

***PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA  
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND  
SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH***

***Mentouri University of Constantine  
Faculty of letters and languages  
Department of foreign languages/ English***



**Black White Relationships in William Faulkner's  
"The Bear"**

***A dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Master Degree in language: Civilization and  
Literature***

***Submitted by:  
Boutamine Hanane***

***Supervised by:  
Rahmoune Nadya***

***2009 – 2010***

## **Acknowledgements**

I have to express my sincere gratitude to Allah. Without the help of Almighty Allah, this dissertation would have never been finished.

There are so many people to whom I am indebted. First and foremost ,my thanks go to my supervisor : Mrs. Rahmoune Nadya ,for her endless talking about my topic ,for her help, and especially for her encouragement to me during my frustrating days.

Special thanks to my teachers of literature: Mr. Boughenout and Mr. Yachir who provided me with ideas that I was never aware of, as well as their precious pieces of advice.

My heart left thanks also to my best friends Reem and Amna as well as my classmates:

Zahira, Sara.S, Sarah and Meriem

To Safia, the girl who helped me typing this work.

Finally. I remain very indebted to my family:

My mother the symbol of love and sacrifice, who always pushes me to hold on and never to give up

My elder sister Ilhem, who helped me a lot, supported me financially and morally, together with her husband.

My father and brothers and especially my sister Nada who kept encouraging me throughout these months this thesis has taken.

## **Abstract**

This dissertation aims at demonstrating and analyzing the different Black White Relationships in William Faulkner's "The Bear"

Generally, any black white relationship is presented routinely in Master/Slave frame. But it is not the case with "The Bear". "The Bear" is a perfect story to illustrate Faulkner's philosophical concerns about the concepts of: Respect, Ownership, Man's sins and his duties towards others especially the black slaves.

Before dealing with the story, it is preferable to shed a light on the historical background of the region: The American South; during the period from 1820 to 1870 which means decades before and after the civil war; as well as the Reconstruction Period and its effects on the whole region. We do not forget the author who devoted himself and his talent to write about the history of his own region.

## **Key Words:**

The American South, Black and White, Slavery, William Faulkner

## **Résumé**

Cette thèse a pour but l'explication et l'analyse des différentes relations entre la race noire et la race blanche dans le livre de l'écrivain américain William Faulkner intitulé « L'OURS »

William Faulkner, par ses tendances philosophiques a pu refléter le concept de respect, le concept de propriété, les pêchés de l'être humain et ses devoirs vis a vis des autres notamment les noirs, au-delà des relations conventionnelles, bien définies dans un cadre ( maître- esclave ).

Avant d'aborder cet ouvrage, il est indispensable de connaître l'histoire de la région dans laquelle évoluent ces personnages, le sud américain durant la période ( 1820-1870 ), l'avant et l'après guerre civile, ainsi que la période de reconstruction et ses effets positifs et négatifs sur toute la région, Un aperçu sur l'auteur qui a sacrifié le don à l'écriture de l'histoire de sa région natale, n'est pas oublié.

### **Les mots clés :**

La race noire et la race blanche, le sud américain, l'esclavage, William Faulkner .

## ملخص:

تهدف هذه الأطروحة إلى شرح وتحليل جميع العلاقات التي تربط السود بالبيض في حكاية "الدب" للكاتب الأمريكي ويليام فولكنير.

العلاقات وان تبدو في إطار عبد – سيد إلا أن فولكنير و بأبعاده الفلسفية استطاع إبرازها من خلال زوايا عدة: مفهوم الاحترام ومفهوم الملكية، خطايا الإنسان و واجباته تجاه الآخرين وخصوصا العبيد السود منهم. قبل التطرق إلى هذه القصة لا بأس بإلقاء الضوء على الجانب التاريخي للمنطقة المراد الحديث عنها، ألا وهي : الجنوب الأمريكي في الفترة الممتدة ما قبل وبعد الحرب الأهلية ( 1820 – 1870 ) كذلك فترة إعادة البناء وما نجم عنها من آثار ايجابية وسلبية على المنطقة بأسرها.

كما لانسى الحديث عن الكاتب والذي كرس حياته و موهبته للكتابة عن تاريخ تلك المنطقة والتي تعتبر مسقط رأسه.

## الكلمات الدالة

السود و البيض، العبودية، الجنوب الأمريكي، وليام فولكنير

## **Table of contents:**

<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Abstract .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter One: Faulkner and the American South.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1) - The White South decades before The Civil War.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2) - The Civil War and its Aftermath.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>2-1) - The Reconstruction's Advantages.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>2-2) – The Reconstruction's Disadvantages.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>3) - William Faulkner.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Chapter Two: Black White Relationships in Faulkner's « The Bear ».....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>1) - <i>Go Down, Moses</i>: The Title and the Dedication .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>1-1) – The Title.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>1-2) – The Dedication.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>2) – « The Bear »: Summary and Succinct Analysis.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>3) – Black White Relationships in the Bear's Part One.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>3-1) – The Hunting Party.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>3-2) - Ike and Sam Fathers.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>4) - Black White Relationships in the Bear's Part Two.....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>4-1) Old McCaslin and his Slaves.....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>43</b>

## **Introduction**

The Old South or the American South is said to be a peculiar part of the United States, it comprises the states of Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi, Florida and Texas.

These states formed the confederates that fought against the rest of the country from 1861 to 1865. The South is different from the rest of the country in terms of geographic landscape, climate, social structure and the way of life, which was heavily dependent on slavery the issue that stimulated the conflict between the North and South.

In that hot climate and fertile land, lived the first class of the South, the aristocratic families or the slave-owners, on the large plantations which is toiled by the slaves. It was a luxurious life in the big plantation mansions with the homes of large families and the centers of relations to others families on similar plantations.

This kind of life is appreciated by small independent farmers with few slaves as well as poor white farmers.

The old South 's way of life was based on a set of ideals among which honor and personal integrity were the most important, together with chivalry and heroism as well as female grace and purity and male “gentlemanly” manners.

The South was not totally different from the North, Southerners were Americans who shared a common history, language, religions and political institutions with other Americans. Perhaps the only difference between North and South during the first half of the 19th century was Slave Labor. This system that dates back to the early establishment of the thirteen colonies was deeply entrenched in the Southern region of America.

Slave labor represented economy, wealth and prosperity. In addition, slave-owners thought

that slavery was the only system that balanced the social order .The Southerners, particularly: the slaveholders had attributed this institution to the black inferiority, arguing that the blacks were by nature inferior and uncivilized; at the same time they were characterized by their physical ability to work the land, thus they were the only suitable race for the southern states' land and climate.

So, the South wanted to live likewise, depending on slavery and without any interference from the North or abroad .The concept of Conservatism spread to describe the Southern rejection of any reform movements, instead the appeal to tradition and the preservation of the institution, social relationship and the way of life. In other words they-the Southerners -had connoted slavery with the South; anyone who stands against slavery is standing against the whole South; the opposite is true.

Nevertheless, the Northerners had accused the system- slavery\_ of degrading the region and called for change. Two blocks emerged: those who insisted on slavery as a part of their economic and social lives (pro slavery) and those who called for change through abolition (anti-slavery). The conflict resulted in the civil war from (1861 to 1865). The war began by the Southerners' determination to retain slavery, but it ended up with its abolition. It was the war that turned the lives of the Southerners upside down: it witnessed a total destruction of economy and eventually of the social life.

The Reconstruction, though brought freedom and autonomy to the freed people and introduced industry to the region, was also destructive in all aspects of life.

Thus the civil war and its aftermath created a new South based on materialism and fostered by moral and social decay.

However these conditions were the basis for imaginative rebirth, writers started to depict life in the South, describing both the beautiful and the dark sides of it.

William Faulkner was among those writers but what was particular in him, was his quality of being the only writer who spent his entire life chronicling his region (the American South). Faulkner presented the history of the South in five white families and their slaves and servants over generations, drawing for them a full detailed map of an imaginary county called: Yoknapatawpha County. His major themes were: the white man's guilt of slavery and the rape of the land. These materials were presented by Faulkner in a sophisticated style, influenced by European writers, psychologists, and philosophers such as James Joyce, Sigmund Freud and Henri Bergson respectively.

Both these historical and literary events are going to be in a chapter entitled: Faulkner and The South.

