Collected Stories, pp. 119-130); the federal men in The Mansion, "The Tall Men," and "There Was a Queen"; the traveling photographer/pitchman in the unpublished television script, "The Graduation Dress"; perhaps Shreve McCannon in Absalom, Absalom! (again, see below); Mrs. Grier's conversation with Major de Spain in "Shall Not Perish"; and the debate over the nature of government in "Lo!"--all have a place in Faulkner's composite image of the North as a communicable disease, as do the portraits of the Northern Negro 'Fonsiba marries (Go Down, Moses, pp. 369, 372-374). These should be considered in conjunction with Faulkner in the University interviews (pp. 160-161, 210, 211, 217-218, 220-221); with Faulkner's letter to Malcolm Cowley of early January, 1946 (reprinted in Cowley's The Faulkner-Cowley File, pp. 77-81); and with Faulkner's numerous remarks on machine culture, the disappearance of individuality, the rise of mass man, the welfare state, and big government. (See Chapters II and III).

finally offered to Bayard to be his alone by his stepmother, Drusilla, the most "fire-burned" and "fire-filled" of his family.

The internalization of this fire in the blindness or mania of specific characters in their conduct at turning points in the narrative is perhaps most clearly evident in "An Odor of Verbena," pp. 243-293). First Bayard imagines Professor Wilkins speaking of "the fever" that yet possesses the South even after Reconstruction and bemoaning its ten years' persistence in the killing of Colonel John (p. 246). Then there is evidence of that fever in the heated manner of Ringo (Bayard's Negro companion) and the Colonel's old troopers as they push Bayard to the "sticking place"; and in the remembered figure of the old Colonel in his last years, his "forensic air" and "intolerant eyes," covered by a "transparent film" (pp. 266-67). These have looked too long, partaken too long of the fire. But they are nothing like "feverish" when compared with Drusilla.

The fever to dominate, to live life as a no-quarter war-to-the-death has, Bayard realizes, brought about his father's death. But not in a manner contrary to the elder man's will. Even as he had looked on Bayard with glazed eyes, he had set himself apart from the fever: "I am tired of killing men," he had said. And, remembering perhaps the last of his killings--a hasty roadside shooting of a hill man who had once served under his command, a reflexive act and probably without warrant (pp. 254-55), he had spoken of "moral housecleaning." Too much war too long persisted in has finally arrested John Sartoris. But not Drusilla. She still exists in, "breathes" the year of war she lived as a soldier (p. 253). She reminds Bayard, as he approaches the house where his father's body lies in state, of a lighted "candle" (p. 269). As they enter, her hand on his arm discharges into him a "shock like electricity" (p. 270). And once in she turns upon him a "feverish eye," draws him to the bier, and like the priestess of some terrible religion offers him "the fire of heaven that cast down Lucifer" (p. 274) in the form of twin pistols.

Fire imagery and the connection of fire and mania are less obvious in other sections of The Unvanquished. However, the scorched earth of northern Mississippi and Alabama after the Federal army has passed across it, the lemming-like trek of Negroes toward an imaginary Jordan, Drusilla's sleepless dialogue with Bayard at Hawkhurst, the babblings of Loosh both before and after his "emancipation," the obsessive continuation of her mule-acquiring gambit by Granny (even after she knows that its future prospects for success are small), the pursuit and execution of Grumby by his victim's "boys" (with its grisly aftermath), and perhaps even the peculiar pattern of events on Drusilla's wedding day testify that fire *and* fever have been at work. And because the external and internal tokens of the power of their adversary on "Sartoris" are given through this connection, because so much is brought to a head and resolved in Bayard's rejection of the "fire of heaven," we are able to see behind the homecoming scene beside the dead man's coffin the network of imagery and reference here outlined and to discern its relation with the design and meaning of the book.

Bayard refuses to take upon himself a power that "belongs to heaven," a stolen "attribute . . . of God" (p. 273). In effect, he refuses to be Prometheus, the prideful and presumptive. And by what he accomplishes in refusing (while nevertheless acting the part of a man of honor) he identifies the antagonist which has almost vanquished his people, his world. For Prometheanism is what the North represents, serves, spreads, what it brings South with it, in _The Unvanquished_: Prometheanism as it ravages, through its "innocent" and untroubled agents, a countryside and disrupts (without really improving) a social order; and Prometheanism as a disease of the spirit communicated to the keepers and defenders of that landscape and order through example and by decimation.[61] Granny, John Sartoris,

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[61] Not overtly in this novel, but in detail elsewhere (see below on _Intruder in the Dust_) Faulkner traces the cause of Northern Prometheanism back in history to the breakdown of the framework of federalism (within which the old union had subsisted) under the drumming of inter-sectional calumny and inflation of the Jacobin fringes of Revolutionary political rhetoric into the higher law theory. Behind these, however, he finds an economic prime mover, and perhaps even behind that the coequal fancies of national innocence (cf. Reinhold Niebuhr's _The Irony of American History_ [London: Nisbet and Co., Ltd., 1952]) and national invincibility (cf. Ernest Lee Tuveson's _Redeemer Nation: The Idea of America's Millenial Role_ [Chicago, 1968]). That the North's attitude toward the seceding states reflected all of these concerns and delusions became apparent to Southerners (and particularly to those of the upper South and those below who had opposed slavery when their states went out) with Lincoln's call for troops to subdue the Gulf States in '61 (see _Intruder in the Dust_, pp. 108-109). Southern resistance in the face of a righteous cause, national invincibility, innocence (Mr. Tate's "angelism"), and destiny provided occasion for formation in the Northern mind the doctrines of total war and unconditional surrender. These violations of traditional Christian polity are, for Faulkner, the most reprehensible features of Northern war-time conduct. His attitude toward them, dramatized in this novel but stated elsewhere (when, for instance, he spoke of these years as the South's "golgotha" [_Requiem for a Nun_, p. 233]) is in essence that expressed in Richard Weaver's "A Dialectic on Total War," _Visions of Order_, pp. 92-112.

Ringo, and young Bayard are in the first six sections of the novel driven to fight fire with fire. These flames, once lighted and sustained for a time by continued fueling from without, are self-perpetuating until, confronted with the suggestion that he spread them on into another generation, Bayard leaves his pistols below and ascends the stairs to confront Redmond. And for Bayard as The Sartoris (p. 247) it was not enough to refuse the fire. To quench it, put it out, he had to climb those stairs. That it should be put out was both his father's will and a duty required of him by his place. Once it is extinguished, "Sartoris" is finally triumphant.[62]

War, of course, brings the fire into Yoknapatawpha. Civil war is in its essence an intense form of disorder--and was itself easily symbolic. But it is, as was inferred above, the special character of the War Between the States that leads those who take part in it to become Prometheans. It is, to repeat once again, a total war--waged against women and children, village and homestead as much as against armies in the field. And the effect of fighting their enemies in this distorted context is more harmful to the Sartorises than it is to their enemies. For before the war became total, before making it a hell for all the people of the South had become Northern policy, the manner in which the South fought it was in character. But after this development in Yankee strategy it was a "holy war" from the viewpoint of both sides. The pseudo-religious idiom of the abolitionists and the mystique of "Union" were challenged by the cult of hearth and clan and the rule of honor. No compromise, no accommodation! And therefore, for both camps, ends seemed to justify means. What was otherwise forbidden was made to seem necessary. And the habit of exercising without fear of special consequences, powers not ordinarily available--and in a manner not ordinarily justifiable--proved to be intoxicating. Likewise the habit of recourse to desperate and ultimate measures in every circumstance. Pride is the result; and pride must be purged from the conduct of the Sartorises as well as the barbarous children of light driven from out of their midst before their triumph can be complete.[63]

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[62] In its essence Prometheanism is discussed in Chapter II and its operations traced in several other places. Its impact in this "social" novel is indicative of how inextricably entwined are "vertical" and "horizontal" non-endurance. In Faulkner's fiction the one is always implied by the other.

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[63] The species of mania produced in the South by the

But there is for Faulkner another side to pride; and for the architecture of The Unvanquished to be available to us, we must recognize that pride *qua* self-respect, pride as consciousness of one's own worth and right to the dignity of a place well kept (magnanimity) is a necessary quality in those who would serve "Sartoris"; pride is the temptation of great hearts. And we find nothing else in this company; the other major type of non-endurance, passive or fatalistic excessive humility, never threatens here. To check what has perhaps been a disproportionate emphasis on the adversaries of that surname/social and moral concept, let us recall that "Sartoris" is, though sometimes endangered by the manner of their performance, well served by its champion of the moment in each of the several sections of the novel. First comes Granny Rosa Millard (1-9; 21-68; 84-175), with a little help from Bayard and Ringo and brief interruptions by the Colonel home from the front (9-21; 69-83); then Bayard and Ringo (with a little help from Uncle Buck McCaslin) in their vendetta/vigilante expedition

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"armed doctrine" of the North are, of course, various. The reaction of some Negroes is not so much a hunger for power, but rather a false hope of an earthly paradise. Longley, *op. cit.*, p. 183, notes that the corrupting influence of power is a major theme of The Unvanquished.

(176-212); then the Colonel (with Drusilla's support) in his struggles with the carpetbaggers (213-42)--and in the post-Reconstruction days recalled by Bayard after the Colonel's death (253-66); and only then Bayard come home to fill his father's vacant place (243-52; 267-93). But those who go before him make Bayard possible, not only in that they warn him against their errors but also in that they swerve not from doing their duty (as they see it) and neglect not their integrity. Indeed, their positive influence on Bayard is greater than their negative. His victory over the fire and fever is more a fulfillment than a rejection of them. Overmuch critical emphasis on "An Odor of Verbena" in isolation from the earlier chapters has obscured the extent to which Bayard stands on big shoulders as he finishes their work. We must trace the building and resolution of the tensions and themes outlined above through all seven sections of The Unvanquished, trace them in the sequence in which they appear, develop, and resolve, unless we are going to conclude that the last (and last written) chapter is "tacked on," inorganic. And I believe we should conclude nothing of the kind.[64]

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[64] See Meriwether's dissertation, pp. 108-109, et

The unobtrusive craft with which Faulkner sets the stage for and then unfolds in The Unvanquished a conflict of world views--and of an inherited ethic with a problem of survival in desperate circumstances--is most impressive. The first five sections, up to the moment of Granny's death, are deceptively idyllic. Only in retrospect do their sombre overtones become fully apparent. Even the horror of the burning of the home place, the melancholy spectacle of Loosh's departure with the unwilling Philadelphy, and the madness of the "freed" Negroes on the road to "Canaan" at first appear to be as much comic as serious--until we look back on them from "Vendee," "Skirmish at Sartoris," or "An Odor of Verbena." Yet warnings that "Sartoris" is threatened, warnings organically connected with events which occur and words which are said in later chapters, are present even in "Ambuscade": First the rising bank of clouds which the

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seq. We cannot overestimate the significance of the order in which the chapters of this novel were composed--the order in which they appear in the novel. Faulkner once reported (Faulkner in the University, p. 252) that he began this novel by composing a short story, only to discover, as he did on so many other occasions, that one short story led to another and finally to a novel. Faulkner worked on The Unvanquished at about the same time he was writing Absalom, Absalom! I am inclined to read them in tandem.

playing Bayard and Ringo see gathering far to the North; then the game they play; and most especially, the way it concludes. The game of war for the South is over and, as Loosh puts the matter, ". . . hit's on the way!" (p. 6). Even the rumor is disconcerting and its effect on Loosh indicates that the war which is coming involves more than the clash of arms. However, in truth, there is potential for disorder in Yoknapatawpha even before the rumor arrives. For the community is administered by women. This fact is not in itself "dangerous"--not unless war in all its fury does come into (and not just around) its life. But no one doubts its coming. Granny begins to practice burying valuables. And the boys prepare to make a stand, to go about the Colonel's business in his absence. Yet all is still in play. Even when Bayard and Ringo shoot a horse out from under the first Yankee they see, no lasting harm befalls anything but the horse. They do not fire in the spirit of total war, but rather just as they have played "Vicksburg" behind the smokehouse. They are relieved when they learn they have killed no one. They run to Granny when frightened by their own boldness, and they are never made aware of how near they come to death. Moreover, the conduct of the Yankee officer (Col. Dick) who lets Bayard and Marengo off does nothing to indicate to Granny what kind of enemy has come into her world. Yet we should remember, she is forced to lie. And with her necessary act she takes a first step out of her place and character (even though she does not intend by her act anything so portentous), and the boys are "involved" in the war.[65] Col. John is home for a while. He does confirm Loosh's report that Vicksburg has fallen. But this information makes no serious dent in the consciousness of his auditors (Granny before him and the youths behind a door). In fact, it may (with his fine figure upon Jupiter and Loosh's night trip to Corinth with its aftermath of "Sherman" talk) inspire the boys to their folly. For he tells them (by what he does and by what he refused to say) that after Vicksburg the war will be different, has already become different for him, become a bitter hit-and-run, steal-and-hide fight to the death. Hence he helps the boys build a pen in which to hide the Sartoris stock. But like the practice burial of silver, this is still a lark. As they get in deeper, the changes do not register with the boys. In "Retreat" matters do, however, become a little more serious.

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[65] Longley, op. cit., p. 189, says the theme of the novel is the corruption of innocence and that with this shot and lie it begins.

A year has passed. Bayard will be fourteen in September; Ringo is almost the same age. But both have been required to grow more than a year's worth by what they were forced to witness. And with their elders they have become more and more involved in war. Nevertheless, in most of the chapter the spirit of game survives. And Granny refuses, save in moments of despair, to recognize any change in the shape of things that will require more than a close watching of Loosh and more precautions with valuables.

Disturbed by what the war has become, John Sartoris had advised his mother-in-law to move the family to Memphis, a federally controlled cul-de-sac of safety in their strife-torn land. Granny here is "obeying . . . instructions" in a matter in which, as she realizes, she should not act on her own (p. 42). John Sartoris is a marked man. Though a soldier, the Union army has put a price on his head as if he were an outlaw. He has been all too successful in the new kind of war. Now (though Granny still cannot realize why) he fears that the enemy may strike at him through his family--something they would no longer feel free to do, even Yankees, with the old woman, slaves, and children behind their lines in the house of Rosa's sister.

Nonetheless, the effort proves to be abortive because of the way Granny goes about it. As she discovers, being a lady (a condition objectified in her insistence on wearing a hat) is no longer a guarantee of safety or immunity from outrage. Her mules are stolen right out of their traces in broad daylight and on a public road. She has, with some reason, thought too well of Yankees (p. 64). The boys are forced to take action. Once more they leave childhood behind as they begin their search for an old white horse they have seen in passing. They expropriate the decrepit beast and set out after Tenny and Old Hundred, who have long since shed their Yankee abductors. Instead of the mules, they find Marse John, who is irate with them for leaving Granny stranded with Joby in the wagon. The Confederate irregulars start out to take the boys home after they have returned the borrowed horse and unsuccessfully searched for Granny. The Colonel plans to deposit them with Louvinia and set out on the Memphis road. But they run head-on into a Yankee patrol; and in a bravura display John Sartoris captures all sixty of its members with no help but the boys'! This bloodless, glamorous, and exciting immersion in war is a heady wine for them. It is all romance; it draws them further in where they do not belong while confirming their delusion that war is play. As Bayard, the narrator, observes, "there is a limit to what a child can accept, assimilate; not to what it can believe" (p. 75).

But the Sartoris males are not alone in their new experience of total war. Granny was not sitting helpless on the Memphis road when they went back to get her because she has "borrowed" horses from she knew not whom (p. 81). She adjusts to circumstances and is well on the way now toward a habit of doing what she must, rules or not, even where property--for which she has religious respect--is involved. But she does not begin to see the implications of what she does. She removes her hat, puts down her cuttings, and sends the boys upstairs to change as if all were well and she had returned home from an ordinary visit to Mrs. Compson in town. Comedy still prevails.

Hard after, however, come moments which fracture her composure as they shift and darken the tone of the novel. Col. John's aforementioned fears of attack on his family are validated. Fifty Yankees ride down on him as he sits bootless on his own veranda, wage war on him in the midst of his family circle. Again he is too much for them.

The fox is up and away--after playing loon for a moment. Riding bareback on Jupiter, the Colonel leaps through a wall and a fusillade of bullets with no parting words but, "Take care of Granny" (a duty at this point beyond the power of Bayard, whom he addresses). The house is put to the torch; the silver is stolen. Later Loosh with Philadelphy in tow, reluctant and apologetic (". . . he my husband." . . . "'Fore God, Miss Rosa, I tried"), comes forward to acknowledge that he is the one who brought the patrol, revealed the silver, and caused the fire. Though she had seen signs of it before, Granny had not really believed Loosh would swallow the abolitionist promise of milk and honey. As the bemused Negro (who "could not even see us," says Bayard) prates of belonging only to God and himself and of the "Jordan" the Yankees will "general" him to (p. 89), Granny breaks down. With the two simultaneous developments the Sartoris world begins to give way from within. The thought that more is afoot in this invasion penetrates; her will lapses temporarily. In a symbolic gesture she joins the boys in swearing ("The bastuds! The bastuds!") the very profanity she had before punished them for uttering.[66] Hereafter, though she never fully understands nor admits how absolute is the antagonist she faces (perhaps because it is an idea and not flesh--and Faulkner's good women are not creatures of idea), Rosa is not very reluctant to suit means to ends, to go beyond her proper sphere and take a part in the conflict. The bonds (represented by soap for mouthwashing, hat, and flower cuttings) are loosed once and for all.

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[66] This departure of family Negroes, along with the

But the most important section of "Retreat" is not the emergence from farce comedy of the serious menace of fire and fever in Mississippi. The chapter is most significant in another way. For it contains the first of the interpolations which Faulkner added to his stories in his manuscript final draft to give their collective entity the impact and order of a novel: the account of the peculiar planters, Buck and Buddy McCaslin (pp. 52-57).[67] The definition of their dream given to Bayard by his father in an approving fashion (and this is also very significant) clarifies what, for Southerners, the war is about; what

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valedictory speech of Loosh, anticipates and helps define what is signified by the Negro mass hegira of the next chapter.

[67] Millgate, _op_. _cit_., p. 165. Perhaps the most useful material in this new study is its report of manuscript evidence.

"Sartoris" means apart from bravery and will and hard fighting; what it means in peace.

The next chapter of The Unvanquished is still rather comic. But for the first time, the overall effect of the narrative becomes (in "Raid") as serious as it is laughable. In retrospect it is not in the least humorous. Two powerful images dominate our impression of "Raid": of one, the lesser (the race of the last two locomotives, one Union, one Confederate, over the track from Atlanta that passes Hawkhurst), we are only told; the other, the hegira of the Negroes, we see through Bayard's eyes. As we would expect, the two episodes are closely related.

As the chapter opens, Granny has recovered from the shock of recent events. She has sent to town to borrow a hat and a parasol and is ready to start out after her silver and Negroes (p. 88). The family now resides in slave quarters. Col. John, after his last narrow escape, is obviously gone for the duration. But all is again much as before. Granny has had experience enough by now to know better than this trip. She intends to seek out Col. Dick. Apparently she regards as aberrations the behavior of the Yankees who misled Loosh and those who conducted a campaign in her yard and burned her out. But we should not be too surprised at this. Granny is more deeply rooted in the old order than is any other character in this novel; therefore she is not really capable of realizing that anything can threaten it, that anything would. For her, necessary deviations from her own strict rule of conduct are deplorable but accidental. Or rather, they are the result of accidents. She intends to set them right. Even when she takes over some of her son-in-law's business, she does so conditionally. She does get in the habit of operating outside her sphere but is never drunk on power not properly hers. Instead of her "sin," I believe we should speak of her mistake, her ignorance or refusal to see in the war much more than a tomfool game, male foolishness, which, as a lady, she could be expected to interfere with when it got out of hand. Her stupefaction at events which should have told her that it was a death blow aimed at all she represents--especially as it is followed by her return to form, which suggests that for her these incidents never occurred--is reminiscent of Virginia du Pre's misjudgment of Narcissa in "There Was a Queen."[68] And what is worse, every time Granny is almost cured of her sanguine view of her situation, she has a success which reconfirms her delusion.[69]

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[68] See Chapter III and my "Certain Ladies of Quality:

But if Granny is confused about the extremity into which her household has descended, her intellectual double (and Loosh's mother) is not. Bayard notes, as he, Granny, and Ringo set out toward the Alabama line, that Louvinia is much agitated by their departure, that she has begun "to act just like Uncle Buck McCaslin did that morning we set out for Memphis" (p. 89). There is an urgency in the old Negress' appeal to her mistress and friend that she be

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Faulkner's View of Women and the Evidence of 'There Was a Queen.'"

[69] My entire discussion of Granny Millard's role in The Unvanquished and of the idea "Sartoris" as it operates there is obviously heavily indebted to the two essays of Andrew Lytle referred to earlier, "The Town: Helen's Last Stand" and "The Son of Man: He Will Prevail." However, with Cleanth Brooks (William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country [pp. 93, 383]) I must concur in taking exception to the severity of Mr. Lytle on the grand old lady. In her favor, I plead circumstances. In truth, I believe they are even a little more extenuating than Brooks admits. He faults her in her view of providence (p. 383). But Granny's religion is one that her experience of the world, before the time of the war, has confirmed. That its metaphysical ground is unstated and unthought is fitting in view of her sex.

Longley (op. cit., p. 182), in his judgment of Granny, is reasonable; Waggoner (op. cit., p. 178-79), obtuse.

be successful this time, bring Loosh home--and "whup him." Like old Buck telling the boys to advise the Colonel to "kill the blue-bellied sons of bitches" (p. 61), the vehemence of this farewell speaks volumes. A whole way of life is at stake, these two good souls are saying. Spare nothing, they admonish their champions.

Once on the road, Granny settles down in her single-mindedness and the boys talk of railroads. First, the image of the locomotive (whose original Bayard has already seen and Ringo is eager to look upon) takes on what in Faulkner are its usual negative associations. It becomes an objective correlative (rushing nowhere down the track) for the "reasonless . . . delusion" already seething "among his [Ringo's] people": juggernaut as jubilee. They drop the subject for the present and observe the countryside--a wasteland of ashes and tall chimneys, broken fences, and empty fields, a scene where it appears that "everybody had died at the same moment" (p. 95). Granny sees a few white women and children, but no Negroes. She is sorry there is nothing she can do to help them. What the travelers confront universalizes for them their own experience. They are the South in miniature. Like what they represent, they cannot be turned aside by mere destructiveness. Soon, however, they encounter a more frightening sign of disorder which makes plain that a more telling wound than mere ravage and economic ruin has been suffered by "Sartoris" at the hands of the passing enemy. In the night, murmuring and "gasping" a singsong "chant," fifty Negroes hurry past the wagon (pp. 94-95). The next night three larger groups pass, almost running. At dawn Granny finds a young female with a baby, crouching beside the road. She has been left behind by her husband. She will answer no questions as to what she needs or where she belongs. Like one possessed, she just crouches and murmurs, "Hit's Jordan we coming to. Jesus gonter see me that far" (p. 96). Granny takes her into the wagon until they pass the spot where her group has stopped (in the brush) for the day. Then she insists on getting out.

The image of the African exodus, like that of the railroad, is then put aside for a moment as the Sartoris trio reaches Hawkhurst, after six days on the road. Fire has been here, too; and it has left its mark both within and without. For here we see the railroad again; get a full exposure to the Negroes' suffering, the result of a defective eschatology; and meet Drusilla. There is still much comedy. Cousin Denny, aged ten, is where Bayard and Ringo had been in "Ambuscade"--utterly innocent of the seriousness of what he has witnessed. He is eager to show Bayard and Ringo what the Yankees have done to the rails. Bayard recalls his first sight of the railroad: "It was the straightest thing I ever saw . . ." (p. 99). But now there are only piles of burned ties and iron knotted around trees like a "green cornstalk around a wagon stake" (p. 100). The scene confuses Ringo and inspires him to talk nonsense. But then Drusilla arrives. She is already dressed as a man. Her fiancee is dead. From him she has only a horse which (and this foreshadows much) she has had to be ready to kill in order to save him from the Yankees. All return to the cottage in the quarters where Mrs. Hawk has retired after the conflagration. There is more talk--now of the river where all the Negroes on the road have been going. Drusilla has been there, to what she aptly calls "homemade Jordan" (p. 115). She has heard the singing and witnessed the surging to the waterside and the frustration of the federal soldiers in their attempt to hold the mob back. Puzzled by what they are partners to, they have asked her help. They intend to win free of their black train by blowing the bridge. But their plan is futile. For the benighted freedmen have confused a journey in space with a journey in time, heaven with central Alabama. And they are determined, like religious fanatics, to cross over or die. The "reasonless" picture of a "bright shape" has been implanted in their "deluded" minds (p. 92). Mrs. Hawk admonishes Drusilla to stay home hereafter: "We cannot be responsible. The Yankees brought it on themselves; let them pay the price" (p. 105). Drusilla's answer is an indication of how well she belongs to "Sartoris," even though her commitment is to cost her much and to become less perfect in its balance hereafter: "Those Negroes are not Yankees, Mother." In her reply speak the old ideals of stewardship of place, of responsibility for dependents, children, the helpless, and the foolish. Also in it are foreshadowings of the depth of hatred for those she holds accountable for this chaos and misery. As she tells Bayard later that night, she is ready to go to war, to "ride and shoot," to kill Yankees. For as she sees it, "you don't have to worry now . . ."--about being a wife, mother, or matriarch (pp. 114-16). Even as we first see her, Drusilla is the most displaced by war of all the principals in _The Unvanquished_.

But before Drusilla asks Bayard to convey her wishes to his father (whom she calls "Cousin John"), there is another subsidiary conversation. The old ladies have retired; and Drusilla, who has "quit sleeping," tells the boys (as she watches to "keep the dog quiet"--she is already acting a man's part, defending her family) the story of the Southern engine which through enemy-held territory made one last wild run on the track which they have seen twisted round the trees. The passage (pp. 106-12) is another of Faulkner's pointed interpolations.[70] Coming after Drusilla's affirmation of her responsibility for the crazed Negroes and just before her offer to serve as a soldier, its meaning is clear. The engine, decorated and clanging its defiance of its Yankee pursuer, is the South; its quixotic last run, the last years of the war which the South fought without hope on principle alone; the destruction of the tracks after the run, the scorched earth and social disorder of Federal occupation and reformation--the radicals' attempt to destroy the basis of Southern society, the "track on which it runs," the confederation of its people (black and white), and the land which sustained them.

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[70] Millgate, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

The following morning we return to the Negroes. Despite Mrs. Hawk's advice, Granny continues her search for her people and her silver. Again we approach the comic. The Sartoris wagon is caught up in the final black push to the water--and carried in. This development is also emblematic. For Granny goes into the water, protesting violently. She is borne by a human (and ideological) tide, against her will into more than river water--in fact, into total involvement with a history which she cannot or will not understand.[71] The theft of her mules, Negroes, and silver has drawn from her a "parry." But in responding to the theft, she leaves her role as matriarch and plunges into a stream of things in which ladies are not recognized, in which ladies cannot act. Still she gives the move few second thoughts. Awakened in Col. Dick's tent on the Yankee side of the river, she is still oblivious of what she has gotten into. She knows to whom she owes a duty; and even if she had understood the context in which she "swam," I believe Granny would have plunged into it anyway, albeit with more caution. In giving her a paper authorizing the return to her of much more than she has lost, Col. Dick is not really behaving in an implausible fashion. He is ashamed to see an old woman suffer as Granny has, and he wishes to make restitution. Also, he wishes to be rid of as many Negroes as possible. What he accomplishes (with the assistance of what Granny has seen) is the temptation of the very persons he has attempted to aid. The disease of "ends justify means" is spreading. Both pushed and

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[71] The Negroes on the march to the "promised land" are perhaps the best summary of what it is that Granny does not understand (and the third most important scene: Bayard in Redmond's office and Drusilla's offer to him of the "fire of heaven" being the two most important) in the novel. These blacks are victims of millennialism, a belief that the world's body may be put aside, and the slow process by which civilizations grow and adjust abrogated, that a short cut is available and that a segment of a society can be redeemed at the expense of its overall stability and viability (Requiem for a Nun, pp. 20, 104). The sympathy and objectivity with which Faulkner treats them might be connected with the mixture of concern and warning which animates his public comments on the twentieth century Negro "revolution" (see Chapter III). It tells us more about his view of sudden abolition (without social preparation or economic indemnity to protect the slaveholder and through him the freedman) than about his judgment of slavery (see Go Down, Moses, p. 289 and pp. 274-81 [Fonsiba's story]; and also Intruder in the Dust, p. 216 [on what John Brown cost the Negro]). As Mr. Lytle

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puts it ("The Son of Man: He Will Prevail," p. 132), "The uprooted slaves moving in mass towards Jordan and freedom, towards that deep-laid hope of paradise on earth but to the actual betrayal of death" represent "the destruction of the society of which . . . [they are] a basic part."

drawn, Granny and the boys are, after this trip, in the livestock business, swapping--never a good occupation for anyone in Faulkner. On the way home, in the excitement of triumph over the wicked enemy, the business begins to get a trifle illegal. The meaning of Col. Dick's paper is stretched by the last expropriation of horses. The satisfaction of getting some portion of her world back in order overcomes Granny (pp. 131-33). There is a moment of repentance when safely arrived at home (p. 134). But it is perfunctory; now Rosa's bridges are really burned, in fact as well as symbol.

"Riposte in Tertio" is the story of Granny's war on the Yankees and of her assumption of all of the functions of The Sartoris, even though her rank and sex are subverted by the triumph.[72] Parry is followed by riposte, counter-stroke. The note of comedy or near farce which became dominant once more in the last pages of "Raid" now rises to its apogee. Granny and Ringo make fools of the Yankees. Forging requisitions is fun. By the by, it is also a matter of survival for the community of poor whites and

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[72] Lytle, ibid., p. 133.

Negroes for whom Granny has taken the responsibility. But even when Rosa is saving lives, even when she is caught by the enemy and her last spate of "requisitioned" mules recovered from the hidden pen John and the boys had built, there is little indication of the danger she is in (physical and spiritual). Again she is misled by a Yankee gentleman. She has become a guerilla and is in peril with every new move she makes. She and her partner, Ab Snopes (the sort of man no lady should have any dealings with--and the betrayer of the location of her stock pen when it becomes difficult for him to make a profit on the mules in any other way), have overdone. There has been a surfeit of mules for all her needs; yet she has so fallen into the habit of taking risks, and is still so incapable of seeing that they are serious risks, that she agrees (on Ab's greedy advice and against the counsel of the boys, who are alarmed at how oblivious to surrounding occurrences Granny has become) to try one more forged note. And she compounds her error by trying it not on the regular troops but on the bushwhackers led by one Grumby, a man of no loyalties who has risen to the surface in Yoknapatawpha in absence of ordinary order-giving establishments. Granny decides to try another requisition on him, this time with Forrest's signature forged, not simply because (as she says) she would "save herself and her own blood" (p. 172) but even more because she is in the habit of doing anything she believes will serve a cause to which she is committed. She is still unable to realize that she is not operating in something like the world she has always known: "I am taking no risk; I am a woman" (p. 174). She is possessed, as her son-in-law is possessed, by the spirit of the times. Unlike John, she is never corrupted by them; but because of her ignorance (willful and otherwise), she is destroyed. The burlesque of war evaporates. The joke proves to have been nothing of the kind. The adolescents, disabused of their fanciful misconceptions of what fun it is to play with fire, are left without the prop which had theretofore sustained, guided, and protected them from a full sense of the harsh realities of their condition, from the flames without and within. But they do not flinch. They feel responsible for Granny's death; and in part, they are. For they have abetted her in her folly, even after she "misdoubted it." With that death, in his father's absence, Bayard becomes The Sartoris; he and Ringo have a debt to pay. As Elmo

Howell asserts, they become men at Granny's graveside. Though they are now for the first time really marked by their participation in war, they prove out well when put to the test.[73]

Before considering the execution of Grumby as carried out by the bereaved fifteen year olds, one last aspect of "Riposte in Tertio" must be examined: Granny's plans for her most unfortunate neighbors, her version of "Sartoris" in action. Apart from the psychology which implementing her program encourages in the old woman and the danger of having it operated by a woman in war and with military property, there is nothing wrong with it.[74] The space devoted to her matriarchy points back to the interpolation on the McCaslins in "Retreat" (see above) and forward--in "An Odor of Verbena" (pp. 254-57)--to Drusilla's argument with Bayard (another interpolation) about his father's "dream"--as opposed to Sutpen's. It is the fullest report that we get in this novel of what "Sartoris" means to those who are members, not of the immediate but the "outer" family. And the account is delightful (pp. 152-59). Granny, with her book, her preacher, and her prayers, is a female hardshell Protestant version (despite her Episcopalianism) of the Old Testament Fathers. No more than Buck or Buddy will she encourage irresponsible behavior. She gives out mules and money on terms, on receipt--and takes them back if they are not well used. Again like Buck and Buddy, she keeps books. The people she assists will not only eat better for having been part of her arrangement, they will

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[73] Howell's comment appears on p. 56 of his fine essay, "William Faulkner and the Concept of Honor," Northwest Review, V (Summer, 1962), 51-60. He contends that Ringo "stands outside the code" by "virtue of his race." He is in one sense correct. The code is never as real for the Negro boy as it is for Bayard. Yet love (and much of the code) does move Ringo after Rosa's death. He is no more a child in "Vendee" than is Bayard. Meriwether, in his dissertation (p. 114), anticipates my assertion that Bayard changes with Granny's death because he feels responsible for it.

[74] Moreover, there is nothing wrong (in terms of Faulkner's world view) with Granny's desire to put $1500 for a fresh start in her son-in-law's hands when he returns home. She has already used a little of what she acquired from the Yankees for her own, as she freely admits to God

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(p. 167). In order to be of use to others, the good steward, The Man, must secure his own position. To do otherwise is to "play Jesus"--as did Ike in "The Bear." But there is much wrong with the way Granny goes about securing her folks and (even more than with mules stolen from Yankees) the property she intends to acquire and convert into cash. Finally, and most of all, there is everything wrong with her compulsion to transform her own will into law.

become stronger. Patriarchy in Faulkner is never mere paternalism. Its objective, to recall Chapter III, is to provide for the ineradicable fact of inequality and interdependence while encouraging in all men as much independence (and character) as is socially operable and (in view of individual limitations) possible. That Granny understands her function in religious (*i.e.*, feudal) terms is indicated by the auspices under which she conducts it--in an informal church congregation. And, as Bayard reports, Granny's system works. It has much of the countryside back on its feet even before the war ends--a part of it which was furthest from being self-sustaining. Her version of "Sartoris" (available to him in her farm and mule plan; her treatment of Negroes; her acknowledgement of sins; her dignity, rectitude, respect for the pieties, and persistence) enables Bayard (as he remembers it) to recognize (in "An Odor of Verbena") what has happened to his father and Drusilla. At the novel's end, it lives on in him.

"Vendee" is a painful story. It does not set well with many modern readers--the same people who are uneasy when they recognize in a play of the English Renaissance that its author accepts as just the idea that a natural providence demands the life of those who violate or abet the violation of order. Several perceptive critics of Faulkner's fiction have referred to Grumby's killing as "murder" and have drawn back in horror from the exactions of the unwritten law as they fall upon him.[75] Again the empathic gap between the sensibility of Faulkner as a Southerner of his generation (to whom these things were axiomatic) and the outlook of the contemporary intellectual establishment intrudes. For there can be no question in the minds of those who examine the tone of the narrative, the context in which the killing is done (in the chapter and in the novel), and the stature, in Faulkner's eyes, of its presiding spirit, Uncle Buck McCaslin, that the author intends for us to understand that Grumby "needs killin'."[76]

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[75] Even Howell (*ibid*., p. 54) calls it "murder," though he obviously has no intention of suggesting that Faulkner disapproves of it. Walker (*op. cit*., p. 281) seconds his word choice and seems to find nothing but implicit criticism of the act in Faulkner's description of the killing. Waggoner (*op. cit*., p. 181) seems to think it a mere "vengeance." And the comments of the detractors of the novel, as we would expect, are even worse.

[76] This is essentially the argument of Meriwether in "The Place of *The Unvanquished* in William Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha Series," pp. 116-17. He goes so far as to say that Buck's part in the pursuit of Grumby proves "no stigma is to be attached to this act of retribution." Howell agrees that Bayard's motives are "generous and manly . . . the promptings of nature" (p. 56).

No other thought occurs to Bayard from the moment that the funeral is over. Much more is at stake than "an eye for an eye." There is, as Brooks points out, no law in Yoknapatawpha in these days; the times are out of joint; and as the resident representative "Sartoris," Bayard must (after the fashion of frontier ex-officio lawmen) set them right.[77] Granny has meant a lot to Yoknapatawpha; how much is evident at her funeral. If Bayard does not act, chaos will come again and all those who once found stability in Granny will return once more to that "unbrotherly" condition in which they have "no one to depend on" and "no one depending on them, caring whether they returned or not or lived or died or not" (pp. 177-78). To put it briefly, community is again at stake. No one will respect Bayard or his name if he does not try, does not go after Grumby (whose execution is, for all these reasons, more his business than anyone else's). And then community will die.

The actual pursuit and shooting of Grumby (except in that they show the boys as formidable antagonists and Grumby as a boil upon the complexion of society) contain nothing relevant to this study. But what happens after the killing is important. In the search of several weeks' duration, the now familiar fever (what Longley calls personalismo, after the Spanish-Americans) grips the protagonists.[78] They do more than execute Grumby. They cut off his offending right hand, fasten it on Granny's grave marker, and peg the rest of the body on a compress wall. This, says Buck (in approval), is "the proof and the expiation." Perhaps as a warning to would-be scoundrels of the future, and as a sign to the rest of their neighbors that "Sartoris" has its hard side, this finale had some utility. Perhaps it was a personal necessity for the boys, an "expiation." But they are still very young--too young to be ready for such a terrible task or to come away from it unscathed. Their tears and relief at the reappearance of Col. John signify that they are glad to give up the stewardship of "Sartoris." They have, reluctantly--since no other means are available, borrowed the fire because their sense of their duty has been greater than their fear of it. But they are ready to give it back. However, we are, I believe, to take Uncle Buck's excited approval ("Aint I told you he is John Sartoris' boy?" [p. 213]) as the author's own. Bayard and Ringo have done a job neither one of them will forget.[79]

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[77] Brooks, The Hidden God, pp. 31-32; William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country, pp. 85-86.

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[78] Longley, op. cit., p. 179. The term refers to violent, extra-legal but often socially accepted "violations of due process."