The second chapter will focus on the relationships between the blacks and the whites in Faulkner's short story "The Bear" which is the most important chapter in *Go down Moses*. "The Bear" is divided into two parts: part one covers sections 1, 2, 3, and 5 and speaks about the hunt and the wilderness which is symbolized by the "Bear". Part two that includes section 4 illustrates Faulkner's philosophical concerns about slavery and the white man's sins as well as his duties towards his black fellows.

Since "The Bear" is divided into two parts, the relationships will be explored on that basis. We will get closer to the characters and know what motivate their relationships to others. The central character in both parts of "The Bear" is Isaac McCaslin or Ike whose story tells his development from a little child learning the art of hunting to a young man, able enough to take his decisions by himself.

The relationships in part one are explored: first, among members of the hunting party who came from different backgrounds but seeking a particular goal .second, between Ike McCaslin

and Sam Fathers, who represented all fathers that Ike needed in his process of being a Man.

An extraordinary relationship overwhelmed by a mass of virtues and authentic values is observed.

Part two of “The Bear” is quite the opposite, based on exploitation, sexual abuse and all sorts of corruption which is embodied in Old McCaslin, Ike’s grandfather whom Ike repudiated his inheritance because of his black past.

In fact what Ike had learned from Sam Fathers and the wilderness, helped him decide his action. He had learned the concept of respect. For him the respect of Nature and all God’s creations lead to the respect of human beings. Besides, the land is for no one but God ,and no one should own it and inherit it .The same thing is applied to human beings ,if owning a piece of land is forbidden ,what is about a man owning another man (slavery)? For Ike, it is an act against nature. It is a sin.

## **Chapter One: Faulkner and the American South**

This chapter is intended to deal with both historical and literary backgrounds. In the historical background, we will see the actual events that characterized the region during that period, called The Ante-bellum Period. Then, we will have a look at the conflict between North and South about the issue of Slavery that resulted in the Civil War from 1861 to 1865. Then we will move to the Post-bellum period and The Reconstruction programs that brought both negative and positive effects on the region. We will stress on the fact that the Civil War and its Aftermath provided rich materials for literary Rebirth; Southern writers, notably William Faulkner, started to write about the South's conditions during all the periods previously mentioned.

Then we will learn the history of the South in literary terms, through the eyes of William Faulkner who wrote about his native region in very smart and sophisticated ways, using all the modern techniques of writing and mainly influenced by European contemporaries.

### **1. The White South (half a century before the civil war)**

When we say slavery, we refer to the American South, and when we say the American South, we think of the conservatism that characterized it during the Ante-bellum years. The conservatism was the rejection of any reform movement, eventually change, and the appeal to tradition and order and especially the defence of slavery and the preservation of social relationship and way of life.

In order to understand the Southern conservatism, it is necessary to know and examine the nature of arguments that the Southerners gave in order to defend slavery. Beginning in

1820's, they elaborated a series of sophisticated arguments in the defence of that institution; some were based on the justification of slavery and others stated the virtues of slavery and the society it fostered.

Among the earliest arguments in behalf of slavery, were those who spoke of its necessity and advantage. Slave-owners saw Emancipation impossible and insisted on the fact that It was illogical to send two million slaves back to Africa or to free them in a white man's country. Slave- owners believed that if the slaves were free, they would refuse to work and cause social disorder and that would result in a war and why not in an extinction of the black race in America. Moreover, pro-slavery spokesmen believed that slavery was essential for southerners prosperity, therefore, that of the United States.

Religious argument were present, they referred to the Bible when the ancient Hebrews (God's chosen people) owned slaves and that Jesus though considering it immoral, never criticized slavery or blamed any one for owning them. Another religious argument was the suggestion that slavery was part of God's plan to expose heathen people to the blessings of Christianity. Scientific Arguments of slavery prevailed in 1840's and 1850's; they were characterized by a racist sentiment. Dr Samuel Cartwright and Dr Josiah Nott popularized ethnological research that proved that black were different, and inferior to whites.

Black are said to have distinctive nervous, circulatory and respiratory system; Cartwright insisted more on the shape of their "head and face" which were:

"anatomically constructed more after the fashion of the  
simiandiae and the brute, thus in the typical negro,  
a perpendicular line, let fall from the forehead,  
cuts off a large portion of the face ...  
throwing the mouth, the thick lips, and the projecting

teeth anterior to the cranium, but not the entire face,

as the lower animals and monkey tribes”.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to small brains that limited their intellectual capacity

From sharp, racist scientific argument came the common ones that black were by nature different, inferior and thus unfit to freedom. According to Peter Kolchin

“Hardworking, loyal and productive under loving but firm conditions (i.e., slavery), they lacked the temperament and intellectual capacity for independent existence, and in freedom would quickly degenerate, falling into ignorance, superstition, and perhaps even extinction”<sup>2</sup>.

These arguments, whether religious, scientific or common look at slavery as a justification.

Others, as it was previously mentioned, stressed on the positive virtue of slavery, focusing on the good relationship between Master-Slave.

Southern slaves were treated in a good way and received a great care and protection, and were better than most free workers in Britain and Northern United States. That was the self-image of the slave -owner as loving master who helped his people and provided them with all what they needed. Unlike the industrial workers in Britain who were “wage slaves” whose

---

<sup>1</sup> S.A Cartwright, « slavery in the light of ethnology » in EN Elliot, ed, cotton is king, and pro-slavery Argument (New York, 1968; orig. pub 1860) ,707 log.

<sup>2</sup> -Peter, Kolchin. American slavery.p193

employers did never care for them. Slaves are benefited by free food, housing, clothing and medical care and did not fear to be expelled.

“Their condition... is now better  
than that of any equal number of  
labourers on Earth and is daily  
improving”<sup>1</sup>

Boasted Virginia’s Baptist minister Thornton Stringfellow.

Other defenders of slavery found that slavery could provide a cure from social ills such as the excess of liberty and equality that characterized Northern America at that period as well as the reform movements such as utopian socialism, Trade unionism, feminisms and surely abolitionism, all the “isms” which were attributed to the Yankee culture associated to excessive freedom and individualism.

The -pro slavery-, spokesmen thought that the true civilizations were based on “hierarchy, and inequality” so slavery is the true system “inequality is the fundamental law of nature and hence alone the harmony of the universe” proclaimed the propagandist, South Carolinian James Henry Hammond radical abolitionist who considered slave society as aristocratic

“I accept the terms... slavery does indeed create an aristocracy –  
an aristocracy of talents, of virtue, of generosity and courage.

In a slave society every free man is an aristocrat”.

The Virginian George Fitzhugh, defended slavery to be

---

<sup>1</sup> Thornton stringfellow, “The Bible Argument: or, Slavery in the light of Divine Revelation,” in Elliott, ed, cotton Is king, 491.

“A normal, natural, and in general,  
necessitous element of civilized society,  
without regard to race or colour”<sup>1</sup>

It seems through all these detailed and even sophisticated arguments that the slave-owners were against change and against any intervention in their economy and way of life, They were considered as defenders of a pro-slavery crusade: it seemed from its name that the slave - owners were ready to sacrifice themselves than to change this status. Simply, they were determined to fight rather than to switch the slave labour system.

Economically and socially speaking, if the pro-slavery advocates considered slavery, as necessity, prosperity and as a way of life, it was not the case for the northerners or the slaves’ spokesmen. Northerners came to see the slavery as the only reason for Southern “Backwardness”. They believed that there was no economic prosperity at all, unlike what it seemed to be. Indeed, what most struck Northerners and European travellers to the South in 1850’s was not southern prosperity but Southern regression.

Landscape Architect, Frederick law Olmsted, spent fourteen months circulating the South, preparing articles for the *New York Times* described the area as a tired land where poverty, illiteracy and ignorance were the major patterns there. He noticed that slavery handicapped economic development while corrupting every one’s manners and morals <sup>2</sup>

New York senator William H.Seward agreed with him:

“It was necessary that I should travel to Virginia  
to have any idea of a slave state,  
an exhausted soil ,old and decaying towns,

---

<sup>1</sup> Hammond, selections from the letters and speeches, 281, 44,45 ; Fitzhugh “Southern , De Bow’s Review, XXIII (October,1857) 338,347,398

<sup>2</sup> Frederick law Olmsted, A journey in the Back country (New York, 1970; orig. Pub. 1860), 203.

wretched, neglected roads and in every respect,  
an absence of enterprise and improvement,  
distinguish the region ...  
such has been the effect of slavery”<sup>1</sup>

Economically speaking, the South was not keeping up with the North and was not sharing the economic transformation of the North. During the previous century, Southern colonies were considered to be “plums” for their fertile land and mild climate as well as the rich natural resources and the production of variety of staple crops. However, on the eve of the civil war, the Southern states were recognized as being behind the North economic development.

The reason was that the Southern economic growth was based on increased production and export of a variety of staple crops, among which cotton was the most important.

The increase in production means “quantitative growth” which did not necessary lead to qualitative development. Besides, although the South’s industrial production increased during 1840’s 50’s according to Kolchin , the region failed in bringing industrial transformation that spread in the North; “Southern manufacturing capacity declined from 18 to 16 of nation’s total ” .<sup>2</sup>

Industrial underdevelopment, the absence of mills for spinning and weaving led the South to export its product northward or abroad.

Another factor of southern decadence is the lack of urbanization. Unlike the North where big cities like Newyork and Philadelphia represented a home for many people who came from rural areas and even abroad, big cities permitted to these residents a kind of integration which enabled them to explore their abilities and devote their energies to achieve prosperity.

---

<sup>1</sup> Seward Quoted in Eric Foner, Free soil, free labour, Free Men: the ideology, Pf the republican party before the civil war (New York, 1970), 41.

<sup>2</sup> Peter ,Kolchin, American slavery .(newyork,peguin books,1995p) 176

Moreover, new Western cities; that did not exist in 1830's witnessed a growth of population such as: Chicago, Detroit and Buffalo. However, moving southward, there were few cities with little population's concentration among which the most important was New Orleans in the deep South with 168,615 inhabitants in 1860, a cosmopolitan city with French and Spanish roots that prospered thanks to its port near the mouth of the Mississippi River. We can cite others, such as: South Carolina and Alabama with 40,522 and 29,258 inhabitants respectively in 1860. Concerning the rest and especially "the interior" of the South, it was almost rural.

So, the lack of urbanization, together with the industrial underdevelopment was the features of the South decades before the Civil war. This was attributed to slavery that, instead of prospering the region, was the reason for degrading it.

➤ Southern politics.

During the Ante – bellum years, when slavery, for the southerners, represented not only an economic interest but also a way of life, the defense of this institution was synonymous with the defense of the whole South. Southern politics took the same pattern, it came to deal with the defense of the Southern interests as well as the defense of the right of Southerners to shape their own destiny without interference from outside.

Slave-owners would vote for men who expressed their interests. Others were themselves men of politics. Stressing on maintaining Southern conservatism, Southern politics threatened to withdraw from the United States in the case of any alien attack on their liberty which is symbolized in preservation of economic and social status, under the name of the Confederate States.

Indeed; when Abraham Lincoln was elected president, the United States fell into a secession crisis and eventually a Civil War which was the worst event ever experienced by Americans.

## 2. The Civil War and its Aftermath

The Civil War is considered as the worst event in American history a war that transformed the whole region- the South -from a slave society to free labor society.

Ironically, the war broke up to preserve slavery, but ended up with its abolition.

So, slaves were freed or emancipated, slave- owners lost their economic and political position wealth was distributed in proportional rates among former slaves, poor whites and blacks.

A heavy Reconstruction program was launched in order to remake the South.

That Civil War first was a war for and against southern secession. Though the reason for this latter revolved around slavery, the confederates led by Jefferson Davis, fought for the right to be independent, while, Federal forces fought for preventing them from doing so.

Lincoln explained, in his speech in 1862, that the aim of the new Republican Administration was to preserve the union. Abolition was not yet mentioned although the Administration favored it. "My paramount object in this struggle is to save the union and is not either to save or destroy slavery"<sup>1</sup> Horace Greeley.

As the war advanced, however, the president and after facing many pressures adopted a new aim which was freedom for the slaves. American experts and diplomats considered it the best thing to do in order to prevent foreign powers from interfering, mainly Britain. These latter or foreign powers in general, will help the confederates claim self-determination. If the war was for secession, they will gain sympathy but if the war was over slavery, there would be no help because it was an issue that could not exceed the American boundaries.

So, after the war and on the political level, national politics central aim was an appropriate reconstruction that would be preceded through congressional legislation.

Concerning the Southerners, they found themselves in a situation that no one would envy; most of them did not believe that slaves were free.

---

<sup>1</sup> - Abraham Lincoln to Horace Greeley, august 22,1862, selected writhing and speeches of Abraham Lincoln ed , T.HARRY Williams (n p 1980, orig pub 1943),174

So, they resorted to their southern state legislature – containing large numbers of former confederates, where "Black codes" were passed, putting blacks in a status between slave and free, restricting black occupations and ownership of property.

On the other hand, Northerners did react with disagreement and disbelief towards the Southerner's black codes. They contributed in making the Reconstruction program, stressing the necessity to include and defend the civil rights together with the voting rights.

Indeed, the Reconstruction program was a series of amendments that focused on the defending of the civil rights and providing the voting ones. They were as follows:

- 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the constitution (passed in January 1865 ratified December 1865) abolished slavery in the United States.

- The Civil Right Act :( passed over President Johnson veto, March 1866) defined all the persons born in the United States as American citizens with equal rights.<sup>1</sup>

- The 14th amendment to the constitution (passed by June 1866 ratified 1868 incorporated the civil Rights acts definition of citizenship into the constitution: prohibited the state from any abridgement of privileges and any attempt at depriving "any person of life, liberty and property". In addition ; declared a confederates war debts and claims compensation for emancipated slavers<sup>2</sup>

- The Reconstruction Act 1869: dividing ex -confederate states in five military districts until they conformed to the constitution, when they would return to their first state. All the states were concerned except for Tennessee, the only state that ratified the 14 th Amendment.<sup>3</sup>

- The 15th Amendment to the Constitution (passed 1869 , ratified 1870) declaring "the right of the citizens of the US to vote, shall not be denied, or abridged by the US by any state on account of race , color, previous conditions of servitude " <sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> -Michael lesbenedict, the fruits of victory alternatives in restoring the union ,1865-1877 rev ,ed (new york, 1986)105

<sup>2</sup> - Benedict, fruits of victory 112-13

<sup>3</sup> - Benedict, fruits of victory 112-13

<sup>4</sup> - Benedict, fruits of victory 118

So, this is Reconstruction on the theoretical level. On the practical one, Reconstruction did a lot to remake the South; Northerners praised Reconstruction programs which would bring new "virtuous " social order.

Besides, the Yankees -Northern Americans- brought another kind of economy through the Railway building that flourished commerce and transportation sectors.

The building of new houses, churches and especially schools for the freed people was what characterized that period as well as giving them the right for land ownership.

However, the Reconstruction brought also bad consequences on the Southerners, or on the whole region.

## **2.1) The Reconstruction's Advantages**

Among the advantages of this set of programs was prosperity which was achieved thanks to the new economy: industrialization and commerce.

Both the latter and economy sectors were developed through the Railway, which was considered as an achievement, thus as an advantage. Schools and churches building was another important achievement of the Reconstruction era.

Hundred of thousands of black children began to attend schools. Not only children but adults, as well. Concerning their teachers, they were Northern missionaries both whites and blacks.

Later, in late 1870's graduate students took the opportunity to teach in their native black schools reaching somehow a degree of autonomy.

Black churches, like black schools, emancipated blacks, and did separate them from the churches of their masters, forming their own ones.

They were helped again by their "friends" the Northerners but later again, Southern black preachers reached a level of autonomy.

The blacks got the chance to own the land. During that period, the proportion of Southern black agricultural families that owned the land increased from 2% in 1870 to 21% in 1890 at the time when the white landownership among Southerners declined.

It was thought that the slaves when freed, would rebel against the order, and refuse to work.

However, variety of working relationships appeared; the most important of them were sharecropping arrangements, in which transactions between those who owned the land and those who worked it involved a portion of the crop instead of cash.

These arrangements did provide the freed people with more control over their lives than before; the blacks started to work hard because they saw themselves more partners than employees in the land. Alabama freed man Bernard Houston explained to his employer the

advantages of a sharecropper "I am not working for wages but am part owner of the crop and I have all the rights that you or any other man has I shall not suffer them abridged"<sup>1</sup>

## **2.2) The Reconstruction's Disadvantages**

But the Reconstruction caused also bad consequences mainly on the Southern whites. After the emancipation of the black slaves, the whole economy and the social order of the region had been destroyed .