At the end of "Vendee" Bayard and Ringo's involvement with the continuing war (in Reconstruction) subsides. In "Skirmish at Sartoris" they are spectators. And even a little of the humor of the earlier stories returns to Bayard's narrative. But what they observe happening to John Sartoris and Drusilla in this story (and in the intervening years between its time and that of "An Odor of Verbena" recounted in the latter story) does nothing to undermine the impact of lessons they should already have learned, lessons about how an enemy much more dangerous than Yankees may be harbored within; how that power cannot be exercised or fortuitous occasion seized without a cost; how dangerous the "short cuts" are (see Ringo's last remark in "Vendee": "It was them mules. That first batch of mules we got for nothing" [p. 211]). Chapter VI is the least important and least impressive section of The Unvanquished. Yet it must be considered carefully if its sequel is to be understood.

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[79] On what Faulkner believes is the natural place and occupation of children and youths, see Chapter III. Waggoner (_op. cit._, p. 178) asserts that the mutilation defines "the weakness of the old code." I believe the matter is far less simple than he suspects. Longley's observation that all the violence done by the principal Sartorises "begin in the noblest kind of human loves and loyalty" (_op. cit._, p. 179), is more to the point. Justified or not, the habit of such violence poses a danger to those who feel obliged to perform it.

John Sartoris, back at home, picks up quickly with the business of undoing the effects on his world of the South's military defeat. His hold on the loyalties of "his" people is greater than ever before. He rebuilds his home on the ashes of its ruin, drives out or kills the carpetbaggers, frightens out of their "notions" the freedmen the Yankee exploiters intend to use; and he reestablishes local self-government. Faulkner's handling of all of these activities is uncritical.[80] There is a careful orderliness and lawfulness about all that Sartoris does. But about his habit of power, his inclination (despite the facade of law) still to see the world as a battlefield, his continued subjugation of means to end, there is much ambiguity. It appears in Faulkner's account (through Bayard's still immature eyes) of what has happened in the Colonel's own household, his account of how Sartoris affects Drusilla, of what he permits her to become. If he were serving "Sartoris," the Colonel would be mindful of Drusilla's sex and age. He would stop her from living as a soldier--at least now that the war is over (and probably would have stopped her even when she first presented herself to his command). Perhaps during the war the inversion and dislocation of all distinctions, places, and rules (which seemed to abrogate all the established values) gave the soldier John Sartoris reason for ignoring just another impropriety. But after the conflict was over and he was supposedly rebuilding what he fought to protect, the order of chivalric husbandry and respect for women and of paternal care for children (adult and otherwise--as Mr. Lytle says, "the core of the

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[80] Meriwether, in "Faulkner and the South" (p. 157), argues that Faulkner expects us to "have our doubts" about the killing of the Burdens, that the Colonel is (because of this killing--not because he disenfranchised the illiterate freedmen) a mixed figure. He forgets what we are told about the fanatical temper of the Burdens in Light in August (p. 235 et seq.). Because of Joanna's testimony and for other reasons outlined in my discussion of Yankees (and Jacobinism in general) in Chapter II, on the following comment on Intruder in the Dust, and in this explication, I cannot accept his view. Brooks (William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country, p. 77) says that Faulkner treats the killing "with great detachment." Howe (op. cit., p. 44) also discovers neutrality--and

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complains. Volpe (*op*. *cit*., p. 83) simply ignores Faulkner's attitude and complains about the South.

doomed South" ["The Town: Helen's Last Stand," p. 479]), his permitting Drusilla to live in his house as a boy was inexcusable. It is, moreover, a warning that he is no longer the man who led his own regiment away to war in Virginia in '61--a leader in the struggle to defend "Sartoris" yet nevertheless self-critical, sardonically conscious of his own limitations (p. 11); it is a warning that he is on his way toward becoming the man who will slay an old comrade out of the habit of killing. The fever is really beginning to eat away at "Sartoris" even as it is on the brink of victory. Yet there is worse to come.

The old ladies, though imperceptive--incapable (like Granny) of believing that John Sartoris has departed so far from his tradition, incapable of believing in what they cannot imagine--the least "vanquished" of all the citizens of Yoknapatawpha, come out at Mrs. Hawk's request to the Sartoris place to straighten out the intolerable situation of Drusilla.[81] And they force the Colonel, who is still enough himself to recognize (once it is asserted) their authority and who wants no dissension in the ranks, no delay or impediment to the execution of his plan, to marry Drusilla. However, as the farce of the bridal spells out in dramatic terms, the adjustment of Drusilla's official status effects nothing. The marriage is postponed until an election and two shootings have been taken care of. Drusilla, who thinks even at this moment of her cousin and husband-to-be as a commander, has to be kept by force from trying to help John with his killing. The wedding is (once Mrs. Hawk explodes) finally performed as an afterthought. The Colonel consoles his reluctant and sexually confused bride by calling her "soldier" (p. 231), thus defining their relationship, past and future, as that of comrades in arms. Therefore nothing is really accomplished that day (and we

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[81] Meriwether, (ibid.), insists that Mrs. Hawk and John Sartoris make the same mistake in ignoring "reality." He confuses closing the eyes with looking the wrong way. Both Sartoris and his new mother-in-law address themselves to reality--but each faces a different fact: Sartoris, an

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immediate problem; and the old woman, a long-term necessity.

The Colonel is taking the same short view when, rather than endanger his railroad building payroll, he shoots a man who has been his soldier and only afterward wonders if the man really intended to rob him. This passage (another of the interpolations) pictures the Colonel at his greatest remove from "Sartoris." It also (with the other interpolations in the final draft) contributes to the definition of the ideal. What occurs in it was a necessary prelude to the recovery of the Colonel from his myopia--and a key to what Bayard is really rejecting with the pistols.

are told as much by John's soldiers as they salute the newlyweds) except a military/political triumph--and a desecration of a sacrament. Reconstruction and civilization are annulled together.

How foreign to "Sartoris" is the marriage of the Colonel and Drusilla comes home to Bayard (and to us) in "An Odor of Verbena." Her conduct in this story, her advances to Bayard and the wild fire speech, is the result of that alienation from her place which began in "Raid." John Sartoris is never a husband to her. And that summer before his death he is changing, drawing back from what Drusilla lives in and for--because, to use his son's words, "he had to live with himself." She seems to want a man sexually; and she needs a vehicle to keep alive for her the atmosphere of total war, of vain chivalry and the life and death struggle--the fever. Bayard, she decides, will do in both instances. She seeks him as a lover even before his father is dead and wants John to know about it. She desires to control and own him all the more after Redmond has shot the Colonel.

Once Bayard has reflected and evaluated his family's history from his boyhood until his father's death, after he has studied law and enjoyed the balm of the Wilkins' and

Virginia du Pre's restorative influences, and after his own judgment has been reinforced (indeed finalized) by his father's exclamation that he had killed too often, "no matter what the necessity or end" (p. 266), his difficulty in rejecting the Promethean role is less than was that of his predecessor's in Sartoris. In fact, the extremity of the departure from that ideal by his father and stepmother (climaxed by Drusilla's temptation of him, by his father's first really reasonless killing--and its aftermath of attempted bribery of the hill woman wife of his victim, and by John's pointless provocation of Redmond) makes Bayard's final decision rather obvious. It is not hard for him to refuse the fire.[82] But once he has done so, other problems remain for him. For mere humility, like mere pride, is not in conformity with "Sartoris." Community cannot be restored by a man no one respects. Therefore, Bayard has to refuse to kill Redmond in a particular fashion if the refusal is to have any efficacy.

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[82] As Faulkner himself tells us (_Faulkner in the University_, p. 255), Bayard does not turn away from all possibility of violence in sparing Redmond. Rather, he distinguishes between necessary action and presumption, borrowing with a trembling hand and seizing as a demi-god. There is confusion about this distinction in most of the criticism of the novel cited above. See particularly Waggoner (_op. cit._, pp. 171, 175); Walker (_op. cit._, pp. 286-87); Howell (who does not like the last chapter at all because he sees in it a concession of "heart" to "head," of novelist to corrupt times [_ibid._, p. 57]); and Brooks (_The Hidden God_, p. 32). Brooks alone recognizes that Bayard "follows the example of his father" and "accomplishes his resolve." His views are similar to Meriwether's in "The Place of _The Unvanquished_ in William Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha Series," p. 127.

As he is on his way home to Yoknapatawpha from Oxford after Ringo has brought him the report of his father's death, Bayard is thinking of the scene with Drusilla which awaits him--and of the fact that he is now The Sartoris and must conduct himself accordingly. Once he has determined that his father's death was as he had expected ("It was all right. It was in front . . . John had the derringer . . ." p. 268), all that concerns him is what his status (in view of what he and everyone else know about the provocation given Redmond by his father) requires that he do, how it will be taken, and why he wants to do it. He is, no less than Granny, hard on himself. Yet as he replies to the friendly offer of help from George Wyatt, "I reckon I can attend to it" (p. 268), the best of Granny, his father, Drusilla, Aunt Jenny (who knows he, as The Man, must go--expects him to, though she once says otherwise [Faulkner in the University, p. 256]), his own and Ringo's youthful selves--all come together in one person, The Sartoris. As he receives Redmond's two intentionally wild shots and follows him into the street, he is confirmed in his decision by George Wyatt's words and by the raised hats of the other men who have awaited him below.[83] When he returns home, Bayard finds the emblematic verbena on his pillow--from Drusilla, who still honors courage, even when it is expressed by refraining from action. And the impact of that token is reinforced by Aunt Jenny's tears of pride and joy and her exclamation of loving relief: "Oh, damn you Sartorises!" (p. 292). He is now recognized by others as complete. It is appropriate at this point in the structure of the novel that the last words he speaks are of the dream, the dream of his father, of Granny, of Buck and Buddy: the dream about which he and Drusilla argued and which is now

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[83] Both Lytle ("The Son of Man: He Will Prevail," p. 133) and Walter Sullivan (on p. 124 of "Southern Novelists and the Civil War," Southern Renascence, pp. 112-125) recognize that there is impropriety and incongruity in using the locomotive (here again its old ominous self) as a means of rebuilding. The machine is a part of the fever, like Drusilla's interpolated version of the dream in which killing is taken too casually (pp. 256-57). In both cases Sartorises have become Yankees in their acceptance of any means to a "good" end. The parodic dream interpolation standing just before the account of John's railroad building sums up the entire series of interpolations which frame the action of the novel as they define "Sartoris."

"bequeathed"--to one who can "never forget" (p. 291). As Howell summarizes, he is now like the Bayard of old, *sans peur et sans reproche*.[84]

I have intended for this discussion of the structure and meaning of *The Unvanquished* to call attention to the novel's unity and to the presence of an enveloping action and an "external" antagonist as the explanation of that unity. If the envelope, the fire without which sparks fever within, is not recognized, then it is probable that the reader will see in the novel's conclusion not a restoration but a rejection, compromise (to be compared unfavorably with Ike's "moral heroism"), or revaluation of "Sartoris." He will then be free to conclude with Millgate that the first six chapters "show few genuine signs of development of theme or character."[85] That any careful section by section study of the book's dynamic, of the unfolding and resolution of its fable, could lead to any of these conclusions is puzzling. Over and over again, in most of his fiction, Faulkner's focus is on the necessity for man to endure all given circumstances--without overacting in pride or withdrawing in humble passivity. No other choices are available to the principals in The Unvanquished. Their circumstances are. They have something (about which they sometimes talk and always think) which they wish to keep alive. Somewhere between these two poles they move. I can find no reason for confusion such as exists in the criticism of this novel but the usual a priori assumptions (by scholars who should know better) as to what a writer of Faulkner's stature and ability must have meant--assumptions which have been the bane of Faulkner criticism since he began to establish a reputation.[86]

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[84] Howell, *ibid.*, p. 56.

[85] Millgate, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

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[86] Waggoner's bland insistence that all "feudalism" (his word for the communal social tradition) is "unchristian" and offers nothing to those "not fortunate enough to be born Sartorises" (op. cit., p. 180) and Olga Vickery's equally baldfaced assumption that "community can be established only if man cherishes not his social but his human identity" and that the "only truly human society is . . . the open society" (The Novels of William Faulkner, pp. 236 and 225) deny both the burden of Faulkner's fiction and his affirmation of traditions neither "open," egalitarian, or "unchristian" in speeches made in Japan (Faulkner at Nagano, p. 169).

The readings of The Unvanquished by James M. Mellard (dissertation, "Humor in Faulkner's Novels: Its Development Forms, and Functions," pp. 56-65) and Walter Fuller Taylor, Jr. (dissertation, "The Roles of the Negro in William Faulkner's Fiction," pp. 63-70) are inhibited and warped by a related hostility to the social order that the novel affirms.

C. Intruder in the Dust

Intruder in the Dust is not as impressive a demonstration of its author's artistry as The Unvanquished. In theme and texture the more recent novel is less rich, less complex, less finished. In structure it is not as tight--is not, in fact, completely satisfactory or effective. Fewer characters and a narrower focus go into its making; and the conceptual framework within which its action can be understood is (partly because its central situation is so melodramatic [a Negro in jail about to be lynched] and so inclined to divert the reader from recognition of the novel's true design, and partly because its genre was left obscure in revision) not so clearly suggested. Nevertheless, there is no escaping the connection of the two books--or the propriety of using the one to read the other.[87]

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[87] I will have better occasion to comment on the architectural shortcomings of Intruder in the Dust (New York: Random House, 1948) in the process of giving the novel a detailed reading below. To explain the last of the preliminary censures given it in this paragraph, it should suffice for the moment to recall what Faulkner has told us concerning the book's genesis (Faulkner in the University, pp. 141-42): that he began the work as a mystery story (probably before 1940--less than two years after completion of The Unvanquished) about the time he signed a contract for it with Random House (Millgate's Achievement of William Faulkner, p. 215) and then changed entirely--perhaps in response to political developments, perhaps out of a

In 1948, when Intruder in the Dust appeared, Faulkner's reputation was on its way back. The novel was widely reviewed; and this new commentary, even when hostile, had about it a tone of respect not often found in the criticism of the thirties. Intruder sold well and was soon grabbed up by Hollywood. And its relation to earlier Faulkner was not ignored. For by this time it had become fashionable to think of the Mississippi books as an interconnected series, chronicle, or cycle. The simple

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heightened self-consciousness about the relation of his work to his homeland brought on by Cowley (to whom he admits as much in letters [The Faulkner-Cowley File, pp. 14-16; 78; 90-91]) and the writing of Go Down, Moses--in his conception of the book's subject as he set out to finish it. It is difficult not to believe that the results are two books in one--yoked but not completely melded: the first a detective story which, by definition, draws its reader into the spectacle of problem solving and engages his empathy in the fascinating game of ratiocination (with little or no thought given to the sorrows of the human pawns whose movements animate the game); the other an account of a young man's struggle to find himself in relation to his own people and to save them from a fratricidal error (a struggle to which the details of criminology--facts--are matters of indifference). Or, if this description is too severe, it is at least safe to say that enough of the mystery story remains in the bildungsroman to hurt it--dilute its impact. Manuscript evidence may considerably simplify the critical problems created by the present shape of Intruder in the Dust.

Millgate (p. 217) is aware of the mixed nature of Intruder in the Dust but for some reason insists that the detective fiction left in the book after revision is one of its virtues and is calculated to make less immediately obtrusive its didacticism.

accumulation of Faulkner's fiction as much as Cowley's essays in The Portable Faulkner and elsewhere had made some such development inevitable. The earlier books protected the latter from gross misreading. Moreover, the world of letters, and particularly the opinion-makers of literature, had had by 1948 the benefit of Cowley, his predecessors, and immediate successors (especially Warren); plus, in some cases (led by that criticism), the advantage of a fresh look at the texts of his earlier works. The buildup that led to the Nobel Prize award was in full swing--even in this country (where it was very slow to start). Nevertheless, from the first the novel made most of its critics angry. And their anger, in the face of the just outlined improvement in the general understanding and appreciation of what the novelist was about, made--and still makes--their performance almost as imperceptive as those of the "authorities" on The Unvanquished. The twin causes of the anger are the obvious ones: the racial overtones of the evil whose prevention Faulkner depicts (for the subject of Negro lynching so short-circuits the rationality of those preoccupied by that antique practice as to incline them to fault everything that issues from the Magnolia State--even condemnations of lynching); and, more especially, the use to which Faulkner puts those overtones, the larger framework of action and dialogue with which he contains them and the material with which they are combined to an end bound to astonish and appall the enthusiast of the usual "lynch" novel. Beyond "poor" Lucas, the wicked mob of would-be spectators at his death, and Gavin's "terrible" speeches (and to the identification of their subject's genre) most of Faulkner's critics do not get. And particularly the speeches.[88]

The commonplace objection to Intruder in the Dust made by its original "judges" was that the book was a tract, a piece of propaganda, and little else.[89] This

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[88] Intruder in the Dust, pp. 153-56; 203-206; 215-17.

[89] A few representatives of this species are Elizabeth Hardwick, in her "Faulkner and the South Today" (Partisan Review, XV [October 1948], 1130-35); Barbara Giles, in "The South of William Faulkner" (Masses and Mainstream, III [February 1950], 26-40); Paolo Milano, in "Faulkner in Crisis" (The Nation, CLXVII [October 30, 1948] 496-97); Hugh Gloster, in "Southern Justice" (Phylon, X [First Quarter 1949], 93-95); Maxwell Geismar, in "Ex-Aristocrat's Emotional Education" (Saturday Review of Literature, XXXI [September 23, 1948], 8-9); Charles Glicksburg, in "Intruder in the Dust" (Arizona Quarterly, V [Spring 1949], 85-88) and in "William Faulkner and the Negro Problem" (Phylon, X [June 1949], 153-60); and more recently, Lawrance Thompson (op. cit., pp. 12-13). Their performances (and several others, very like, but not mentioned here) are monotonous.

Walter Allen, in his New Statesman and Nation criticism rarely devoted much effort to any question but how best to answer the argument upon which it had stumbled and to which it assuredly (and with the requisite passion) objected. Structural analysis was beside the point, especially with nothing available for analysis (they contended) but the ruined remains of a slick detective story. However, in the intervening years the "line" has changed: the new emphasis is on praising Lucas, whose hagiographical usefulness, the politically motivated critic is convinced, is too great to be lost in blanket condemnation. Now the accepted view is that the infamous speeches are inorganic--even in conflict with the profounder implications of the book--and in a way that throws some doubt on Faulkner's psychological health (and that of the upbringing which moved him to compose them) at the time of their writing.[90] Sometimes this argument is varied slightly with

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review, "Mr. Faulkner's Humanity" (XXXVIII [October 15, 1949], 428-29), agrees with the aforementioned concerning the tractarian qualities of the book; but he likes the message.

[90] The writer is uncertain as to whether Irving Howe's discussion of this novel belongs here or in the list just finished. For Howe expends a great deal of space railing against Gavin (_op. cit_., pp. 99, 226, and 283) and even more in admiring Lucas (pp. 99-100, 129-31);

the theory or conjecture that Uncle Gavin's "editorials" are appropriate because they are ironic--judgments of the good lawyer, of his opinions, and of all who share those opinions.[91] There is really little difference between

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and yet he is as certain that there are two books in Intruder in the Dust as is anyone (pp. 98-99). Likewise Volpe (op. cit., pp. 253-64) and Joseph Gold (op. cit., pp. 76-94). Edmund Wilson's review, "William Faulkner's Reply to the Civil Rights Program" (The New Yorker, XXIV [October 23, 1948], 106, 109-112), may have anticipated most of this school of thought on Intruder in the Dust. But his essay has merits that cancel the obscuratism of its title. Generally of the persuasion that the speeches do not "belong" in this story are Campbell and Foster (op. cit., p. 167 et seq.); O'Connor (op. cit., pp. 136-42); Hoffman (op. cit., pp. 99-101); Waggoner (op. cit., pp. 215, 219, and 249); Swiggart (op. cit., pp. 179-80); Walter Fuller Taylor, Jr. (dissertation, "The Roles of the Negro in William Faulkner's Fiction," pp. 177-206); Berner (op. cit., pp. 195-203); Carol Dee McLaughlin (op. cit., pp. 226-40); Tuck (op. cit., pp. 107-111); Arthur Mizener (The Sense of Life in the Modern Novel [Boston, 1964], pp. 161-81); Dan S. Norton ("This Man's Art and That Man's Scope," in Virginia Quarterly Review, XXV [Winter 1949], 128-35); Glenn O. Carey ("William Faulkner As a Critic of Society," in Arizona Quarterly, XXI [Summer 1965], 102); and John M. Bradbury (Renaissance in the South [Chapel Hill, 1963], p. 57)--though each of this group has some claim to a place in my first and/or third categories.

[91] The most noteworthy enunciations of this viewpoint are in Olga Vickery's "Gavin Stevens: From Rhetoric to Dialectic," Faulkner Studies I.1 (Spring 1953), 1-4, and her The Novels of William Faulkner (pp. 142-144); in Robert D. Jacobs' "William Faulkner: The Passion and the Penance," pp. 172-73); Aaron Steinberg's "Intruder in the

these older and more recent misreadings of the novel. For all balk at fully recognizing the identity of Gavin and Chick that exists after the boy's heroic work is done, his anger at having to do that work contained, and his mother's brother made conscious of errors in his original assessment of Lucas Beauchamp's part in the killing out in Beat Four; and all ignore the way in which the work done, anger contained, and error discovered come together and validate one another in the identity of the two kinsmen. Therefore they do not connect the lawyer's rambling with his nephew's assumption of a burden which no one else, save a colored friend of his own age and a gentlewoman of almost seventy, will share with him--a duty which he and they are, by age, sex, and/or color, ill-suited to perform: an endurance which is the novel's thematic backbone.

Dust: Faulkner As Psychologist of the Southern Psyche," Literature and Psychology, XV (Spring 1965), 92-106; Raleigh P. Player's "The Negro Character in the Fiction of William Faulkner," University of Michigan dissertation, 1965 (chapter three); Berner (op. cit., pp. 195-96); Hornback (op. cit., pp. 209-221); and (by implication) in Donald Mordecai Kartiganer's "The Individual and the Community: Values in the Novels of William Faulkner," pp. 46-49.

Nonetheless, the just announced demurs against the most of it notwithstanding, there has been a scattering of very valuable comment on Intruder in the Dust. As will be made plain in the remainder of this discussion of the novel, Andrew Lytle's review essay, "Regeneration for the Man," is, as far as it goes, very close to this writer's understanding of our common subject.[92] Brooks is, as always, likewise indispensable.[93] And on particular points, a number of others have been illuminating: Cowley, Elias, Taylor, Millgate, Howell, and--to a lesser extent--Vickery, Longley, Mizener, Howe, and Kazin.[94] To the works of all of these,

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[92] Sewanee Review, LVII (Winter 1949), 120-27. Also on pp. 129-36 of The Hero with the Private Parts; citations are from the former.

[93] William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country, pp. 279-94; 420-24. On Intruder even Kartigarner (op. cit., p. 31) admits that Brooks is sound.

[94] I refer to Cowley's recent The Faulkner-Cowley File, pp. 102, 110, and 173; to his review, "William Faulkner's Nation," The New Republic, CXIX (October 18, 1948), 21-22; to Robert Elias' fine essay, "Gavin Stevens: Intruder?" Faulkner Studies, III (Spring 1954), 1-4; to Millgate's The Achievement of William Faulkner, pp. 215-220; to Elmo Howell's papers, "William Faulkner and the New Deal" and "William Faulkner's Caledonia" (the former in Midwest Quarterly, V [Summer 1964], 323-32 [cited above in Chapter III] and the latter in Studies in Scottish Literature, III [April 1966], 248-52); and to Kazin's "Faulkner in His Fury" (pp. 257-73 of The Inmost Leaf [New York 1955]). Others mentioned here are identified in the lists of citations just above.

I will have recourse while touching upon questions to which they have devoted their attention. But I am finally forced to contend that the true burden, the full burden of the novel has remained undiscovered--primarily because its relation to Faulkner's other dramatizations of his doctrine of nature has not been recognized or (more immediately) because the doctrine itself, in all its ramifications, is "unknown" to the would-be receivers.[95]

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[95] The most astonishing thing about the criticism devoted to Intruder in the Dust is the frequency with which the novel has provoked open displays of personal displeasure or animosity from those whose ostensible purpose in writing was to examine and explain. Veiled or indirect malice or anger are commonplace in Faulkner criticism; but complete abandonment of the scholarly expositor's mask, such as Howe's "alas" (at the identity of Faulkner's and Gavin's opinions on Southern problems [p. 99]); Dorothy Tuck's "unfortunately" (at Gavin's turning of his argument for homogeneity into a warning against Yankee intrusions [p. 111]); Hoffman's "a succession of cheap metaphors which only a person whom Faulkner wishes to ridicule can be proud" (at Faulkner's description of the character of Northern society [p. 107]); Mizener's "vulgar rubbish" and "unendurable" (on the novelist's derogation of the melting-pot-of nobodies type of democracy and apparent endorsement of a modest amount of social stratification [pp. 165, 170]); Volpe's nervous "blind" and "of only historical interest" (of the very idea of a self-contained, biracial community [p. 264]); O'Connor's "not a novel written for a later as well as a present generation" which "one cannot believe" (pp. 141, 139); Hardwick's "absurd" and "unimaginable" (of Southern boys' imagination of a still unfought Gettysburg and Gavin's ["a decent, guilt-ridden Southerner"--note punctuation] sectionalisms [pp. 1132, 1134]); Taylor's "uncritically

The note of hope for the survival of the communal tradition in a distinctive South first sounded clearly in The Unvanquished, muted in Go Down, Moses (but in a way that defined its original dilemma and prepared for its re-establishment), and implied repeatedly in the short stories written in the decade between, regains and even increases (through fresh and harder than ever testing) its strength in Intruder in the Dust. The external antagonist of this community is the same as in the 1938 novel, the complex of

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Southern" and therefore "unimaginative" (on Faulkner's explanation of racial tensions [pp. 179, 182]); Warren's "beguiled" by "fond delusion" and "out of touch with . . . his own world" (of Faulkner's insistence that imposed reform would only aggravate the problems of the Southern Negro [p. 17 of his "Introduction: Faulkner: Past and Future" in his 1966 collection of essays for the Prentice-Hall Twentieth Century Views series]); and Berner's "terrible thing about it is that there is a great deal of truth in it" (Gavin's warning to would-be visiting reformers [p. 201]) could have come only out of a complete inability in even the most responsible professionals, if they belong to the present intellectual establishment, to hear an unorthodox opinion on certain questions. Brooks (pp. 280-81, 420-24) has some sport with the spirit of this commentary and concludes by identifying it with the procedure of a prosecuting attorney bent on obtaining a true bill--against both Faulkner and Mississippi. Of the overall effect of this rigidity on Faulkner criticism, I have had somewhat to say in "Faulkner, James Baldwin, and the South"; and in reviews of Swiggart, Hunt, Runyan, Longley, and Gold (Sewanee Review, LXXII [Winter 1964], 146-50; Mississippi Quarterly, XIX [Winter 1965], 49-51; Studies in Short Fiction, III [Spring 1966], 358-63; Louisiana Studies, V [Fall 1966], 243-46).

forces philosophical, social, political, and economic summed up in the epithet "Yankee"; but its operation is even less evident. The setting is now the mid-twentieth century and the internal enemy engendered in the Southern mind by aggression and example from the North is now more dangerous than Federal fire and sword or the atmosphere of total war, dangerous primarily because this inner enemy is more narrowly taken up with problems racial than were Colonel John, Bayard, Granny Millard, and their followers/dependents. Racial problems, in view of the natural (and historically documented) difficulty of maintaining any sort of biracial order, are more nearly insoluble than any others. This undeniable difficulty, when compounded by threat of fresh (and perhaps, this time, irreparable) invasions which its explosion could occasion, lends an aura of desperation to some of the book's dialogue and idiom. Finally, in this Mississippi (_ca._ early 1940's), the only Yankees in evidence are of the "home-grown" variety, the worst.[96] Yet this latter enemy is far nearer to winning irreversible victory than was the enemy of the late 1860's and early 1870's. This being true, matters are obviously in a frightening state.

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[96] As subsequent discussion of the novel's structure will indicate, however, the original enemy, the enemy who in the first place converted the Negro into a fifth column (in the minds of many Southerners), a primed charge of dynamite or "unbridled horse" (_Faulkner in the University_,

The protagonist, the vehicle of the idea heretofore denominated "Sartoris" is in _Intruder in the Dust_ another well born young man, at sixteen coming into his inherited place as "gentleman," steward. Pride and humility, endurance or flight, are still the alternatives available to him.

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p. 209) endangering hearths and homes, cannot be exonerated entirely. For the species of disloyalty to the tradition "Sartoris" (and its counterpart, the tradition "McCallum") operative in today's Jefferson has been determined by the new mask worn by the old threatener, the threatener from which their fathers had survived "unvanquished" (for supporting evidence, see "Regeneration for the Man," pp. 121-22, 126-27; Tate's "William Faulkner" 1897-1962," _Sewanee Review_, LXXI [Winter 1963], 163-64); and Faulkner's own remarks in Japan (_Faulkner at Nagano_, pp. 192-93]). And both the way for and the defensive overreaction to that new threat were in turn prepared, conditioned, by previous abolitionisms--its antecedents, one and all. To put the matter another way, whatever the Jefferson of _Intruder in the Dust_ is guilty of, it must share that guilt with the forces which helped to toll or drive it to serious crimes against its own community (the first American purchase of an African Negro, of course, aside; but even in that transaction there was also a seller). For a relevant discussion of the problem of Southern civilization vis-a-vis, the Negro and the necessity for accommodating him within the framework of community without its running the risk of self-destruction the problem Faulkner summed up in _The Hamlet_ with the story of the wild ponies, the reader should see pp. 19-21 of Richard Weaver's _Visions of Order_. Weaver sees it as a question of "homogeneity," as does Faulkner. But more of this hereafter.

The integrity of his culture is still at stake. Eighty years have, nonetheless, made a difference on the personal as well as the collective level. The South is still the South; and for those who belong to it still comes the vision that the hour of two on that hot July afternoon in 1863 is not yet, the hope that this time gray files will roll over the crest of that nondescript ridge to the east of a little Pennsylvania town and the manhood of their people be vindicated.[97] Yet Chick is not so certain of what he is or must do as was Bayard in The Unvanquished. The old communion of spirit within which endless introspection was unnecessary has suffered some diminution. The enemy is not so well known, within or without, because he has been lived with too long, too placidly. As the boy's enunciation of it demonstrates, the dream and the aspirations which go with it survive--but, without the perspective that produced them to begin with, they make little sense. A great deal more must be told to young Mallison, a great deal more explained than would be necessary if that perspective were his. Moreover, the telling and explaining are rather too abstract to serve, the vehicles and voices of his tradition (surrogate fathers, "uncles," and "aunts") less obviously authoritative and functional. And the possibility that, in his ignorance, he might reasonably be expected therefore to reject his place _in toto_ (a possibility explored but rejected in _Go Down, Moses_) is given its due.[98] Admittedly, some restorative surgery is necessary. And the impetus given Bayard by the example of his elders, the experience of war and worse, is lacking. Chick's struggle is that of today's Southern boy, as his creator understands it. He makes the usual rite of passage, the jouoney out and back--makes it in what would be in a well established tribe an unusual degree of spiritual isolation. And (all questions of confusion of genre--sleuthing and the unseemly comic ease with which virtue triumphs and order is restored--and of unfinished revision aside) perhaps for that reason, because Faulkner was so much concerned with how such boys might, unsupported, contend with their countrymen, their consciences, and the enemy without, Intruder in the Dust lacks the finished objectivity of the books that look back. But, given the subject, Faulkner had little choice. He found the present more confusing, less submissive to the categories by which he measured men and nations. But to confront it and finish (as far as was possible in his generation) he was determined.

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[97] Intruder in the Dust, pp. 194-95.

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[98] In Cynthia Grenier's "The Art of Fiction: An Interview with William Faulkner--September, 1955," p. 175, the novelist made reference to Ike in a comparison with Charles Mallison, a comparison favorable to Chick. There are marked differences between the parallel situations of the two boys: Ike is not oblivious of those demands which go with his inherited place. Chick is, at least in part. And Ike's preparation for meeting those demands is undercut by his initiation into the vertical implications of what is called, in this study, the doctrine of nature.

A preponderance of the confusion of responsible criticism concerning Intruder in the Dust is, as was noted above, the issue of excessive preoccupation with Lucas Beauchamp, preoccupation which has sometimes led to his identification as the novel's protagonist, more often to an exclusive emphasis upon his role therein which would be appropriate only if he were. Yet Lucas actually *does* very little in the book. The inner workings of his mind and character are not, as in Go Down, Moses, set before us; his function is as catalyst.[99] And in performing it he is not really the blameless paragon he is often made out to be. For Lucas does conduct himself in an unbearably proud and haughty manner; as Miss Habersham puts it (here using the uncomplimentary epithet as Negroes [Lucas included] most often do when remarking some weakness in one of their own number), he is "an arrogant insufferable old nigger . . . who . . . upset the whole county trying to pretend he murdered a white man" (p. 189).[100] His defensive "outsider"

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[99] Several critics have remarked the externality of Faulkner's treatment of Lucas in Intruder in the Dust and some have contrasted it with the characterization Beauchamp is given in Go Down, Moses in such a way as to discover

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evidence of Faulkner's "progress" in divesting himself of nefarious inherited ailments of mind and spirit. Their conjecturings are part of the patterns of distortion now impeding criticism of the novel--patterns listed above. The externality is a formal necessity in this novel. No other explanation is required. For examples of comment on the "mystery" of Lucas, see Howe (op. cit., pp. 29-30); Irene Edmonds ("Faulkner and the Black Shadow," Southern Renascence, pp. 192-206); Ralph Ellison (Shadow and Act [New York, 1964], pp. 30-31); Millgate (op. cit., p. 219); and Taylor (dissertation, "The Roles of the Negro in William Faulkner's Fiction," p. 178).

[100] The words quoted here are imagined for her, put in her mouth by Chick; however, they comport with what she says and does elsewhere in the novel. On Miss Habersham's "nigger," see the writer's "Faulkner's 'That Evening Sun,'" CEA Critic, XXVIII (June 1966), 1 and 3. Her earlier suggestion (p. 89) to Chick that Lucas could not have been expected to explain his situation to Gavin or any other white man is more of a comment on his stiff neck than on the character of Stevens and other local authorities. The admiration which colors her words in this bit of analysis carries with it no contradiction of what she says later. She admires Lucas' dignity, understands why he projects it

attitude toward the rest of Jefferson society is as much a token of disorder as is the disregard for him felt by most members of that society.

It is his pride which enabled Crawford Gowrie to dupe him. Only by challenging it could the younger man have drawn this black McCaslin into demonstrating that he has a pistol in good working order (a "fawty-one Colt" [p. 69]) and knows how to use it. And it is his perverse stubbornness, his aristocratic hauteur and disinclination to explain or deny anything, that sets this plot in motion. If Lucas had reported just what had happened to him during his walk with Gowrie in the woods, we have reason to believe that both Gavin and Sheriff Hampton would have checked his story. And he had a chance to do so. After such a "narrative," the atmosphere surrounding his

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with hyperbolic gestures, but still does not approve when he allows it to convert him into a danger to the community, a temptation to his errant white countrymen. Hence, "pretend."

Elizabeth Hardwick ("Faulkner and the South Today," p. 1131) uses the term quite literally in her explanation of Beauchamp's character. She imagines he seeks martyrdom as a last act of contempt for his oppressors." Brooks deals summarily with her nonsense (p. 281). What Miss Habersham means by "pretend" is not at all astonishing when we remember that she is remarking Lucas' effect, not his objectives.

incarceration would have different, and the prospect of a lynching far less serious. Moreover, nothing (or very little) would have been required of Charles Mallison, Aleck Sander, or Miss Habersham. Or, to put matters otherwise, if Lucas were not "one of the old lot . . . a McCaslin" (p. 19), if he had not been in this book the same man who hunted gold in the creek bottom by night and plowed by day in Go Down, Moses, the same man Molly was ready to divorce, we would not have this novel but instead something more restrictively comic. His pride is, when challenged, near manic; and it is challenged at every turn. Lucas' faults are connected with his virtues. But they are faults nonetheless. Once he has been arrested, his silence asks of Jefferson what it would not give a white man.

The case of Lucas is a very complicated one. In fairness to Beauchamp it may be admitted that a man of his intelligence and familiarity with his area's culture (past and present) would have no reason to expect white men who do not know him in all his honorable particularity, men who really know only the ordinary Yoknapatawpha Negroes (of whom Lucas himself is contemptuous) and who have been given reason to regard these Negroes as a potential threat to the stability and well-being of all the Jeffersons of the

South, to believe without question the implausible truth of his misadventures.[101] He does, after Gavin insists, start to clear himself. But he goes about it noncommittally, reluctantly, as if to force the white man to be the one who declares he is blameless. Lucas is unusual. As much is recognized by all, but only in puzzlement. And as he has grown older, he has revealed himself to fewer and fewer and is therefore misunderstood.[102] The people who know the ideal and rule he lives by are, for the most part, already deceased, elderly, very young, or colored. He is an anachronism. Circumstances have, indeed, gone against him. Yet he is determined to keep a stiff neck in this distress, determined to deny himself the luxury of unbending and accepting assistance from those with whom he is amiably incorporated and to whom a self-respecting man may turn when victimized by happenstance--deny even if he has to overdo--rather than risk losing his dignity. The most Lucas could have hoped for from a full testimony such as Gavin would heed would have been a reprieve--followed by much

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[101] Brooks, op. cit., p. 283. He makes plain that logic and evidence are on the side of those who assume Lucas has killed. Even Chick is at first of this opinion. The issue initially separating the just from the unjust is why (under what circumstances, not if) Lucas has killed. Both Chick and Gavin act on the premise that the shooting was not mere murder, as Jefferson would understand the word.