There was no longer Slave Labor but free one and later, the industrialization of the region changed its landscape.

The building of the railways, schools and churches was considered to be the total destruction of Nature or wilderness. In this respect ,said a congressman proudly:

"The wilderness shall vanish .

The churches and schoolhouse will appear ,

the whole land will revive under

the magic touch of free labor"<sup>2</sup> .

The social order also was ruined. After emancipation, the former slaves had shared the same rights as their former masters, in education and land ownership. This led to the decline of the aristocratic class which was represented by the slave owners. So it was obvious that their wealth "land" would be redistributed among both poor whites and the blacks, causing disorder in the Southern society.

Perhaps the most important negative effect was the spread of a total disappointment, discontent and despair throughout the whole south –during and after the reconstruction (around 1870).The sense of disillusionment affected almost everyone: former slave owners, freed people, poor whites, and even Yankee Reformers. All of them agreed on the fact that

---

<sup>1</sup> - Bernard Houston to Georges. Houston, Amen's, ala, August3, 1867, Georges Houston papers, Duke University library

<sup>2</sup> -Eric Foner . Reconstruction: America 's unfinished revolution 1863-1877(new York .1988) . 235.

things were going wrong if not worst. The myth of Reconstruction turned to be the myth of Destruction, as we are going to examine through the different categories:

a) Former slave holders:

The sense of disappointment is not surprising with the ex-slave owners Emancipation and later Reconstruction had transformed and turned their lives upside down .Their economic and social status were destroyed. Although some planters professed to welcome the idea of emancipation because it freed them from having to care for their slaves, it was just an image aimed to mask the intense feeling of loss- both in the war and of the slaves .

b) The Yankee Reformers:

The Yankees thought that slavery was a nightmare that kept the south back ward and degrading in every way. With abolition, they believed that slavery would vanish and the region would transform into a prosperous and virtuous society. However, despite the changes that came to the South, expectations were so high that they could not be fulfilled.

Emancipation may have changed the Southern landscape, but free labor did not produce prosperity. Life remained hard and economy was still degraded. The Yankees had failed in achieving their Utopian world in the South. That's why they felt disappointed.

c) The freed people:

It was among black Southerners that the sense of disillusionment was intense. The ex- slaves had expected much from emancipation. Hopes for land distribution faded immediately after 1868 but they continued to look for a freedom that would enable them to maximize their independence and provide them with equal rights. In attempt to improve their autonomy. they fell into another problem : segregation .

The seeds of segregations started to grow from the Reconstruction, when the black established

their own institutions: schools and churches in order to achieve freedom from any ex-masters interference. Unfortunately they found themselves isolated in a society that remained: "white man society".

d) The poor whites:

They sought to profit the situation and increase their autonomy but they found themselves again and as usual, on the margin.

So, this is the situation that characterized the South after the civil war. These effects and the defeat of the South as a whole attracted a great number of writers of the region who wrote about the South's decline before, during and after the Civil War.

Southern writing demonstrates itself as nostalgic and sentimental like the case of *Gone with the Wind* of Margaret Mitchell, which followed the literary convention.

According to Usula Brumm:

"It was Faulkner who transformed the myth into parables of human existence, unique in its mode and at the same time representative of human possibilities towards the good and the bad"<sup>1</sup>,

It means that William Faulkner was the one who mixed and presented all the human qualities from humility, patience and endurance to greed, violence and weakness, in an unconventional literary style.

Before dealing with William Faulkner there were early attempts to portray the charms as well as the dark side of the South, for example, George Washington Cable, born in New Orleans who wrote his stories about *Old Creole days* in 1879 .Kate Chopin also who came to

---

<sup>1</sup> Marcus Cunliffe, ed. American literature since 1900 (London: Penguin Books, 1993) p175

Louisiana through marriage achieved a great success with her novel *The Awakening* in 1899 that treated the thoughts of a woman who was lost between seeking liberty or being confined in the traditional life.

Another writer who is considered to be the first writer to achieve popular success in writing about the South is Erskine Caldwell who reached his great period during the days of depression with *Tobacco Road* (1932) and *God's Little Acre* (1933). His greedy, primitive characters are presented humourously for highly social criticism.

Robert Pen Warren , a modern Southern writer who belonged to “The Fugitives” a group of poets and critics that rejected the materialistic American civilization and called for tradition and individual attachment to family , kinship , place and region .

Warren wrote about historical subjects that search investigation into the moral problems of the South, all of that in his famous work *All the King's Men* (1946).

Then another southern writer came to prominence: William Faulkner.

### 3. William Faulkner

The setting of the majority of Faulkner's short stories as well as his novels was the American South, and especially the state of Mississippi. Moreover, most of the stories and the novels concern people who lived in a small region of Northern Mississippi to which Faulkner gave the fictional title of Yoknapatawpha which means in the Chickasaw language "the divided land" or "land split". The name came from Chickasaw legend about the place in which two brothers Chicsa and Choctaw got separated after crossing a river called Yoknapatawpha River. Faulkner had adopted this name to refer to the divisions and the conflicts that took place in the history of the South.

Yoknapatawpha is an imaginary world for Faulkner; He drew a detailed map of this fictional area and referred to himself as its "sole proprietor" a very detailed map with rivers, hills, towns ,churches, jails, plantations and people ; black and white. It was described like that

"Jefferson Yoknapatawpha Co, Mississippi.

Area 2.400 square mile ,population:

whites 6.298 Negroes,9313,WilliamFaulkner;

sole proprietor"<sup>1</sup> .

Besides, Faulkner wrote mainly about histories, followed through generations, of five white families which are The Sartoris, The Compsons, The Sutpens, The McCaslins- whom we are interested in- and finally Snopeses, and their black slaves or servants.

These families usually fell into social and moral decay. By reading all of Faulkner's fiction and the short stories, it is possible to follow the history of Yoknapatawpha County, thus the South as a whole, in these following stages:

---

<sup>1</sup> Marcus Cunliffe,ed.American literature since 1900, (London:penguin books,1993)p 194

- The first stage begins with the white man's exploitation of the native Indians cheating them out of their land
- Next, comes the rape of the land itself, the uncaring destruction of timber and wild life for private gain, and not for need.
- Following that, is the forced introduction of black people to serve in the building of patterns of social order to keep them in their inferior position after the abolition of slavery.
- The fourth stage comes after the American civil war (1861 -65) when the Northern states of American defeated the confederation of Southern states; the Northern invaders exploited both blacks and defeated whites in the South. Those invaders are joined by Southern whites who are as evil as the Northerners and who adapted their brutal principles.
- The final stage of this history, a new breed of poor whites that Faulkner depicts through the Snopes family in his fiction, moved in and completed the destruction of Southern aristocratic way of life, by its cynical materialism, announcing the emergence of the New South.

Such a brief summary shows how closely Faulkner fiction is involved in the history of the South's decay. Moreover, two of Faulkner's major themes are the white man's guilt about slavery, and the rape of the land, by the civil war and by the decades of Reconstruction which followed, that according to him released forces of corruption and disorder that had always existed in the South.

These forces led to the decay of the old appearance of dignity and honor, and the emergence of a new sense of materialism. After the war, and as previously mentioned, further changes happened as industry moved into the south, political power gradually moved away from old slaveholders to the countless thousands of small tenants' farmers who were known as "rednecks".

Whenever Faulkner was asked about the influences upon his works, he usually mentioned European writers rather than contemporary Americans, though he did think that Mark Twain was: “the first truly American writer, we all descended from him”<sup>1</sup>

So William Faulkner came to maturity in the decades which saw the publication of James Joyce’s *Ulysses* as well as T.S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land* which suggested Faulkner’s method in *The Sound and The Fury* and *As I Lay Dying* of placing together different sorts of narrative or fragmented narrative techniques , scrambled space and time. Similar techniques were used by Joyce in *Ulysses* who presented the events of one day in a variety of styles and points of view.

Faulkner may also have learned from Joyce “The Stream of consciousness” or the interior monologue technique because Joyce was one of the first novelists to use this method of rendering directly, as exactly as possible, the continuous flow of associated thoughts, feelings, words, memories and ideas as they pass through a character’s mind .Faulkner used this techniques in *The Sound and The Fury*.