[102] Walter Fuller Taylor, Jr. (dissertation, "The Roles of the Negro in William Faulkner's Fiction," pp. 202-206) expatiates at length upon the unsuitability of Lucas as "The Negro"--i.e., a tool to be used in a fictional critique of the "plantation ideal" (patriarchy). Where he got the notion that such was or should have been Faulkner's purpose in the novel is not easily determined. But his discussion of Lucas, the mulatto traditionalist governed by the values of his white ancestors, is amusing and instructive, even when erroneous. And he is generally correct in observing that Chick reacts little to Lucas' Negro characteristics, Lucas' patience expected (p. 203). Howe (op. cit., pp. 90-91, 129-131) is similarly careful, uneasy, and entertaining in his half-hearted effort to support his view of proper race relations with his subject's admiring portrait of Lucas. Nilon, in asserting that Beauchamp is Faulkner's representative Negro, is absurd (op. cit., p. 12). Swiggart (op. cit., p. 78) and McLaughlin (op. cit., pp. 227-228)

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rival him in claiming that the mulatto gentleman is "far superior . . . to any white person" [italics mine] in dignity; and that in creating him, "Faulkner wrought better than his finite mind could comprehend." Volpe (op. cit., p. 257) and Hoffman (op. cit., p. 100) skirt dangerously but predictably close to the same follies. Circumlocution such as theirs is more irritating than Nilon's simplicity or the bald assertions of Swiggart and Miss McLaughlin. There is, however, even worse. Horace Judson, in a feature article for Time of July 17, 1964 ("The Curse and the Hope," p. 47), argues for an equation of Lucas with the "new" Negro and discovers in his conduct a precursor of tomorrow's protest demonstrator. Finally, topping all the rest is Leslie Fiedler's description of the old patriarch as another example of the "dark beloved" which "haunts the soul" of white America (An End to Innocence [Boston, 1955], p. 150). Partial antidotes for this self-engendered nonsense may be found in the Negro novelist Ralph Ellison's Shadow and Act, p. xviii; in Millgate (op. cit., p. 220); and in Brooks' William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country (pp. 283-284).

haggling interrogation; and only then would he have been granted an embarrassing exoneration, bought by what he would feel as humiliation. A gentleman, he feels, cannot go that way. His sense of the necessity for balancing pride with humility (and he has one, though sometimes limited) has been weakened by his struggle to be more than "just a nigger," a superfluity at best and an "intruder" at the worst. He cannot, he imagines, be beholden because no one admits to being beholden to him, admits that he has a place. Given what he and the town have become in response to each other (and finally in response to one hundred years of exacerbating Yankee interest in their affairs), out of the scene of the old mulatto patriarch standing over Vinson Gowrie's body with a smoking pistol an impasse such as occurs must be expected.

What we know of Lucas in *Intruder in the Dust* we know through Chick. The boy is our filter, the mirror we observe, Faulkner's insurance that all the "pointed" drama Chick recalls will not slip off into the didactic; what we really learn about in the book is what happened to young Mallison *as he remembers it*, the recovered shape of his own subjective experience. Hence, Lucas looms big before us because he made a difference for and in Chick, not on purpose or out of any conscious design to perpetuate values as with Sam Fathers (he would have said that such matters were the business of the Mallisons and their connection) but instead because one of the series of accidents which set the novel in motion forced him to teach the boy something *as* he performed on him a duty to a guest (particularly a child of good family) on his family's place.[103] And then his dignity could not allow him to permit the boy to unlearn that lesson--or to forget it. And because Chick did try to unlearn or forget it and Lucas continued to be himself, the boy learned it all the better.

Structural analysis of *Intruder in the Dust* requires (as do most of Faulkner's later fictions) a careful attention to the way in which the novel begins. A thorough grasp of the tensions established and themes introduced in the opening episode would have been a check upon the systematic incomprehension from which the book has suffered. After half a page which, *in medias res*, introduces the reader to Chick in a past moment, and to the fact that he has problems somehow connected with the confinement (across the street from where he stands) of a Negro, Lucas Beauchamp, and to the additional fact that Beauchamp is being incarcerated in Jefferson's venerable jail for killing a white man, Faulkner lets his youthful hero begin to explain how his difficulties took shape and how the black man whose jailing he had that Sunday awaited commenced years earlier to press inadvertent, unspoken demands upon his theretofore untested magnanimity. The speaker is sixteen at the time when he first presents himself to us. Some fifty-two months before, during a winter afternoon's rabbit hunting on the plantation of his father's and uncle's friend, Carothers (Roth) Edmonds, he had been careless and toppled off a footbridge through the ice covering a small creek. Considerable floundering followed--exacerbated by the burden of shame imposed on his nascent (and therefore hypersensitive) manhood with the accident. And at that moment, after he has collected his gun from the muddy creek bottom, just before one of his youthful Negro hunting companions managed to assist him to the bank, a dignified elderly colored man had appeared and taken charge of the aborted chase. The black cohorts are prevented from handing Chick up; the pole they pushed out for him to grab (p. 6)--a threat to what remains of his dignity and, like all props in Faulkner, less of a help than a hindrance--is withdrawn at their elder's command: ". . . out of his way so he can get out."[104] Chick can at least work his way to the shore, free of the water he got himself into. The old Negro indicates quickly that he knows how important the lesson adumbrated in the effort may be and how far the learning of it may go toward helping the boy to regain some of the self-esteem lost in his stumble and its observation by other males. He instructs the older of the two boys awaiting Chick on the shore (a boy he knows, the son of a hand on the place) to take Mallison's gun. Beyond this he says nothing either in reproach or advice save, ". . . come on to my house." In this undemonstrative handling of what he can recognize as a moment of moral misery for the white boy, Mr. Lucas (as the black boys call him) exhibits further wisdom and tact. From his bearing and conduct as from his appearance when Mallison first beholds him--complete with gun, boots, and a big felt hat (such as Chick's Grandfather Stevens had worn, probably black), we should be--Chick should be--able to predict what is to come, that Lucas will encourage both learning and recovery. To elaborate, as his actions in small details establish, he knows the larger rules behind "no pole" and "help himself up." The decorums he enforces are all inclusive. They signal a beginning in Chick's preparation for his place as "the Man." The two events (the dip in the icy water and the entry of Lucas into Chick's life), as the remainder of Intruder in the Dust reveals, mesh symbolically. Even the season of the unfortunate immersion reinforces their connection. Winter is the time of death; water is a trope for grace, the power of regeneration. And the part of old men in a traditional culture is to insure its preservation (or, in this case, restoration) with the confirmation of their successors as custodians of the faith: in the practice and acknowledgment of the imperatives of pride and humility. So the novel begins, with a baptism--a harsh one. But others follow and are even more severe.[105]

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[103] Millgate, *op. cit.*, pp. 218-220; Lytle, "Regeneration for the Man," p. 122.

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[104] Longley (op. cit., p. 33) somehow comes to the erroneous conclusion that Lucas literally saved Chick's life.

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[105] Lytle ("Regeneration for the Man," pp. 26-27) introduced the idea that Chick's fall into the creek at McCaslin was a "baptism." It has been seconded by Malin (op. cit., p. 89), McLaughlin (op. cit., p. 229), and Dayton Kohler ("William Faulkner and the Social Conscience," College English, XI [December 1949], 127).

Lucas is Carothers Edmonds' kinsman, a grandson of his plantation's founder (of whom Cass is only a great-grandson--and in the collateral line). With the present proprietor of McCaslin womanless and, comparably speaking, remote from the time and place of its occurrence, and with himself on the spot, Lucas assumes responsibility for the white child's discomfiture and matter-of-factly compels Chick up to his house. As a guest and a youth, the white boy must not be allowed to risk sickness by going unattended --without help he cannot give himself. On the family's plantation and on the part of it which he himself owns Lucas is, when Chick meets him, a co-proprietor, the present McCaslin. Probably he would not have herded Chick into his home under other circumstances. But it is this time, his place to do so. To Chick's family (and kind--"the old lot") as much as to the boy, he, as a gentleman, owes the debt of stewardship, of hospitality. But more importantly, he owes it to himself, to his sense of, his concept of himself, his magnanimity: noblesse oblige. And he honors his several devoirs, private and not, with a combination of easy amusement and ritual formality: "intolerant inflexible and composed" (p. 13).

Charles is uneasy in the presence of Lucas, restless before he is led into his cabin and uneasy even apart from his embarrassment at having been discovered wallowing in the creek ("something a girl might have been expected, even excused for doing, but nobody else" [p. 5]). Nonetheless, as he at sixteen remembers having thought while he walked toward the small hilltop building, "he could no more imagine himself contradicting the man [Lucas] striding on ahead of him than he could his grandfather." And the attitude of his hunting companions, we must recognize, betokened a similar respect. But his nervousness and consternation increase. The Beauchamp household, its accoutrements as well as its inhabitants (and both together especially) are not something Chick's earlier experiences with Negroes have prepared him for. The wedding portrait of Lucas and his wife Molly, the furniture, the big "watch chain looping across the bib" of the old Negro's overalls belie the boy's expectations. The food, the smell of the house, and Molly's form and color contradict the contradiction; yet by doing so they encourage further suspicion of the generalizations those expectations are grounded upon. As Lucas sees to it that he disrobes, dries out, redresses in his restored garments and eats some greens, fatback, and biscuits, Chick struggles to remember all that his Uncle Gavin had told him concerning the peculiarity of Beauchamp. The most important ingredient in his reaction to this patriarchal attendance of his welfare is displeasure in being handled as a child and with the disarming manner in which Lucas exercises his authority. Chick has been in the keeping and under the supervision of adult Negroes before, has visited in their homes and eaten their food. But the ground rules, he senses, are not the same here at McCaslin. He wants, therefore, to get out of the cabin as soon as he is in it, wants to put behind him what he cannot understand and what drives him even deeper into shame. And in that desperate spirit he does something even more childish than stumbling on a log, makes a blunder which scars him even more than the earlier *gaffe*: he offers Lucas money for his hospitality, denies (as Mr. Lytle has well said) the Negro's "manhood," his place as head of his own family, and thereby (once rebuffed) further undercuts his own.[106]

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[106] "Regeneration for the Man," pp. 123-24; Gold (*op. cit.*, p. 84) is convinced that Chick "acts in the [old] tradition of his people" when he offers money to his black host, that he *is not* himself but his people at that moment and by "following his heart" gets free of their

Moreover, he in his own eyes disgraces his family with the blunder. Lucas, however, is not much perturbed by the coins. He is not angry or hurt with the stupdity of a fledgling. There could be no dignity in being so readily disconcerted. We could not accept Lucas as Faulkner intends him, so far as we can tell from the rest of his portrait, if Chick *or* his elders were able to dislodge so easily his composure and poise. But they cannot. To Mallison's most profound anguish, Lucas continues in the face of insult to be the man in his home, the man with the gold toothpick and

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influence. Original tradition and historically explicable deviant version of that tradition are one in his eyes. Mrs. Vickery (*op. cit.*, pp. 136-38) similarly contends that Chick's inheritance is "lynching" *and* "patriarchy" (synonyms, she infers) and that both (along with "formalization of conduct") go by the board when the boy goes grave robbing.

It may be appropriate to note at this point that Mrs. Vickery is to be read with more than the usual care required by her informative, indispensable, fascinating, and contradictory study in her chapter on *Intruder in the Dust* and in her other comments on the book. At one point she praises Lucas as a "mirror image [for Mallison] which reflects the plantation world of patriarchy and possession, . . . a measured assertion that the moral and social principles of the South are equally applicable to Negroes and whites" (p. 128), then acknowledges his uniqueness (p. 136), and then labels him a refutation of the norms which she has just insisted (with obvious approval) he affirms (pp. 135-36). Her problem is that she would honor Lucas and defame what produced him.

The difficulty with Mrs. Vickery's and others' arguments about and around the meaning of Mallison's achievement is that Chick is most pious when he repents of offering the coins and prevents the lynching.

formal-dress pistol, the man who is never at a loss for a quiet jest (especially in moments of stress), the man who will not go to town on Saturday or have his wife photographed with a headrag on (like a "field nigger" [p. 15])--The Man. The pocketful of change extended toward the silent (save for a word from Lucas intended to stop the farce) unacknowledging colored couple is left to drop from Mallison's feverish hand and onto the floor. From there it is picked up and returned to him (at Lucas' command) by his black double, Aleck Sander, and the Edmonds boy who had been sent along to guide the "town folk." Chick is then genially dismissed to resume his hunting with a bit of almost affectionate and tactful raillery (of the variety the male Southerner has always used to emphasize the fact of duty or the point of a painful experience to younger men in his charge): "'Now get on and shoot your rabbit,' the voice said. 'And stay out of that creek'" (p. 16). Some parting word is required, both to ease the boy's renewed sense of humiliation (as he did when he first excited it) and to discourage its further exercise. But it will not do to refer to Chick's more recent folly. An allusion to its predecessor will better serve. Release him Lucas does, as one gentleman would another, but also as a master would a novice. It is enough. There is nothing in Intruder in the Dust which does not follow from this chapter, from the two-stage encounter of Charles Mallison with the extraordinary colored embodiment of the code he was born to live by.[107]

Further explanation of sixteen year old Chick's vigil across from the jail on the day when Sheriff Hampton brought Lucas in appears in this novel's second chapter (pp. 17-45). The first stage of their interaction concludes at its end when the full complication has been spun out and Lucas finally asks for something from him. The substance of the chapter is Mallison's effort to bring about such a reversal of roles, his attempt to be of service to Lucas and his restiveness and inclination to flee from that occasion when it appears he may indeed be needed. There had been no more hunting after departure from Lucas' place on the day of their first encounter. Instead, the disastrous coins were thrown into the disastrous creek and a quick retreat beaten back to Jefferson. But Chick is, almost as much as Lucas, from the first and even more so as the young man develops, a gentleman himself. To repeat, he recognizes both of his *faux pas* for what they were as soon as he commits them. As a gentleman, he must make restitution for injuries he has given someone not deserving of them. However, his shame would be a little less if he could reduce Lucas' moral superiority over him--get him to act a little "like a nigger" (pp. 18, 22): undercut what Beauchamp had erected in refusing payment for his collards and side meat. For the more Chick has to recognize as Lucas' "gentilesse," the more painful to him is the memory that the old man has observed his ignorance, childishness, and lack of manners. And to speak the truth, at about this point (early in Chapter II) it begins to be important and distressing to the white adolescent that it is a colored gentleman who has "uncovered his nakedness." Race pride is natural enough. (Lucas has it himself, in being a McCaslin. Nor is he ashamed of *his* "negritude.") Faulkner makes it clear that the sentiment has been part of what sustained Chick's people through settlement, war, reconstruction, and "aftermaths." But the impasse between Lucas and Chick leads the boy into a perverse form of that sentiment. Beauchamp has already, in ways already mentioned, accommodated Chick's pride as far as it is possible for him if he is to retain his own. He must, to repeat again, frustrate the boy's every effort to "pay." And his part in the exchange of gifts (on Chick's side, because of the context established for them in the Beauchamp cabin, actually muted, comic repetitions of the original affront) which, over a period of years, follows the momentous winter day, indicates that he cannot help becoming increasingly amused with Lawyer Stevens' nephew. He wins every time and increases his "advantage" in this "matter of honor." And his victories engender a third phase in Chick's defection from the Mallison version of "Sartoris, the idea."

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[107] Taylor, dissertation, "The Roles of the Negro in William Faulkner's Fiction, op. cit., p. 205; Miss Tuck (op. cit., p. 107) is of the opinion that Chick leaves McCaslin feeling that Lucas has "insulted" him. Her remark is difficult to explain. The same is true of Hoffman's assertion that Lucas is purposefully testing his guest from the first (op. cit., p. 99).

Despite the ordinary race pride excited earlier, at first the boy's efforts to get Lucas to "be a nigger" carry with them no suggestion of simple racial snobbery, no hostility at all. Chick is thinking of himself even when he recognizes the injury he has done the name of his family or the white part of the community (p. 21). Nevertheless, after much frustration his preoccupation with treating his wounded pride is transformed (by the old law of "sour grapes") into an urge to shame and reduce Lucas, reduce him as a Negro (cf. pp. 26, 32, et seq.), regardless of his own advantage.[108] At about the same time Chick learns that the dark McCaslin has had a similar effect on most white men in his county, an effect epitomized in the memorable story of the old man's exchange with a drunken sawmill redneck in a crossroads store (pp. 18-20).[109]

When the boy recovers from this self-degradation, he is more seriously disgusted with himself than with either of his earlier back-slidings. The conjunction of his third repentance with Lucas' confinement in Jefferson and the town's relish of the prospect of the black man's lynching extend--in the boy's inclusion of his society with himself in the repentance/rejection, in his recognition of the syndrome that moves from displeasure with self into scapegoating--the scope of the novel from private to public and move it into the second phase. It points Chick _toward_ the pathway on which he will develop a capacity for that extinction of the self in all save honor which is required of the gentleman, a journey concluded in a third and last division of the book (after Lucas is saved or as good as saved). But more of that hereafter. Something further in explanation of the cause of conflict between, the difference in the viewpoints of, Charles Mallison and Lucas Beauchamp is called for at this point.

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[108] Howe (op. cit., p. 101) argues that Chick would really like to see Lucas burned. Actually, the worst that Chick can imagine is seeing Lucas humiliated. Genuine danger to the old Negro's person is part of what recovers the boy to his senses.

[109] Taylor (dissertation, "The Roles of the Negro in William Faulkner's Fiction," p. 203) comments on this scene in detail. He is aware that it is an error to imagine that this mill hand provokes Lucas by calling him a "son of a bitch" and reflecting on his paternity. In truth, it is the identification of himself with the Edmonds family that draws Beauchamp out. Lucas glories in his illegitimate origins, because they are McCaslin.

Chapters I and II of _Intruder in the Dust_ are especially important to the study of social assumptions implicit in Faulkner's doctrine of nature as they relate to the race problem. What is at issue in the dialectic of Chick and Lucas is, after some initial fortuitous complication, the mulatto's right to the place he has earned and (at least to some extent) inherited in the Yoknapatawpha his grandfather helped to establish and his "family" has labored to sustain. The question arises quite by accident. But by the time Lucas asks Chick to bring the boy's uncle to the jail, it is before the house. And (if we reread the chapters after finishing the rest) probably sooner. Before the boy went out to McCaslin, it had not existed for him. Afterward he can think of (or rather, around) little else. However, if he is to learn the words and distinctions necessary for any formulation (with Gavin's help) of that question in useful discursive terms, much must transpire. Charles' heresy against the social code of the republican gentleman, the rule he has inherited as a Mallison and a Stevens, is a result of his ignorance of the history and origin of that tradition--in the combination of individualist and hierarchical principles mentioned throughout this study. Lucas is not thus ignorant. But he, too, as I insisted above, practices with some though not final excuse a related perversity. It is a heresy against, a widespread misunderstanding of, the tradition (in the time of Chick and Lucas) that enables Chick to assume that Negroes--regardless of their quality, conduct, or connection--can be left without purpose, stake, or functional dignity in the society in which they live and still be no danger to its persistence as a community. It is the error of Lucas (a McCaslin error) to imagine that he can do without friends, avoid all dependence on others

(p. 64). Fortunately, neither black man nor white boy believes in the positions first assumed. They perform in deed what they deny in word, and by what they do, each for the other when he is helpless to do for himself, "re-incorporate." Their "nurture" overcomes their nature. It is hard for them, however, to admit the truth they act upon. The detritus of a bitter history is between them. Communion is interdependence--of the sort arranged for and sustained by the McCaslin twins and Miss Rosa in a time before that history.[110] As both Lucas and Chick recognize throughout the novel, it does not preclude hierarchy--indeed, though the patterns shift, may even necessitate such: each man, in Mr. Lytle's phrase, "ordered according to place and function, even to the exact degree of place and function."[111] Nor does it insist that race is irrelevant.[112] But it does require that some portion of status and importance be reserved for every place, that the operation of the social "family" carry with it acknowledgment of the importance and necessity to the whole of the effort made by each of its components: a fellow feeling fed by an awareness, at the top and bottom, of common investment in the part played by providence or accident in the disposition of all, and a recognition that the survival of the eminent is often in the hands of the obscure, as much as upon the reverse. A good summary may be the old fable of the limbs which tired of feeding the belly after (they decided) it had failed to appreciate them or their labors, the fable put to good use by Saint Paul (1 Corinthians 12·14-27). All, we remember, perished together. Another analogue Faulkner used in his last public speech comparing the quality in worthwhileness of several kinds of achievements honored in the medals of old county fairs, gold medals for quilting, cooking, and husbandry, with the credit men should bestow on capable

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[110] *Vide* above for discussion of these operations in the reading of *The Unvanquished*.

[111] "Regeneration for the Man," p. 127.

[112] Millgate (*op. cit.*, p. 220); Taylor (dissertation, "The Roles of the Negro in William Faulkner's Fiction," pp. 203-205), and Chester E. Eisinger (*Fiction of the Forties* [Chicago 1965], pp. 180-81) all note that Faulkner permanently assigns the roles of responsibility and leadership in achieving racial peace and justice to

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white (or part-white) men. There is no assumption that the races are equal or identical in their capacities in the appeal for Negro manhood in Intruder in the Dust. Faulkner was of a divided mind on the question; in this connection, see the hesitancy in Faulkner in the University (p. 210).

performances in all places, kinds, and labors--to the individual sustenance that may come of up-to-the-hilt performance of any role.[113] Once, Faulkner believed, such

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[113] "Address to the American Academy of Arts and Letters upon accepting the Gold Medal for Fiction," May 24, 1962 (reproduced on pp. 168-69 of James B. Meriwether's collection and edition, William Faulkner: Essays, Speeches, and Public Letters. In The Mansion (pp. 224-25) and in Faulkner in the University (p. 218) the novelist made direct reference to the necessity for the Negro in the South to make his white neighbor "need" him if he is to acquire that neighbor's favor and respect. It was his belief that the Negro had lost much of his place in the Southern economy with forced emancipation and has been, bit by bit, losing more of it with the decline of Southern agriculture. Faulkner did not favor Negro outmigration as a remedy for Southern racial problems. He could not envisage the Negro, as he hoped to see him, in a totally urban setting. Because of its addiction to the species of Prometheanism associated with the machine and for other reasons (the region's commitments to certain political delusions [i.e., the "bright shapes" or eschatological visions referred to in The Unvanquished, p. 92]), Faulkner doubted the ability of the North to establish a biracial community. (Vide, Go Down, Moses, The Unvanquished, and "Golden Land.")

Robert Penn Warren, in his "Introduction: Faulkner: Past and Present," pp. 17-19), complains of his Mississippi contemporary that his hope for future racial accommodation on a communal basis was sanguine and anachronistic: that Faulkner would have been a better prophet and remedy-prescriber had he read the morning papers "more faithfully," the papers which tell of the "concessions" mendacity is able to facilitate and the "practical" peace of uneasy truces ("decent . . . settlements") between sworn, mortal enemies. Nothing could be more ridiculous. Observing and judging, the Kentuckian forgets, are two different things. Although Warren may understand well enough the pattern and basis recent adjustments have been following (a pattern with which he is, it appears, well satisfied), he is beside Faulkner's a recognition of interdependence (and of the importance thereof) existed and had prospects for development among his people, existed as a check upon the natural tendency of a democratic republic to drift from envy and irresponsibility into a struggle of classes, interests, and regions and from thence to the leviathan state, "one faceless serration like a mouthful of teeth": a middle or syncretic posture, neither diluting brotherhood into condescending paternalism nor independence into jungle law obliviousness to human incapacity.[114] The action of Intruder in the Dust traces,

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point in prating of having "the benefit of instruction" from last week's headlines. Faulkner did not merely hope but rather insisted that a permanent settlement of racial disagreements would have to have a communal, patriarchal basis if it were to be in any sense viable or lasting. Instead of "ignoring the Negro slums of the neat Northern cities," he considered their ominous implications most seriously and then denied that they or Warren's "exemplars"--the "middle-class businessmen" of Mississippi--held any answer. Howe (op. cit., p. 99), O'Connor (op. cit., p. 141), Mizener (op. cit., pp. 164-65), Volpe (op. cit., p. 264), Taylor (dissertation, "The Roles of the Negro in William Faulkner's Fiction," p. 183), and Hardwick (op. cit., pp. 1130-31) all approach Warren's line of argument on Faulkner's devotion to community and its irrelevance to present difficulties and are unwilling to look to the Southern past for explanation of Chick's heroism or Lucas' stubbornness.

[114] This passage is also from the 1962 speech to the Academy of Arts and Letters. The address attributes the faceless and angry sameness of life in the new order now in

in the persons of Chick, Lucas, and other Yoknapatawphans moving within their orbit, its partial restoration.

Before the killing of Vinson Gowrie Chick had imagined that he was "free" of his involvement with Lucas. Molly had died sometime in the Mallison boys' fifteenth year; and, after the gift-exchanging comic sequels of the scene in Lucas' cabin had run their course, he met the old Negro on the street and passed him by without being noticed, acknowledged, or in any way reminded of his hunting "adventure." Lucas looked like himself, acted like himself (in town to pay taxes on a *week* day); therefore, although it was apparent that his grief over his wife had dulled his sensibilities (the recognition of which fact is itself part of Chick's education), the boy came away from their silent encounter with a sense of relief, telling himself that a part of his and Lucas' history had been annulled, canceled~~;~~—and an equality in manhood reestablished between them (pp. 24-27). However, when on a day one and a half years later he hears of what has happened out at Beat Four,

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the making to a denial, by prize winners big and little, of the especial equality that is shared by the best of many kinds. See discussion of this address in Chapter III.

and when he remembers that Carothers Edmonds is in New Orleans for an operation, he quickly drops his fond illusion of disinterest. True, he continues to resist reality. Monotonously he reiterates that he is now "free" and repeatedly reverts to the thought of seizing for himself an even more concrete exemption from Lucas' dilemma by riding away from Jefferson on his horse (pp. 28, 30, 31, 34, 38, 41, 42, 45, 46, and 67). But the more he considers the situation, the more he observes of Yoknapatawpha's reaction to the news of the shooting--the "official" version --the closer he is drawn to taking Lucas' part.[115] Once Lucas says, "tell your uncle I want to see him," there is no more question about Beauchamp's authority to command him than there was that first time at McCaslin. Like Lucius Priest in The Reivers (pp. 301-303) and Ike McCaslin in "The Bear" (part four), Chick is reluctant to recognize that there is no avoiding or resigning from history, public or private: only living with it, trying to flee from it (a certain cause of additional shame if the fugitive has any character left), or ceasing to be fully human (the extirpation of one's own moral sense, as with Jason Compson). But his reluctance does not keep him from moving into the trouble deliberately, with ever increasing speed once he recognizes that a lynching is probable, that it cannot be forestalled without him, and that the very kind of emotional set produced in himself by Lucas at his best is likely to encourage and draw all of his world into the crime. He *knows* Lucas. In all likelihood, Chick realizes, no one else is aware enough of the old Negro's *virtu* to feel obliged to protect him, to see to it that he is not lynched and that the details of his "crime" are examined carefully. Beyond question, Mallison has some enduring to do. That it is not easy for him makes his performance all the more hopeful in augury.[116]

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[115] Curiously, Longley (op. cit., p. 33) argues Chick is not really a comic hero because he doesn't begin with a "sense of innocence." It should be obvious to any reader of Intruder in the Dust that Chick is comfortably innocent on the day of his first brush with Lucas. And he is trying to convince himself that he is still innocent thereafter--at least until he gets to Beat Four. Insofar as Chick is less than innocent thereafter, even in his own eyes, the tone of this novel is admittedly not comic, but tragi-comic. But such was Faulkner's intent.

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[116] Millgate (*op*. *cit*., p. 215) is quite correct in insisting that the structural subdivisions of *Intruder in the Dust* are "charted very largely" by shifts in Charles Mallison's motivation, basically shifts from personal to impersonal, from private anxiety to philosophical commitment

As hectic as his next twenty-four hours are to be, Chick is not too quick about honoring Lucas' request/command in getting his Uncle Gavin down to see the old Negro. Not only "foot dragging" and reluctance to play his part occasion the delay. Gavin is no more to be managed easily than is his prospective client. Chick wants their interview to go well; therefore, he is careful of proprieties. On the kinsmen's way to jail after supper on the Saturday Lucas is brought in, there is much talk. Its design is to allow Gavin to work his way toward the issue and from there to a solution. This conversation, like the setting for the confrontation to come, is part of the thematic envelope of _Intruder in the Dust_. The trigger of this first uncle/ nephew exchange is their visit while on the way to town with a representative Yoknapatawphan, a Mr. Lilley who has come in from the country to keep a small store on the edge of the Negro section in Jefferson (pp. 47-49). Lilley is not a bad man, not a devotee of any unusual (for Jefferson)

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and realization of the indivisibility of human dignity. But he oversimplifies. Chick, he asserts, transcends the "characteristic limitations of his time, class, and environment." About time we can agree. But Chick's class is behind his transformation and his environment (if by that we mean, among other things, upbringing) also had a hand in it.

species of villainy. But what he says to Gavin and what it indicates about his view of the South's Negro problem help to define the transpersonal, social side of the malaise to which Chick will soon begin to address himself. It is Mr. Lilley's conviction that the Negro is a potential enemy at all times, that the black man goes around with murder constantly in his heart, a desire to kill any and all whites who come his way. Therefore he regards periodic lynching of Negroes as eighteenth-century criminologists and moralists regarded public hangings: a therapeutic for the collective mind of would-be miscreants. Lilley sees the Negro as permanently outside the framework of community, as a fifth-column danger from within to be endured but not corrected or recruited into any kind of "membership." Confederation of Southern white and Negro does not occur to him as a possibility. History has done its work, on the little storekeeper and all his kind, too well. In the place of community the Lilleys of Jefferson have ritualized the "armed camp" psychology of the Reconstruction era, have confused the incidental potential for disruption, danger, and conflict in their black neighbors with the real enemy who once utilized, and might again utilize, that potential to bend Southerners of both races to its own political, emotional, and economic ends. And in so doing they have made the servitude they resist more, not less, likely.

After leaving Mr. Lilley, Gavin and Charles come swiftly to the courthouse, the Confederate monument, and the jail--Jefferson's oldest building--an objectification (with the two other artifacts, dating from an era "when people took time to build even jails with grace and care" [p. 49]) of the history that produced Mr. Lilley, Lucas, their differences, and the task of people named Stevens and Mallison (*i.e.*, "Sartoris") in preventing internecine strife between their historically disoriented fellows. What the jail summarizes in this passage is the long-standing determination of Jefferson's founders and keepers to make a land where they and their heirs might realize their individuality and live, each in his own place, with dignity--governing themselves and their own affairs so efficiently that no one could imagine they needed (or would permit) someone else to govern either for them (p. 50). To insure that we will understand this iconography, Faulkner alludes briefly to the story of Cecilia Farmer, the girl who in

1864 asserted some of that craving for identity by cutting her name in a pane of the fanlight by one of the building's doors.[117] The visitors encounter two worthy descendants of the "old fathers": outside the jail is Will Legate, one of Faulkner's intrepid woodsmen, this day (half against his will) a temporary deputy; and inside is Mr. Tubbs, a colorful old jailor, who is going to keep Lucas intact for trial and due process--whether or not he likes and respects him. Interdependence is the practice of these men, the ancient place of confinement and judgment, restriction, the token of their will to persist in communion, to keep their "Place," to expel or eliminate what will not abide by community. In this context, surrounded by reminders of what Jefferson is and was, after passing through both the ancient and the modern mechanical door (symbolic of the presently mixed but reparable state of affairs), Gavin and Chick go in to see the Negro who is forcing them to rediscover their tradition. The framing leaves us with little question as to what will be at stake in the encounter.

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[117] In connection see the "jail section" of Requiem for a Nun (pp. 213-62) as well as the closely related "capitol" and "courthouse" essays in the same play (pp. 99-111; 3-48).

I have already remarked that Gavin mismanages his conference with Lucas. A few more observations on the appropriateness, economy, and power of the episode are, however, necessary at this point. The scene is beautifully constructed. Gavin's abruptness is indicative that Lucas intimidates and irritates him as much as Chick. His years and situation make talking with Lucas excessively disconcerting to the County Attorney. As much as Will Legate and Mr. Tubbs, Gavin is already determined to risk grave danger for Lucas, is already of the opinion that Lucas is not criminal in the sense that his fellow Yoknapatawphans, white and black, imagine. He seems to have decided that Lucas slew Vinson upon some provocation, out of his pronounced sense of personal honor. Otherwise, Gavin would not be talking of short sentences and clemency. He recognizes the old man's magnanimity and infers an explanation of what seems to have been his conduct from it--so infers even as he squirms in beholding that dignity behind bars. Moreover, he is assuming that Lucas must have some of the traits of more ordinary Negroes, that he has been foolish out of an unawareness of the serious trouble he could walk into with such involvement. This conclusion is not really so unfair, since Gavin does not know Lucas as Chick does. And to repeat once more, we are given to understand, both from details in this novel and from *Go Down, Moses*, that Lucas does have his "nigger" side--shows it even in jail; in addition, he is elderly, old enough to be "doting." He appears to have "borrowed trouble"--and then to have ignored what he has done, refused to regard his actions in their ultimate terms. In the attorney what has been labeled "professional reflex" takes over.[118] Its intrusion and control of the interview is encouraged by the way in which the session begins. Lucas' first question for his "lawyer" is to Stevens, even at this point, an appropriate one: "'What you going to do with me?'" (p. 59). But it confirms Gavin's suspicion that Lucas is guilty of a foolish manslaughter and that, like a child, he expects the white folks to "make it right." The trouble with the white man is not an unwillingness to answer and do something. Instead, it is the course of action chosen by him, its paternal presumption that Lucas is "just a nigger," a creature to be protected from himself and the abuse of society but not, in any serious sense, to be taken as a partner in Yoknapatawpha. By operating on other (or no) assumptions concerning the case, Gavin might have had from the embattled prisoner whom he only half-questions, all the answers needed to clear him quietly and easily. Instead, he "turns on" the McCaslin in Lucas. As the colored man recognizes (p. 65), Stevens is not listening when he talks. All that Lucas has to say then (in six different ways) is, "I'm gonter pay you" (p. 59 *et seq.*) and "I ain't got friends" (p. 64). If he is not to be treated as a man, not to be heard out in his way (even once he has bent to the white man enough to accept "You've played hell" and still begun an answer), not allowed the dignity of being presumed innocent and adult, he will look beyond Gavin for help. He *says* nothing to Chick. But from where Chick finds him (the "three-sided visit" completed) after he has left Gavin outside and found an excuse to go back into the jail, we can tell that Lucas knew the boy would return (p. 68). For his part Chick knew he would have to from the moment his uncle's talk with Lucas ended.

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[118] Longley, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

Unlike his lawyer uncle, Charles does not open his private session with Lucas with reproach and advice. All that he does is to ask what the confused patriarch requires (p. 68). True enough, it is possible to overestimate the importance of this gesture. Its counterpoint to Gavin's beginning with Beauchamp is only partial. Chick still has a long way to go before he understands the nature of or reason behind the imperatives he obeys. The boy is at this moment yet thinking he must perform a service because he has a debt to pay. And Lucas still speaks of money and restitution (pp. 68, 72). But their conversation is brief and comparatively easy. Chick's respectful deportment and good beginning notwithstanding, Lucas continues to keep to himself most of his information on the killing in the woods. The only objective presently in his mind is the acquisition of proof of his own innocence, not evidence to solve the crime or implicate anyone else. That will be, in accordance with his habit which we noted in commencing this study of *Intruder*, the business of others--others whom he is not at this time disposed to assist; and there is still the matter of his dignity. To preserve his life *and* his character (the one being worthless to him without the other), he cannot reveal too much too soon. Nonetheless, as he faces the elderly mulatto, Chick realizes that Lucas will seek assistance from no one else he can expect to see before Old Man Gowrie ascends the stairs to his cell (p. 69). And, as his eyes admit (conceal it though they may from the older white man now gone from their company), he needs assistance. Lucas still has the moral authority (discussed above in connection with Chapter I) which the Mallison boy was raised to recognize and respond to automatically. But there is a fresh ingredient in his demands upon Chick's conscience. Lucas is like the Jew injured by the roadside and the boy, like the Samaritan of that parable: either the former is saved by the latter or he is not to be saved at all. Once Lucas answers his opening question, everything comes down to the sixteen year old. His place comes clear; the duty is inevitably his now that Gavin is out of the picture: Vinson Gowrie's body must be exhumed, his wound examined, and the proof that it was not made by a "fawty-one Colt" established before the authorities--all in the space of a few hours. The idea of such an escapade is, in Mississippi (and in Beat Four), unthinkable. But outrage or no, grave robbing is the only gambit left to these conspirators.

Chick and Gavin (because of Chick) are the only white men Lucas respects enough to depend on who are within his reach on the day he is brought to jail. Sheriff Hampton does not do or say anything in the novel that gives the reader a hint as to why Lucas would not turn to him. However, Lucas is a bit of a snob. "McCaslin" (and previous experience with the sheriff's office [Go Down, Moses, p. 43]) precluded an appeal in that direction; and that left the two who visit him, uncle and nephew. Like Phoenix Jackson in Eudora Welty's "A Worn Path," Lucas feels in his bones, even if he denies it, that there are people of the other race who are still half-incorporated with him, people he "knows" because their conduct and that of their kindred toward black men and women presupposes some degree of interdependence and interdependability; and in his plight he is forced to act on what he knows.[119] Of course, it is appropriate that he call first on Gavin. But he is not too upset when the lawyer is imperceptive and throws him into the hands of the Mallison boy.[120] For as Chick realizes he is thinking as he faces him through the bars after his assignment for the night has been announced, Lucas understands (as do other Negroes) that in order to get something outrageous and unbelievable done quickly and efficiently women and children are better employed as agents than men (who are too bound up in rules and habits--"reflexes"--to be capable of the effort). Moreover, Lucas has no more doubt about Chick's willingness to go than he has about his coming back after Gavin has left. He is not even worried for the boy's safety; for he will have an immunity in his youth and class, even in performing what appears to be a sacrilege.[121] As young Mallison seethes and babbles before him, Mr. Lucas Beauchamp reverts to the pattern of their earlier encounters, reaffirms his manliness once more, and sends the boy off with a wry jest, a touch of high style: "I'll try to wait," he says (p. 73).

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[119] Selected Stories (New York, 1954), pp. 284-85.

[120] Taylor (dissertation, "The Roles of the Negro in William Faulkner's Fiction," p. 188) insists that Lucas looks to Chick first; his admiration for Beauchamp and

Chapters IV-VIII of Intruder in the Dust (pp. 74-179)--apart from a few anticipations of the philosophical

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considerable knowledge of Southern manners should have protected him from this error. Even more curious is Gold's theory (*op. cit.*, p. 77, 90) that Chick is called upon because Gavin refuses the case.