Faulkner as well as Joyce may have been encouraged in their use of the stream of consciousness by the original work in psycho analysis of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939).

Freud’s investigations on dreams and disturbed or unconscious mental states created a good interest in the nature of the human mind and its workings. This was what Faulkner used in his operation of the mind of an idiot, Benjy one of the major characters in *The Sound and the Fury*

Faulkner also was influenced by the French philosopher Henri Bergson (1859-1941) and his theory of the fluidity of time. Faulkner, like Bergson, favored the idea of time as open and freely flowing rather than counted in an exact way and restricted by clocks. He said in this respect:

---

<sup>1</sup> Faulkner at Nagano edit, by Robert A.Jelliffe, (Kenkyusha, Tokyo 1956,) p.88.

“I agree pretty much with Bergson’s theory  
of fluidity of time. There is only the present moment in  
which I include both the past and the future”<sup>1</sup>

In addition to that, Faulkner claimed to have re-read the classical novel by Miguel de Cervantes; *Don Quixote*. He considered the French novelist Honoré de Balzac to be the greatest of prose writers and he acknowledged the Polish British Joseph Conrad to be a particular master .

While reading “The Bear” or *Go Down Moses* in general, it is clear that Faulkner had got a rich religious background. During his childhood, he used to read frequently and study the Bible. This explains such biblical names like Isaac and even the main title.

Furthermore, it is said while writing “The Bear”, Faulkner had been reading *Moby Dick* to his daughter: from that point he took the bear as a symbol just like the white whale of Melville’s novel. Faulkner’s regional literature also was among his influences : *The Big Bear of Arkansas* by Thomas Bangs Thorpe was considered to be analogous to “The Bear” , that we are going to examine closely in the following chapter.

---

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Blonter, *Faulkner a Biography*, 2 vols, (Chatto and windus, London 1974), p1441.

**Chapter Two**  
**Black White Relationships**  
**In William Faulkner's**  
**« The Bear »**

In the previous chapter ,we have spoken about The American South before and after the Civil War, The Reconstruction and its positive and negative effects and all the events that were the basis for the Southern Literary rebirth. We have spoken also about William Faulkner, the author who spent all his life writing about the history of his native region. Chapter one gives us the foundation for the study of Faulkner's short story « The Bear » So, Chapter Two will deal with this story, focusing on all the relationships that are between Blacks and Whites in it.

Through the summary, we are going to find out that « The Bear » is divided into two parts: Part one; including sections 1, 2, 3 and 5 .Part two including section 4. Thus, The Black White Relationships will be explored according to that division.

« The Bear » is the most important chapter in *Go Down, Moses* (1942) Faulkner's selected short stories; it speaks about the McCaslin family history throughout generations

Before studying « The Bear », we were struck by both the main title *Go Down, Moses* and the dedication found on the first page of the book, so we decided to begin this chapter by examining them.

## 1. Go Down Moses :Title and Dedication

“The Bear” is the longest and the most important chapter in *Go Down, Moses*. Before tackling “The Bear”, we have to stop at the principal title and ask why Faulkner chose such a title for his short stories.

### 1.1) The Title

*Go Down, Moses* was derived from a traditional Negro spiritual which was popular among the slaves .The slaves were substituted for the Jews and the South for Egypt

When Israel was in Egypt's hard

Let my people go

Oppressed so hard they could not stand

Let my people go

Go down, Moses,

Way' down in Egypt's hard

Tell doe pharaoh

Let my people go ...,

The title refers to the conditions of the blacks and expresses a deep and somehow optimistic longing for freedom and deliverance.

The black used to believe that they shared the same destiny as the Jews. They used to believe in the day when God would send a Holy man to break their bondage, and lead them to the Promised Land.

According to William H. Rueker“... the blacks cannot be meditated upon by a white southerner apart from the whites”<sup>19</sup>.

However, it is not the case with Faulkner .This black song is used by a white man -William Faulkner – who knows all these substitutions and understands the profound yearning it expresses .From this point, it is clear that Faulkner the white, has in a way, a relationship with the blacks. In order to illustrate the first black –white relationship in Faulkner’s novel, we have to go ahead in the novel, but before, we encounter another relationship embodied in the dedication.

### **1.2) The Dedication:**

As we are dealing with “The Bear” , the key chapter in *Go down, Moses*, we cannot neglect the dedication .

To mammy

Caroline Barr

Mississippi

(1840-1940)

Who was born in slavery and

Who gave to my family

A fidelity without stint or

Calculation and to my childhood

An immeasurable devotion and

Love<sup>20</sup>

If the title of the book came from a negro song, the whole fiction is dedicated to a black woman Caroline Barr, who was Faulkner's nanny .

Faulkner used to leave his books without dedications but in *Go down, Moses*, which describes Negro conditions, he had transmitted a message of gratitude and respect to this black woman who is a symbol of love, devotion and sacrifice.

Therefore, the relationship between the white Faulkner and the black Caroline is a relationship of a child and a mother, far from any economic and sexual relationships that bind blacks to whites, and which will be discussed later.

“To mummy” seems more familiar and personal; a word uttered by a child to his mother.

Usually, any dedication takes the form of (for +name) yet “to mummy” is informal and demonstrates clearly the maternal nature of the relationship.

Besides, Caroline's birth place is Mississippi, what makes her a native of the region.

About her age, as it is mentioned (1840-1940) it is suggested that she belongs “to the old people” from whom are acquired the good qualities, just like Sam fathers in “The Bear”.

Also, she was born in slavery, and as any black in the south at that period, was not free .In fact, for Faulkner, slavery does not matter, humanity does.

The characteristics which Faulkner listed for Caroline Barr are human values :fidelity without limits and calculation, by using the word “giving” -of course - without taking, it makes her a symbol of sacrifice.

In spite of the oppression that characterized the lives of the blacks during slavery, Caroline being a black servant, could provide Faulkner and his family with care and protection, playing the role of the mother. Her treatment to Faulkner's childhood and his formative years was overwhelmed by

---

<sup>3</sup>William Faulkner, *Go down, Moses*, Middlesex: penguin books in association with Chatto and windus. 1960. p 5

love and devotion, far again from any form of sexuality but deep, “enduring”, and immeasurable human’s values.

So, the qualities or the “matrix” of human values as William Ruekert described are found in some of the favorite characters in Faulkner fiction: Dilsey in *The Sound and the Fury* and Sam Fathers in “The Bear”

## 2. “The Bear” : Plot and succinct analysis

“The Bear” is a complex work that describes two major aspects in the life of young Isaac (Ike) McCaslin, born in 1867. There is first his initiation into manhood through hunting rituals in the period from 1877-85 (sections 1, 2, 3 and 5), and then the repudiation of his inheritance in 1888 because of guilt which is used to be associated with slavery (these events take place in section 4).

So the story began by Ike’s initiation as a hunter from age 10 to 16 under the guidance of Sam Fathers , a son of a Chickasaw chief and a black slave .Over six years, Fathers taught Ike the art of hunting ,implanting in him a deep respect for Nature. Each year, hunting parties track a bear called Old Ben, the head bear symbolizes the wilderness; Ike could see him only after putting away his gun, compass and watch.

The hunting party also trapped a wild mongrel dog, that Fathers named Lion .Lion seemed the only brute that could track Old Ben .Boon Hoggenbeck, the camp’s rough man, who was also like Sam Fathers a part Chickasaw, became Lion’s companion, and together ,the following year, they hunted Old Ben .The last hunt was pathetic: Old Ben died and Lion too. Sam Fathers also collapsed, as if his will to live vanished with the wilderness that it symbolizes.

Indeed, the wilderness started to vanish, two years after the death of Old Ben, Lion and Sam Fathers, Ike returned once more to visit their graves in the big woods where a lumber company was cutting down the forest .Ike found Boon hysterically beating broken pieces of his gun together near a gum tree full of squirrels .Boon’s simple mind could not comprehend the decline of

the wilderness with the spread of industrialization.

Concerning section 4 which is different from the rest, it shifts from the focus of hunting to Ike's family history. In 1888 when he celebrated his 21<sup>st</sup> year, Ike discussed with his cousin Mc Caslin Edmonds their inheritance, and studied the plantation commissary ledgers kept by Ike's grandfather, Lucius Quintus Carothers McCaslin, and his twin sons, Ike's father (Buck) and his brother (Buddy). The ledgers contained cryptic entries that Ike interpreted as evidence: his grandfather had a mulatto daughter named Tomasina (Tommey), he had in 1810 with his slave Eunice and then committed incest with Tommey, as a result, Eunice drowned herself on Christmas day of 1832. Tommey died giving birth to a son: Tomey's Turl. This tragic discovery convinced Ike that the inherited land and the whole South are cursed. In attempt to atone for his grandfather's guilt, he paid restitution to several descendents of Tomey's Turl, but he was met with limited success. Finally, he repudiated his inheritance leaving it in the hands of his cousin Cass.

In both narrative parts of "The Bear", Ike McCaslin is searching: first in the woods, and then in the ledgers, for a complete understanding of his relationship with the natural and the social worlds. Sam Fathers is his spiritual "mentor" who taught him humility and responsibility in relation to Nature as well as respect of Nature for it leads to the respect of human beings.

Later, Ike seemed to be a good pupil: he had applied all what was learned from Sam Fathers, and stood against the idea of ownership, arguing to his cousin that the land had never been theirs to own, just as other human beings – slaves- had never been theirs to own.

### **3. Black White Relationships in “the Bear” part one:**

Since “the Bear” is made up of two distinct parts the investigation on Black/ White relationships will be tackled similarly, each one separately.

As it is mentioned before, part one in the bear deals with hunting: Ike’s initiation to the wilderness through hunting with Sam Fathers and Old Ben. Part one covers sections 1, 2, 3 and 5. It is clear that the hunt plays an important role in the life of the Southerners .through the hunt, children acquire some qualities that enable them to build up their identity like: endurance, patience, humility and respect for all God’s creations.

In short, the hunt is an initiation to manhood; this is what happened to Ike when he killed his first deer. Sam Fathers marked his face with blood, a sign that Ike is no longer a child but a man able enough to find out the mysteries of the wilderness. So, it was the tradition , groups of hunters in all colors; white, black and red gather in the wilderness twice a year – in November and June-for hunting bears, deers and more particularly Old Ben.

#### **3.1) The Bear’s Hunting Party:**

In the narrative, the Hunting Party in which Ike participated consisted of:

- Major de Spain: who is the owner of the large tracts of land which constitute the part of wilderness where men hunt .in addition to that, he was a good hunter.
- General Compson: an expert hunter and a highly respected man .
- McCaslin Edmonds (Cass): Ike’s cousin and a good hunter as well .
- Walter Ewell: In spite of being young, he is said to be one of the true hunters .
- Tennie’s Jim: though a child like Ike, he used to take part in the hunting party (a black McCaslin descendent).
- Sam Fathers: one of the old people, a mixture of red black and white (it will be discussed later).

- Boon Hoggenbeck: a part Chickasaw, rough, rude but at the same time with a childlike mind.
- Uncle Ash: an old black cook who usually stays in the camp preparing food for the party.

We notice that the members of the hunting party can be classified into four categories:

- Gender: here there is no problem, since we speak of manhood. it is clear that all this hunters belong to the masculine sex.
- Age: we remark all the life stages, from childhood to adulthood passing by youth, are represented. Ike and Tennie's Jim are children in their teens, Walter Ewell is a bit older than them. Major de Spain, G.Compson, Cass as well as Boon Hoggenbeck are adults, and finally Sam Fathers is older than all of them.
- Social status: G.Compson, Cass and Major de Spain belong to the aristocratic class (landowners). Sam Fathers is a simple carpenter and Boon works for Major de Spain. Ash is a servant.
- Race: it is the most important point; the hunting party is made up of people of different colors and mixtures: white, black, black red, white red, black white. Major de Spain, General Compson, Walter Ewell, Cass and Ike represent the pure white blood line Tennie's Jim and Uncle Ash belong to the black line. Sam Fathers and BoonHoggenbeck, apparently, represent the Indian red line.

Boon is also a mixture of white with red, he is three fourths white. Tennie's Jim son of Tomey's Turl and thus an illegitimate descendent of McCaslin is a mixture of white and black blood. Sam Fathers is in a way a special case; both red, black and white, though his appearance is Indian just like Boon Hoggenbeck.

So, Ike's hunting party is a mixture of Red, White, Black, children and adults,

men who came only for a particular task: hunting. Consequently, the relationship among members of this party can be defined through the motive that united them.

In fact, what unified the "colored" hunting party is the wilderness symbolized by Old Ben, the bear.

Each year, hunters gather in the same place and at the same time, none caring for his fellow's color, age, and even economic status. They are all alike, have the same task to accomplish: tracking Old Ben. Once Old Ben was killed in that "last" hunt, there had been no more hunting party; Major deSpain sold a tract of his land to a lumber Company.

Thus, the wilderness gathered Ike's people of the hunting party as well as all the hunters regardless their color, age and social status. The wilderness where they are all hunters inside, as Faulkner said "It was of the men, not white nor black nor red but men, hunters"<sup>21</sup>

### **3.2) Ike and Sam Fathers**

We carry on with The Bear's part one. This time, we encounter an extraordinary black white relationship embodied in Ike and Sam Fathers.

It is true that Sam Fathers was a mixture of Indian, black, and white blood, a son of an Indian chief and a black slave. But, racially speaking and in the South at that period, though he enjoyed freedom, Sam Fathers was considered as a Negro.

The relationship between Ike and Sam Fathers is a child to his father, similar to that of Faulkner to Caroline Barr.

We notice that the word "father" is haunting Sam Fathers: his name as well as his role and function. The name of Sam Fathers came from the fact that his real father the Indian chief Ikkemotubbe had had a child from a slave woman, who was Sam, but he— Ikkemotubbe— brought to her a black slave to marry him. Consequently, the name "Sam had two fathers" became shortened to Sam Fathers.

As a result, Sam was a product of many bloods that gave him qualities of all of them; Sam is half Indian, the dominant blood, which is associated with the simple, pure and innocent life spent in a close contact with Nature and wilderness. Sam had collapsed after the death of Old Ben and this illustrates the idea of the collapse of Nature. Even his death wish had followed the Indian rituals.

---

<sup>21</sup> William, Faulkner. *Go down, Moses*, Penguin Books; Chatto & Windus. 1960. p:145

Moreover, Sam is one eights black, this is clear in the degree of his assimilation with the blacks when again he gained their traditions and rituals. Faulkner said about him:

“For, although Sam lived the Negroes, in a cabin among other cabins in the quarters and consorted with Negroes, and dressed like them and talk to them, and even went with them to Negro church now and then, he was still the son of that Chickasaw chief and the Negroes knew it”<sup>22</sup>

What remains is the white blood; Sam’s mother was a quadroon slave i.e. three fourths white .so she was herself a mixture of bloods like her son who is three eights white .

Again, he got from the white blood line the freedom and the ability to do “white man’s work” such as carpentry. Sam got the good qualities from the white race like freedom and skill, unlike Boon Hoggenbeck who is also a part white, and got the negative characteristics of this race; rudeness and pitilessness.

The relationship between Ike and Sam Fathers began in the preceding story of “Old People” when Sam started to teach Ike -eight years- the art of hunting. He first introduced him to the simplest steps like how to load the gun and kill rabbits and squirrels .Then, when Ike was ten, he was ready -according to Sam Fathers- for the big game in the wilderness .Ike became a man after he had killed his first deer, especially after Sam had baptized him by the deer’s blood, marking his face with the hot blood announcing the shift from childhood to manhood.

The big game was old Ben, the Bear, which helped a lot Sam Fathers in implanting in Ike all the virtues that any man should have. Ike had realized that anyone could be strong and kill the bear;

---

<sup>22</sup> J.L.Roberts. *Cliff notes on the Bear* university of Nebraska,1986 p 10-11

for him strength is not killing the bear but acquiring from it the good virtues like patience, endurance and humility.

Most critics agreed that the last scene of the Bear's first section was the most exciting. The scene describes the first contact between Ike and Old Ben. The contact came just after Ike put aside his gun, compass, and watch whom the critics called "tools of civilization"

Ike would never do that if Sam Fathers did not guide him. Sam Fathers knew that by getting rid of any instrument of civilization, any one could reach Old Ben, the essence of wilderness. For fathers, Civilization had no place where wilderness had.