[121] Millgate, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

threshing out and articulation of the envelope that follows the action proper in the novel's last quarter (remarks by Chick, Miss Habersham, and Gavin's fist speech [which his nephew does not respond to until later])--are what is left in the published novel of the mystery story Faulkner began in 1940. Chick is in this second and primary movement of the book almost alone on the center of the stage, not only before the reader as a consciousness but also now fully the protagonist in the action he presents.[122] And his conduct bears a heavy weight of significance. However, action is the word to use in describing these chapters. Despite the fact that at this point Chick puts away his own difficulties vis-a-vis Lucas, completes the process set in motion in the conclusion of Chapter II (see above p. 295), and becomes by swift, precognitive, and precipitate stages the custodian of Jefferson's collective virtue, the youthful knight/seigneur, we are not in the pages in question effectively or significantly reminded by what he says and does of the serious envelope of theme and image established in the book's beginning and rounded in the close. The mood is almost gay--and, as I insisted earlier, casual--too casual. The delight in energy and perspicacity well exercised in trying circumstances, the delight that lifts the pitch of Faulkner's hunting stories to a heroic level, here carries all along, but without the authority or solemnity omnipresent in those stories. The kaleidoscope of unexpected and alarming "travels" and appearances, surprising turns followed by others still more surprising, shadowy figures lurking in the background (with nothing explained and everything draped in a cloak of not-at-all frightening, "stagey," Saturday afternoon thriller foreboding) shifts too much and too swiftly to evolve from yarn into fable. Of course, this may be as Faulkner intended. We remember his habit was to hint at and then withhold meaning. Even though, if considered out of the context of sections one and three, the experience of Chick as keeper of the unwritten law may appear to be no more than sophomoric derring-do, it is probable that it was not meant for such separate consideration. Sections one and three _are_ there. The Mallison boy's trip to Caledonia Chapel is for him confusing, jumbled, macabre, and more dangerous than we know it to be. It is bound to strike the reader as comic.[123] The ordering and perspective of and upon what Chick has been about cannot be attributed to him until he has had time to reflect. Confusion is reserved to Saturnalia. What is lacking in the novel's coherence and focus Faulkner would naturally supply not in the middle chapters of Intruder but (with scene and dialogue) after them, in IX-XI, just as we have observed he provided (in another manner and degree) in I-III.[124] Therefore, if the critic is to determine whether and how well Faulkner did finish his "framing," he must first understand in the context provided by pp. 1-73 precisely what happens before Gavin and Chick settle down for serious talks concerning their "business" with Lucas, the Gowries, and all of Jefferson; follow the complication of the plot as it unfolds in Chick; and then examine the relation of that complication to the further behavior of the boy and his uncle. Assuming that Faulkner has proceeded as organically and dramatically as we would expect him to, the writer will imitate the rule he has herewith prescribed for himself in attempting to answer the questions he has raised.

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[122] The action of earlier chapters does not give us the effect of Chick as protagonist because his conduct in them is not clearly purposive.

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[123] On this and other comic materials in the novel see Eudora Welty's "In Yoknapatawpha," Hudson Review, I (Winter 1949), 596-98.

[124] As Mr. Lytle perceives ("Regeneration for the Man," p. 121), the pastness of the murder, the swift and breathless spread and uncovering of information about it and reactions to it, give an organizing principle and urgency to the action; it is not a "static pastness" that rushes Chick into manhood and leaves him so little freedom to organize himself: "This introduces us to the structure. Instead of leading up to the murder as a final release to the tensions of involvement, by putting it into the past Faulkner uses the act as the compulsive force to catalyze the desperate fragments of appearance into reality, for the story is not about violence at all."

Chick is as hesitant and fumbling in his preparation to leave home for Beat Four as he was to get his uncle down to the jail. And he is impeded. Miss Habersham, the last surviving representative of Jefferson's oldest family, is visiting Stevens. Moreover, the boy is still half deceiving himself that he will manage to entangle Gavin with him once he has given his model/kinsman "new information." But Gavin is no more interested in hearing secondhand further ramblings from Lucas than he was when he forestalled them in person. In fact, he has already guessed what Beauchamp told his nephew and put it down as more ordinary "nigger" behavior, reversion to type in distress (p. 79). As he is explaining to his elderly guest, Stevens has set his mind on how to contend with the situation and is therefore useless. Stumbling away, dazed from this disappointment, Chick plays his last card in the effort to avoid moral and physical isolation during the coming night's work. He also assumes Aleck Sander will assist him, and about this he is correct. That confederation remains intact--even after a few plain words of objection from the Negro boy.[125] And just as the striplings are about to take the road with Highboy, the only other person in Yoknapatawpha who really knows Lucas Beauchamp as well as or probably even better than Chick does (for she never doubts Lucas' innocence once he announces it, never challenges his word) and is also at hand to help him is added to their curious company (p. 87). Mollie Beauchamp has been, in their childhood, *like* a sister to Miss Habersham. And, as we know from the final story in *Go Down, Moses*, that relationship remained unbroken as long as the Negress lived, unpretentious and proprietary without either artificiality or offense. Lucas' wife was the daughter of one of Dr. Habersham's slaves, a family Negro--both friend and charge. The doctor's daughter had been a godmother to the singular couple's first child. By "marriage" and by long association (to say nothing of the respect in his own right which a Negro of his kind could expect to command in a lady of her class) Lucas has a claim on this latter day double of Virginia Du Pre and Rosa Millard.[126] The McCaslin in him insures that Beauchamp will never exercise it. And therefore it is all the stronger. Miss Habersham has seen Chick come rushing into his uncle's study, heard him interrupt their conversation even when warned to desist (a rudeness out of character and therefore a certain sign of the urgency of his report), and then watched Stevens rebuff the boy

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[125] Aleck and Chick as a team are one with Faulkner's other white boy/black boy pairings (Ringo and Bayard in The Unvanquished; Roth Edmonds and Henry Beauchamp in Go Down, Moses)--and akin to Miss Habersham's relation to Molly (though the last is different in several ways because they are women). This combination is, however, perhaps more interesting and attractive than the others because it is less idyllic than Ringo/Bayard and less affected by abstractions than Roth/Henry. Aleck's objections to Chick's wild scheme, the unself-conscious collaboration of the two boys accomplished even though neither one of them ever forgets who he is--the suggestion that such accord is possible without the ignoring of racial distinctions and differences--stands somewhere in between the pretense (in most of The Unvanquished) that these distinctions and differences do not exist and the opposite extreme (in "The Fire and the Hearth") of imagining that they are an alpha and omega, an insuperable barrier to easy fellowship. Gold (op. cit., pp. 88-89), though he abuses the point mercilessly and ruins it by calling both boys social "innocents," and McLaughlin (op. cit., p. 240) both recognize that Aleck is not casually included by Faulkner, that this black/white unity is as paradigmatic as are other conjunctions in Intruder in the Dust. Kartiganer (op. cit., pp. 46-49) labors toward the same conclusion--but draws back from it by speaking of the boys as "violators" of community. A great many critics are so impressed by the Roth/Henry, Chick/Aleck formula that miss entirely the distinctive qualities of the latter part (cf., for example, Taylor [dissertation, p. 187]); and they ignore the similarity to Ringo/Bayard.

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[126] Miss Habersham, with her thirty-dollar shoes, eighteen-dollar gloves, and cheap Sears and Roebuck dress (unmistakable emblems of her gentility, her sense of her own dignity and of the irrelevance to it of wealth), has proved a particular stumbling block for critics who are intent upon making *Intruder in the Dust* out to be a simple

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and total repudiation of the entire Southern social tradition--"Sartoris" as well as Mr. Lilley's confusion. Howe (op. cit., p. 101), Mrs. Vickery (op. cit., p. 140), and Mizener (op. cit., p. 164) fall back on bald assertion in the face of facts in the effort to label her as "beyond the ordinary, social world [which she inherited]," "an exception to her class and sex . . . [in her exaltation of] human relations above social ties," and an "outsider." Gold (op. cit., p. 88), though he mismanages his point, does accept her as "the best of the past." But his trouble, and that of his less perceptive cohorts, is still a confusion of the communal with what the antagonist has helped to make of it.

One further observation on Miss Habersham. As Mr. Lytle reasons ("Reneration for the Man," p. 124), the tasks performed by this great lady in Intruder are evidences of another "transposition of functions" by men and women. Admittedly, there is ground for associating her with Rosa Millard in her "mule trading days." But Eunice Habersham acts here, as in Go Down, Moses, in order to get men to act for her. She is what Elnora ("There Was a Queen") calls "quality," and she gladly returns to her usual routine once Gavin and the sheriff bestir themselves. Her intrusion is temporary and is the sort of departure from "place" that Faulkner believes is natural to women, even needful--given the notions which govern men, notions which sometimes blunt even in a gentleman like Gavin what Lytle calls "intuition." There is nothing ominous for community in her rescue of Lucas. That children are involved is more serious; but in this writer's opinion, she is closer to Virginia Du Pre than to Rosa Millard.

with the talk (of manslaughter, the psychology of murderers and colored people, and the probable mercy of the court) which he means as much for her as for Charles (pp. 78-81). Like Faulkner's other matriarchs, she is an eminent pragmatist. She knows Gavin will require a push before he is to be drawn in. She recognizes that Lucas would not have called on Chick had an undertaking no adult white male would consider not been necessary to his survival. Beauchamp, as a Negro, would have as a birthright the knowledge that for his extra legal plans children or women, who have not acquired or cannot acquire the reflexes of habit and masculine "role playing," were the inevitable instruments (pp. 89-91). Therefore, she comes ready to go, raises no questions about the propriety or necessity of the task Lucas has set for his friends. She contributes moral reinforcement, counsel, confidence, and an old truck to the entourage--plus a little extra insurance, since the Gowries are even less likely to attack the group with her in it than they are to injure the boys by themselves.[127] And it is not unfair to Chick and Aleck to say that she (along with a little luck--Crawford's foolishness) makes the trip a success.

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[127] Brooks, William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country, p. 286.

Things move swiftly once the supporters of the innocence of Lucas Beauchamp (or at least the possibility of his innocence [Chick is still uncertain at this point--and Aleck probably the same]) are joined. Long trip out (Chick on Highboy, Aleck and Miss Habersham in the truck), maneuvers at Caledonia (encounters with quicksand, a mysterious-burdened mule, a grave-digging by flashlight, and discovery of the wrong corpse in Vinson Gowrie's coffin), and long trip back are, in effect, foreshortened into a moment. Miss Habersham's tact in discovering Chick's doubts (pp. 88-89), her continued and predictable impatience with the rules that would limit her efficiency in this emergency, and Chick's ruminations on the significance of the absence of Negroes from the road covered in the first stages of the nine-mile trip continue to develop or prepare the way for materials important to earlier or later scenes. But the reader passes over this section swiftly and is soon to Chapter V and back in Jefferson (p. 105).

Once home again, Chick is in more trouble than he encountered in the hills. First he goes and awakens his uncle to leave in the good lawyer's charge the use of what he and Aleck and the seventy-year old spinster have uncovered. Then Mrs. Mallison appears, and Gavin interrupts his sister's motherly intrusion to whisk his nephew away for more visiting, this time to Hope Hampton's. Stevens is not surprised by what the boy has done, especially since Miss Habersham was with him. Quickly purged of the inflexibility that had governed him the previous evening, he is momentarily expatiating upon one of his favorite subjects, the mystery that is womankind, while herding his awakener out to the truck where the other two conspirators are waiting. There is a quick word for Chick's mother (no more, for she, like Miss Habersham, is not to be argued down) and some reassurance for the boy that he need not concern himself about giving her further worry. (Women, of course, are strong.) Gavin is not slow to act on his new truth, just a little shamefaced (though he denies it) at having it flung in his teeth by those for whom he is supposed to provide guidance, instruction, and protection. But he is not surprised at that development either. The difference between the psychologies and moralities of adult males and females, so often remarked and so often demonstrated in his life (in this novel, The Town, The Mansion, Knight's Gambit, and Go Down, Moses), is as familiar to him as it is to Miss Habersham and Chick. He affirms the persistent distinction as part of the strength of his community. Other "dependables" are, however, equally important to its survival. And at least one of these is totally masculine.

Hampton cooking breakfast for himself at 3:30 in the morning is an impressive figure. The big fellow's conduct when informed by the County Attorney of a complication in his murder case is the beginning of the novel's resolution. He is another of Faulkner's redoubtable yeomen, close to his country origins (anything he eats after the sun is up is still dinner for him [p. 107]), steady, and politically astute: morally and functionally good. He knows his county, knows what a word from Miss Habersham means, how to arrange for and proceed in opening the grave at Beat Four, and how to protect Lucas while he is gone. He can handle Gowries and is masterful with a mob. Once the delivering of Lucas from the jurisdiction of Judge Lynch is in his hands, the reader senses that the matter is all but settled. Even his unhurried insistence that his unexpected guests join him in breakfast (p. 114)--before he begins to clear up confusion--is reassuring. The sheriff, although almost never recognized as such, is one of the heroes of Intruder in the Dust. He is too plain, too undramatic and invincible. But the way in which everyone relaxes in his presence is a certain sign that there is still much that is healthy in Yoknapatawpha and that Gavin went to the right "authority" with the "evidence" from Caledonia.

With Hope in motion, the visitors at his house disband. Aleck goes home. Miss Habersham, one labor yet to perform, returns to her house to pick up some mending (Mrs. Tubbs must not be made to entertain her) and then is quickly back to the jail to take Will Legate's place in the doorway. The forces that threatened community are at bay--even though they do not know it. And these resurgent evidences of endurance of given duty on every hand, Chick and Gavin are at this point actually free to do as they wish; but they join the lawman as spectators to his efficiency, carried along by the momentum of the chain of events they have set in motion and by their own compulsion to remain close by his side if needed. First, however, they feel obliged to stop by the Mallisons once more and explain their enterprise to Maggie.

That fine lady, predictably, objects to their plan but does not forestall them in the performance of their manhood. For her own part, though, she has something to add; she insists on joining Miss Habersham at the jail. If not by his own role, then most certainly by the good conduct of all his adult associates on this morning, Chick is assuredly to be put in mind of the importance to society of the honorable performance of each man, woman, and child in his or her own "ordered place"--to be disabused of any notion he might have had that the emotions concerning Lucas' situation which have so overwhelmed him are unique. In other words, he is certain to be reminded of "Sartoris" the ideal as opposed to the various travesties of that ideal that confound his people: Jefferson's present (one-storey Florida-designed warrens inhabited by displaced rustics who are losing their character in an unhealthy collectivity) and past (tall old houses set far back from the street where telegraph reports from Tennessee, Virginia, and Pennsylvania are yet awaited [pp. 119-120]). One other important ingredient besides his instruction in the duties that belong to station, the necessity for interdependence, and the character of women (recurrent motifs in Gavin's discourse and in Chick's thought throughout Chapters V-VII) is, however, prepared in these pages, an ingredient which throws these other themes into focus: uncle and nephew are both made painfully aware of the still-gathering Jefferson mob, its character, and the effect its existence has had on the entire Negro population of the county. Only Hampton's tremendous personal "presence" and iron nerve enables him to get free of a crowd around the jail and down the road with the "help" he picked up there (pp. 138-43). And not a Negro is in sight as the kinsmen move around town preparing for their own departure. The themes connected with these impressions are soon to be treated in full. But the dynamic of the book is not yet ready for rounding off and synthesis. First comes the encounter with the Gowries.

Chapter VII of Intruder in the Dust (pp. 144-66) occurs while Chick and Gavin are following the high sheriff and his convict gravediggers--are on their way to Beat Four, upcountry. Finally, there is time for conversation, "regrouping"--for the implications of what he has done and why he has had to do it to begin to settle in Chick's mind and that of his uncle. Half asleep and more than a little befuddled by the joking but ugly crowd around Hampton's car, the boy at first sits quiet, watches the passing scene, and considers what he has just seen and heard in Jefferson. An anomaly in the rustic panorama rouses him from silence to speech as Gavin's car rushes on:

> . . . the empty fields themselves in each of which on this day at this hour on the second Monday in May there should have been fixed in monotonous repetition the land's living symbol--a formal group of ritual almost mystic significance identical and monotonous as milestones tying the county-seat to the county's ultimate rim as milestones would: the beast the plow and the man integrated in one foundationed into the frozen wave of their furrow tremendous with effort yet at the same time vacant of progress, ponderable immovable and immobile like groups of wrestling statuary set against the land's immensity--until suddenly (they were eight miles from town; already the blue-green lift of the hills was in sight) he said with an incredulous an almost shocked amazement who except for Paralee and Aleck Sander and Lucas had not seen one in going on forty-eight hours:
>
> "There's a nigger."
>
> "Yes," his uncle said. "Today is the ninth of May. This county's got half of a hundred and forty-two thousand acres to plant yet. Somebody's got to stay home and work":--the car rushing boring up so that across the field's edge and perhaps fifty yards separating them he and the Negro behind the plow looked eye to eye into each other's face before the Negro looked away--the face black and gleamed with sweat and passionate with effort, tense concentrated and composed, the car flashing past and on while he leaned first out the open window to look back then turned in the seat to see back through the rear window, watching them still in their rapid unblurred diminishment--the man and the mule and the wooden plow which coupled them furious and solitary, fixed and without progress in the earth, leaning terrifically against nothing. (pp. 147-48)

The solitary Negro plowman about his proper business sets off (as do the pastoral interludes in a court comedy of the Renaissance) the social distemper he ignores--the disorder engendered by Vinson Gowrie's death--and brings home to Chick how very profound and general that disorder is.[128] Farmer, mule, plow, and stubborn but fruitful earth are together a projection of the working agreement with Nature, vertical endurance that makes possible horizontal, which Yoknapatawpha has forgotten or lost the capacity to practice. Moreover, they are another living insistence that every part must be reserved a respected place in an operative, organic whole--reinforcement to the examples of Miss Habersham, Gavin, the high sheriff, Will Legate, Maggie Mallison, Aleck, and himself. No man's addressing of himself to the tasks immediately before him, the thing which must be done by him if it is to be done at all, is contemptible. In other words, the plowman's defiance of the postbellum decorum of race relations in an embattled South helps to recall to Mallison (or will, after Gavin sets him straight, help to recall) the original vision of good order and community in whose name that battle had been joined. Gavin, sensing what is disturbing the boy, delivers, in broken fashion, his first monologue: to insure that his nephew approach the questions which besiege him in the context to which they belong. Now (as has usually been the case with them since Chick's infancy), the two kinsmen are again thinking almost as one. As present experience, subsequent events, and surrounding silent meditations reveal, his remarks are to the point. But Chick does not yet begin to answer. There is a little "saving" left to do and another challenge to meet; for just facing the Gowries at this time will be dangerous. The hills of Beat Four are just beyond them as Gavin commences to recapitulate the history of Mississippi; and soon the stark outline and ominous inscription of Caledonia Chapel come into view. Young Mallison pushes back into his consciousness the reply which he is later to make to his uncle, the articulation of his rage at what his people have almost made of themselves, and considers the one final ingredient which must enter into the "stream" and sequence of his adventures before his "education" can be completed: the oldest South (Indians excepted), older than the culture itself because transported thither from another "highland fastness," the frontier Scots and Scotch-Irish South of the people whom he had from the first supposed to be his principal enemies in the struggle to save town and county from undoing themselves in the ignominious, impersonal, and undeserved slaying of one old darky.

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[128] As Frederick Hoffman half-recognizes (op. cit., pp. 27-28), the scene is a tableau of endurance, an epic simile of pride and humility in balance: motion that is stasis, changeless, the emblematic norm.

If the dignity of Hope Hampton has been inexcusably overlooked and systematically ignored, that of another of Faulkner's representative plain men, Nathan Bedford Forrest Gowrie, has been even more astonishingly abused. What Chick learns of and from old one-armed Nub is of central importance to his moral and intellectual development, his discovery of his own place. For like most of the other major characters given thorough depiction in _Intruder in the Dust_, this taciturn clan chieftain is a summary figure. The further unraveling of the murder mystery, the confirmation of Lucas' innocence and Crawford's guilt--the now empty grave opened at Hampton's insistence by Nub's boys (it being understood by the sheriff that there will be hell to pay if the opening is without justification), the bizarre search in the creek bottom for two bodies, their discovery, and the hill men's departure (with Vinson's body and the conviction that fratricide has been committed)--all are incidental to the impact of Chapter VIII (pp. 167-79). What the reader comes away from it with is a memory of the Gowrie presence: fierce, indomitable, ruthless--but fair, grieving. As much as he had been mistaken about Lucas in the early chapters, young Mallison realizes he has had a misconception about these people. The Gowries are the least of their kind--for the most part productive of only blood vengeance, whiskey, and more Gowries. They do not, like their neighbors the McCallums and Frasers, play a necessary role in the life of their community. Like Chick when he is first confronted with the responsibility for Lucas and like the old Negro until his redemption is completed, they are too intent upon their "freedom," pride without humility. But they are typical enough of Faulkner's upcountry yeomanry in their one appearance in this novel. Even Faulkner's censure of some of their faults is at times almost affectionate, mere raillery. They do exclude Negroes from their world--and everyone else who much differs from them. In this particularism their conduct is a reflex of their fierce Scots pride, their piety--the antithesis of Vinson's mendacity and Crawford's ultimate disloyalty to blood. In this they speak the language of the South, fought for by the men they name sons and grandsons after, of the South which built Jefferson's jail and courthouse and which lives in the memory of every admirable character in this novel.[129] The malaise of the mob which awaits their coming in Jefferson does not affect them. The Gowries would have killed Lucas, not just because he was black or the present agent of some external enemy but as a personal matter, something no self-respecting highlander would leave to a court. But they are of no danger to him until they are convinced he is guilty; and they have no taste for vicarious sharing in ritual coldblooded violence. They live by a responsible rule, a rule even better kept by their less intemperate neighbors. Once made a fulltime part of Yoknapatawpha, they will add more to its character and backbone, contribute more to its recovery from facelessness than all the Mr. Lilleys in Jefferson. Once it comes to him that Nub Gowrie mourns his son, once he sees the old man clumsily cleaning the quicksand from the sightless eyes and breathless nostrils of his son, once he observes his iron composure in distress, Chick puts away all hostility toward him. Not the "nigger" in Lucas, the imperception of Gavin and Hampton, nor the savagery in Beat Four will serve for a one-shot explanation of what ails Yoknapatawpha; the answers lie in history, and in the ideological confusions it has occasioned and sustained. Therefore, because Chick does not know that history as he should, it is time for talk.[130]

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[129] The Gowries are likewise typical Faulkner in having their substantial qualities connected with their inveterate ruralism. Departures from land to city often parallel the movement from one generation to the next (Crawford and Vinson [in his trading], for instance). The movement is usually out and down. What may be said of the Gowries' virtues may also apply to Lucas, Hope Hampton, Miss Habersham, and even to the educated Gavin (who is philosophically "agrarian" on frequent occasions scattered about in the novel). That there has been a falling off among the younger people is beyond question.

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[130] For a representative sample of nodding of heads and wagging accusing fingers toward the Gowries which appears in all the anti-traditional comment on Intruder in the Dust, the reader should see Mrs. Vickery (op. cit., pp. 138-39) where this persistent personage finds in Gowrie's pronouncement of judment on Crawford an analogue of Carothers McCaslin's summoning his half-breed daughter to his bed--labeling both patriarchy in action. Even responsible and politically temperate critics of the stamp of Millgate (op. cit., p. 217) are disturbed and surprised that Nub Gowrie should be admirable. Brooks (William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country, pp. 23-24) is exceptional in accrediting the old man with "a sense of community" and "code of values" embodied in Caledonia. But the credit for the most thorough refurbishment of the Gowries must go to Elmo Howell, who by insisting on the connection of the family broken by greed and deceit in Intruder with Faulkner's other yeomen and with the Celts of Northern Scotland has made available to the reader of

Apparently the trip back to town by Chick and Gavin is uneventful and silent. Nothing about it is reported in the novel. Though everything has been prepared for the at-this-moment inevitable "threshing out," the fuse will require ignition. The Gowries' departure homeward with corpse-bearing mule is too solemn and painful to serve as a backdrop for harangue. The thought of what this family must soon do, of the gathering of father and four remaining brothers round a table to condemn Crawford to expulsion and death (pp. 219-28) and the second burial to follow--these preclude any dramatic or warm words from Chick. But the "mob" from Beats One, Two, Three, and Five is still in Jefferson, the great "face" (as Chick comes to see it [pp. 181-94]) which has collected itself together from most of the county, the composite of which Mr. Lilley is microcosm.

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the novel what Faulkner intended ("William Faulkner and the New Deal" and "William Faulkner's Caledonia," cited above). Especially delightful is Howell's observation on the shape of the Gowrie noses, the father's like an eagle's--the sons' (clearly lesser men) no bigger than hawks' ("William Faulkner and the New Deal," p. 330).

Also of interest is the grudging but genuine acknowledgment that the Gowries are substantial people with a discipline--good raw material for a healthy social order by the Negro scholar, Charles Nilon (op. cit., pp. 4-5).

When these folk learn of Lucas' innocence and Crawford's crime, when they learn that the white race (metaphorically speaking) has been injured from within--not by a Negro--they flee, disperse in a matter of moments. Perceived through a veil of hysteria, as in a dream (p. 205), this spectacle is spark enough. The resolution of one of the two external actions, Lucas versus the town (the other being the changing relation between Chick and Lucas), again affects the pattern of their internal and more important counterpart. Shame objectified releases its own verbalization in the now alienated but still responsible young gentleman--concerned for his people and not just himself. Even if anticipated a bit earlier, in silence, in potential, it is at this point in the novel's structure that its third stage begins. Charles Mallison's preoccupation with his private impasse with Lucas Beauchamp is long since behind him. But something of a personal, private objection to his involvement in the imperfection of his community remains, even grows when he realizes that it is far gone in fratricide. Moral pride affects him, closing his eyes as did other assumptions before. From blaming one of his black brothers (or blackness), to blaming some of his white brothers, to blaming them all (or whiteness) he has come. If there can be no brotherhood, he will "resign" from all--or so he implies in pouring out his wrath on Stevens. And the survival of brotherhood as the word is understood in this study is always in question when community is imperiled. The formal cause of the entire fable, the body in the grave--which is not the body the angry whites imagine there--and the prospect that those men disturbed by it will be led by one of their own race to blame a Negro for what he (the misleader) has done, are together miniatures of antecedent and concurrent developments in the enveloping action. Chick cannot put all of these parts together. Only after Gavin has demonstrated to him that what he has done almost by instinct--the enactment of duties appertaining to his inherited place--is the way to answer his personal objections to what he now realizes that place is, only then are they resolved and he able to see that anger is the refraction of his love, his absolute oneness with his people: that he *is* himself only through that identification.

To indicate his acceptance of what his uncle insists is true, the boy takes a meal with his family (an age-old symbol of communion and one that refers to another, contrasting meal with Lucas at the beginning of the action). Then he mocks his own Ike-McCaslin-like "righteousness" (p. 210) and is reassured by his uncle that he has not been wrong in his zeal for the right--only confused about how to implement it. Before (with Lucas at Hampton's) and after dinner at the jail (as Lucas and Hampton leave to trap Crawford) and in Gavin's office (where Miss Habersham has explained to him what she has been into, how there came to be a killing, how Crawford's second victim, Jake Montgomery, and Lucas became involved), the loose ends of the story are tied together. On p. 211 Charles' initiation is complete. As he walks the street and into the square of Jefferson (its heart), he comes finally into his manhood:

> . . . unhurried and solitary but nothing at all of forlorn, instead with a sense a feeling not possessive but proprietary, viceregal, with humility still, himself not potent but at least the vessel of a potency like the actor looking from wings or perhaps empty balcony down upon the waiting stage vacant yet garnished and empty yet, nevertheless where in a moment now he will walk and posture. . . . (p. 211)

The very words that come to him at this time project the fully developed sense of stewardship in Faulkner's protagonist, the peace he has made with himself *and* with his people: his readiness to confront and contend with the mixed inheritance that will come to him as it came to Miss

Habersham, Gavin, Lucas, and Hope--as it came in earlier days (and other books) to Quentin Compson, Virginia Du Pre, Granny Millard, Bayard Sartoris, Cass Edmonds, and the McCaslin twins. Finally, he is ready to resolve independence with responsibility in the spirit of that confederation with which his world began.[131]

As I have already suggested, the lesson which brings Chick to this final completion is an instruction in history, in just what it is he will have to correct (which he half knows already) and how that distemper in Yoknapatawpha's body politic--the South's--came into being, since there can be no cure without knowledge of cause. Seen in its place in Chick's development as a Mallison, a Stevens, as a "vessel" of "Sartoris," Gavin's speeches are functional--organic parts of an overall design. We are obliged to remember that they are as much Charles' as Gavin's; in fact, one of them (the last) is his alone (pp. 215-17).[132] They make considerable reference to the United States beyond the borders of Chick's and Gavin's region because Chick is likely to misplace the blame for Yoknapatawpha's confusion about community if he forgets how they were brought to that confusion: the fire without that stirred the fever within and obscured the primary enemy behind his potential agent. That portion of the lawyer's argument and exposition is the correlative of his lengthy condemnation of machines, urban blight, the new "commercial spirit," and statism in Mississippi. The South is worthy of the devotion its children give to it because it has, in some measurable degree, resisted all.

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[131] The chief support for this structural analysis is, of course, Lytle's "Regeneration for the Man." Vickery (op. cit., pp. 134-35), Taylor (dissertation, "The Roles of the Negro in William Faulkner's Fiction," pp. 184-87), and Volpe (op. cit., p. 255) more or less admit that the three-part division of the novel is as I describe it. McLaughlin (op. cit., pp. 227-28), Howe (op. cit., pp. 98-102), and Gold (op. cit., pp. 89-92) miss stage three.

[132] In support of this view, see Millgate (op. cit.,

Gavin does not really have any problem in persuading Chick that a distinctive South deserves to survive--or in persuading him that the North, even in the mid-twentieth century, is still its enemy. But for the culture to survive,

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pp. 215-16), Robert Elias (_op. cit._ in _Faulkner Studies_ [Spring 1954]), _The Faulkner-Cowley File_ (p. 18). Mr. Lytle also concurs; and he agrees further that it would have been a mistake to include an objectification of that antagonist such as the writer recommended in footnote above ("Regeneration for the Man," pp. 123-24). Taylor (dissertation, "The Roles of the Negro in William Faulkner's Fiction," p. 198) and Vickery (_op. cit._, p. 249) realize, as do the aforementioned defenders of the speeches, that they are Gavin's and Chick's. But they make nothing of the fact.

be its essential self, all of its subdivisions _must_, to use Gavin's word again, "confederate" (p. 156 _et seq._)--not break up into hostile camps or "faces." The "homogeneity" of components (ethnic and philosophic) need not be sacrificed if they (Scots, Saxons, Negroes, etc.; yeomen, merchants, professionals, planters) each agree to admit (as far as the priority of their own survival will allow) that each is necessary to the other, that each is worthy of its own manhood--notions of equality aside. The concession must be two-sided. But melting pot and confederation are different things. (What Gavin [and Faulkner] thinks of the former is clearly indicated in the allusion to Europe's "coastal spew" [p. 153].) People do not "escape" into each other, do not in this Faulkner work any more than in the others escape at all (p. 155). Integrity is strong only when grounded in the sort of self-respect (pride) that makes escape seem unattractive. It cannot be sustained at the expense of others' distinctiveness--upon some theory that "Gowries will bear watchin'" or "niggers need keepin' down," or upon the antithetical folly that all men can be _made_ equal in their own or their world's eyes. White and colored manhood are at stake. The old enemy of both, an "armed doctrine," waits in the wings. Hence, Gavin's oft quoted remarks about the "freedom" (i.e., liberty) to do a lot of things (things he probably will not choose to do if he respects himself and his neighbor) that will belong to "Sambo." Hence also the associated qualification of those comments in the exception from the promise of those Negroes who so despise themselves as to become "second-rate" specimens of the other race--violating its homogeneity and their own (p. 155). Hence finally Faulkner's (his because Gavin's pointed ramblings earn this identification as a climactic in the unfolding of the novel's theme) outrage at externally imposed "improvements."[133] Under Gavin's

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[133] Not Jim Crow per se but the attitude toward the Negro behind the codification of social separatism is in question here (see Faulkner in the University, pp. 214-16, 225). It is altogether logical that an atypical Negro should, as in Intruder in the Dust, touch the conscience of conservative white Southerners and lead them to re-evaluate the pattern of life and assumptions followed by their community, "Sambo" in general. Gavin never identifies Lucas as a "Sambo"; in fact, the point of the lawyer's relation to Beauchamp is that there is no composite "Sambo," that there are classes among Negroes that must be treated accordingly. Mrs. Vickery (op. cit., p. 255) imagines that homogeneity and "confederation" require the abolition of "class" and social structuring. In the same passage she discovers that Faulkner attributes the homogeneity of Southern whites to a single source, "collective guilt."

"gentlemen's agreement" arrangement every man will (within reason) rise or fall toward his own rightful level if he addresses himself, to the fullness of his ability, to his own immediate situation-place, and if respect is accorded him in proportion to his use of his "talent." The call for patience in the Negro (pp. 156, 204) and impatience in the white (pp. 206, 242) is historical realism. Yet this realism has its hopeful side. _Intruder in the Dust_, we repeat, is structurally if not tonally comic. Saturnalia comes to an end because at least some Yoknapatawphans can learn, at least some can be appealed to in that they have, even in their blindest, most aberrant seasons, the hungering for community with dignity that had brought their fathers to the great heartland beyond the mountains, that still brings Mississippi boys to imagine at fourteen that "_This time_. _Maybe this time_ . . ." (p. 195).

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With Chick settled down into being the young man Lucas and Gavin and Miss Habersham know, from the first, that he will become, only one portion of the "business" of _Intruder in the Dust_ remains to be completed: the one which began earliest, between the boy and the old Negro. This is accomplished in Chapter XI (pp. 235-47). From the time of the mob's flight onward, from their revulsion at fratricide and their embarrassment in Beauchamp's presence, Lucas has the advantage of Jefferson--as he did of Chick before the boy's intrusion in the dust of Caledonia (p. 199).[134] This is as far as they can go at present. Nevertheless, it is a good beginning, a step toward the eradication of race relations as an undeclared war, the position voiced by Mr. Lilley. But it is noteworthy that in the "repayment" or "bill settling" scene Chick (a half-serious ploy on Lucas' part aside) is not a party. Miss Habersham is also omitted. Astonishingly, Lucas even agrees to acknowledge her goodness with flowers (pp. 241-43). And Gavin himself is involved in only a token manner, in a degree measured by his original injury to his client's dignity and acknowledging his later service to the same man. The talk of expenses and the apparent struggle over their proportions are not without edge; but their chief importance is as a confirmation that Gavin and Lucas now understand each other and that *both* have changed. Indeed, the gestures made by the Negro may also have another, entirely gracious purpose, as an accommodation of the lawyer's dignity--an acceptance of his service as worthy. Their verbal fencing is a sort easily recognizable among Southerners, a special variety of *double-entendre* necessitated by tact and breeding.[135] These extraordinary dealings are improvements enough in the status and attitude of Lucas Beauchamp. However, there are more. Between Lucas and Young Mallison, despite the Negro's earlier promise of rewards, there is not now (nor can there be) more talk of repayment--no concern with it on either side--

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[134] This may be the point to insert that the writer takes the title of Intruder to have reference to Chick's activities as a grave robber. That it may signify more is, of course, probable. The trip Charles makes is down into the metaphoric "dust" as well as the literal, into the problems of the lowly and abused. Understood in this way, it fits beautifully with Go Down, Moses, Absalom, Absalom!, and (especially) The Unvanquished--all titles that point to the theme and principal action of the books to which they are attached. On the title of Intruder, see Waggoner (op. cit., p. 214).

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[135] Brooks (*William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country*, pp. 292-94) so interprets this episode. Longley wisely observes in the same connection that "in the human family the process of paying off debts is illusory" (*op. cit.*, p. 34). For evidence of persistence of this "confederation" in an even more recent South, the reader might consult *The Shreveport Times* of December 6, 1964 (XCIV, No. 9), p. 5-B, for an account of the Le Grand murder and the collective response to it made by *all* the inhabitants of the Will Robinson plantation at La Chute, Louisiana.

only light jest and comfortable decorous familiarity between gentlemen of different age and color, who are nonetheless friends, confederated in "Sartoris," which, through them and their cohorts, emerges once more as "unvanquished." How Faulkner felt about this issue he indicated clearly enough in the placement and dramatic rendering he gave it.

D. The Reivers

The Reivers is, framework aside, an even more obvious bildungsroman than The Unvanquished or Intruder in the Dust; but apart from its design and its emphasis upon the endurance theme (the to-be-expected corollary of that design), it is otherwise a very different book. For one thing, it answers less serious or at least less pressing questions. Nothing mortal is at stake in the immediate maturation of its protagonist. Community in his world is well supported, with or without Lucius Priest--in fact, so well supported and established as to deprive the book of its share of the customary Faulkner fireworks. Even the union of Everbe Corinthia and Boon Hogganbeck Lucius could have encouraged just as readily while remaining the nice little boy who left Jefferson, knowing better. It might even have occurred without him. As for the "breed's" expropriation of his employer's property, we know from the beginning that it is only borrowing, that he will return what he has reived and will not be cast off by the Priests in retribution. And no one could be expected to get the best of Ned Williams McCaslin or to feel like punishing him seriously if inconvenienced by one of his "arrangements": he knows too well how to manage. Assorted evils, problems, even villains also appear in the story; we are, however, never allowed to worry about them. They generate only ephemeral imbroglios. Their influence is dependent upon the persistence of the principals in folly, and they are without even the power to discomfort once the inceptional errors made by Faulkner's vagabond trio (Lucius, Boon, and Ned) are repented or corrected and the absurd complication engendered by those errors resolved. Throughout we are warned by tone, by the mock-heroic juxtaposition of lofty gabble about "Virtue vs. Non-virtue" against the genial ironies of the frame narrator (in which he is like the gentleman who usually stands between the reader and the subject in the humorous tales of the Old Southwestern frontier) not to take Lucius' hyperboles about the scale upon which he wars against encroaching darkness or the depth of his temporary perfidy too seriously. And likewise by his leisurely raconteurish dwelling on the most embarrassing moments in his "travels." But Lucius' maturation is privately important to Lucius. As he remembers it for his grandson (mock-heroic touches notwithstanding), it is the important thing about his descent into Saturnalia--hereafter to be called after that wicked city of the plain and valley, Memphis, Tennessee, and environs. For that reason he thinks it worthwhile to take time out of his old age to recall his adventures in the process of growing up fast to a young kinsman bound to travel the same highroad, bound to visit the same old "vanity fair." The telling itself is an appealing illustration of the values his narrative affirms. The irony is proof against his own myopia in regarding himself, a guarantee of aesthetic distance, a natural and realistic touch (How else do wise old men view the melodrama of their adolescent self-consciousness in "struggling upward?") and a check against any tendency that the reader might have to grow contemptuous of or impatient with an eleven year old Quixote's tilting on the downs or out behind the bawdy house.