Therefore , Sam fathers is Ike's spiritual guide or "mentor" as Faulkner described him .Ike had learned many things from him , the concept of freedom , of respect , he had learned manhood that could never be attained unless by acquiring these authentic values and others such as patience ,humility and endurance . Consequently Ike became like Sam fathers who had two fathers:

Theophilus Mc Caslin and Sam fathers.

Being Childless in his life, Sam fathers became the father of Ike .in addition, it is true that later Ike did not inherit from Mc Caslin or did repudiate his inheritance, but he had inherited from his father, Sam fathers, the title of the priest of the wilderness as much as deep and enduring human values, and this is what made the relationship human just like that of Faulkner to Caroline Barr.

Thus, the Black White Relationship in "The Bear" part one is sublime, whether among members of the hunting party or between Ike and Sam Fathers. It is based on the love and respect for Nature and the wilderness, where everybody, regardless his colour, comes to learn and acquire the good virtues. Eventually these virtues help him to build up his character.

For Ike McCaslin, not only the wilderness and Old Ben shaped his personality, but Sam Fathers, as well. This latter who, from his name and functions in the story, represented all the fathers that Ike needed in order to become a man.

#### 4. Black White Relationships in “The Bear” part two

The Bear’s part two consists of section 4 that stands separately from the theme of hunting, though the central character is still Ike, not as a child this time but a young man of Twenty-one.

In fact, section 4 belongs more to the book *Go Down, Moses* rather than “The Bear”, which means that, section 4 deals with the history of the McCaslins \_Edmonds\_ Beauchamp, but not with The Bear’s first part.

When William Faulkner was at the University of Virginia, a student asked him to explain his reason for writing and including section 4 in “The Bear”. Faulkner answered that it was not his decision but the publisher’s who was not able to consult him at the time of publishing this short story. For Faulkner, “The Bear” should consist of only sections 1, 2, 3, and 5. About section 4, it belongs to the McCaslin history, thus, to the whole book. Faulkner said in this respect:

“If he[his publisher] had told me he was going to print it separately, I would have said, take this[part] out, this does not belong in this as a short story , It’s a part of the novel but not part of the[ short] story’. ... The way to read [the short story] is to skip [part4] when you come to it”<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> Frederick L Gwynn and Joseph L Blonter. *Faulkner in the university : class conferances at the university of Virginia ,1957-1958.*New York : Vintage books, 1959

Nevertheless, Faulkner's publisher should have been thanked for he had introduced a new type of writing that is a "short story novel". A story of which section 4 is considered to be odd in terms of the setting, the structure, and the theme, could serve as a continuation or a result of what Ike did or learned in the previous sections.

Indeed, section 4 deals with Ike's repudiation to his inheritance. This repudiation came mainly from putting into practice what he had learned from Sam Fathers.

As it is mentioned before, Ike relinquished his legacy after he had discovered a family secret, through long investigations in the old ledgers of his father and uncle. The secret is going to be the basis for Black White Relationships in the following part.

#### **4.1) Old McCaslin and his slaves:**

The relationship between old McCaslin and his slaves was revealed by Ike in an attempt to decipher the old ledgers entries .So after the death of Lion, Old Ben and Sam Fathers and the decline of the wilderness, Ike spent all his time in his plantation commissary examining the ledgers that were kept by his grandfather –Lucius Quintus Carothers McCaslin-and his sons Ike's fathers Theophilus and his brother Amodeus .The ledgers contained entries written by Ike's father and uncle about all what concerned their slaves in the generations from birth, death, purchase, sale, as well as manumission.

Through one of the entries, Ike found the death of his grandfather in 1837 and the death of two old slaves: Rokus and Fibby whose son was Thucydus .This latter was left ten Acre piece of land in old McCaslin will as well as his freedom. Ike wondered why did his grandfather-the land owner-leave a piece of land for his black slave after he had freed him. This aroused doubt and suspicion in Ike especially that during the antebellum period, it was impossible for a black slave to inherit from a white land owner such a land.

Nevertheless, Ike carried on his investigations over the cryptic entries, when he encountered again Thucydus, but this time he learned that he had married Eunice ;a black slave who was pregnant

from an unknown person .Ike arrived at a result that Eunice's child was the child of Old McCaslin who arranged that marriage in order not to acknowledge him, but he provided ten Acre land to assure the child's future.

Ike's hypothesis was confirmed, when he found out in another entry, that Tomasina, Eunice's daughter, was a mullato that is half white, half black.

Ike did not stop at that but he continued searching for the whole truths of the McCaslin family through the ancient ledgers' entries. He stopped at another entry about Eunice who "drowned herself", many questions were aroused again "But why, But why".<sup>24</sup>

Eunice's suicide came three months before Tomasina gave birth to an illegitimate child. Thus the reason for Eunice's suicide was not the child but the nature of the relationship between Tomasina and the child's father. The child or Tomey's Turl who was three fourths white was a product of an incest relationship. Old McCaslin abused his daughter sexually who died when giving birth to Tomey's Turl.

Ike was horrified by the tragic discovery "His own daughter, His own daughter, No No Not even him".<sup>25</sup>

Now he had understood the reason for Eunice drowning herself .Eunice and in spite of being a black slave could not help living with the knowledge that Old McCaslin had violated the most sacred taboo in the world; an incest relationship is a universal taboo, it is denounced by all the races regardless their colors

On the other hand, the reason why Old McCaslin did so was because he believed that the slaves were by nature inferior, they had no feelings and emotions, they were created only to toil the land and follow their masters' orders .Eunice and Tomasina were a part of his property, just like animals were .For him, it is easier to leave money than to acknowledge an illegitimate son and the worst of all if he was a nigger.

---

<sup>24</sup> William Faulkner. *Go down, Moses*,(penguin books; chatto & windus.1960.p:204)

<sup>25</sup> William Faulkner. *Go down, Moses*,(penguin books; chatto & windus.1960.p:206)

So, Tomey's Turl was the illegitimate black son and at the same time grandson of Old McCaslin, the half brother of Buck, Buddy and Cass's. Grandmother.

Later, Tomey's Turl had married Tennie Beauchamp; as a result six children were born but

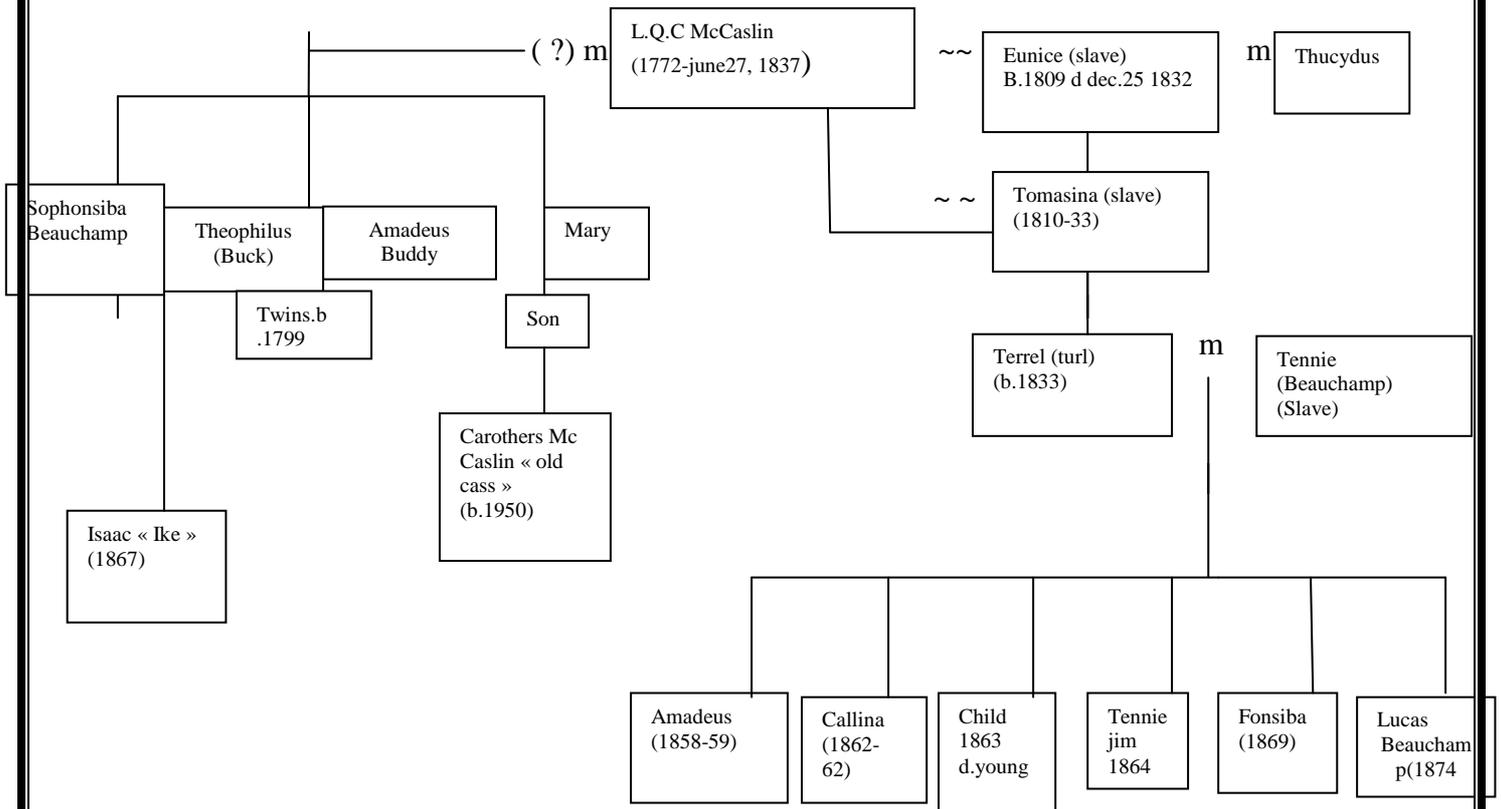
Three of them died at an early age .what remained were: Tennie's Jim, Fonsiba, and Lucas

The black descendents of The McCaslin. So, the McCaslin Genealogy of "The Bear" is likewise:

## McCaslin Genealogy of "The Bear"

The legitimate white descendents

the illegitimate blackdescendents



m married

~~ Outside marriage

Therefore, the relationship of Old McCaslin with his first slave Eunice was sexual abuse and deceit when he arranged her marriage with Thucydus. About Tomasina, he transgressed the natural laws by abusing sexually his own daughter whom he never considered as human.

They are relationships based on corruption, exploitation and sexual abuse which are represented by slavery. Slavery, that corrupt system, the act of man owning another man, which is totally against Nature as well as committing incest.

All this made Ike repudiate his inheritance claiming that the land, of which no parcel is owned by anyone, is cursed. Not only the land, but the whole South is cursed by slavery.

As a conclusion for this chapter the Black White Relationships in William Faulkner's "The Bear", we have seen two different and contrasting relationships: the first one identifies deep basic human values; the respect for Nature and all what could be learned from it. The love and respect for the wilderness which is symbolized by Old Ben, the bear that gathered all people whichever their races and gave them the exceptional feeling of equality and freedom. These former qualities that could never be obtained or even felt in the South at that period. About Ike and Sam Fathers, it is an extraordinary relationship of a white child learning what life is from a non- white adult.

The second relationship is totally the opposite; it identifies the inhuman and the unnatural sins which are slavery and incest. These awful sins are embodied in Old McCaslin. In fact, Lucius Quintus Carothers McCaslin, in turn, represented all the plantation owners of that time; thus representing the South, the den of corruption and exploitation.

## Conclusion

After being introduced to the historical and literary backgrounds of the American South during the nineteenth century, we have explored together the kind of relationships Faulkner aimed to show.

Black White relationships in “The Bear” are particular; they are characterized by both good and bad values, pure and corrupt ones, exactly like the nature of any human being.

But this time and opposite to the previous visions that consider all what is white as pure and right whereas all what is black as wrong and damned, Faulkner embodied the good values in the non-white race, notably the black race, rather than the white one. The best examples were Sam Fathers, the “colored” man who was a source of the authentic values discussed in “The Bear” (part one), and old McCaslin the corrupt white man,(part two)

Faulkner’s personal experience helped him to depict this image; he was influenced by the good qualities he had noticed and learned from his family black servant: Caroline Barr.

This woman, as well as many blacks, lived the worst experience ever lived by Mankind which is slavery. They found themselves possessed and exploited by other men because of their color. They were even deprived from the basic rights of liberty, equality and the pursuit of happiness that the white man had always been claiming. However, these hard conditions had contributed in shaping the character of the black race. The blacks became characterized by the noblest values such as courage, humility, patience, endurance as well as faith, hope and love, the ability to acclimatize and so on. Consequently, Caroline Barr was similarly characterized, she was the rich source from which Faulkner had learned what life is, and this is why he dedicated to her *Go Down, Moses*.

Faulkner’s experience was similar to that of Ike McCaslin, a white boy learning from a non white adult the good values and applying them whenever facing any strange situation.

Being against his region’s system and way of life which was depending heavily on slavery, Faulkner presented all the bad qualities of the human being in the second part of “The Bear”.

He stressed on his philosophical views about the idea of ownership. Besides, Faulkner's rich religious backgrounds made him state his positions towards the multiple ideas of ownerships through Ike McCaslin.

Faulkner, through Ike, stood against the ownership of both land and human beings-slaves-he had referred to the Bible, arguing that God first created the land, the dumb creatures, then at last, He created Man in order to be his overseer, not to destroy the land and abuse God's creation,. In the spirit of religion, Faulkner thought that Man should have a piece of land, live on it, and once he dies, there is no need to write any will or other document over it because it is for God.

If owning a piece of land is forbidden what is about possessing human beings; for Faulkner it is a sin, not only a sin but an act against nature.

So, the crucial point in this study is that the good qualities of the human beings do not belong to any particular race. The white man had always attributed these values to him, in fact the good person is a good person, regardless her color.

The central vision of Faulkner is a world where Black, White and even Red lose their color; where male and female lose their sex and where young and old lose their age, and the good values survive and prevail and go beyond all the economic and social interests. This is why we find all colors and ages and sexes in his fictional world: Yoknapatawpha.

This is what William Faulkner wanted to convey to us through Ike and "The Bear" as a whole

## **Bibliography**

### **A) Works by Faulkner**

- 1) Faulkner, William. Go Down, Moses. Middlesex: penguin books in association with chatto and windus, 1960
- 2) Faulkner, William. The Sound and the Fury. London: Pan books, 1989

### **B) Works on Faulkner and the South**

- 1) Anderson, John Dennis. Student Companion to William Faulkner. London: Green wood press, 2007
- 2) Blonter, Joseph. Faulkner: A Biography, .2 vols.london: Chatto and windus, 1974
- 3) Cart Wright, S.A. Slavery in The Light of Ethnology in EN Elliott, ed.Cotton is king and pro slavery arguments. New York: 1968; orig pub 1860
- 4) Cunliffe, Marcus, Ed. American Literature Since 1900.London: Penguin books, 1993
- 5) Foner, Eric. “Free Soil, Free labor, free men”. The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War. New York: 1970
- 6) Foner, Eric. Reconstruction: America’s unfinished Revolution 1863- 1877. New York: 1988
- 7) Gwyn Fredrick L and Joseph. L Blonter. Faulkner in the University: Class Conferences at the University of Virginia; 1957-1958. New York: vintage books; 1959
- 8) Jelliffe, Robert A, ed. Faulkner at Nagano. Tokyo: Kenkyusha; 1956
- 9) Kolchin, Peter. American Slavery. New York: Penguin books, 1995
- 10) Lee, Brian. American Fiction 1868-1940. New York: Longman Inc, 1987
- 11) Les Benedict, Micheal. The Fruits of victory: Alternatives in Restoring the Union. 1865-1877, rev, ed.New York: 1986
- 12) Olmosted, Frederick Law. A Journey in the Back Country. New York: 1970,orig pub 1860
- 13) Padgett, John B “Go Down, Moses”; William Faulkner on the web. 11 apr 2005.ed.John. B Padgett. U of Mississippi.30 Dec 2005
- 14) Roberts, J.L. Cliff Notes on the Bear. Nebraska: university of Neberska, 1986

15) Ruekert, William H. Faulkner from Within. West Lafayette, Indiana: Parlor Press, 2004

16) Stringfellow, Thornton. “The Bible Argument: Or, Slavery in The Light of Revelation”. in Elliot., Cotton is king

17) Williams, T.Harry, ed. Selected Writing and Speeches of Abraham Lincoln.1980