Yet despite its serenity of theme and design and privacy of burden, The Reivers is a work of art, an aesthetic whole, a finer book than the other post-Nobel prize creations. The elegiac simplicity and calm are part of its perfection, as are the long episodic delays in scenes of rollicking humor. The flavor of the oral tale is part of Grandfather Priest's person, part of the verisimilitude of his portrait as a Southerner born before

1900, a Southerner for whom the art of tale telling would be a natural inheritance, to be practiced in a certain way when addressing youthful grandsons. And as for the comedy, the purposes of the genre to which the novel belongs have always been better served by it than by typical Faulkner tragi-comic teetering on the brink of disasters. Unfortunately, that perfection has not been widely recognized. The tone, the complete absence of serious perplexities and heroic figures, the lack of attendant agony in the resolution of the plot, and the narrator's obvious relish of his own tale--of the opportunity of giving it to his grandson--put off the enthusiasts of the Southern Gothic and the politically loaded expose. Tragi-comedy with its potential for criticism of a character's _morality_ and not just his _judgment_ suited them better. Even when tragi-comedy was not censorious in burden as the pillars and supporters of the critical Establishment expected it to be, it could be made out to be what it was not (_vide_ earlier discussion of the criticism of _Go Down, Moses_, _The Unvanquished_, and _Intruder in the Dust_) when subjected to their manipulation. Not so the simpler comedy. Therefore, despite a book club selection and huge sales, the reviews of _The Reivers_ were for the most part nervously respectful (Faulkner had become a towering figure among living American writers by 1962) but cool or evasive. It must be remembered the novel appeared only a few months before the Meredith explosion in Faulkner's native Oxford and not long after the bubble of Harper Lee's _To Kill a Mockingbird_ (1960); it was followed by the equally indefensible crazes for Carson McCuller's _Clock Without Hands_ (1961), Jesse Ford's _The Liberation of Lord Byron Jones_ (1965), Shirley Ann Grau's _The Keepers of the House_ (1964) and far lesser "compilations of evidence" that were commonplace between 1955 and 1965. The demand of the Establishment was for documentation and denunciation, annals of atrocity and protest, deep-Delta depravities. Only one song from the South was wanted; and the elder Priest's open and undistortable nostalgia for life in a bygone, even more tradition-bound South, a nostalgia _not_ qualified by authorial ironies, unnerved these worthies no end. True, most demurs were muted; but New York/Boston, _et al_ were plainly less than pleased. Academic criticism (but little thus far) has not taken a fresh tack. It continues in and elaborates the pattern set in the reviews.[136]

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[136] Setting the tone of the reviews was Irving Howe's

"Time Out for Fun in Old Mississippi" in the June 3, 1962, New York Times Book Review Section (VII, pp. 1, 24, and 25). Howe begins by insisting that The Reivers is "deliberately minor," an adventure story "without a total vision of life." He does recognize the book as a novel of initiation but blurs this distinction by adding that it is so much an example of the type as to be "a parody of that traditional pattern . . . [and] . . . not a solution, but an evasion, of the moral problems besetting . . . [his] recent work." To obfuscate matters further he turns aside from the main narrative, the fable proper, to praise the Negro member of Faulkner's thieving trio, Ned Williams McCaslin, as "an impressario of vitality" and to redefine his subject as "an act of comic praise to the refreshments of mischief": that is to say, Ned's novel from Chapter V on, a concession to the universal "need every once in a while to play hookey"--in the same relation to "The Bear" as Tom Sawyer to Twain's Huckleberry Finn. Finally he backs away from the lot of his meanderings with a warning for future readers against excessive analysis of "country froth." All of the veins Howe opens have been mined by successors. Indeed, most of them were opened simultaneously in other notices of the novel which appeared in late May and early June of 1962. The most popular of the just enumerated machines for denigrating this last Yoknapatawpha novel has been the "child's book" or tall tale theory as exemplified by: George Plimpton in New York Herald Tribune-Books for May 27, 1962 (Vol. 38, No. 43), p. 3--complete with the suggestion of "parody"; Terry Southern in "Tom Sawyer in a Brothel," Nation, June 9, 1962 (Vol. 194), 519-21; Hilary Corke in "Faulkner Across the Water," New Republic, July 16, 1962 (Vol. 147, Issue 2489), 20-22--with the observation that the novel is "homosexual"; V. S. Pritchett in "That Time and That Wilderness," Sept. 28, 1962, New Statesman (Vol. LXIV, no. 1646), 405-406; and in Newsweek's "Picaresque but Puzzling" for June 4, 1962 (Vol. LIX, No. 23), 100. A variant of this strategy is Leslie Fiedler's contention that The Reivers is "ladies' literature"--a peace offering to the sex for injury done their reputation with earlier (and, Fiedler believes, more honest) works--a Faulknerian "Legend of Good Women" ("The Last of Faulkner," Manchester Guardian Weekly, October 4, 1962 [Vol. 87, No. 4], 10). Equally suitable as a "respectable" procedure for evading the novel (and a muted double of Howe's "deliberately minor") is to prate of it as evidence of Faulkner's "mellowness," as in: Thomas F. Curley's "Faulkner Smiles," *Commonweal*, June 22, 1962 (Vol. LXXVI, No. 13), 331-32; to an extent, William Barrett's "Reader's Choice" for the July, 1962, *Atlantic Monthly* (Vol. 210), 109-110; Gouverneur Paulding's "Running Away" for the July 5, 1962, *Reporter* (Vol. XXVII, No. 1), 38; and certainly *Time's* June 8, 1962, "Prospero in Yoknapatawpha" (Vol. 79), p. 90. The Establishment reviews in several cases are so echoic as to give rise to the suspicion that they were written in collusion (Plimpton and Southern print evidence that theirs were). I omit from this blanket castigation (though he appears to share the assumption that any Faulkner [or any Southern] comedy must be "minor") Granvile Hicks' "Building Blocks of a Gentleman," *Saturday Review of Literature*, June 2, 1962 (Vol. 45), 27; and (although it smacks over much of the "mellowness" routine) William E. Mueller's "'The Reivers': William Faulkner's Valediction," *Christian Century* of September 4, 1963 (Vol. LXXX, No. 36), 1079-81; and the London *Times Literary Supplement's* "The Last of William Faulkner," September 21, 1962 (No. 3160), p. 726--excellent on the importance of a knowledge of the social norms of Yoknapatawpha to a reading. Hicks, Mueller, and the *Times* reviewer try to take the novel on its own terms. The best of the reviews, however, is that of Warren Beck in the Autumn, 1962, *Virginia Quarterly Review* (Vol. XXXVIII), 681-85, entitled simply "Told with Gusto." The merit of Beck's essay is a direct result of his wariness of gambits exploited by critics discussed earlier in this note--wariness of "supercilious latter-day depreciation as the benign foolery of an elder-citizen" of the "true virtuosity" of the Mississippi writer's last work (p. 681).

Not long after the reviews of *The Reivers* appeared brief comment on the novel in Thompson (*op. cit.*, pp. 14-15 ["trivial amusement . . . tired"]); Swiggart (*op. cit.*, pp. 207-14 [the first really open complaint about the "reactionary" burden of Ned's portrait]); and W. F. Taylor, Jr.'s dissertation ("The Roles of the Negro in William Faulkner's Fiction," pp. 233-35 [more anxiety about the significance of the same character]). These were followed by longer and more miscellaneous essays: in the revised (1964) edition of Mrs. Vickery's *The Novels of William Faulkner* (pp. 228-39--a valuable reading yet somehow damaged by all the aforementioned crotchets and evasions--from a text not used by me

Only in _Go Down, Moses_ is the importance of endurance underscored as openly as in _The Reivers_. Only in _Go Down, Moses_ is the question of what constitutes a proper balance of pride and humility more apparent. Lucius Priest, boy and grandfather, defines the tension out of which the fable proper unfolds as being between "Virtue" and "Non-virtue"--responsibility and escape. Non-virtue takes either the form of thoughtless presumption (no big Promethean schemes here) and the feckless violation of duty or that of flight from the consequences of irresponsibility, a

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save in this division of this chapter); in Brooks' _William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country_ (pp. 349-68--perhaps the best yet); Millgate (_op. cit._, pp. 253-58); Volpe (_op. cit._, pp. 344-49--the worst); Tuck (_op. cit._, pp. 120-24); and Gold (_op. cit._, pp. 174-87--the best thing in his book). Explication in the learned journals has finally gotten underway: William Rossky's "'The Reivers': Faulkner's _Tempest_'" (_Mississippi Quarterly_, XVIII [Spring, 1965], 82-93); Rossky's "'The Reivers' and 'Huckleberry Finn': Faulkner and Twain" (_Huntington Library Quarterly_, XXVIII [August, 1965], 375-87); William and Doris Donnelly's "William Faulkner: In Search of Peace" (_Personalist_, XLIV [Autumn, 1963], 490-98); Elmo Howell's "In Ole Mississippi: Faulkner's Reminiscence" (_Kansas Magazine_, 1965 [n.v], pp. 77-81); J. M. Mellard's excellent "Faulkner's 'Golden Book': 'The Reivers' as Romantic Comedy" (_Bucknell Review_, XIII [December, 1965], pp. 19-31) and Elizabeth M. Kerr's, "The Reivers: The Golden Book of Yoknapatawpha Country," _Modern Fiction Studies_, XIII (Spring, 1967), 95-113. To these longer essays or chapters and to their extensions and developments of approaches introduced in the reviews I will make further reference as occasion arises.

flight which aggravates ill effects and increases their cost so long as it continues. Virtue also has several faces requiring the best of its champions in both the expected devoirs which belong to a particular station and in some other roles purely coincidental. And virtue, once lost, is infinitely hard to recover. For it returns only to those of whom the most painful variety of endurance, that of the consequences of errors recognized in their full magnitude, has been required. Even as he makes his first wrong step, these terms are in conflict within the mind of Lucius--and are clearly understood by him. Yet he sins. No one else is to blame. No infectious envelope here, no manipulating Yankees (save the pleasant and gentlemanly Mr. Van Tosch) or harmful ideology--only the good example and instruction of the elder Priests and the harmless sinners whom Lucius always knows for what they are. Reason is not enough, nor knowledge. _Will_ is necessary. And this last is no built-in strength, even in Faulkner's best fiction (p. 246).[137] It is not come by easily. It has to be developed, usually in a well heated crucible over the old dependable fires of shame and remorse. Such purgation, though not always dramatized for the reader, is underway inside Lucius throughout the book.

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[137] This and all future citations from _The Reivers_ are from the 1962 Random House edition.

All of the themes of The Reivers (and the tension whose unfolding is the occasion for their exploration) are adumbrated in its opening episode. Chapter I functions as "overture" to the remainder, introducing setting, characters, and subject. It is not connected with the main narrative but rather serves to anticipate it in miniature (and to link the entire novel with the remainder of the Yoknapatawpha Cycle, with which its author assumes the reader's familiarity). Lucius' role in the overture is that of a fully informed spectator. Lucius has no excuse for not learning from the interlude better than what he does with Ned, Boon, and his grandfather's car. That he *will* not is proof that he is no victim of subtle tempters.[138]

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[138] There is some internal evidence that this initial chapter was last or separately written. There are contradictions between its pages and the remainder of the novel (for instance, the announcement that Boon has neglected to perform his *regular* duty when he failed to meet the train [p. 32] and the earlier report [p. 8] that Dan Grinnup has had that assignment for years). Should manuscript evidence

The principals in Chapter I are Boon Hogganbeck, about forty years old; Maury Priest, the father of the narrator; and three Negroes, Ludus, John Powell, and Son Thomas. Ludus sets all in motion; he (in a situation parallel to Boon's in the story proper) is taken with a girl of his own race who lives well beyond the confines of Jefferson. To visit her in the evening he borrows his employer's mules and takes advantage of the fact that only the easily intimidated John Powell of the Negroes are present for him to hoodwink if he is to keep the equipage

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corroborate my conjecture, it would confirm my view of the total structure of this novel. Professor James B. Meriwether has shared his familiarity with Faulkner's text and with the novelist's practice in preparing it with the writer (personal letter of March 1, 1967) and concludes his response to a query about Chapter I of The Reivers by saying: "I was in fairly frequent contact with Faulkner during the writing of this novel without having any impression that he was breaking his habit in previous books of ending with the beginning, as you suggest." Professor Michael Millgate (personal letter of March 12, 1967) likewise concurs with this view of what is probable, adding that even if Chapter I were written long before the rest of the novel, my view of its structural function remains well supported. Of earlier commentators on The Reivers only Beck ("Told with Gusto," p. 682) has a similar view of that chapter. Howe particularly dislikes it, going so far as to describe it as "tiresome rant" ("Time Out for Fun in Old Mississippi").

out all night. But he is tripped up by his own chicanery. So as to win free of the scrutiny of Boon, who doesn't really believe his implausible story about instructions from their employer to soak a wagon wheel in the family pond, the enamored Negro agrees to pick up for the night foreman some whiskey before he returns the rig whose absence he is explaining--good homemade whiskey available only at the remote still of Uncle Cal Bookwright.[139] Because his gambit is so tenuous, Ludus promises what he can't provide and still court his girl. In other words, he bargains, swaps services for safety--even more carelessly than did the Frenchman's Bend folk for spotted horses. He can't take the chance that Boon will call his hand and contact Boss Priest or the foreman, can't risk assuming that even the boyish giant will be deceived by his tale of shrunken wheels; and he can't make it all the way out to the Winbush place (where Bookwright's still operates) in the traveling time he has allotted. So he tries compromise. He visits his paramour, stops by for some cheap whiskey available close to home (Boon calls it "rotgut"--"lye and red pepper" --probably a Negro concoction), and returns the borrowed wagon and team before the change of shift and the arrival of the head men. Ludus imagines he has covered his tracks. But Boon had given him two dollars for good Bookwright whiskey. He is irate with what Ludus, who is probably accustomed to such brew, has brought him instead. The terms of their contract (impossible and dangerous for both from the first, given Ludus' primary intentions) have been broken. The "white" accessory tells Mr. Ballott the whole story, so as to get Ludus fired; in fact, he insists that

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[139] I believe there may be a misprint on p. 11 of The Reivers which, if corrected, would greatly clarify the question of Boon's part in the provocation of Ludus and thus, in his own discomfiture. In line nine the context calls for "not" after "could"--". . . you could [not] have expected even Boon to believe, as John Powell immediately did not, since anyone who knew either would have known that, whatever the disposition he made of the wagon for the night, Father would have sent Ludus to lead the team back to their stalls in the livery stable. . . ." Boon isn't fooled by Ludus' yarn, though his penetration of its transparency is no sign that he has suddenly acquired intellect. Ludus' plan is not to fool anyone. All he expects to do is avoid exposure. Boon, he foresees, will not care why he keeps the team if he has an excuse for not bothering about its location or any "nightwork" imposed on Priest mules--and if he can get something out of the irregularity for himself. On p. 13 Boon describes Ludus' explanation of why he did not return at day's end with the rig he started out with that morning a "cock-and-bull story." He reports matter of factly, "I never even listened." Even John Powell, assuredly no admirer of Hogganbeck's perceptiveness, "ain't good convinced [speaking of the imaginary fool who might be expected to believe Ludus] that his name is Hogganbeck" (p. 12). All Boon does (like the rest of the principals in this "overture") is to violate a trust in an apparently safe and harmless fashion, taking advantage of Ludus' mania to indulge his own thirst.

Ludus be fired. This, in turn, angers the black drayman who is unwilling to forfeit what he foreknew would be the wages of sin if his nocturnal wanderings were exposed: position, wages (plus the two dollars for refund to Boon), and (most irritating) transportation. He has acquired a sense of personal grievance instead of an awareness of the inevitability of retribution. And, like Flem's victims, Ludus murmurs--calls Boon a name (reflecting on his intelligence and his ancestry [about both of which we know him to be sensitive, and with reason]), even goes to the trouble to do it in such a way as to insure that his words are widely reported. Boon is publicly affronted. He goes first for Maury Priest's revolver, with no luck, and then for John Powell's. After pursuing Ludus into the square, he there proceeds in his best Hogganbeck fashion to shoot up everything in sight except his high-stepping target.[140]

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[140] The shooting recalls an episode reported in Go Down, Moses (pp. 235-36) in which Boon empties a pistol at a Negro. Boon, in that book (p. 228), is apparently about the same age that he is in The Reivers; however, in the 1962 novel we are informed that he was raised with Ike and in Go Down, Moses that he is almost thirty years Ike's senior. The discrepancy of perhaps twenty years is unimportant, though Boon's real life prototype (known to Faulkner in his boyhood) must have lived his middle years closer to the time of The Reivers. (See Edwin Howard's

From that moment several more unrighteous folk than the original pair come to be involved in this ever worsening display of the varieties of Non-virtue.

In a properly ordered stable there should have been no gun readily available to satisfaction seekers, what with the known character of the volatile Boon ("a shootin' man," if not a shot) and several of the younger Negroes. It is there because John Powell is a man of the old school, the head hostler with absolute authority over Priest horses and mules, a colored man of great probity; and because both he and his employer are gentlemen. (Mr. Priest has officially forbidden guns other than his own to be on the place, while knowing that John Powell has carried one with him everywhere since his twenty-first birthday as a symbol of his manhood, here resembling in bearing and psychology Lucas Beauchamp.) Like gentlemen, however, they face up to the situation their unwise agreement has engendered, though not without their share of the discomfort experienced

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"Anecdote: The Faithful Smith" in The Delta Review, II [July-August, 1965], 34-35, for an interview with the aged Negro blacksmith of Oxford, Earl Wortham; here Boon's original is identified as one Chester Carruthers, who did make the first drive from Oxford to Memphis--and in Faulkner's father's car.)

by Boon and Ludus. As Faulkner writes, ". . . the whole edifice of entendre-de-noblesse collapsed into dust. Though the noblesse, the oblige, still remained" (p. 9).

As noted above, John Powell, because of his pistol, was subject to intimidation by Ludus--and indignity from Boon. He knew of Ludus' escapade and tacitly sanctioned it (under unspoken threat of "exposure" [it would abrogate his unspoken agreement with Mr. Priest if Maury were made officially aware of the presence of a private pistol]) even as he saw the loaded rig (stores, peppermint, and all) parked near the Priest establishment. To repeat, he had warned the younger Negro against dealing too lightly with Boon and anticipated trouble. When it came, he spoke up--restrained his own impulse to seek redress for the injury Boon has done him in stealing his gun, checked himself because he owes a courtesy to his friend/employer; and, out of the very sense of honor that made him carry a snub-nosed revolver he never intended to use, John confessed himself a party to the entire outbreak, and set out to quell it. The culpability of Lucius' father (in leaving Boon, pistol, and potential provokers together) is likewise quickly acknowledged. His cost is not just embarrassment but also interruption of business and no little money. He stands it as well as the hostler--recovering Boon, pistol, a slightly wounded Negro girl (squealing loudly), and a deputy all together before Judge Stevens for the direct patriarchal justice necessary to a healthy community: payment (by Priest) of the cost of damages (to the girl and to Ike McCaslin, whose storefront window has been broken) and a peace bond (requested and paid for by Priest to arrest the spread of Non-virtue and to see to it that its propagators savor its fruits). The entire episode is not lost on Lucius; indeed, the pattern in which the day's events return to him indicate that, even as a boy, he saw in them the deceptiveness and allure of "short-cutting" (non-endurance) --the speed and ease with which it spreads, and its costs. That pattern, or even a chronological rearrangement of it, cries out to any intelligent observer the truism (ever new to the uninitiated) that the only way to stop the spread and cut the costs is to face the consequences as soon as possible (as Ludus might have had he taken his chances on the trip he wanted without trying to insure himself against risk).[141]

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[141] All of this dramatized homily on escapism, "bargaining," shortcuts, etc., of course links The Reivers

But understanding does not prevent young Priest (any more than does careful instruction in responsibility given him from early childhood by his family, with mention of which the chapter begins [pp. 3-4], or the vigorously underscored refusal by Maury Priest to allow Boon, Ludus, or himself to circumvent the punishment they are due [either by ignoring crimes or "resigning" from the situation to allow the criminals to destroy each other] with which it ends) from ignoring forewarning of danger and embracing his own species of "Non-virtue" within a few days--as soon as the main narrative of the novel begins. The episode of Boon and Ludus, to repeat still again, defines young Lucius as a willing sinner and establishes the context in which his "education" occurs.

Apart from a careful pacing and unobtrusive maintenance of an order of time (unusual in Faulkner), rich characterization (not complex, but complete even when two-dimensional as far as comedy allows), and an organically unified, well articulated plot, the structure of The Reivers is little reinforced by the poetic or dramatic

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to Faulkner's other comedies, particularly the Snopes trilogy (see below). Brooks has noted the connection (William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country, p. 350).

qualities which go into the composition of most modern fiction, including Faulkner's. Here the trademark of symbolic naturalism, the texture of metaphor, is thin, both in the speech of the principals and in the portraiture, mulling, and reminiscence of their recaller. The diction is suited only to broad strokes, not to Jamesian etching and Elizabethan amplitude, the other (social and "romantic") options of the genre. And the presence of normative terms such as the endlessly repeated "Virtue" and "Non-virtue," though comic in effect, spell out the poles of the tension animating the entire fable in the barest manner imaginable. Yet all that there is in the novel belongs to and with the persona of the sixty-seven year old grandfather and to the implicit setting in which he speaks, the child and heir before him awaiting "instruction" on what to expect and how to prepare to fill the place he will soon inherit. The elder Priest is the familiar "over-voice," modified by the passage of years (and the changed relationship to his audience that lapse had brought upon the novelist)--but serving Faulkner's ends, sans any fracturing of aesthetic illusion or necessity of intrusion (bold first person), better than any adopted by him before. Boss Priest is close enough to Faulkner for Faulkner not to be tempted, even for a moment, to push him aside and speak in his own person: both an independent creation, part of the created world of Yoknapatawpha, and the sort of "safety valve" the Mississippian seemed to need more and more as he grew older.[142] He can say, and with good hope of purchase on

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[142] It is noteworthy that Faulkner dedicated The Reivers to his own grandchildren--mostly grandsons. The novel is not, however, a children's book but rather a dramatization of the telling of a story for young gentlefolk on the threshold of the adult world. Thompson (op. cit., p. 15) acknowledges the aesthetic function of personal and dramatic context but is still dissatisfied by this "excuse" for the tone of the narration, its "garrulousness." Southern (op. cit., p. 520) can see nothing in Faulkner's mock-heroic "heavy handedness" but "silliness" and imagines that the book is told from an unmodified "child's point of view." Robert Drake's review, "Yoknapatawpha Innocence Lost" (National Review, XIII, No. 2 [July 17, 1962], 70, 72) likewise misunderstands the form of the novel and insists that the novelist made a mistake by trying to "mean" something seriously with his tall tale; the dramatic and comic necessity of the narrator's reiteration of normative terms (and the most amusing aspect of what he insists is not a "funny" novel--the inflative impact of these terms) is lost on Professor Drake--a not unusual fate for mock-heroic elements in a modern novel.

Beck ("Told with Gusto," p. 684), Mueller (op. cit., p. 1079), Millgate (op. cit., p. 254), and Hicks ("Building Blocks of a Gentleman") see the dramatic machinery of Faulkner's frame or capsule much as I do. Brooks (William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country) has very little to say about it. Gold (op. cit., p. 186) is puzzled. He writes:

> We are almost being [in the book] reminded by the grandfather that we, like Lucius, have been told the entire story to enable us to learn this point. After all, the Lucius of the story is himself a

the reader's attention because of the care with which the scene of transmission is set up and its built-in, human appeal--at least hope for more purchase than platform admonition could secure--whatever Faulkner wishes, say it even while interrupting the narrative without doing any damage to the novel's integrity of design. For he speaks from authority, after years of sifting and analysis (pp. 50-51), on his earlier self (the device perhaps echoing Conrad); moreover, he has as a loving grandfather helping his grandchildren every reason to speak, digress, and even moralize, every reason as an old man remembering his youth to be both open and amused. A settled mind has no problem with haste, no fear of digression--especially if it is enjoying the purposeful recreation of things loved and left behind. Hence Priest has no need of an aggressive posture. In him Faulkner projects a rhetorically unexceptionable

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> grandfather, retelling the story to a boy who may in turn tell it again. In effect Faulkner creates an echoing backwards and forwards through the generations. We do not know this great-grandfather, we do not know just what has led him to such a deep-rooted conviction. This is a technical weakness in the novel.

Mrs. Vickery (revised edition, pp. 228-29-238-39) overemphasizes the narrator's idealizing of his handiwork as does Brylowski (_op_. _cit_., pp. 290-296).

combination. The persona, the convention of a recollective narrator established on page one, converts the entire book into a relaxed dramatic monologue (prefaced by another, shorter monologue and containing a _bildungsroman_--discovery encapsulated by judgment) and is its chief formal property. The persona presents his own youthful self in motion and process while controlling our understanding of that self, violating neither it nor us; it gives the work a finality rare in early Faulkner, and yet preserves it from classification as mere parable. Or to put matters otherwise, the unity of _The Reivers_ is the unity of the narrator, the wisdom of Lucius Priest which it purports to make available to his (and our) progeny. His presence gives the novel a thematic complexity, makes it both an exemplum on the necessity of endurance, a demonstration of grandfatherly concern, and an example of what Paul Fussell calls "elegiac action," an admonition to reform and return disguised as a call to remember and lament.[143]

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[143] _The Rhetorical World of Augustan Humanism_ (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1965, pp. 283-305). I will have more to say on the significance of Fusell's terminology for the study of Faulkner at the conclusion of this reading.

Although The Reivers is rather uncomplicated in design (its two important architectural peculiarities aside), it does depend on some old and familiar symbolic "presences" or counters for resonance: specifically, machines, women, and horses. Like the patterns of "irresponsibility," "bargain," and "escape" established in the novel's first chapter, these counters indicate the connection of its unpretentious narrator with the not at all simple philosophical backdrop or frame of reference discovered above and below in this division of the paper operating in Go Down, Moses, The Unvanquished, Intruder in the Dust, and Absalom, Absalom! They set and keep the plot in motion as they push and pull, toll, tempt, and compel Lucius, his two fellow thieves and their connection onward into complication, distress, illumination, and unraveling; and their meaning is assuredly a part of what they together discover--particularly Lucius.[144] Nowhere else is Faulkner more skillful, less obtrusive in the combination and absorption of tropes into the flow of his narrative (or the mind of his narrator). A study of what he does with machines, women, and horses inside a combination of the initiation journey and underworld descent archetypes is evidence that the reading of any Faulkner fiction is enriched, simplified, and protected against foolish errors in emphasis by viewing a particular work as a part of the entire corpus.

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[144] Boon shares much of the initiation pattern with Lucius; but, to speak truthfully, Ned is never to be numbered among the deceived. He goes along for the ride--is (once in Memphis) confronted with a family problem, and then begins to aggravate (and, curiously, at the same time speed toward its happy resolution) the difficulty of his white "chauffeurs" in order to solve that problem. Ned, when he steals the car, so acts in order to get what he needs to help a kinsman, one Bobo Beauchamp (his and Lucas

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Beauchamp's cousin [p. 229], caught up by a white man in the snares of the flesh pot--in a gambling debt). And he has no doubt about his ability to recover the Flyer from the swap he executes to buy time. Ned is never tempted by the automobile as are Lucius and Boon. He is interested in, curious about, and yet resentful of it (the last because he is the Priest coachman). But for him it is no more than curious transportation. Horses please better his aesthetic sense (though he is only a little foolish about them--within bounds of prudence). However, he is willing to ride in the car in order to get a quick holiday in Memphis, especially with Lucius along to provide "sanction."

He is, moreover, not reluctant to inconvenience his companions in crime or his "Boss" because he is secure in the sense of privilege he has as the favored Negro retainer (p. 128) and in his right to call on white kinsmen and a white family employee (p. 289). As a McCaslin, he has a claim on Lucius and car (p. 71); and since no other McCaslin is present, it is Lucius' business to help Bobo (even though he is not, until very late, allowed to know that Bobo is involved in [p. 229] or that it is for Bobo's sake he must worry, sweat, and ride [p. 287]). I will return to Ned in more detail hereafter.

Even the order in which Faulkner introduces these emblematic antagonists is revealing: first the car, then women, then the horse. Together in sequence they define stages in Lucius' progress toward that painful and indispensable condition and kind traditionally denominated "gentleman." They are an evocative combination indeed--motion, speed, escape, adventure, sex, chivalry, and two laps for the sardines.[145]

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[145] The association of women and machines as paired mirrors of the moral condition of the men who "possess" them is not new in The Reivers--nor is that of manliness and horses. The latter runs throughout The Unvanquished, appears in "Race at Morning," "Spotted Horses," and in other scattered stories and scenes. The former, Gavin Stevens expands on at length in Intruder in the Dust (pp. 238-40). In truth, there is scattered evidence of one or the other of these connections everywhere in Faulkner; but the three together in such extended fashion is new in The Reivers. In the Yoknapatawpha Cycle it is generally a cause for hopefulness in women when their men are linked with horses--and an ill omen when the connection is with automobiles (cf. DeSpain and Matt Levitt in The Town, Gowan Stevens in Sanctuary, Bayard in Sartoris). Close association with cars or horses is a bad sign in women (Drusilla in The Unvanquished, Linda Snopes in The Mansion). The same holds true for airplanes with either sex (vide the December 22, 1954, letter to the New York Times on an Idlewild plane crash discussed in Chapter II). Richard P. Adams in his Tulane Studies in English essay, "The Apprenticeship of William Faulkner" (XII [1962], pp. 113-56), recognizes the tropological weight of Faulkner's uses of horses and women in a tale of initiation; he traces it to the example of Sherwood Anderson; Mellard ("Faulkner's 'Golden Book': 'The Reivers' As Romantic Comedy," p. 124) and Gold (op. cit., pp. 178-80) emphasize the mythic or archetypal dimensions of the novel.

Chapters II, III, IV, and part of V (pp. 18-95) make up the first "movement" of The Reivers. Their subject is man and the primitive automobile, a most dangerous passion (the former for the latter). Women replace the Flyer in the remainder of V and in VI (pp. 95-115). Women and horses together complicate matters throughout subsequent chapters, the last few pages or denouement perhaps excepted (pp. 299-305).[146] Women and cars are the occasion of the "underworld" descent of Lucius and Boon, horses and women the occasion *and* cause of their re-emergence. Where what the connoisseurs of the archetype call the myths of initiation journey and visit to the underworld are combined, we should expect women to play a part.

As these pages begin to sprawl out the tale of the fall and redemption of a reluctant young gentleman picaro, they misleadingly first turn back to Boon, as if to pick up where the story left off at the end of Chapter I. The big quarter-breed Indian is introduced in detail (in a recapitulation and expansion of material presented in Go

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[146] I say perhaps because it is on the last page that we learn Everbe Corinthia Hogganbeck has memorialized Lucius' chivalry by naming Boon's son after him--and because those last pages make absolutely and finally explicit what has plainly been the book's theme from the first.

Down, Moses [pp. 227-31]) and endowed with the first in a series of "interests" which are to bring him to a minor transformation of his own. They open with more of Boon--not because he is the formal protagonist of the novel (which would be, morally speaking, an impossibility for a character with his limitations), but rather because he is the biggest part of the envelope of circumstance which presses Lucius beyond the confines of his premoral condition as a child to "accountability," in the idiom of the Book: press him beyond even the precept and example of admirable grandfather, father, and kinsmen. Coincidences other than Boon's presence in this Priest menage have a hand in the "baptism" of Lucius: the timing of his Grandfather Lessep's death; the coincidence of the meeting in town of his cousins Ike McCaslin and Zack Edmonds before he and Boon deliver his nurse and the younger Priest children to McCaslin; weather; Everbe's letter to Boon; the family's habit of going by New Orleans at the conclusion of any out of town visit they make (a habit that will extend their wanderings beyond the time a schoolboy might be kept from his books); and finally, even the invention of the automobile and the presence of a representative of the species in his grandfather's garage. His, nonetheless, is the temptation that counts. By his own admission, the Priest boy could have held Boon back, could have locked the car up with nothing further said. On his initial commitment to "Non-virtue" or "Un-virtue" the action turns--and on the residue of _noblesse_ uncontaminated by such vassalage to wickedness: the one pushes on toward Memphis, the other brings "Jefferson" and "Priest" along, a rectitude so strong that it engenders improvements in those who might be expected to corrupt it and insures (together in the aforementioned basic decency of both societies/worlds) the fable's happy issue.

Chapter II commences with Lucius still, as he was in the opening pages of _The Reivers_, talking about Hogganbeck. Throughout it he still seems to be "outside" the action. Boon is the one first and most obviously smitten by the mechanical toy of the elder Priest (not counting, of course, the town's first mechanic and small-scale manufacturer of the monstrosities in his own right, one Mr. Buffaloe, perhaps [with Boss Priest an inadvertent partner] Boon's corrupter). To _the_ car, once he has driven it down to Jefferson from Memphis one year before the time of the "theft," Boon devotes his working hours: washing, servicing, polishing, tinkering, caressing, or just admiring. From the first Boon's feeling for the Winton is described in sexual terms. To it, "his soul's lily maid," he gave "the virgin's love of his rough and innocent heart" (p. 28).[147] He is ever attempting to find excuses to drive it, trying to interest other members of the Priest household in "trips"--to which he, of course, must be a party. All stable work is neglected--everything. And in particular Boon is driven by the idea of having the car completely to himself, in his own charge and at his own disposal (*vide* much fencing about keys and locks with the Boss [pp. 31-34]). We can, from Lucius, see what is coming. But the tone of his narration (both when he speaks as an old man and when he speaks as a boy) is apparently amused, unconcerned, and immune to the madness of speed--motion. Then suddenly we learn, as Boon knew all along, better.

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[147] Earlier, in a graphic image (p. 26), it is suggested that he might also have picked up this attitude from Mr. Buffaloe, who is significantly a bachelor. However, the passion for machines, we must remember, is not a new one for the Boon of *The Reivers*. Years before he has had a similarly unfruitful conjunction with them (see the discussion of the Gum Tree episode in "The Bear" above). The review of this novel in *Time* (June 8, 1962) curiously describes this yearning as an "innocent lust" (p. 100).

Apart from its unforeshadowed rapidity and aforementioned self-consciousness, the most noteworthy of the qualities of Lucius' fall are his protestations against whatever powers that dispose coincidence that so much of the burden of free moral agency should be put upon him so early in life (with an attendant disclaimer of responsibility for any such decision [pp. 57, 62, and 68]) and a strong inclination in the midst of exercising that agency to chuck all his newfound freedoms and return to Mother's protection and supervision (p. 66).[148] He imagines that it is the function of Providence to close up the primrose path before him as a father would prevent his child from playing a dangerous game. Like the characters in the preceding overture he too wants something without being willing to pay the price.[149] True, his thinking is not beyond what we might anticipate from a child whose "freedom" is amoral and who expects the significance of his misdeeds to be negated by parental punishment or reward. But it is revealing because it is part of what he thereafter rejects. Its function is dramatically ironic and therefore necessary.

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[148] In this regression he much resembles Chick Mallison in Intruder in the Dust, whose first thoughts when periodically agitated by the realization that he may be the only one who can save Lucas Beauchamp, is of the protective cocoon of home and mother (p. 41) or of flight (pp. 31, 41, 46, and 67).

[149] At this point it might be proper to recall what it was that Faulkner liked about G. W. Harris' Sut Lovingood: "He had no illusion about himself, did the best he could; at certain times he was a coward and knew it and

Lucius himself tells us that the moment Boon came up overheated with the news that Grandfather Lessep was dead and only chauffeur and boy would be left behind by his funeral-going elders with the car, an easily disposed of black mammy (Aunt Callie), and three smaller Priests, he was defeated. He had not known this at the time; such defeat was impossible, he reasoned, for one of his antecedents, one "patterned [in rectitude] on the knightly shapes of . . . male ancestors as bequeathed--nay, compelled . . . by . . . father's word-of-mouth, further bolstered and made vulnerable to shame by . . . mother's doting conviction . . ." (pp. 50-51). Boon expects to go to some trouble, anticipates even more resistance than he encounters. But Boon has prepared his way. He knows, even as he knows he

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wasn't ashamed; he never blamed his misfortunes on anyone and never cursed God for them" (Writers at Work: The Paris Review Interviews, p. 137).

will steal the car, that he will someday have to face the ire of his patron and that by having Lucius in collusion with him he will be able to muffle the impact of that "inevitability." From time to time in anticipation that a moment would arise when he would want the boy's support in an automotive runaway (bent as he is on going without it, if necessary [p. 45]), Boon has been giving Lucius driving lessons--giving him a taste of the exhilaration that comes with having the power of a machine responding to his hand and the ordinary limitations on speed and distance traveled in a limited time to fall away (pp. 51-52).[150] Just as soon as he arrests Lucius in the performance of his most adult duty (the Saturday morning collection) and draws him into the car, Hogganbeck puts him behind the wheel again. In consequence, despite the insistence of Lucius at the time of the conception of the crime that his own part in the reiving is a passive one (that of a near silent accessory), as he reconstructs the events of that fateful morning he is soon at liberty to imply and adduce--humorously and yet seriously, again for mock-heroic purposes--for and from his own youthful mischief a Faustian analogy (p. 53); and later he sustains and elaborates it (pp. 58, 60, 66, 93, and 94). Faulkner, as noted in Chapter III of this paper and in the comment on _Intruder in the Dust_, eschews any notion of the special moral superiority of children. He accepts that they are not subject to the errors that habit and even much experience lead their elders into. And biology is also somewhat less troublesome to them. But their innocence is most often simply disinterested ignorance of the precise nature of a sin or an inability to commit it. The inclination, the old Adam, is there (see pp. 46, 53, and 55). Even at eleven, Lucius is attracted by what the family car and like instruments represent. The activities of a juvenile Faustus may be amusing to everyone else--but not to himself. He is dead serious. And just as soon as Boon gives him another go at the wheel, Lucius experiences "an exultant [_i.e._, a partially Promethean] feverflash" that establishes the justice of the analogy. Rectitude and honorable name were no protection for him any more than they were for his adult prototypes in earlier novels. Instead they make of him a greater sinner than his companions (one disqualified from heroic sinning [as was asserted earlier] by status and simplicity, the other by status and an understanding of the wages of what he calls "roguishness" [p. 294]), make him their leader, even as these same inheritances restrain him from the depths of casual amorality. Lucius, as was contended heretofore, is a willful culprit--cries of helpless protestation and infantile dreams notwithstanding. Though not the focus of the novel in Chapters I and II, he quickly becomes so in III--and in most natural and revealing fashion. The delay is purposeful and pointed, designed to clarify what is at stake in his adventure. His moral consciousness prevents his misdeeds from being trivial and without meaning for him as he endures their results, even as the comic scaffolding prepared for and surrounding them protects his youthful seriousness from striking the reader as absurdity.

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[150] We are told of these interludes at this point and not before for reason of narrative tempo and tone. Chapter II is designed to sharpen the impression made by the abruptness and finality or absoluteness of Lucius' fall in III. Young Priest indulged Boon's fancy in them (he convinces himself to test his friend's virtue, not his own). Boon is, of course, here sustaining the pattern of "bet hedging" and would-be "crawfishing" set up in Chapter I--with the usual results, as the remainder of the novel reveals.

Precisely what it is about the Flyer that tempts Lucius and/or Boon is implied but not explained. The Faustian comparison, the notation of special exhilaration in rebellion, the references to the delights of power as they combine with the fancies of ill-substantiated hope, and the overtones of sexual substitution help. But they do not pin the trope down to an obvious signification. Actually, the only answers to be found must be, as was contended above, drawn from the entire Faulkner corpus--from the largest patterns of opposition and conflict, courage, and cowardice worked out in those earlier books.

Though not evil in itself, once prized as a *modus vivendi* for escape from creaturehood, the automobile has a solid place in Faulkner's pantheon of infernal deities, among the incarnations of the non-enduring spirit. Its promise is power as motion. As the realist Grandpa Priest noted in Chapter II, while planning to buy road bonds to protect his bank and its depositors, "People will pay any price for motion. They will even work for it . . . [though] we don't know why" (p. 41). And speed is, John Donald Wade similarly observed over thirty years ago (in hostile reaction to developments which have fulfilled Boss Priest's prophecy concerning their region), a demonic totem co-equal in importance with Mass (*i.e.*, Dominion).[151] The desire to have the power of a demigod is the brother of the desire to have his status. Both are forms of rebellion, pride--attempts to acquire dominion over Nature and to circumvent contingency. And these twin "anti-Christs" (to use Wade's nomenclature) are only a small taste of the superhuman. Of Mass we have already seen a great deal in the lives of Faulkner's would-be empire builders. Of speed we have an accounting in Pylon and Faulkner's numerous other tales of good folk fallen foul of bemusement with moving versions of what he once summed up as "watch, compass, and gun."[152] Railroad, airplane, automobile (and maybe even a steamboat),

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[151] "Old Wine in a New Bottle," *Virginia Quarterly Review*, XI (April, 1935), 239-52; Gold's identification of

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the Priest auto as the "apple" in this "Eden," "the temptation to greater knowledge," is half misleading (op. cit., p. 181). If knowledge is what the auto brings to Lucius and co., it is the forbidden knowledge of Milton. He has no awareness of Faulkner's attitude toward "place." Fiedler ("The Last of Faulkner") is especially perceptive on the novelist's symbolic use of the Winton and its connection with his "myth" of the machine in America.

[152] The steamboat appears as evidence of the new idea of chieftainship (white and Promethean) which takes over among the Chickasaw with Doom's (Ikkemotubbe's) ascension to the chieftainship in "A Justice" (Collected Stories, pp. 343-360); "Turnabout," "Death Drag," "Honor," "Ad Astra," and "All the Dead Pilots" (Collected Stories, pp. 475-509; 185-205; 551-564; 407-429; and 511-534) should be grouped with Pylon (1935) as part of Faulkner's folklore of the air. All (with Sartoris and sections of A Fable) indicate that pilots are in danger of spiritual maiming in the practice of their profession.

are potential underminers of man's will to endure, causers of mania; and when they are loved for themselves--momentarily in an abbreviated, obliterative passion--and not for the dominion over creature and creation which they might facilitate, then the results, though still Faustian, are Faustian in miniature, as in the comic subplot of Marlowe's tragedy. The sorcerer's apprentices in the old play are not bound away to the nether regions by their toying with the master's spells. But neither do they get out of their small scale imitation of his presumptions unscathed. So it is with Lucius and Boon. Both have a place to which they should belong. Both neglect it for the sake of what they imagine will be an interlude of pleasure (as much for Lucius as for Boon; as Faulkner says, children even "lie rather for pleasure than profit" [p. 53]). And finally, both are eager to return to that place once the hurly-burly's done.

The final warning against the empty promise of Motion/Speed vouchsafed the vacationers in The Reivers comes to them not long before their first journey ends. They pass where the road to McCaslin forked away from the main highway to the Tennessee line, pass Hurricane Creek, Ballenbaugh's, and the Iron Bridge without difficulty (other than pangs of conscience--Lucius in fact complains that conscience has too little support from these landmarks). From the easy crossing of these boundaries the rebellion/descent acquires only momentum. The car needs just a little help from Boon to pass Hurricane Creek. Ballenbaugh's station, a visible reminder of Yoknapatawpha's history of violence, aggression, and repentance that should give its heirs pause only sharpens their sense of adventure. And they (Ned being discovered as a passenger soon after the lesser water crossing) make, for 1905, excellent time to that reformed den of iniquity, to their first night's stop and beyond. But Hell's Creek Bottom, as Boon foresaw, is a sterner test of their fealty to Non-virtue. The comedy of the mudhole is admired by all who comment on the novel. Its debt to earlier Southern humor is usually noted as are the social overtones of the hilarious dialogue between the travelers and the presiding _genus loci_. Its function in the novel's structure and part in the development of its theme are, however, ordinarily overlooked. Here the machine is weighed and found wanting. Here the wanderers are thrown back on their own wits and devices--and on the assistance of a bucolic Charon with a team of mules.[153] After Hell's Creek Bottom they have no excuse for persisting in the delusion that the automobile is able to provide man with a transcendence (even momentary) of his condition as a moral agent destined to act in a particular context. And neither are they, after the effort required of them in the crossing, free to imagine that they have been pushed into Memphis by a chain of circumstances--against their will. The struggle completes their commitment; once it is done, as Lucius says, Virtue "relinquished [them] to Non-virtue to cherish and nurture and in the style whose right [they] had won with the now irrevocable barter [their] souls" (pp. 93-94).[154] What they cross over into is, however, not hell but "pleasure island"--a place where bad boys discover what long ears they can grow--whose difference (civilization [p. 92]) from what they left behind is immediately apparent to the crossers. Boon had taken the step, in spirit, before he even got to the obstacle. And in order to reinforce the boy's involvement in the theft (which in the mudhole he suspects might well have abated--or might after a taste of it abate if both sides of their compact were not kept) Boon puts Lucius quickly under the wheel of the now "exposed" Winton as soon as the straightaway to the fleshpots comes under its wheels. In his "pride" in driving (p. 94), particularly before roadside spectators and passing motorists, young Priest, however, closes his eyes to "Virtue's last efforts" to preserve his innocence; and the arrival of all in the place of his initiation is not long delayed--is indeed brought on by the swiftest movement they have made. But the reader (in looking back on the trip from the perspective afforded by a complete reading of the novel) should not be so unaware as a fascinated eleven year old up to his neck in fresh sinning. There are foreboding and anticipation of later developments in the nightmare of the mudhole farm. With it Faulkner has exhausted the metaphorical potential of his first ikon. Hence the increase in pace, the quick change of scene. Its replacement is not, however, a less formidable tempter. Even at eleven Lucius senses in Miss Reba's something more challenging to his rectitude than a mere machine. And here, once he gets his bearings (and even as he reaches what are ordinarily unplumbed depths of depravity for an eleven year old), he starts on the road back. Also here, he begins to have considerable positive effect on the lives of those around him--and to pick up more passengers. Lucius' still intact reserves of rectitude and youthful openness are part of the course of these developments. But Ned is an even larger one.

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[153] Gold (op. cit., p. 182), Mellard ("Faulkner's 'Golden Book': 'The Reivers' As Romantic Comedy," p. 24), and Swiggart (op. cit., p. 209) concur in this identification of the mudhold farmer. But he differs from his classical prototype in that he aggravates the impassability of his post. Also significant are the instruments of passage; mules are usually associated by Faulkner with the practice of endurance, with a "working agreement" with Nature (as opposed to efforts to subject or dominate it qua machines [pp. 121-23]).

[154] Gold (op. cit., pp. 181-82) understands the significance of this episode.

Once arrived in Memphis, Ned has no intention of troubling (or joining) Boon and Lucius for his amusements. He plunges quickly into that city's (even in 1905) considerable Negro infrastructure, there to discover even more quickly (a coincidence which never troubles us) his cousin Bobo Beauchamp "trying to outface his doom through the bottom of a whiskey bottle" (p. 290). Bobo has run up a gambling debt and then discomfited his white creditor with slow repayment; he is called upon to deliver--quick--over one hundred dollars cash or its equivalent in collateral. When Ned arrives, no time for additional negotiations remains. All he is able to do before taking over the management of Bobo's trouble (if he is to keep the boy out of jail) is to learn some of the particulars of the younger Negro's situation, to see the horse Bobo has had (before his ruin) in his keeping (Coppermine), and to convince the youth that they will do well to keep the animal and arrange to race it themselves, giving the Priest car to the white gambler in its stead. Ned gives up his personal plans as soon as his duty confronts him. To rescue Bobo he conceives of an elaborate gambit (based on his knowledge of horseflesh and "white folks" [his own and others]), quickly returns to Miss Reba's establishment for the car, turns it over to Bobo's harasser, goes for the horse, returns with it to Reba's, and sets in motion a tide of events that pulls his white companions (and their female cohorts) away from there within a very few hours after their arrival. Once Ned "reives" the reivers' car, they have no choice but to carry through his gambit. Even though they suspect (as is true) that this black McCaslin is not telling them the whole truth when he says his plan is to get a horse for them to take back to Boss Priest as a peace offering and that the race horse ('Lightning' to them) is stolen, they have to get the car back (p. 129) and have no chance of doing so save through means recommended by Ned. And to insure that they will join him and not question him too much as to what he is really "up to," Ned even goes so far as to challenge the sporting blood of _all_ the white people gathered at Miss Reba's, to challenge their nerve (as well as their natural taste for the usual short-cut and unearned advantage) in a way that would be difficult for Southerners of any sex (he needs the women's money to complete his plot--and knows how to get that too, even though they hate gambling and have less excuse for being fooled than the men), class, age, or color to resist (if they help him hide it, transport it, and bet it) by bringing around the race horse he has on "loan" and explaining how he can make it run them into money. He covers all his wagers, leaves little room for imponderables, and provides himself (by involving Boon and Lucius) a way out if anything goes wrong. Even so, none of Ned's schemes in Chapters V through XIII of _The Reivers_ are, however highhanded his execution of them, designed to serve his private ends--except in some incidental fashion. But he _is_ a schemer--the bright, unscrupulous servant of traditional comedy.[155] Ned isn't a knave; but neither is he--by his own admission (p. 282) a gentleman (as is Uncle Parsham [Possum] Hood in this novel and Lucas Beauchamp in *Go Down, Moses* and *Intruder in the Dust* [to name two of his own race]). His is worldly wisdom, tempered by respect for and a touch of *noblesse*. He can act like a gentleman, can (even as Boon in tempting Lucius [p. 51]) be a gentleman for a moment. Yet he is willing to make a profit from or take advantage of whatever doing his duty brings into his hand--as a gentleman would and could not. He recognizes the shape of Non-virtue wherever it appears. And he desires that his people, white and black, avoid it--except when he can control them *in it* and *with it* to accomplish something necessary. But he can, because he knows temptation and how it influences poor mortals, play with it--so long as he doesn't (as he *will* not) try to extract too much spoil from his knowledge.

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[155] Mellard, "Faulkner's 'Golden Book': 'The

The best we see of Ned, and the worst, is in his assumption that white McCaslins and Priests have endless patience and discretion and are at his disposal, even when he won't bother to explain to them why and how he must use

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Reivers' As Romantic Comedy," pp. 21-22.

them. We might understand his going a bit hard with foreigners, charlatans, and white trash; but his offhand abuse of his own people is (though finally a tribute to them) a bit puzzling. True, he is careful not to do anything that would seriously trouble or injure his proprietors, especially since his self-esteem and theirs are conjoined. And his "impudence" or "presumption" is admittedly a token of the "health" of his community, of the "family" to which he belongs. He is able to depend upon Lucius, his father, grandfather, and their connection regardless of what he does. As I have argued above and as the narrator informs us (p. 128), Ned genuinely _enjoys_ his position as privileged retainer _cum_ cousin _cum_ uncle, as do his white kinsmen in perpetuating him in it. He has no quarrel with the gods concerning his lot in the world, his blackness or Southernness (see particularly his "infamous" and [to some] disorganizing satisfactions of being Negro on a Saturday night [p. 291]--an echo of a regional folk commonplace--and the way he names himself to Reba [p. 129] and to Butch [p. 173], with Jefferson, Mississippi, as a part of it). In fact, he is even ready to use his color and all the double-edged decorums that go with it on people without a moment's hesitancy. And it is true that he protects Lucius from some things (the talk of Everbe's cousin Otis [pp. 140-43]; the effrontery of the bravo deputy sheriff, Butch Lovemaiden [p. 239]; the momentary imperceptiveness of the good little constable of Parsham, Mr. Poleymus [p. 243], and the truth about how much trouble they could be in [throughout--once the boy and Boon have joined with him and Bobo in the horsestealing business]) and Boss Priest from others (from buying that four-legged conundrum Coppermine [the horse is trouble and more racing of him with "sourdeans" would bring "roguishness"--more gambling to the family]). But in many cases his manner with and attitude toward his white kindred is well nigh outrageous, impossible to imagine as coming from Lucas Beauchamp or Dilsey or Elnora, and is even a little like old Simon Strother in Sartoris. He thinks nothing of giving anguish; or of misleading Boss Priest--whom he ever acknowledges as the party to whom he is responsible, his "chieftain"--into thinking that he will work his trick to get Coppermine to win over Acheron in a fourth heat (p. 294) arranged by that gentleman, Colonel Lipscomb (the patroon of Parsham), and Mr. Van Tosch (the owner of Coppermine)--arranged to unwind the confusion of horse's abduction and the illegal racing in a well-bred, affable fashion; or of costing him four hundred ninety-five dollars in the bargain. Apparently he can't imagine that the old man will miss the money. And the senior Priest's bet will, of course, hoist the odds he can get on a really safe wager of his own--a wager from which he garnishes a tidy sum (minus a twenty dollar sop to Virtue for Uncle Parsham's church). This profit is probably several hundred dollars (since he has available to "put up" two rolls of bills given him in trust) made from the money the boy had refused to take from Miss Reba (who insisted it was Lucius' due) and of his own "group" purse (whose proceeds were originally intended to "buy back" the Flyer) after he already had enough to clear Bobo. Ned is tired of stinking little fish, horse races, red faced deputies; ready to go home (has been for some time--since he concluded that his entire plan is too troublesome and dangerous [p. 254]); decided in his opinion that the Priests are better off without Coppermine ("It's worth four hundred and ninety-six dollars not to own him," he says [p. 298]); and a little concerned about the feelings of Acheron's rider, a Negro boy (one McWillie). Boss Priest's feelings, he assumes, are not for him to worry about. And he has set up the final heat so that Boss cannot come back at or upbraid him for neglecting to display sardines before Lucius' mount as he came down the stretch.

Ned is a basically astute, kindly, and (above all) judicious person, but no paragon. To make of him a spirit of Misrule, a black Dionysus, or personification of the principles of vitalism and healthy mischief is to ignore his thoroughgoing, cautious suspicion of more than a little "roguishness"--just as it is wrongheadedness to idealize him as an upright but more energetic counterpart of Lucas, Dilsey, Parsham Hood, John Powell, or Elnora.[156] His part in Lucius' "education" is that of both positive and negative example: "Sometimes do as I do and sometimes do as I say"

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[156] For various mixtures of the two misrepresentations, see the reviews of Howe, Pritchett, and Southern, and both of Rossky's essays on this novel (particularly p. 92 of "'The Reivers': Faulkner's 'Tempest'" and p. 376 of "'The Reivers' and 'Huckleberry Finn': Faulkner and Twain"). Volpe (op. cit., p. 345), who goes so far as to insist Ned _is_ Lucas, and Gold (_op_. _cit_., p. 184) reinforce these companions in error. And most recently Ralph Ellison (_Harper's_ of March, 1967 [Vol. 234, No. 1402], pp. 76-80; 83-86; 88, 90, 93-95) in "A Very Stern Discipline: An Interview" has cast aside all reason and outdone all previous partisans of Ned to argue that he is "Faulkner's own persona . . . the artist disguised as Negro rogue and schemer" (p. 83). As noted above, Taylor (dissertation, "The Roles of the Negro in William Faulkner's Fiction, pp. 322-35) and Swiggart (_op_. _cit_., pp. 207, 212-13) know better--as does Brooks, though he insists Ned is, in some

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sense, a gentleman (*William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country*, pp. 349, 353-55). Mrs. Vickery (throughout her essay in the 1964 revision of *The Novels of William Faulkner*) both does and does not. The impulse to admire Ned is strong in her; but the awareness that (pp. 235-37) perhaps she cannot safely do so is likewise strong enough to make her analysis of the tricksy Negro, though confusing, still instructive (to those who would learn what rigid social and political commitments can do to a capable critic). Similarly divided are Raleigh P. Player in "The Negro Character in the Fiction of William Faulkner" and Vernon T. Hornback, Jr. (*op. cit.*, pp. 250-264).

One source of the confusion memorialized in discussion of Ned is the Twain analogy. Attempts to make Lucius Priest into a victorious rebel against ossified social norms obviously ignore the laws governing the type of comedy to which *The Reivers* belongs--the traditional type in which a delusion in the protagonist is cured by exposure to the natural consequences of acting upon that delusion. The Priest boy is, as he sees himself from the perspective of fifty-plus years after, an errant sinner--not a modern "hero as outsider." Therefore Ned cannot play opposite to him (a la Twain's Nigger Jim) the good, innocent, rather stupid darky conscience-maker. But the convention of referring everything in American literature to Huck and Jim on the raft (if not to Natty in the Wood or Henry David at the pond) is now so entrenched as to render what has happened to *The Reivers* white boy/colored man pairing inevitable, however lamentable.

For examples of the Twain analogy at work, the reader should see the reviews of Howe, Southern (*op. cit.*, p. 520), Pritchett, Fiedler; the essays of Tuck (*op. cit.*, pp. 123-24), Millgate (*op. cit.*, p. 257), Rossky (*all* of both), Volpe (*op. cit.*, p. 348), and a puzzling German essay by Hans Bungert, "William Faulkners letzter Roman," *Die neuren Sprachen*, XII (Autumn, 1963), pp. 498-506. Beck ("Told with Gusto," p. 682) refers to the analogy only to deny it. Kartiganer (*op. cit.*, p. 16) has it in mind when he describes the action as a "triumph of communion formed outside the conventions of society."

is a summary of his avuncular advice to the boy. Structurally his function is extremely important. For, as Mellard argues, ". . . neither Lucius nor Boon is capable of bringing off the [novel's] comic actions . . . [as] without him [Ned,] Lucius and Boon would never have gotten into many escapades, but without him they may never have emerged as triumphant at all."[157] He insures the fullness and direction of the experience of his fellow malefactors. And he is also significant in foreshortening and transplanting into the country and in acting as a catalyst to the interplay of the tensions he discovers when he moves back into the lives of his companions from his interview with Bobo; in the country these tensions have a better chance of resolution, in a place where Lucius can crown his chivalry by winning a victory astride a horse, a context in which Boon can recognize (as Miss Reba has much earlier [p. 135]) the role in Corrie's life (and hers in his) which that mounted victory and its preliminaries should suggest to him as proper and necessary--given his own residual chivalry, Lucius' challenge to it, his affection for the girl and need of feminine "direction," to say nothing of her now permanent "chastity." But nothing is more important to the boy's education, his "rite of passage" and to the novel's thematic development than the women at Miss Reba's (particularly Miss Reba herself, Corrie, and their chorus, black Minnie). Indeed, their impact on the boy is so great that the reader is hardly aware of what Ned is up to with his swap or with what it may involve until he has his co-conspirators and their female companions/supporters on the eastward road to Parsham. Even then, until Ned's scheme and the complications engendered by Lucius' visit in the whorehouse mesh, the former serve as nothing more than background noise for the latter.[158]

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[157] "Faulkner's 'Golden Book': 'The Reivers' As Romantic Comedy," p. 22.

The interaction of Lucius and Boon (together, for they are still almost co-protagonists at this stage in the novel and would have on everything and everyone around a very different impact if separated, each pulling his own way) with the life in Miss Reba's "house" is as disturbing to some who have examined The Reivers with care and perception as it is delightful but insignificant to others less assiduous and less informed. The Times Literary Supplement's reviewer calls the entire middle section of the novel "sentimentality." And Leslie Fiedler, who is most helpful and informative in his gloss on the auto theft and rush to Memphis as these relate to American "pastoral myths," is thoroughly put off by the progress of Lucius "from a small Faust to a junior Redeemer."[159] The thematic and metaphorical logic of the transition remains everywhere unremarked, a fact which perhaps explains why the two reviews just quoted and much other criticism fall afoul of "movement two" of the novel. Always in Faulkner (as, indeed, in real life) women and land, children, property, or station are instrumental in his hero's efforts at self-definition and discovery. The lot are, moreover, usually connected--

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[158] Hilary Corke in his review of The Reivers ("Faulkner Across the Water," p. 20) complains of the novel (and of American fiction in general) that women play no real part in it. He could not have made a worse choice of books with which to make his point.

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[159] "The Last of William Faulkner" and "The Last of Faulkner," identified above in the omnibus citation of previous Reivers criticism. Fiedler attributes the falling off after p. 91 of the novel to its author's preoccupation with what he had written before, to a compulsion to exonerate himself (mentioned above in that omnibus note) for earlier releasings of "nightmare fantasy," a surrender to "sententious banality" brought on by "the curse . . . of Sir Walter Scott from which the American South is still striving to recover."

all part of what is to be endured. Irresponsibility and promise-breaking with an automobile are small dereliction (even if symptomatic); but irresponsibility with women, especially if it entails the abuse of helplessness, is inexcusable. People are not toys, not even to a mere spectator at the toying. Polite though he must be with all adults, Lucius cannot become a party to the degradation of women (use without responsibility, without payment of cost--abandonment) and still retain any of the Priest "rectitude" he has left after his surrender to the automobile. Nevertheless, small beginnings in sin must lead a Faulkner culprit into a risk of committing others and worse. The kind of evil Lucius finds in Memphis is, however, far more profound (even though still not absolute) than he imagined he had sold himself to when the Flyer passed the fork to McCaslin and crossed the Iron Bridge.

Once genuinely challenged by "Non-virtue," Lucius quickly demonstrates with certain almost reflexive gestures which punctuate his conduct on Catalpa Street and in rural West Tennessee that unlike Faust's, his defection from Virtue was no more than partial and his sense of noblesse oblige, honor, or rectitude very much intact. Precept and example (spoken and unspoken) hold firm in the violently concluded nocturnal conversation with Otis (pp. 153-58) and the later dialogue with Corrie as she binds up the wound Otis gives him (pp. 159-160) as in the seemingly innocuous exchange about a glass of beer (pp. 107-108) and the performance of the rituals of introduction (pp. 99-102, *et seq.*); hold firm, though under strain, even after Eberbe has broken her word to him with Butch (see his last exchange with her in Parsham and his attack on Boon for striking her for her betrayal [pp. 279-81 and 259-60]); firm even as the desire to flee homeward from an impossible complication and share of that complication's burden grows and grows (pp. 155 *et seq.*, particularly 164, 174-75, 229-30, 246-52, 260-61). And because the norm he embodies as the gentleman or male endurer of high station is yet (in 1905) so strong in his world, so all pervading, that its authority is recognized even in its most remote outposts and subterranean declivities, Lucius is able to change the whorehouse, not it him.[160]

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[160] The reader of Faulkner's novels and stories of the post-bellum South who believes there is a serious contradiction in the Mississippian's depiction of the old order as sometimes faltering and sometimes intact I refer again to Richard Weaver's dissertation, "The Confederate South, 1865-1910: A Study in the Survival of a Mind and a

He neither argues nor pushes nor even reproaches its inhabitants or visitors (save once with a bit of silence for an already penitent Everbe [pp. 278-79] and twice [still silent] with blows for culprits whose misdeeds, according to his code, call for violence [Otis for making money with a peephole opening on Everbe's place of "business" and Boon for jealous smiting of her after she "dealt" with Butch]). Nor does he act to honor a promise; for as he tells Everbe, there are, in his view, "some things you don't have to promise anybody" (p. 218). But simply by being himself, what nature and nurture have made him in age and breeding--a young gentleman--he intimidates (a little) Mr. Binford; (a lot) Miss Reba; and (altogether) Corrie (Everbe Corinthia's "city" name).[161] And what he

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Culture" and to the forthcoming Arlington House edition of a revised version of that definitive study (to be entitled The Southern Tradition at Bay).

[161] More than the good character of Lucius, the ease with which that young man moves through the great world and back to his own place basically unharmed and the power his "quality" has over whomever he encounters in either, has driven many expositors of his story to take it (to use Volpe's terms [op. cit., pp. 348-49] as nothing more than a "legend" of a "fairy tale" made-up world that "could never have existed." Terry Southern speaks of Lucius' fall and rise as wishful thinking, ill-disguised "escape" fiction--worse than the "children's stories" or even than

makes of Corrie when combined with (in the mind of the big fellow) the knowledge of how it has been accomplished (and

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"ladies' literature" because it is supposed to appeal to genuine adults ("Tom Sawyer in a Whorehouse," p. 521). And Pauling, with a curious twist all his own, warns that unless we interpret the fable as do Volpe and Southern, we will be forced to take its depiction of "aristocratic virtues [in] triumph" as a "reprehensible evasion of our present [*i.e.*, with intransigent Southern "peculiarities"] difficulties" ("Running Away"); and, of course, he adds, we can't allow ourselves to do that! In truth, this petulance about admitting that there is any plausibility in Faulkner's assignment of considerable *noblesse* and other "Virtues" to both Yoknapatawpha and Memphis, vintage 1905, troubles most of the commentary quoted from in this discussion. This writer is inclined to attribute this unnecessary perplexity to willful anachronism (Tate's "New Provincialism"--in Time, not Space), an unwillingness to believe better of another era or culture than we can of our own. To dispute with the reflexive futurist over Faulkner's historical accuracy in projecting the "feel" and temper of an earlier South is fruitless, or work for social and cultural historians like Weaver--hard work. The basic problem of the critic not thus committed is simply to point out the indisputable evidence of what Faulkner did mean to say concerning the "wicked" civilized world of Hell Creek when he portrayed Lucius' good works and good fortune there. Howell ("In Ole Mississippi: Faulkner's Reminiscence"), Mellard ("Faulkner's 'Golden Book': 'The Reivers' As Romantic Comedy," pp. 30-31), and Millgate (*op. cit.*, p. 256) recognize that Faulkner stays, at least for comedy/dramatic monologue/recollection, within limits required for "realism"--as does Beck ("Told with Gusto," p. 683). Indeed, Faulkner, once he worked his way (through his fiction) to the doctrine of endurance, tended in his later fiction to dwell upon its operation more often than upon the penalties that come of its neglect. The form of his last novel left him no other alternative. But this is to touch upon the nature of elegiac action, which I intend to save for concluding remarks on *The Reivers*.

some inkling of why) moves Boon (in his real affection for her and his own lesser "chivalry" [pp. 176, 259]), once he has had time to think--outside of Memphis and back in the world where women are not ordinarily regarded as "commodities," to consider the girl and his need of her in a very different light, even to think of her (before the fact) as his "wife" [p. 299]. His attitude toward Corrie and hers toward him have never been that of "customer" to "entertainer" or harlot to patron. Boon wants only one girl when he goes (at regular intervals) to Reba's, wants her completely to himself, is jealous of attention given her by other men, respects her feelings, corresponds with her when in Jefferson, and regards their link as permanent. Corrie, in her turn, declares (and shows [p. 132]) that she "loves" him (p. 196). And neither Corrie nor Boon is a fatalist or inclined to put off on others what is their own charge (see particularly Corrie's repentance scene [p. 166] and her care of Otis, Lucius, and Boon [throughout], and Lucius' periodic admission that Boon would take him home whenever he insisted). The raw material for their marriage is there before Lucius comes between them--perhaps even enough to have brought it off sooner or later, as I said to begin with. What the boy does is to activate their sense of place in relation to each other--is able to because he matters to Boon and comes quickly to matter to Everbe (a believable good bad girl if there ever was one--and a Southern girl of her era assuredly) and because the two of them are already involved before he comes on the scene.[162]

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[162] Brooks notes that Everbe's upbringing in Protestant Puritan rural Arkansas would drive her to refuse Boon outside of wedlock once she is in love with him (William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country, p. 360). Though this background undoubtedly is part of what animates her decision, I believe on the basis of the text it can be argued that she would not have so behaved had not Lucius been hurt by his defending of her and had he not persisted in character thereafter. Though it is not a matter of conscious calculation, Lucius' conduct around the big country girl is an illustration of the truth of a regional commonplace concerning manners, so long as social norms retained their authority: that the "best way to reform a woman who is not behaving like a lady, even though she knows she should, is to treat her as if she were." Acting out the axiom automatically, Lucius is all the more effective as demonstrator of its validity. Lucius has to change Everbe before they together can change Boon.

Brooks, in the same examination of Everbe's metamorphosis, makes another point concerning which I have no reservations. He writes (ibid.):

> In his treatment of the story of Everbe, Faulkner would seem to have compounded folly by grafting onto the improbable story of the reformation of a whore the equally improbable story of a good woman who makes the great sacrifice of her virtue for the sake of someone she loves. Yet in the upshot, instead of

Faulkner includes in The Reivers a great deal of what may at first glance seem to be incidental material, material which is calculated to set off and define what is at stake between Boon and his "lady friend": overt (and covert) references to the mystery of sex and to the explosiveness of the sexual urge itself; accounts of the ritual union of Miss Reba and Mr. Binford (and on the contrasting relation of Mr. Poleymus and his wife); remarks on the distinct philosophies and roles of horses, mules, cats, rats, and in that connection, men and women; the subplot of the horse drawn up into a box and driven round and round in a circle by an irrational hunger for forbidden fruit (*i.e.*, a food not appropriately part of its diet); and finally the narrator's asides on the potential for chaos and distress in people's use and abuse of one another. All coalesce to play a definite part in the metaphorical

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canceling each other out, it may be that the twin impossibilities act to support each other. Everbe's temporary lapse, her prudent selling of herself once more, serves to reduce the sense of strained falsetto shrillness. We may find it easier to believe in the sincerity of Everbe's attempt to trudge along the strait and narrow path back to virtue just because she is willing to abandon it temporarily in order to detour around a particularly nasty mudhole.

scaffolding and thematic backdrop of "movements" two and three of the novel.

The most important of these frame materials are the remarks concerning flux, stasis, and the imperfectibility of the given world caught between the two polarities. They begin with the already discussed comments of Boss Priest on why men will love automobiles (p. 41) and run forward through the digression on cats, rats, mules, and horses (pp. 121-23) to the brawl with Otis (p. 155) and finally to the moments of helpless misery which come to Lucius in the country when he realizes that the fate of his group (their hope of extrication from growing difficulties and his for the renovation of Boon and Everbe) is upon his shoulders and the enemy at the gate. Women bring the boy face to face with the body of the world, with a dimension of Nature he knew not. Man is, as Lucius has just learned, subject to temptation. It is a serious matter to him, but not too serious. He enjoys a little vice. But women are the originals of temptation and, as was insisted above, Lucius quickly senses that, if unchecked, the temptations which surround women would soon destroy all that he is committed to (including women themselves), all that he intends to return to once his "experiment" is done. Yet what makes women (their passivity) and men (their assertiveness) dangerous can be managed if the horror of alternatives is recognized.

As has been noted repeatedly throughout this paper, in Faulkner men are the vessels of rebellion, "notions," dreams of "escape" from the limitations of place. Like the race horse manipulated by Ned (a creaturely double for all the foolish human beings in this novel and one usually identified with the male, as mules with women), they are too easily tolled away. They reach out to define themselves in action. Women, like Nature, act not. They simply *are*. Like the land, they check man's delusions, bring home to him his contingency. And his (man's) stature is often to be measured by his treatment of the two. Both are designed for his stewardly use if he also is available to theirs. Through man woman completes herself; and she is herself measured by her direction and control of his energies. Effort, *will*, is required of both. For there are bound to be slips. The pull of both natures is too strong. Recovery, restoration, and consistency are the important things, not perfection.

No antithesis is more commonplace in Faulkner's work. The opinion concerning women as creatures of practicality, recognizers of necessity, and accommodators of flux, frailty, and transcience voiced in The Reivers by the elderly narrator (pp. 47, 51, 11, 118, 123, 174 and 195-98), Ned (p. 263), Miss Reba (pp. 113 and 280), Minnie (pp. 114-15), and even Boon (p. 134); and acted out *manque* in the vignette of Miss Reba and Mr. Binford (pp. 101-115) could be dropped down into a number of other Faulkner novels and stories or swapped with passages found there and no ill effect results. Similarly proofs of the soundness of this definition in the conduct of feminine characters could be exchanged. And the same holds true for this last work's gloss and portrayal of distinctively masculine traits (for instance, the report of Mr. Poleymus' marriage [p. 257] and his rage at Boon's punishment of Corrie [p. 260]). In the pride/humility balance men represent the former, women the latter. Together they sustain each other. Together they are able to contend with and control facets of their condition (and not just sexuality) better than is possible for either of them alone. As Boon does not recognize even after two run-ins with the reformed Everbe (but as the big

Arkansas girl does--immediately--as soon as Lucius fights over her), their interdependence--formalized in some way--is necessary to them both. Otherwise what Butch and Otis bring with them, the view (pp. 185 and 207) that people are real only in so far as they are exploitable and that use carries with it no other obligation than self-aggrandizement will hold sway. And what holds true for the male/female confrontation in some ways holds true for all others.[163]

Mortality, the source and sustainer of Non-virtue, first puzzles, then frightens, then appalls Lucius. What he smells when he first enters Miss Reba's is that old adversary in its most flamboyant aspect, a kind whose significance an intelligent boy can imagine once certain things occur in his presence even though its erotic source he cannot conceive (p. 99). The interdependence it calls for, like the interdependence of the partners in reiving and gambling, suggests a rule for human life. But not until the boy discovers that much Non-virtue lies beyond car borrowing and playfulness. Or, to put the same argument another way, revulsion at male exploitation of women (and at woman's submission to and counter-exploitation of men) drives Lucius to consider the overall problem of social order in a fallen world, to consider what he is and belongs to, how much is required of a gentleman, and how necessary will be his persistence in that role. To hate aspects of, potentials in, what is ". . . must be, had to be, if living was to continue and mankind be a part of it"; to insist that "it should not be" but recognize that "it is a part of participating in life, being alive" (p. 155) is all right. But to emulate the cat in the elder Lucius' little myth of shifts in early hierarchical arrangements among earth's inhabitants, to decide that since the "mortal predicament" is "insoluble," we had best "abdicate" and leave the necessity of confronting it to those more "foolish" (p. 122) or follow after the short-cutters, gamblers, and empire builders who would transcend it with some swift stroke--these courses will not do if life is to have meaning and dignity. This much Lucius must accept before he can be anything more than the automatic little product of conditioning and promising who left Jefferson, before he can (in a gesture with which he accepts his inherited role in life) mount the knightly steed to perform the desperate deed of service, before he is ready to hear, receive with comprehension and accept as truth (altogether putting aside the delusions that mortality can be escaped, "fixed," or left unfought) the words of his grandfather in the exchange with which the action of the novel concludes:[164]

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[163] Lucius' pure chivalry in his attitude toward Corrie is at one extreme, Butch's complete but casual animality at the other. Boon (p. 197) starts somewhere in the middle. His partial confusion is objectified clearly in his assertion of the false analogy that Everbe would be to him, whenever he is around, as he is to the father and grandfather of Lucius. He forgets that his relation to the Priests, McCaslins, and Edmondses is not part-time and, as the novel proves, would be worth very little to him if it were. But he is given an opportunity and a cause for remembering.

> "I lied," I said.
> "Come here," he said.
> "I cant," I said. "I lied, I tell you."
> "I know it," he said.
> "Then do something about it. Do anything, just so it's something."
> "I cant," he said.
> "There aint anything to do? Not anything?"
> "I didn't say that," Grandfather said. "I said I couldn't. You can."
> "What?" I said. "How can I forget it? Tell me how to."

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[164] The focus of Brooks's reading of The Reivers (William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country, pp. 349-64) is upon the operation of the ideal of the gentleman. To his comments I am much indebted. Gold (op. cit., p. 187) and Corke ("Faulkner Across the Water," p. 21), as well as several others, are made uncomfortable by Faulkner's use of the word. Hicks, to my surprise, is not disturbed by it at all ("Building Blocks of a Gentleman"). Neither is Beck ("Told with Gusto," pp. 682-83).

> "You cant," he said. "Nothing is ever forgotten. Nothing is ever lost. It's too valuable."
>
> "Then what can I do?"
>
> "Live with it," Grandfather said.
>
> "Live with it? You mean, forever? For the rest of my life? Not ever to get rid of it? Never? I cant. Dont you see I cant?"
>
> "Yes you can," he said. "You will. A gentleman always does. A gentleman can live through anything. He faces anything. A gentleman accepts the responsibility of his actions and bears the burden of their consequences, even when he did not himself instigate them but only acquiesced to them, didn't say No though he knew he should. Come here" (pp. 301-302).

The Reivers ends on a more serious note than most romantic comedy because the withdrawal from Saturnalia of its hero is more than a private act. This is part of the logic of including the horse race in its third movement. As do all of Faulkner's enduring, Lucius in the end recognizes as providential much that he dislikes about his part of the world, including his own guilt and all that comes of his original lie. With his part in this dialogue Boss Priest is preventing a loss, Lucius' reversion to the status of child (what the whipping Maury has in mind would assure), and at the same time hammering home a lesson well learned. The boy's acceptance, not what it enables him to accomplish, is at the heart of the novel. It forestalls in him the immobilizing hatred of weakness in others which troubled him for a moment at Parsham (p. 174) as it checks the coequal paralysis of "licensing all" and prepares him to act a patient but firm part in the brotherhood of finitude. The frailty of others (both the weak and the strong variety) bit by bit throughout the last two-thirds of the novel strengthens his resolve to practice _noblesse_. Acceptance is what the narrator intends to commend to his grandson (and Faulkner to his reader) for emulation with this wild tale of his youth.[165]

The turning point in the four-day initiation of Lucius Priest is the evening and night he spends with Uncle Parsham Hood. Here (and not in that citadel of disorder and exploitation, as Otis properly defines Memphis [pp. 139-43]) the boy is able to recover perspective (pp. 244-52). "Possum," as the inhabitants of the community whose name he shares call him, is the colored counterpart of Lucius' grandfather as is his household of the Priest family. He is a thorough gentleman, a patriarch among his own, and perhaps (though certainly offensive to many modern readers) Faulkner's most nearly complete Negro character. It is in his company that Lucius comes to realize, consciously, who he is and what he stands for (a Priest, and Jefferson).[166] At this point his desire for home becomes not escapism but a value judgment--and his determination to ride Coppermine to victory, regardless of how his companions fail him, an assertion of character (p. 260). With a regional version of one of the oldest metaphors belonging to the tradition of Western literature, that of the chariot and the charioteer (here team of mules and driver), Uncle Parsham (pp. 245-46) suggests to Lucius the difference between power and wisdom, knowing how but sliding along passively and choosing. A sagacious direction makes power useful, as does a good rider a mighty horse a racer. The task of the gentleman is to steer nature into useful channels. What Jefferson means is such steering. Curiously though, it is not by thinking of usefulness but with what he believes is a hopeless gesture that Lucius fulfills his responsibility and performs his miracle.

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[165] Rossky's essay, "'The Reivers': Faulkner's 'Tempest'" and Gold's chapter (_op_. _cit_., pp. 184-87) both give good accounts of Lucius' acceptance (though Gold's is clouded by his determination to discover what he calls "humanism" in all of Faulkner's later works). The novelist in his own remarks on the book (_Faulkner at West Point_, pp. 68 and 73) speaks of the animating tension in _The Reivers_ in terms which lend credibility to their analysis.

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[166] Mellard, "Faulkner's 'Golden Book': 'The Reivers' As Romantic Comedy," p. 28. Later (p. 29) he adds: "Lucius is not so much initiated into manhood as he is integrated into the society to which he truly belongs." In the process he ignores the fact that the two developments are really the same; to become a conscious partner in Jefferson is to become a man.

Noblesse should be disinterested if it is to have moral authority (_vide_ Quixote). Nor should the value of the genuine chivalric deed (appropriately performed on horseback) be measured by the people it serves any more than the religious service by the moral condition of the cleric who conducts it or the laymen who participate (_vide_ the Don again). The most compelling reason to be a gentleman is the desire for self-respect, antipathy to shame, and not pure charity; or rather, magnanimity and usefulness go together. Things are never as bad as Lucius imagines (though it is to his credit that he cannot believe this), Otis and Butch never so strong. What appears to have gotten worse with removal to the country has actually turned the other way--even for "sporting folk." Lucius and the rest (though Ned doesn't let them know how far) half turned from Non-virtue when they set out to race Coppermine. In the working out of their earlier mistakes Lucius' two special responsibilities make matters temporarily seem to have completely escaped his control: first, when Everbe breaks her promise (Butch has convinced her there is no other way--in love and concern reverting to the passivity that got her into harlotry in the first place); then, when Boon, going back to the childishness of his pique with her for "holding out" on him, whips her. But their desertion of the new association Lucius has put together is temporary. And since they all left Reba's, Lucius has picked up support on all sides--stronger support than he could have commanded in Memphis.

Parsham is a place very like Jefferson. In its atmosphere (and in the face of his conduct) Reba and Ned come to serve Lucius, as in their way do Mr. Poleymus and the owners of the two thoroughbreds. Even Boss Priest, arriving in time for the last heat and more than a little proud to see Lucius' persistence, joins in. Butch is punished, the motley crew come out with Coppermine (or Lightning) released, Everbe given a job, property restored to its rightful owners, Bobo cleared--and nothing monstrous allowed to happen. By bearing it out to what he believes may be the edge of doom, obeying his own rectitude despite his pessimism concerning its efficacy, winning his race against a proven horse and an experienced jockey, Lucius quickly shames and pulls both defectors back within his sphere of influence. The symbolic marriage, the traditional ending for comedy, representing the restoration and rejuvenation of family and community, winds up the "golden fable" on the note we should expect.[167] Nothing remains but the rewarding of the hero (a reward which reminds him one last time that the performance of duty can lead only to the emergence of new duties to perform, new mountings-up and tiltings with mortality unchecked): the birth and naming of the son and heir of Everbe and Boon, the boy whose very name forewarns that he is young Priest's charge for life, Lucius Priest Hogganbeck.

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[167] *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26. Mellard cites Northrup Frye's *The Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1957, pp. 163-71 and 186-95) and summarizes: "The major themes of romance suggest the triumph of the world of life, love, fertility, innocence, over the world of death, lust, sterility and experience; the major theme of comedy is the integration of the family and society." Apart from the reference to innocence (which Lucius certainly sheds [unless he means by it Virtue]), the reference is appropriate. Mrs. Vickery (revised edition, pp. 228 *et seq.*) sees the parallel of Lucius to Cervantes' hero. But she goes astray in insisting that it runs throughout the novel, in making out the first "movement" of the fable proper as a worthy seizure of freedom, of an arena for the proving and exercise of knightly virtue. Lucius is like Quixote only after he ceases to be like Faust.

Just one last question about The Reivers remains to be considered: the significance of its subtitle, its part in what I have earlier called the elegiac action. Were the novel simply a first-person reminiscence or a dramatization of a one-sided conversation about the present, then the writer would be fairly well satisfied with some of the commentary on it. But it *is* a dramatization of a reminiscence, a dramatization of a particular kind. In The Reivers we are never allowed to forget that a grandfather is addressing his grandson with a pointed story from his own childhood. The potential for meaning in this arrangement is underscored by the narrator's repeated reference to how things were, by the shape of the story itself, by the implicit insistence on social norms and on the importance of their survival.[168] What is recalled is projected with love, affirmatively; what triumphs in Lucius and is the strong support available to him from all quarters belongs to the old patriarchal order; and the context determines that we not take the homily or the act of recollection as mere entertainment for a child. Moreover, it is difficult to resist the spectacle of a grandfather recalling memories for his grandson's use. To argue as Millgate does that a work of love like The Reivers has nothing to say to the present about the object of that love is indefensible.[169] But we should be able to understand (if we have read enough Faulkner criticism) why he so argued--and therefore why Faulkner in 1962 put together as he did his valedictory salute to the South into which he was born.

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[168] The Reivers, pp. 4, 16, 20, 21, 23, 27, 38, 45, 66, 73, 89, 90, 95, 96, 121, 166, 193, 210, 241, 243, 269, 285, 295, 300, etc.

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[169] Op. cit., p. 256. Most of the argument of this reading of The Reivers is anticipated in the writer's review of the novel which appeared on p. 12-F of The Nashville Tennessean of June 3, 1962.

E. *Absalom, Absalom!*

Absalom, Absalom!, the last Faulkner novel to be examined in detail in this study, has, as I suggested in opening my series of readings, been thus reserved for reasons of logic which outweigh the more obvious convenience of chronology. Assuredly, simple rhetoric--if nothing else were involved--would prescribe this arrangement: for complexity, difficulty, *and* importance all call for the reservation. Moreover, by means of such placement the way is prepared for the exegesis which I intend and the terms upon which that criticism will draw are made intelligible. For after *Go Down, Moses*, *The Unvanquished*, *Intruder in the Dust*, and *The Reivers* have been exhibited as demonstrations that endurance is the besetting imperative confronting the typical Faulkner hero coming into self-consciousness, it is not difficult to recognize what is at issue in a Compson boy brooding upon the Sutpens' story--or that there is a range of possibility that stretches, by inference, between the poles represented by the young aristocrat and his subjects. *Absalom, Absalom!* is considered by many to be its author's masterpiece. Dispute over its design and meaning has been heated and continuous. In a sense what I attempt with the book (and in the face of reams of commentary to the contrary) is the fairest possible test of the methods and assumptions developed in the preceding pages--the piece de resistance of my labors.

Even taken as it usually is, Absalom, Absalom! is ordinarily recognized as another of Faulkner's fictions whose design can best be understood as a dramatization and exploration of the themes of pride, humility, and endurance.[170] Yet the structure and focus of the novel has been an especial puzzle to many. Its ostensible subject is the career of an archetypal self-made man, the adamantine titan and rebel against the ethic of endurance, Thomas Sutpen.[171] Several versions of his biography, interpretations of his character, and accounts of the aftereffects of both on his descendants and associates are included. Obviously Faulkner finds his errors in pride both horrifying and instructive. However, something more than the fortune of the manque empire-builder demands our attention. Indeed, the emphasis upon and carefully projected revelation of the tale of Sutpen, so enthralling in itself, is in fact proof that even if he is the formal cause and centerpiece of the novel's action, Thomas Sutpen appears to us with such impact because of the exceptional medium through which he, his heirs, victims, and "interested" contemporaries are filtered to us.

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[170] All citations from Absalom, Absalom! here included are from the standard edition (New York: Random House, 1936).

[171] For a context useful in a discussion of Sutpen as a type of one species of non-endurance or rebellion against nature, see Chapter II above and Brooks' William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country, pp. 295-324 and 426-429.

In *Absalom, Absalom!* Quentin Compson's consciousness envelops the story of Thomas Sutpen.[172] After the novelist

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[172] Hyatt Waggoner (*op. cit.*, pp. 153-154) identifies "the telling of the story of Quentin to Shreve" as the enclosing "frame" in the novel; Shreve, however, is not present when Quentin begins his rehearsal of the Sutpen story. Indeed, Quentin himself is not "present" in the immediate dramatic way in which he comes to be present later in the book. The unobtrusive voice of the author opens the novel and plays a small part throughout. Quentin gradually replaces it. Shreve is not in any sense evident until the beginning of Chapter VI (p. 173); even if we assume with Waggoner that Quentin is in his room alone at the "time" of the novel's first five chapters, it is young Compson's dialogue with himself which "contains" the Sutpen saga, not his dialogue with anyone else. Professor Waggoner does not make as much of his remarks about the structural function of Quentin's consciousness as is here attempted.

Edmond L. Volpe (*op. cit.*, pp. 211-212) seems also to agree that mind and not event stands at the center of the novel. He describes the reader as the fifth in a series has slowly and unobtrusively introduced and partially explained (especially on pp. 12, 31, 33, 133, and 172) Quentin's haunted and retrospective bias, the Harvard freshman from Mississippi is left in the rest of the book (pp. 172-173 ff.) between the reader and the unfolding legend of a Southern Prometheus, a shadowy presence even when he is replaced or overcome by others in his role as narrator. Upon his consciousness the structure of the novel brings to bear all manner of facts and conjectures concerning the rise and fall of the house of Sutpen. That intelligence periodically, and toward the end of the book with increasing frequency, moves upstage and reminds us that Quentin is the one who has brought Sutpen into our presence

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of "concentric circles" made by the appearance of Thomas Sutpen in time; he says of the novel that "the characteristics of human thought determine its form." Lawrance Thompson (op. cit., p. 56) concurs with both Waggoner and Volpe when he identifies Quentin as "the center of consciousness through whose restricted vision the reader's own vision is restricted." Hornback (op. cit., pp. 105-116) and Gold (op. cit., pp. 30-38) are of the same mind--though they persist in identifying Quentin's problem with racial guilt. Still close but even more confused are Duncan Aswell ("The Puzzling Design of Absalom, Absalom!" Kenyon Review, XXX [Issue I, 1968], 6784); Richard B. Sewall's The Vision of Tragedy (New Haven, 1959), pp. 133-147; Walter Patrick Sullivan (op. cit., pp. 94-119); and Louis D. Rubin, Jr.'s "Chronicles of Yoknapatawpha" of The Faraway Country (Seattle, 1963), pp. 50-54.

and has sustained our involvement with his life's story. As the thread of the novel is spun out by associational links, we are brought more and more into dramatic involvement with this mind's divided and tormented activity. Implicitly omnipresent even in the first five chapters of the novel, it suggests to us that there is in the experience of Faulkner's curious nouveau portentous meaning never directly presented or explained. With Quentin looking at Sutpen the novel begins and ends. And inside of the youth's consciousness occurs one of the two actions it depicts, structurally the more important one because it controls our perspective on the other, external happenings. Quentin responding has no rival for our attention save the predictable Faulkner overvoice. And as that most nebulous presence does in the beginning, so it does throughout: returns us to Quentin as soon as it has ushered him in.[173]

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[173] Faulkner in the University, p. 275. Faulkner declares of Quentin's version of the Sutpen story that "he is actually telling his [own] biography." William Van O'Connor (op. cit., p. 99) goes even further: "It is Quentin's story rather than the story of Thomas Sutpen, who died not understanding the meaning of the life that had been his. Quentin, with the aid of his father, Rosa Coldfield, and even Shreve McCannon, recreates the separate scenes, studies them, probes their significance."

Millgate (op. cit., p. 153) makes the same point: "Sutpen . . . remains elusive as both symbol and

In one sense, there is of course no disputing what Faulkner himself said of _Absalom, Absalom!_ in the University of Virginia interviews, no disputing it even though he admitted at the time that he had forgotten a great deal about the novel.[174] The book is "about" Thomas Sutpen. But it is most precisely about his impact on various people, only one of whom is Quentin Compson. What makes the overall Sutpen story peculiarly Quentin's is the fact that the structure of the novel brings it forward as _the_ formative influence upon his life--as a part of the general pattern of time and the life of men in time which speaks reproachfully to him of his own dire extremity. Upon Quentin's

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character. But what we do know about him is his meaning for, and effect upon, Quentin, and as the action progresses Sutpen recedes from the foreground, allowing the weight of the novel's major concerns to be subtly shifted on Quentin's shoulders. By the end of the book the importance of arriving at a satisfactory interpretation of the Sutpen story is at least equated by the importance of seeing the significance which this solution will carry for Quentin himself, the extent to which it will relax or tighten the rack on which he is stretched, the particular twist it will give to the knife."

[174] _Faulkner in the University_, pp. 71 and 275; in the latter Faulkner identifies the story as "incidentally" Quentin's. However, in a letter to Cowley of November, 1944 (quoted on pp. 14-17 of Cowley's _The Faulkner-Cowley File_), he explains that Quentin "is the correct yardstick" to use in approaching Sutpen's story because "I was [_i.e._, in the construction of the novel] creating him [Quentin] as a character."

gradually unfolding reaction to and understanding of his grandfather's ambitious neighbors the novel turns. All the Sutpen stories given in the book are foils to the "story" of their fused impact on Quentin. He is measured and defined as one of the unenduring by his synthesis, extrapolation, and abortive flight from these narratives. Out of his dialectic with them the novel moves forward.

Quentin Compson is the same person in *Absalom, Absalom!* that he is in *The Sound and the Fury*.[175] He is unmanned by time and confused about what rule of life he should follow; he feels helpless before everything and everyone; and he suffers from guilt in that he is unable to resolve any of the questions which he must submit to or confront any of the duties he must assume. What we are shown of him in the earlier novel would lead us to expect this frailest of Compsons to be preoccupied with and pained by the Sutpen legend. Our expectations are not disappointed. The pattern of Sutpen's rise and fall, the willed quality of his destruction, the inevitability of it once he (Sutpen) has misinterpreted the "affront" given him as a boy, formulated his design, and seen it collapse in the conflict of his sons, Henry Sutpen and Charles Bon, are ingredients in the total Sutpen story which have dominion over Quentin's imagination.

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[175] See p.   and *passim*.

However, it is not Thomas Sutpen's part of the Sutpen saga that most interests Quentin. As John Hunt remarks in an essay which contains some of the most perceptive comments on the structure of the novel, "The focus of Quentin's interest is upon the reason why Henry killed Bon."[176] For as Quentin realizes, upon the explanation of Henry's action hinges the meaning of the entire Sutpen chronicle. Bon's death is its climax; and the futile attempts of an elderly Sutpen after the event to "come again" out of the ruins of his dynastic dream serve only to underscore with heavy irony (and even grotesquerie) the mistake which inspired his conduct, to underscore and point up even while they at the same time tie together the loose ends of his life and round off its shape. Indeed, Sutpen's career becomes morally intelligible for all of those who in _Absalom_, _Absalom!_ share in its rehearsal and recreation, and especially for Quentin, only in its extension into the lives of Sutpen's descendants.

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[176] *William Faulkner: Art in Theological Tension*, p. 117. Andrew Lytle writes in general agreement that "by piecing together the fragments of the fatal story of families not his own . . . Quentin--almost hectically--hopes for greater knowledge about the son's part in the family life, either to save himself or give grounds for his suicide" (*The Hero with the Private Parts*, p. 138 and [an expansion of the same sentiment], pp. 120-121).

Even the title of this novel points the same way--to Quentin and *through him* to Henry. Absalom, we recall, was King David's son, the son who was lost to him after he had slain a brother over their sister (II Samuel 13). Ironically, here the lamentation is that of another son who fails father and sister.

The pattern of cause and effect, deeds and their endless afterlife, the stream of history within which, as Quentin puts it, "a man never outlives his father" (p. 273) and ripples move endlessly outward and onward from the pebble casually tossed in (p. 261) are what Quentin is made to dwell on by the record of the autocrat and his children. Not injustice to Negroes, not the monstrous evil of "designs," and not even the drama of strong wills in action (though this last is perpetually fascinating to the spineless young man) are for Quentin the burden of the dark fable which he presents to us. For him the point of the Sutpen legend (which he for a time resists but recognizes ultimately) is that "you can't get away," that there will be "nevermore of peace" (p. 373), that each man is arbitrarily assigned a place and responsibilities that go with it by his antecedents and the history of his people, and that he must "cope" with or be destroyed by it. The emotions provoked in Quentin by the spectacle of time's juggernaut coming down, through no fault of his own, upon Henry Sutpen are very much like those which, we learn in _The Sound and the Fury_, run through his mind a few months later as by breaking his watch he prepares to commit suicide.[177] Quentin's inability to interpret (or to accept his own interpretation of) the fratricide issues finally in the anguished equipoise of implications embodied in his concluding exchange with his Canadian roommate, Shreve McCannon. The exchange is a dramatization of Compson's non-endurance _and_ of his disavowal of that very non-endurance: of the equivocal effect of his identification with whatever in the Sutpen story implies to him that he should be. And we have to look back at his struggle to interpret the Sutpen story and the narratives which go into it to comprehend from just what sort of rebellion against nature the boy suffers and from what his ambivalence stems.

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[177] _The Sound and the Fury_, p. 99.

Charles Bon is perhaps the most enigmatic and misunderstood character in *Absalom, Absalom!* Sutpen's son by a French-Haitian first wife, he is with his mother put aside by the "demon" (as Miss Rosa Coldfield and Shreve after her refer to the elder Sutpen in their narrations) when he discovers that they are part Negro and cannot be adjunctive to his "design." Bon is civilized, Latin, and remote. Faulkner does not probe him. We learn a little of what he did, and of how others reacted to him. But even though Shreve identifies with him and creates for him (with the help of Miss Rosa and Quentin's father) a personality, motives, and an emotional life in conformity with the literary stereotypes of the wounded mulatto with which his culture has made him familiar, the reader of *Absalom, Absalom!* cannot really know Sutpen's eldest son. Nevertheless, weigh him and judge him we must (like Quentin), because upon that judgment will depend what we make of Henry's decision to kill him. About the culpability of Bon's father in both his "resignation" from his first family and the cold, legalistic spirit in which he walks away from them, there can be no question. Regard for women and children are at the heart of the chivalric pattern

Sutpen mimics; to possess either is to be possessed by them. But the misguided and overzealous sympathy of many critics (encouraged by Quentin's passivity to Shreve's preemption and distortion in the last chapters of what is primarily "his [Quentin's] tale") for Bon's sufferings, real and imagined, have obscured the fact that Bon *is* his father's son: very like his father, single-minded and inflexible in his pursuit of a chosen course; and in his effect on the lives of those he touches, destructive in the extreme.[178] Faulkner criticism has done with Bon as with Joe Christmas in *Light in August*; Isaac McCaslin in "The Bear"; and Lucas Beauchamp in other sections of *Go Down, Moses* (although with less violence in this last case). Because all are grist for the angelic mills, as Morningside Heights, the *Partisan Review*, *Nation*, *Time*, and *The New*

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[178] For misreadings of Bon's character and/or abuses of Henry Sutpen, see "Faulkner's Ambiguous Negro," by Melvin Seiden (*Massachusetts Review*, IV [Summer 1963], 675-690); Harvey Breit's "Introduction" to the Modern Library 1951 edition of the novel (pp. v-xii); "The Design and Meaning of *Absalom, Absalom!*" by Ilse Dusoir Lind (*PMLA*, LXX [December 1955], 887-912); Mrs. Vickery (*op. cit.*, pp. 98-99); O'Connor (*op. cit.*, p. 98); Waggoner (*op. cit.*, p. 165); Irving Howe's *William Faulkner: A Critical Study*, p. 77; Peter Swiggart's *The Art of Faulkner's Novels*, pp. 162-170; and Richardson's *Force and Faith in the Novels of William Faulkner*, pp. 29-35.

York Review of Books see things, they are faulted in nothing.[179] And those characters in the novels who stand in opposition to these chosen few are regularly condemned out of court. But mass obscurantism notwithstanding, Charles Bon probably "needs killing" (in the old idiom) when Henry finally brings himself to do the deed. Nor is it difficult to explain why.

We cannot be perfectly sure of our interpretation of Charles' motive for insisting that he and Judith marry. We do not know how much Bon learns about his parentage in his association with the Sutpens or what passes between him and Henry, his mother, or his father. But the more he knows, the worse we must believe him to be. And whatever we believe him to know, all the narrators in Absalom, Absalom! agree that Bon's usual reaction to any information is "So what?" or "Then what?" (p. 341). Therefore the question of how informed or instinctive (random) is his conduct with Henry and Judith is largely beside the point. What we do know is that Bon intends (or at least leads Henry to think that he intends) to marry Judith Sutpen and that Henry, as a brother--given the world in which they all live--has no choice but to stop him. Judith is ignorant and (partially because of Henry) mesmerized by her sophisticated Byronic lover.[180] That Bon is (in any recognizable sense of the word) in love with her, we (and Henry, and Quentin--and even his "champion" Shreve) are never convinced. Sutpen will not take a hand in the matter of Bon and Judith; and it is left up to Henry to decide what will transpire. From the text of *Absalom, Absalom!* we can determine that Henry has (from his father, from Judith, and from long familiarity with his half-brother) all the evidence he needs to make an informed and considered determination. He knows that Bon is Thomas Sutpen's son, knows also that he is part Negro, and knows that it would be to consign Judith *and* Charles *and* any children they might have to a life of protracted and unamenable misery were he to permit this miscegenous and incestuous marriage.

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[179] See R. Scholes' "Understanding Faulkner" for an identification and discussion of this "school" of Faulkner criticism.

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[180] Bon's letter to Judith, which is the only concrete evidence of his good character his defenders bring forward (pp. 129-132), may be taken as nothing more than what it purports to be, a love letter and the most calculated piece of rhetoric. It does not fit Shreve's reading of Bon's character on which his defenders lean heavily; but it does seem to support that of Quentin's father. In any case, though moving, the letter does not become Bon, however we read it--as an appeal for sympathy, a display of sophomoric fatalism, or as part of a plan to "punish" his father.

That Henry feels, once they reach the gate of Sutpen's Hundred, obliged to kill Charles Bon does not tell us anything about his private racial attitudes. Actually there is much evidence in the novel that he puts considerations of family interest and blood connection ahead of all others. Moreover, his action cannot be taken as a reflection of (or on) the Southern social order, for he does not act in its behalf. He has already rejected the strictly racial axioms governing that order in acknowledging Charles as his brother. Henry's reason is love, love for his sister which outweighs his affection for his brother, even though he also loves that brother. So great is his passion that he is almost maddened by what brother, sister, and father compel him to decide (p. 357). Henry rejects his patrimony for Charles; he refuses to face the truth about the impropriety of his brother's presence among the Sutpens. But he will not permit his sister to be victimized by a situation she does not (and probably could not) understand. Only a choice between brother's interest and sister's--with the brother as the offending party in their conflict--could have provoked Henry to hurt Charles. In one of the more plausible of his imaginative reconstructions of what occurs between Henry and his elder brother, Shreve (pp. 344-345) has Henry to question why it could not have been any other choice that he had to make. However, Henry does "endure" his place, his role, when he is forced to see that the role is his and his alone, the particular history deposited upon him as a Sutpen and as a keeper of the order his father bred him to represent. No other action could impress and intimidate Quentin Compson more forcibly.

To repeat, Charles Bon (and indeed his son Charles Etienne de Saint Velery Bon after him) is like Sutpen. But Henry (and to a lesser extent his sisters Judith and Clytie after him) breaks the inherited mold. He is no utter monomaniac. According to his lights, he puts human values and priorities ahead of abstractions. Said another way, he acknowledges that pattern of priorities in his responsibilities which his father has ignored, the order which demands that each man love and serve best what Burke calls "his own little platoon in society": that plain justice which General Compson insists that the elder Sutpen forgot when he imagined he could buy off a wife and child with money or logic; that rule of chivalry which insists that above all else women are not to be taken as commodities (p. 265).[181] Quentin focuses on Henry because Henry makes and acts out (without a father's help) a decision about a sister, a decision which determines the fate of his family--a decision which we know from The Sound and the Fury Quentin himself believes he faces during the summer of the trip out to Sutpen's Hundred with Miss Rosa. Quentin's pain in retracing the Sutpen family story with Shreve in Chapters VI-IX of Absalom, Absalom! is far more intense *because* in the interval of time which has lapsed since the beginning of the novel he has failed to act at all whereas Henry at least tried.[182] Quentin too

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[181] On Faulkner and clannishness, see Faulkner at Nagano, pp. 192-193. In general, women in Faulkner's fiction are more mindful of this order of priorities than men. And non-endurance or rebellion against nature is, as was noted in Chapter III, therefore rarer amongst them. Faulkner's most contemptible or frightening characters do, however, go against blood: Jason, Flem, Carothers McCaslin, Crawford Gowrie.

[182] No general solution to the difficult question of the appropriateness of references to one work of an author to explain another is here suggested. Though, as was noted above, Faulkner has told us that Quentin in Absalom, Absalom! is Quentin in The Sound and the Fury, no specific allusion to the domestic dilemma of the Compson family in the latter novel is made in the former. And nothing we can

(in the other novel) inherits a world he never made; but unlike Henry's, his response to it is (his ineffectuality aside) formal, legalistic, and not "of the heart." The enduring, we must remember, "do the best they can"--and in order to do so quite often make a choice between evils; but they do choose rather than resign their "place."[183]

If Henry's motives in his engagement with an inherited "curse" are not subject to serious censure, Judith's, in her confrontation of the ruins Henry and the

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find about Quentin in The Sound and the Fury substantially changes the image left with us by his struggle with the Sutpen story. But the great difference between Quentin's feeling about that story in the first five chapters of the novel and his discomfiture at its rehearsal in the last four requires more explanation than resentment toward repetitious Yankee questioning (by Shreve and others), the letter from home about Miss Rosa's death, the trip he made with her to the Sutpen place (which came after the time of Chapters I and II), or the simple lapse of time can provide. That explanation, the experiences of Quentin, his father, and his sister in the summer of 1909 recounted in The Sound and the Fury, seems to supply far better than anything available in Absalom, Absalom!

[183] Hunt, op. cit., p. 155. Professor Hunt speaks of "office" rather than place. But he means by his word what is intended here by "place." Marvin K. Singleton has distinguished Henry from his father and brother with reference to English legal tradition--the younger son being the feudal Christian and the older boy and Thomas himself common law legalists ("Personae at Law in Equity: The Unity of Faulkner's Absalom, Absalom!" Papers on Language and Literature, III [Fall 1967], 354-370). Language is his evidence.

elder Sutpen leave, are even less so. And Quentin's preoccupation with his own sister, as well as his interest in the inexorability of the onflowing and outflowing of ripples from the "splash" in time's "pond" called Sutpen--the drama of iron wills toiling in the clutch of circumstance and cosmic justice--would be expected to draw him to her as to her father, brother, and mother. Judith Sutpen's stern and inflexible "coping" with the detritus of what had once been the two worlds of Thomas Sutpen, the value systems which destroy each other when Henry kills Charles Bon, has received sympathetic and convincing treatment from Professor Brooks.[184] Until Charles Bon is dead and Henry is gone forever from her ken, Judith is an almost passive observer of the struggle of determined men to decide her fate. But once the fiance whom her brother and mother had chosen for her (and her father and brother had denied her) is a corpse in her house--the fiance who had thus far inspired her one adult decision, to be loyal once committed--Judith becomes the central figure in the Sutpen story; and in one of the few portions of the novel based more on fact than conjecture

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[184] Brooks, William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country, p. 319.

(Chapter VI), she, like her brother, meets what she considers to be her (and her family's) obligation as best she can, meets them until she dies. She reasons that "somebody will have to take care of Clytie and father" (p. 128) and explains to General Compson that, as she understands life, "you keep on trying," even though the context in which people have their being is like tapestry set up by a celestial rug maker--a tapestry on which everyone "wants to weave his own pattern" and in which there is never a perfect order or proportion (p. 127).[185]

The chief business of her involuntary spinsterhood is the mulatto son of her mulatto brother-lover. She never knows that the boy is her kin or that his father is part Negro. But she does find his picture (and his mother's) on Charles' body. And out of her continued love and loyalty to Charles Bon and her tacitly acknowledged guilt (because her family has deprived the boy of his), she contacts the boy's mother (Bon's quadroon concubine); and after that woman's death or defection Judith assumes full responsibility for little Charles Etienne de Saint Velery Bon. Though she is aware that the child is part Negro, she and Clytie treat him like one of her own blood--not knowing that he is. She rears the child, tries to protect him when he discovers his mixed origins and reacts insanely (as we would expect from a Sutpen) to that knowledge, asks him to call her "aunt" (p. 208), and finally loses her life as a result of tending his sickbed (p. 210). Meanwhile, she and Clytie see to the propriety of necessary burials, tend to Sutpen while he lives, keep their place "going," and finally (though this effort is mostly Clytie's) take responsibility for the last of the Sutpens, Charles Bon's idiot grandson, Jim. Though her part in the novel is a muted one, the story of Judith would reinforce the effect of that of her brother on Quentin's consciousness.

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[185] Judith's use of metaphor here identifies her as a self-conscious practitioner of endurance.

In the assessment of various influences on the protagonist of Faulkner's Absalom, Absalom!, there remains the matter of Quentin and Thomas Sutpen himself. Sutpen is, as I have argued frequently in this paper, the inevitable figure of reference in any discussion of non-endurance or rebellion against man's limited and contingent status in the Faulknerian universe. From the first pages of the novel, in which the author pictures Quentin pondering

Sutpen's part in the creation of his plantation in words reminiscent of those spoken by God in Genesis ("Be Sutpen's Hundred"), the larger-than-life founder and destroyer of a dynasty is identified as an overreacher (pp. 8-9). In the authoritative recitation by Quentin of the two-part explanation Sutpen gave of his life to General Compson (who in turn gave it to Jason III, who in turn gave it to his son) in Chapter VII of the novel, there are two quotations from Sutpen on which Quentin dwells: the first explains how Sutpen looked at the disposition of place and advantages in the world before the house Negro sent him away from the front door of a plantation; the second indicates what change in his philosophy occurs after that experience. At least twice in the novel (pp. 222 and 288-289), Quentin tells us that as a boy Sutpen believed that fate and fate alone spawned "some . . . in one place and some in another," gave some men a "fine rifle" and some nothing at all. This age-old and natural (but nevertheless contemptible) excuse of the shiftless for the little their shiftlessness brings them collapses on the boy when the Negro "insults" him. He retreats to a cave, reasons with himself, and then jumps from one half-truth to another. For, as he describes it later (pp. 245-246), Sutpen came that day to believe that a man makes his own fate, makes it (if he amounts to anything) to "shape itself to him like his clothes did." From excessive humility, "dreamy and destinationless locomotion . . . downhill" (p. 224), Sutpen turns to excessive pride; and we must remember the formula in Faulkner for those who would avoid the furies is "pride and humility." Thirty years later, when his miscalculations have come back upon him and he goes to discuss them with General Compson, Sutpen is still describing his life as a study in the exercise of will. His talk of "choosing," in Chapter VII and elsewhere, as much as his deeds themselves, helps to keep Quentin's problem before him and to aggravate it. It says to him that each man's past is for him inescapable, that will alone is not enough, but that the ability to excercise it is grand nonetheless. But finally it is by way of empathizing with Henry, of feeling his way into Henry's situation (to which he repeatedly recurs after touching on others) that Quentin pursues the truth about his fellow compulsive and antitype.[186] It is because Thomas Sutpen's motives must be understood if what befalls his children can be explained and because only in the lives of his children does the meaning of his own come clear that Quentin can respond to Shreve's "Tell me about the South" with the Sutpen story. For what the South means to Quentin (a young man locked up inside of himself and therefore interested only in the application of whatever he learns to his own problems) and what Shreve will never understand is "the presence of the past."[187]

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[186] William R. Poirier, in his "Strange Gods in Mississippi: Analysis of Absalom, Absalom!," even though

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he sees that the novel is "about the meaning of history for Quentin Compson" and that Quentin's problem is "to extract value from a cultural heritage" by "recreating the circumstances of Bon's murder," goes wrong when he insists that "it is well to remember that Quentin's interest in the Sutpen story transcends any reference he finds in it for . . . personal problems." His essay on Absalom, Absalom! (Sewanee Review, LXIII [Summer 1945], 343-361) is a fine example of how the zeal to talk about the South by talking about Faulkner can blur the good judgment of the most perceptive critics. Likewise the criticisms of James Guetti (The Limits of Metaphor [Ithaca, 1967], pp. 69-108); Walter Brylowski (op. cit., pp. 15-46); Backman (op. cit., pp. 88-112); Holman (op. cit., pp. 27-47); Kartiganer (op. cit., pp. 99-128 and "Faulkner's Absalom, Absalom!: The Discovery of Values," American Literature, XXXVII [November 1965], 291-306); and Berner (op. cit., pp. 77-102). Absalom, Absalom! has perhaps been more thoroughly abused by this tendency than any of the other novels.

[187] Brooks, William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country, p. 314. Upon Professor Brooks' destruction of various arguments that Quentin is the modern South suffering from the curse of slavery and Sutpen the ante-bellum

As the pattern of deed and consequence, father and son, the heavy-handed justice of a teleologically governed universe is uncovered in _Absalom, Absalom!_, Quentin Compson --at first slowly and casually (if reluctantly even then), and afterward (upon Shreve's urging in the last four chapters) with a great rush--moves into deeper and deeper involvement with the matter he is piecing together. When he begins, Quentin is seemingly unaware that the Sutpen legend is going to capture and reproach him; he submits, half-willingly to the account Miss Rosa has summoned him to hear, to the speculations about various Sutpens which his report of the mysterious spinster's conversations elicit from his father, and to the first tentative empathic impulses which the two together (plus perhaps memories of other conversations with his father) inspire in him. The awareness of the importance _as well as_ the "presence" of the past which his culture had given him would inevitably dispose him, the Compson heir, to attend these narratives and venture these speculations, even before he begins to see

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Southerner incarnate, I will not attempt to improve. Longley (_op_. _cit_., pp. 206-218) is also instructive in the same connection.

himself in the Sutpen chronicle. The fury of Rosa Coldfield's "gothic thriller" and the almost equally compulsive quality of the recollections of the legend imposed on him by his father plant the seeds of his own later agonized ruminations upon the shape of one particular unit of Southern time. But he has to learn more about the Sutpens, have more time to dwell on them, and more of the difficulties which he finds mirrored in the painful choices forced upon the principals in their "history" before that history can really fall upon him with full purchase.

However, if what happens to Quentin and his family in the summer of 1909, especially Quentin's encounter with Henry at the end of that summer, has a bearing on how he behaves when he starts again on Sutpen with his roommate at Harvard, how his co-worker in the heightened narrative of the last four chapters behaves has, as already suggested above, an even greater impact on his resumption with his private "Prometheus Bound." Only once or twice before the nocturnal dialogue of the last chapters does Quentin actually begin to protest against hearing more of (or again) the Sutpen story (pp. 7-12, 172). Once Shreve enters the novel and sets out to make of it what Mrs. Vickery calls a "romance" (and I believe she is correct in her choice of terms), Quentin protests repeatedly: "I have had to listen too long" (p. 193) . . . "too much too long" (p. 210).[188] But these protests are silent, inward, and unavailing. Quentin senses by the time Shreve really "starts in on him" that it is inevitable that he hear the tale over and over again.

In bending the story to suit his own ends and preconceptions (his object would appear to be at once to satisfy curiosity, confirm prejudices, and receive amusement), McCannon makes it yet more painful to the Southern boy by narrowing even further and more exclusively (if inadvertently) its focus on the day of Charles Bon's death, the moment of "decision."[189] Miss Rosa had a good bit about this day in her narrations and Quentin's father seems to have had some impulse to circle round and round it as the centerpiece in his high tragedy. But Quentin himself,

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[188] Vickery, *op. cit.*, pp. 89-92; the descriptions of Miss Rosa's and the elder Compson's narratives given above are also hers.

[189] As Cleanth Brooks has insisted, Faulkner's critics have generally overvalued the testimony of Shreve (*William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country*, pp. 313-319); both his objectivity and his judgment have been exaggerated (for example, see: Volpe, *op. cit.*, p. 197; Vickery, *op. cit.*, p. 86; Swiggart, *op. cit.*, p. 165; O'Connór, *op. cit.*, pp. 98-99). But from his first appearance in Chapter VI and by his comments and conduct in the remainder of the novel, we are warned against taking Shreve as the novelist's spokesman. As Faulkner said (*Faulkner in the University*, p. 75), without Shreve we would never get the story told;

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for Quentin is not interested in much of it save in so far as a given section or episode bears upon Henry's dilemma and decision, and, of course, does not really care to rehash it at all. But we can determine from the question with which Shreve sets the story in motion again that he has his mind made up about what story he wants to discover among the Sutpens before he knows what materials he will have to make it from. Shreve is "the modern 'liberal' twentieth century reader, who is basically rational, skeptical, without any special concern for history and pretty well emancipated from the ties of family, race or section" (Brooks, p. 313) when he says to Quentin, "Tell about the South. What's it like down there. What do they do there. Why do they live there. Why do they live at all" (p. 174). He is still, as Brooks puts it, "like certain literary critics" when he continues later: "Jesus, the South is fine, isn't it. It's better that the theatre, isn't it. It's better than Ben Hur, isn't it" (p. 217).

Faulkner warns us of how we ought to take Shreve with the flip, irreverent diction he assigns to him ("old dame," "jack," "old gal," "Jesus," etc.). And he has not changed when he puts to Quentin his concluding question: "Why do you hate the South?" (p. 378). As that question and the still flip prophecy with which he follows it indicate, he has already made up his mind about whether Quentin or anyone else hates the South, had it made up when he asked, "Why do they live at all?" as he and Quentin first began the story. To quote Professor Brooks again, "It was a stroke of genius on Faulkner's part to put such a mentality squarely inside the novel, for this is a way of facing criticism from that [i.e., liberal] quarter and putting it into its proper perspective" (ibid.). One reason why the drama of Quentin's mind in the toils of retrospection has not been recognized as the heart of Absalom, Absalom! is that Faulkner's use of Shreve in precisely the manner described by Brooks has been either misunderstood or misrepresented.

even before the story of Sutpen grew so to anguish him, was drawn into his first full imaginative penetrations of it at the ends of Chapter IV (pp. 132-133) and Chapter V (p. 172) --by events surrounding Charles' death. Perhaps he was even then disarmed by the display among the principals of its drama of the strength he lacked. And in the cold dark of his climactic encounter with self-engendered images of that strength, born of obsessive reflection upon its time of testing, he finds that display unbearable. Because he will have his romantic melodrama, the Canadian designs much of his questioning and hypothesizing to illumine its most dramatic scene and to keep it before Quentin. In summary, Shreve encourages in Quentin the very variety of indirect self-accusation which will, in the end (a few months after), destroy him. Most of the increased agitation of Quentin, as he and Shreve rehearse (Quentin already knows all of its details, Shreve most) and unfold the Sutpen saga, is evidence of the Northern boy's effectiveness (in both the role of bully and that of "stage manager") as an instrument of provocation--as is Quentin's frequent insistence that his friend sounds "just exactly like father" (pp. 181, 207, 211, 261, and 277).[190]

Much of Quentin's steadily increasing discomfiture at the legends he is forced by Shreve to sift through once more is rendered by information about him from the author in descriptions of his dress, his conduct, and his look as the evening's business progresses. Quentin is first "sullen" (p. 181), then becomes hot or even feverish while the room in which the dialogue occurs is too cold for a healthy Canadian (pp. 348-360), and is finally driven into convulsions and almost smothered by thinking on "The House of Sutpen." Moreover, the image we get of his management of one side of a speculative dialectic from the pattern of these chapters reinforces the impression made on us by the more dramatic facts of his behavior as described in them by the novelist. He moves and speaks as if bemused or in a trance, seems usually to address himself and not Shreve when he does speak, and retreats into his own ruminations at the slightest provocation; indeed, most of what we have from him in these chapters is solipsistic. And even when he answers Shreve's questions (including the final one), he is often as much addressing himself as his roommate, is answering a question he puts to himself as soon (or as long) as his friend is asking him another. And always--in answering questions, in introspective retreat from questions, and in physical response to both--Quentin Compson's state of mind is explicable only in terms of his fascination with Henry Sutpen's agonizing decision, his "endurance" of his place, the event which he (Quentin) "can't pass" (p. 174).

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[190] Mrs. Lind (op. cit., pp. 89-92) agrees that "Shreve serves chiefly as an instigator, prodding his . . . roommate . . . into reluctant fulfillment." But this observation does not lead her to interpret Shreve or Quentin as they are here understood.

The "action" of the last four chapters of Absalom, Absalom! must be followed very closely if we are to understand correctly the dramatic pattern culminating in Quentin's vehement denial that he hates the South or the relation of that denial to the endurance theme. For by that pattern we are prepared to focus completely on Quentin when we are done with the Sutpens--and warned that all of Shreve's questions about the Sutpens were, in substance, questions about Quentin which laid groundwork for the malicious conclusion of their series--a conclusion which he seems to have had in mind from the beginning.

The interior monologue assigned to Quentin early in Chapter VI, his first response to the interrogation which, with the letter from home about Miss Rosa's death, drives him back to the Sutpen legend, is a recollection of his trip out to the "Hundred" and discovery of his doppelganger hiding there. But he is not ready to tell Shreve about Henry; what is noteworthy about this reverie is that it proves that Quentin's involvement with Henry has increased since the late summer of Chapter V. It indicates that something has transpired in the interval--something that intensifies and aggravates the relationship of these two young Southerners, something that makes Quentin reluctant to "find him [Henry]" again. As was argued above, to discover just what it was that occurred requires us to look outside of Absalom, Absalom! That the passage does appear at this point, however, puts beyond question (especially when considered in the light of Quentin's subsequent behavior) the fact that Quentin in the winter of 1909-1910 is, in reaction to whatever has happened since the September before, much more inclined to see the Sutpen story as the story of Henry's dilemma. The reverie passage (pp. 174-176), which stands near the beginning of Chapter VI, connects (and distinguishes) the Quentin we see in the first five chapters (where, again as was noted above, he was always more interested in Henry than in the other Sutpens) with his behavior in the remainder of the novel. Shreve is apparently stimulated by the information in the letter to go over again with Quentin what he already knows about the Sutpens. As he continues with this summary of what befell the Sutpens after the death of Charles, Quentin drifts away again to recall his first visit (with his father) to the Sutpen graveyard where Judith buried Bon. He is even yet hovering just beyond the figures of Henry and his adversary. However, while Shreve talks, Quentin apparently shares some of what is passing through his mind with the Canadian because on page 215 their dialogue picks up without any shift in subject matter. Shortly thereafter Shreve inserts himself, says "wait" (p. 216) to Quentin before he can begin to speak, and then gives way to hear in Chapter VII (pp. 218-280) the story of General Compson's conversation with the man who took him to be his only friend, a conversation concerning Sutpen's early days in Mississippi, his beginnings, his enterprises, and his puzzlement at its collapse. Shreve wants Quentin to wait because he wants to digest what he has learned thus far. He lights his pipe and then offers his half-defensive sarcasm about how fine the South is, ". . . better than the theatre." His remarks refer to his original question to Quentin at the beginning of Chapter VI; and, in some way (perhaps because of their irreverence) they get Compson back to answering that question. As Quentin proceeds Shreve again indicates that he already knows much of this story also; but he wants to hear Compson's version of it again so that he may "play a while" (p. 280)--continue with his own private "Ben Hur." And the Southern boy's halting, often broken exposition stimulates Shreve's own dramaturgical impulses. Moreover, Quentin is glad to get away from Henry's part of the Sutpen saga and is also too Southern and too polite not to begin his compliance with Shreve's request for an explanation of the South and "how people live down there" without going back to the beginning. Nonetheless, as we might anticipate, that beginning will swing the focus back to Henry.

Quentin's speech is not at this point agitated; for the story of Thomas Sutpen does not (as was noted earlier) profoundly engage his sympathies or threaten his self-respect. But after young Compson has finished with what he knows from his grandfather by way of his father, Shreve is eager to help with the tale-telling and to organize the entire story; and, at the same time, Quentin becomes more reluctant to continue, especially after Shreve seizes on the word "design" as the heart of the pattern they are after. For with that word Quentin is brought directly back into involvement with the narrative, back to the thought that each man lives inside a continuum of deeds and their consequences set in motion before his birth but becoming finally his own to face or fall before despite his innocence of any responsibility for its inception. And the next word Shreve seizes is "children" (p. 262), a word which completes the reintroduction of Henry into the circuit of their speculations.

The last and most important reversion to the actual day of Bon's murder/suicide does not, however, occur until the end of Chapter VIII (pp. 351-358). But we are nonetheless on our way toward this episode with a steady emotive and dramatic acceleration from the moment when Shreve begins once more to function as co-narrator (p. 280). First, he and Quentin excitedly rehearse Thomas Sutpen's management of Bon's appearance, his last visit with General Compson, his decision to let Henry settle with Bon, and his return home to a house to which he knows Henry is lost; then they cover the "demon's" last days--his proposals (both) to Miss Rosa, his seduction of Milly, and his ignominious end. Shreve is now very eager for Quentin to slow down; but his roommate will have none of it. He seems to want to stop the questioning and imagines that by finishing with the elder Sutpen, he will end his conversation with Shreve. But instead of stopping him, the account of Thomas Sutpen's full life (including the ironic justice of its conclusion) and motives gives the "playful" roommate just what he needs to push on and "finish" the drama he has been trying to make all along. And after a pause (during which the novelist calls to our attention Quentin's increasing misery with it), the narrative is resumed with Shreve fully in charge (p. 295).

Quentin has already suggested to the Canadian that he did learn something from his visit to the Sutpen mansion. He never says what. Perhaps he has tried to forget it; perhaps he intends to withhold it lest Shreve insist that they belabor its significance. Shreve, however, does not need anything from Quentin now, does not even want anything. He is carried forward by the flow of his own melodrama which seemingly "discovers" the blot on Bon's scutcheon without assistance from anything or anyone external. He commences with Henry and his father, when, at the time of Henry's second visit home with the somewhat older fellow student from New Orleans, the elder Sutpen tells him that his friend is also his brother. The protagonist of Shreve's story is most obviously Charles Bon, whose life he reconstructs with loving care. Though he does not indicate, as he begins Bon's story, that he is yet aware of his hero's Negro blood, he sentimentalizes from the start and makes of the Byronic and inscrutable young Latin a paragon of filial affection abused and true love denied. He even says, "And now . . . we're going to talk about love" (p. 310). Quentin knows that this word is, as Shreve intends it, beside the point in a discussion of Bon's behavior (pp. 323, 329). He protests his friend's handling of the Sutpen story and defends Sutpen's acknowledged son. Moreover, when Henry begins to share with his half-brother the spotlight of McCannon's romance and when the tempo and emphatic purchase (for him) of the Northern boy's telling of it increases, Quentin gravitates back into the flow of his friend's florid monologue. The story Shreve is recreating now is the story Quentin was thinking about all the time--but inverted so as to honor Bon instead of Henry. The extra push provided by the highly charged, near hypotic quality of his roommate's rendering of Bon's life before he and Henry have to settle their difference over Judith and his condescension toward Henry only reinforce Quentin's already strong inclination to dwell again on Sutpen's sons before the gate. The total pattern of Chapters VI, VII, and VIII may be said to have conspired to bring Quentin face to face once more with the measure of his own weakness. This time, the results of his empathizing exhaust and shatter him completely. How well Quentin is emptied by this last of his returns to the scene of Henry's act is conveyed to us by his submission, after he and Shreve return from their imaginative journey, to the idea that he had rejected repeatedly--that Bon died for love (pp. 358-359)--and by his already discussed physical deterioration at the beginning of Chapter IX.[191]

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[191] Shreve finds what he believes to be the cornerstone for his romantic reading of Bon in the locket portrait of Bon's mulatto "wife" and child found on his body by Judith. Because of what we know about Bon from the rest of the story and what we have already learned about Shreve,

After pushing on to the discovery of Bon's Negro blood (perhaps Quentin reveals it, perhaps Shreve conjectures the truth) and the dialogue between the two brother/enemies McCannon imagines its revelation would have engendered, Shreve is himself a little spent and ready to pause again. Moreover, he is momentarily alarmed (as Chapter IX begins) by what his "game" is doing to Quentin. Out of concern and honest puzzlement he relents and withdraws the pressure which he has applied to his friend so unswervingly. He confesses that he finds the South to be puzzling and asks the first genuine question he has put to the Mississippian during the evening's discussion. And he prefaces his inquiry with a gesture of intelligence, a tacit acknowledgment that whatever the South is or means can be explained only with reference to history. He admits (with an additional display of irreverence, this time not malicious) that the past is in no sense "present" for his people, that it imposes on them no thought of burdens to be borne or obligations to be fulfilled, no awareness of the mysterious incorporation

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we have some reason to doubt that Charles carried the locket with him on this trip to protect his beloved Judith from grief by convincing her that he is a blackguard.

of the living with the dead and the yet unborn. In response to the baldness of Shreve's well-intended and serious but still obtuse query, Quentin defends himself with the only answer a traditional person can give to such a question coming from someone with the Canadian boy's background: "You can't understand it. You would have to be born there" (p. 361). Shreve, despite his temporary reformation and openmindedness, deserves the stock response of the harried Southerner to this all-too-familiar question. For he is asking it a little too late--in the wrong context. But, just or not, from Quentin he will not accept anything so pat; he knows the young escapist too well, has been listening to him too carefully. We must remember what has just occurred in the last pages of Chapter VIII before we judge Shreve's rejection of Quentin's answer to his big question too harshly. They have shared too much for McCannon to quit without extracting from his roommate a solution to the problems Quentin has formulated for him. And therefore he says to Compson's evasion the most perceptive words we are to get from him in Absalom, Absalom!: "Would I then? . . . Do you understand it?" (p. 362). Quentin mutters, "I don't know"; and then, as if to explain why he is yet uncertain about what it means to be born with "an entailed birthright," why he is yet unable to "pass" Henry and Charles and the pistol, and in what context he has tried to resolve these questions for himself, young Compson finally tells the story of his meeting with Henry Sutpen and his discovery of how high may be the cost of endurance (pp. 362-376). With that meeting, Shreve's question, the novel's question, ceases to be abstract and speculative to Quentin. And he is, as the sequence of events in this section of the novel clearly infers, now unable to answer the question because it has acquired for him a weighty personal significance.

Shreve is only reacting naturally to Quentin's just completed narrative *cum* explanation (Chapter VIII) in repeating, but with greater emphasis, his tell-me-about-the-South question; and in replying with the story he has tried to withhold to the question brought on by the less painful narrative which preceded it--a narrative which was offered in response to a milder form of the same question--young Compson is behaving in a manner utterly consistent with the character established for him in the rest of the novel. As Shreve finally discovers, Quentin cannot answer his question, not even its corollary concerning why Miss Rosa was so determined to visit the Sutpen place in the summer of 1909. All that he can do is to repeat, indicate the context in which he (as a Southerner) knows an answer may be discovered, point toward and probe the event and person which and whom he would have to penetrate to find an answer.

The blond and sanguine inquisitor is left still unsatisfied by Quentin's last (and rather eerie) recitation, especially since Quentin has remained unable or unwilling to touch directly on what the elderly Henry Sutpen said to him--why he slew his half-brother and what the cost of his decision has been. As an ahistorical being, he is incapable of comprehending why Quentin will not finally answer him. And perhaps for that reason his sympathies again recede from his exasperating companion and the briefly interrupted tone of levity returns to his remarks.[192] Yet he has learned one thing from Quentin's anguished evasions. There is something strained and imperfect about the

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[192] On page 280 of Absalom, Absalom! the novelist tells us that Shreve's levity is often merely "protective coloring," the result of embarrassment; but this remark does not explain away the generally obnoxious quality of Shreve's conduct.

Mississippian's relation to the place and world to which he belongs. Shreve's last question is, as was insisted above, imperceptive; it indicates that no valid answer Quentin could have offered the Canadian would have given him the understanding he seeks. He is, save for the moment (pp. 360-362) discussed above (which Faulkner uses to humanize Shreve and to prepare for the novel's end), the impenitent futurist, a provincial in time.

Quentin's almost hysterical response to Shreve's ultimate question certifies (and in so doing sums up what his characterization throughout Absalom, Absalom! has been telling us) that it does belong, is not irrelevant. Rather, it is a token of how very like the persona in Allen Tate's "Ode to the Confederate Dead" young Compson is. Though penitent, and aware that something is flawed in his relation to history, he can imagine no better cure for his ills than to "set up the grave in the house"--or commit suicide (an external traditionalism and its most likely consequence). Contrary to what is indicated to Shreve by his refusal to explain anything about his homeland but the turmoil it stirs in him, Quentin does not hate the South; but he cannot endure what his own narrative efforts indicate that it means to be a Southerner, to be stuck with an inherited personal history and its fruits: caught in such a way that he must respond to it or be smothered by it. Therefore Quentin protests too much that he does not hate *his* South, *his* burden, *his* "nevermore of peace." His reiterated insistence (p. 378) that Shreve has misread his behavior persuades us that the Canadian was partially correct. But it should also, when considered together with everything else we learn about Quentin in the novel, and especially his general weakness and shame at that weakness, convince us that Compson is measured with its occurrence and *not the South or its history*.

The thematic and formal implications of the fact that Shreve's last question is about Quentin, not about the South, are enormous. As was said above, the Mississippian has been the topic and subject of interrogation all along. The Canadian and all of his kind, past and present, who put loaded questions about the South to Southerners are always more interested in the latter and in that curiosity, the "Southern mind." Indeed, if Shreve is really interested in anything but his melodrama (which he has for the most part finished at the end of Chapter VIII) and a little sport with his "curious" roommate at bay, there is some indication that he realizes he can learn about the South by learning about a Southerner. In this enterprise he partially succeeds. The critics of Absalom, Absalom! should do likewise--without confusing the one (the assumptions concerning place held in common by most Southerners) with the other (with what one of their number chooses to do--be he Compson or Sutpen).

Quentin rejects the social or familial implications of Faulkner's doctrine of nature and is therefore, secondarily, also in rebellion against the providence which made him a man, a Southerner, and a Compson. His is the passive presumption which leaves to feckless men the government of those affairs which are properly his business. On the fulcrum of pride/humility, he leans toward the latter and undermines community in a purely negative fashion. The result of his cowardice and dramatically acknowledged desire to be free of his heritage--the most extreme in the canon--is like Isaac McCaslin's less despicable but no less erroneous "heroic resignation": a harmful vacuum. Sutpen, Quentin's antitype, is also antisocial and a poor "steward of his place"; but he is first of all vertically Promethean, one of the proud--his creator's most active, aggressive metaphysical rebel. He produces not a vacuum but a wound. The pairing is hyperbolic, in a fashion not attempted in the four books read above. In *Absalom, Absalom!* these two, the three Sutpen children, and those involved with them explore in depth what it means to endure or not endure. No other Faulkner novel deals with this theme more exhaustively or is less comprehensible apart from it. And no other is in its relation to that theme more difficult to unravel. Apart from what I argue is the burden of the book, its design makes no sense whatsoever.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In the train of much comment on specific works, some further words on Faulkner in general are in order: final words looking backward toward my hypothesizing in Chapters II and III and drawn out in epilogue to knit the skein of my argument together, last remarks pointing beyond the project at hand to the other problems of Faulkner scholarship which that task well performed should simplify and put in context. The sequence of readings just completed was, as I hope is here apparent, ordered and limited for reasons of *economy* and *emphasis*. Admittedly, I do not with it exhaust the evidence at my disposal. In being absolutely thorough and exhaustive I might have extended my essay to thrice its present length. Furthermore, set aside here are some items of great importance and stature. And this *is* ground for objection. "Where," the practiced Faulkner scholar will ask, "are the readings of *The Sound and the*

Fury and As I Lay Dying?" Nevertheless, I have done or not done out of neither caprice nor fatigue. If I had considered only a few more Faulkner novels, or (as I first intended) included a series of explications of the short fiction, or even rearranged the longer studies I did attempt, my argument would have been diffused with misleading concessions, exceptions, distractions, and asides. And to disentangle such complexity or restore my concentration with a semblance of fairness and completeness, I would have been obliged to do the lot--to grapple with all of Faulkner's writings simultaneously, closely related to my principals or not. In this alternative there is no reason--and for it no necessity. Stop here it was or not at all. And stop I have, without further apology or excuse.

Nonetheless, aftermaths there must be--projections of what studies should by logic proceed from my mere beginning at reevaluation. For if my formula worked thus far but not further, it would be suspect. I would, in herewith concluding, so far reveal myself as to confess that I take comfort from and find a strong defense of my procedure in the recognition that not everything in the Faulkner canon is equally to my purpose. There are both "handles" or entranceways and "fortified places" in that body. And if I seize upon the latter while avoiding the former, it is because this practice is, of the ways open, the best calculated to gain full entrance and total possession. Much Yoknapatawpha and non-Yoknapatawpha fiction does not appear to concern itself with the properties or meaning of true endurance unless the reader is encouraged to come to it by way of the path I have identified and through the books I emphasize. A critic cannot easily demonstrate that Faulkner is essentially of a piece by confronting his fictions all at once. And such demonstration is a large part of what I work toward within my discussion of his doctrine of nature and its importance to five books. There is no Cycle without a consistent philosophy of history and no recognizing such philosophy/teleology without both of the distinctive varieties of endurance well understood. My selection of books serves both of these ends. But the labor on them is in part wasted if its fruits are not applied beyond them. Not content with this modest commencement, I do propose to follow my own lead--according to the only rationale known to me from my study of the subject.

In looking forward, it now appears that the next order of business should be the short stories. They are, by and large, less roundabout or complicated than the novels; and they gather naturally enough around the books I have finished with, have points of tangency with one or another of them. Furthermore an additional reason for examining the focus of their design asserts itself: Faulkner often made his novels out of what was at first a short story. That a large percentage of these stories are, thematically, about endurance or relinquishment (*i.e.*, refusal to endure)--vertical and/or horizontal--is strong support for the theory that his imagination was activated, energized, and held by that clutch of subjects as by no other, that it is at the heart of his performance.[1]

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[1] That the writer has already prepared many of the abbreviated critiques once planned as a part of the preceding chapter is indicated plainly enough in the citations to his essays on the short fiction scattered at appropriate points throughout the previous pages. Once again (and with full bibliographical identification) I list all of these here (together with a few not before referred to) to indicate their connection as components in a coherent series. According to the order of their appearance these papers are: "Faulkner's 'Tall Men'," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, LXI (Winter, 1962), 29-39; "Faulkner and the Great White Father," *Louisiana Studies*, III (Winter, 1964), 323-329; "Faulkner's 'Tomorrow' and the Plain People,"

Difficult as their explanation may be in the creation and cautious as any who approach them separately or together must become, the Snopes trilogy must follow the short fiction. (And the three works should be read both as a unit _and_ as an association of independent texts.)

Studies in Short Fiction, II, No. 3 (Spring, 1965), 235-240; "Escaping Westward: Faulkner's 'Golden Land'," _Georgia Review_, XIX, No. 1 (Spring, 1965), 72-76; "Faulkner and the Jeffersonian Dream: Nationalism in 'Two Soldiers' and 'Shall Not Perish'," _Mississippi Quarterly_, XVIII, No. 2 (Spring, 1965), 94-100; "The Winding Horn: Hunting and the Making of Men in Faulkner's 'Race at Morning'," _Papers on English Language and Literature_, I, No. 3 (Summer 1965), 272-278; "'Spotted Horses' and the Short Cut to Paradise: A Note on the Endurance Theme in Faulkner," _Louisiana Studies_, IV (Winter 1965), 324-331; "Faulkner's 'That Evening Sun'," _CEA Critic_, XXVIII, No. 8 (June 1966), 1 and 3; and "Certain Ladies of Quality: Faulkner's View of Women and the Evidence of 'There Was a Queen'," _Arlington Quarterly_, I, No. 2 (Winter 1967), 106-139. This list, of course, omits comment on sections of _Go Down, Moses_ reported expanded upon and organized in the first section of Chapter IV. Other articles (on "Elly" and "The Artist at Home" [_Collected Stories_, pp. 207-224 and 627-646]) will soon be published, in _Mississippi Quarterly_ and _Denver Quarterly_, respectively.

The importance of the short stories to Faulkner studies will be much magnified by future attention to the novelist's manuscripts and page proofs, to his composition and revision as the bibliographer is able to reconstruct these operations. Textual research may indeed make it possible to _prove_ that what I summarize as "endurance" was all his song--apparent in the imaginative gestation of a novel or novella but disguised in the many-voiced, modulated, and sometimes inverted dramatic orchestration created to explore all of its possibilities and overtones.

Wild Palms and *Light in August* have the next priority. After them belong *As I Lay Dying*, *Sanctuary*, *Requiem for a Nun*, and *The Sound and the Fury*. *Pylon* fits in easily with any one of these or as an afterword to these strictly Mississippi books. I do not consider *Mosquitoes* or *Soldiers' Pay* to be important; and I would assuredly reserve them, along with *Sartoris*, for treatment outside of any extension of my series, for an exegetical appendix. For though very closely related to my selection of works (particularly the three conduct books), *Sartoris* does not present the Yoknapatawpha prototype as Faulkner had intended it. *Flags in the Dust*, the longer version his publishers persuaded him to revise in conformity with the enthusiasms of the literati and the expectations of the sad/solipsist by-the-war-conditioned readership of the early Twenties, is due out later this year. Judgment of the *Sartoris* we have must be withheld until this momentous printing occurs.[2] That leaves *A*

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[2] Bayard Sartoris is, of course, the original of the Faulkner hero, the young gentleman failed (by self and women) and failing (family and place); injured by his own fatalism (like Quentin's) and sense of unworthiness (due to his brother's death). He is therefore important to my study, as I have said before. But he is not clearly conceived; and his story, as it is now, is difficult to interpret with confidence.

Fable. Because I cannot believe that Faulkner the artist was in character when he wrote this book and because it is even more peculiar than the unnaturalness of its genesis would have led us to expect, I would write period to this second series explicating with a discussion of it. Indeed, A Fable may prove to be an almost independent question for the Faulkner scholar of the future. The only way of preventing such a development is to perform the critical rites upon this allegory/romance within the framework established by the Yoknapatawpha books and with the conclusion of that pattern's unfolding--after the main work is finished. The results are not likely to be satisfactory; but neither is the book.

The Snopes trilogy is a work of great fascination. In contrast to the bildungsroman, no genuine hero appears in these books, no effective gentleman force-for-order, no massive envelope of oppressive powers set over against him. The themes I have discovered operating in the other novels reappear. Stewardship of place is in question; what to do with women is a major preoccupation; escape (from women and from other facets of station or place) is a recurrent possibility--or rather a temptation. Yet this tripartite comedy is, by itself, not obviously concerned with the consequences and causes of endurance and relinquishment, not thus perceivable unless it is assumed to be only a broken off segment of a larger history, a history mined only here and there by its possessor's fictive compulsions. It is not just the absence of gentlemen that progressively, stage by stage, dooms Yoknapatawpha to a season of Snopesism, to a helplessness before Flem and Co.--at least until that evil (after the manner of comedy) undoes itself. Entire peoples decide to defy or observe a doctrine of nature. And as the O'Donnell theory (in all of its varieties) ignores, a decision not made at all levels within a society will not sustain it as a community. Gentlemen are important --but not all important. Others may--indeed, often must--serve in their stead. But in the trilogy the controlling infection is pervasive. Few if any enduring are in evidence; not even Ratliff is, as anti-Snopes, consistent. Significantly, as fine as that sane fellow may be, he is a bachelor and a tradesman--as his upper class cohort Gavin Stevens is a bachelor and a scholarly attorney. Spectators are the best available. Both sex and agriculture are askew. No one is equal to Eula, no one to the land, no one to general social responsibility. Snopes is part of Faulkner's chronicle of the post-bellum South. It substantiates what is reported in Absalom, Absalom!, The Sound and the Fury, Light in August, and Go Down, Moses. It, in turn, is substantiated by Sanctuary, Pylon, Wild Palms, and many short stories. There has been a falling off. In the place of the vaunting, ruthless pride of Thomas Sutpen, Carothers McCaslin, and other "rascals," the ruling passions of the characteristic figures from later generations are rationalized passivity or desperate pursuit of death by privacy, movement-joining, and/or the machine.[3] True, the view of these more recent times projected in other books written after 1937--in The Unvanquished, Intruder in the Dust, Requiem for a Nun, The Reivers, and even The Mansion--modifies as it fills out their image in the earlier works. Faulkner, as I have insisted consistently, waxed a bit more hopeful as he grew older. But the teleology, the understanding of his region's history in its moral and philosophical dimension, remained essentially unchanged. The great critical stumbling block erected by the Faulkner fiction withheld for future treatment is that, even more than in the Snopes trilogy, this doctrinal matrix is difficult to recognize or abstract from the fortune of their principals or the fables those characters interact to produce.

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[3] The series of would-be swaps or attempts at bargaining out of difficulties imposed by fortune, rightfully earned or inherited, that are the backbone of the trilogy's fable I have identified and discussed in "'Spotted Horses' and the Short Cut to Paradise: A Note on the Endurance Theme in Faulkner," 330-331. In this connection, it is worth recalling (cf. p. 41 of The Literary Career of William Faulkner) that "Spotted Horses" was the first section of the trilogy to be written and that attempted escape from responsibility through bargaining is its subject.

Wild Palms is an illustration of this recalcitrance. In Chapter II, I have already said a little on what may be done to link the book with its more typically Southern counterparts, to make it support my theory concerning Faulkner's major theme. Faulkner's regional miniature of the history of the recent West is not much in evidence in either of its parallel halves. But this absence serves only to make their unfolding of the endurance motif all the more stark and unmistakable. The same applies to the narratives of Joe Christmas and Lena Grove in *Light in August*.[4] I acknowledge that there is certain evidence contrary to this analogy. For there is a society, a Yoknapatawpha society, which both of these antitypes encounter. Yet despite what Cleanth Brooks has done with the theme of community as developed in the book, its texture and movement--its total character--bespeaks the late nineteenth and early twentieth century inward turning and ossification of that body.[5] However, the rootless perhaps-mulatto and the unbelievably "adjusted" white peasant girl both live on their own. They test, measure, and judge the established order; and they leave their mark upon it. Their way, however, though it confronts and changes a portion of Mississippi, forcing it to reject and kill the one and absorb the other, is basically solitary. It is in the contrast, in Lena's cheerful humility and Joe's agonized pride, that they remind us that endurance is important--and in the transformation they effect (or cannot effect) in the lives of their folk: the Reverend Gail Hightower, Joanna Burden, Byron Bunch, Martha Armstid, Lucas Burch, Bobbie Allen, Percy Grimm, Simon and Mrs. McEachern, Doc and Mrs. Hines, and many others.

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[4] I have, at various points, so spoken of this book above as to foreshadow how it might be accommodated to fit in my system of interpretation.

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[5] William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country, pp. 47-74.

In summary, it is safe to say that vertical and horizontal facets of their author's doctrine of nature are powerfully and regularly dramatized in _Wild Palms_ and _Light in August_. To prove this out of their designs is, however, not a simple matter. Peculiarities of structure impede the work--unusual narrative techniques, a division of focus, and plurality of actions. With _Pylon_ the facts are otherwise. As I have said earlier, this is a novel of "flight" in two senses of that word--of modernity at its most severe. _Sanctuary_ differs only in the unrelieved villainy of its principals and the sensational hyperbole of its metaphorical texture. With _The Sound and the Fury_, they are the nadir of Faulkner's despair. But I have done with this trio in Chapter III, done what I could without preparing a complete analysis. That _A Fable_ has to do with the imperatives of endurance is obvious. But I have even less space for that tortuous, abstract connection here than I do for the novelist's full length accounts of emancipated modern womankind and the helpless male drones that swarm in their vicinity. As I observed earlier, all possible preliminaries should anticipate that exercise. What remains is a word or two on how to read _As I Lay Dying_ and _Requiem for a Nun_, another closing comment on myth in Faulkner's work, and a reflection provoked by a living legacy left behind in his garden by my late subject: left, I might even imagine, with the convenience of such as myself in mind.

The odyssey of the Bundrens and the passion of Temple (Drake) Stevens I came close to including in Chapter IV, particularly the latter. However, these books have women for protagonists and therefore belong, with Sanctuary, Pylon, and The Sound and the Fury, to another subdivision of the canon. Caddy is a female Quentin, oversexed by the same fatalism that unmans her brother. Laverne Shumann is married to an airplane. Such passive protagonists are at least half a contradiction; but in women passivity is not altogether bad. The other two "ladies" who are at the center of the books in which they appear are indisputably connected to the problem of endurance. Addie and Temple are female Prometheans. What befalls their societies proceeds from their rebellion against the limitations and responsibilities that belong to their sex. Addie, more than Anse (whom she marries out of catharist delusion) is the ruin of her family--as is the self-destroyed Temple of her entire world. It would require more than Horace Benbow, Gowan or Gavin Stevens, Cash or Vardaman Bundren, or either of their families could provide to check their careers. Indeed, they are proof that the sex of a protagonist makes so much difference to the criticism of a Yoknapatawpha novel that I would need a disproportionate addition to the comment on the place of women according to the horizontal half of Faulkner's doctrine of nature included in Chapter III to frame such readings. One thing is certain. Faulkner uses sexual disorder as did Shakespeare. The errors of Addie and Temple are basically sexual and reach out to touch with bizarre sexuality everything that occurs within their sphere of influence. What Faulkner makes in these tales of women has its broad social overtones. As with Flaubert, and with Lytle on him, the misfortune of a contemporary heroine is an epitome of what it means to be modern.[6]

Requiem for a Nun, unlike any other Faulkner work, makes this connection of the status of women with the order of community in explicit terms. I have done everything but "read" the choric sections of that book already and have remarked their relation to Temple's escapism. The structural anomaly of the book as play/novel and its relation to Sanctuary are what prevented my going further with it. I am not certain drama and narration meld dramatically for reader or viewer; and I find Nancy's gesture implausible. But the myth of Southern history encapsulating the melodrama is an unavoidable adjunct to my study. After its publication there could be no denying that the plots of Faulkner's better works were meant to be read on more than one level. Equally persuasive evidence to the same effect can be found only outside the printed page. I shall end with it.

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[6] *The Hero with the Private Parts*, pp. 21-41.

Behind and a little to the left of William Faulkner's home in Oxford stands a twisted pear tree, a tree now often singled out for the special attention of visitors at Rowan Oak. In most recent Aprils, as in other years before his death, its extremities and crown have been full of small pears which would thereafter weigh down its outreaching, awkward branches. Those curious about it are told that when the tree was some years ago injured in foul weather, Faulkner, for a short while, let it go its own way. It was old and suffering from rot; and it appeared to be ready to surrender. Then, when it showed signs of stubborn life, he gave it a helping hand--a crude prop. The tree took things from there and now survives as a paradigm of the will to endure, which he admired above all else in living things. The timing of his assistance to the tree, the degree of that assistance, and the nature of the plant's response do, when considered together, leave with us an appropriate and striking reminder of what "endurance" meant to the novelist and are a fitting climax to this study.

To say again what I have said throughout (but now with an unusual and positive botanical analogue at my back), the enduring must do more than survive the blows of fate; they must attempt to recover from them. Mere gritting of the teeth is not endurance as Faulkner intends the word. For there can be no endurance without the effort of what or whoever survives unpleasant circumstances to (in John Ransom's phrase) "perform its nature." Faulkner's injured pear tree has blossomed and borne fruit. His assistance to it may reasonably be interpreted as an acknowledgment or tribute of and to will exercised in the face of difficulty. It was consistent with his view and practice to assist life to fulfill itself, to utilize his place and position to "boost" what he admired--but not to "carry" anything or anyone unwilling to earn his way. The appropriateness of the resurgent pear tree as a trope for the only perfection Faulkner found humanly meaningful is not artificial or Calvinistically imposed. The tree "surgeon" and the whole hothouse apparatus was, by modern standards, called for by the condition of this unfortunate and "underprivileged" victim of a bad environment. But Faulkner respected too much the principle inherent in his tree's response to ill fortune to negate it with incubator treatment. To repeat myself once more and finally, he believed (as this arboreal reiteration of what his fictions insist should recall to those who have read them aright) that everything which lives should be encouraged to be as independent as it is capable of being; for otherwise there is really no life. Nonetheless, because the arrangement of opportunities and roles into which we are plunged at birth is contrary to presently received human conceptions of justice, because the inscrutable "Arbiter" does not distribute His talents after our notions of equity, the brotherly assistance of some by others is called for.

The nature, meaning, and purpose of this assistance is, by contemporary Americans, easily misunderstood. We are not so cautious of our largess, so careful of the distance between well meaning and well done. We polarize either toward what is by Faulkner well described as "violent and misdirected compassion" (_Faulkner at West Point_, p. 104) or toward a muddled Darwinism. But the social ethic (or vision of community _in_ individuality) implicit in the performance of Faulkner's complete characters--those in whom "pride and humility" are so balanced as to sustain in them the power to endure the _a priori_ context of their lives--should make plain that they (and he) accept both the doctrine of individualism or self-realization and that of brotherhood or communal fulfillment. The very word "brotherhood," we have forgotten, implies a hierarchy of duties and loyalties, a concept of place and status, not an abstract leveling. It implies a premodern world view with a premodern ontological base. Faulkner's enduring give and receive personal support to and from one another without condescension or humiliation; for they recognize that established roles may, in a moment, be reversed and the vagrant have in his hands the stewardship of a prince's well-being. Yet they are reluctant either to give or receive unless some action is necessary and self-help impossible. Finally, they give most readily to those who attempt to meet without self-immobilizing complaints the demands imposed upon them by their situation--as the pear tree attempted to *be* itself, despite its injuries.[7]

Why the view of the human situation and of responsible behavior in it which Faulkner as a Southerner of his class and generation inherited from Jefferson *and* Calhoun, John Randolph *and* Jackson, is now foreign to most of us (Southern and otherwise) should be obvious. New pieties command us; we conjure with other names. Therefore the meaning of his symbolic husbandry escapes us. But, as this exercise has intended to suggest, it is available for our recovery in his art. The crude prop still in use at Rowan Oak is, to summarize, "patriarchal" in the direct personal sense of that word, but not coldly benevolent or "officially" paternalistic; the utilization of that prop by the tree is libertarian, but not, in implication, equalitarian. It does not degrade the recipient or the benefactor; rather it affirms their community in finitude, a shared ontology and polity which functions as a catalyst in the making of all the author's fables. If we would, like the old pear tree of Rowan Oak and its owner/benefactor, "prevail," we ignore at our peril the distinction between these forms of endurance left to us by Faulkner in the shadow of his home. And if this is too much to expect, then we should at least grant to him the privilege he gave his tree--that of following his own stubborn inclinations as man and artist.

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[7] For accounts of Faulkner's public use of the pear tree in conversation with visitors, I am indebted to Professor James W. Webb (University of Mississippi) and Professor James B. Meriwether (University of South Carolina).

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