The Clan of Orphans: Recognition of Contingency and the Destination of "Truth" in *Go Down, Moses*

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I

"I cant repudiate. It was never mine to repudiate," says Isaac (Ike) McCaslin, and relinquishes his family inheritance in Part IV of "The Bear" in William Faulkner's *Go Down, Moses*. He attempts to take full responsibility for the sin of his great-grandfather, Lucius Quintus (old) Carothers McCaslin (*Moses* 245–46), namely, for the history of the whole South as is revealed in the ledger entries, "that chronicle which was a whole land in miniature, which multiplied and compounded was the entire South, twenty-three years after surrender and twenty-four from emancipation" (280). After giving up the patrimony of the McCaslins, he chooses to live in the woods according to the laws of maternal nature, in which he has spent his childhood and has become a man. Ike's life and fate are undeniably affected by these parental representatives.

In the light of this assumption, I will discuss the ethical problematic of the novel, focusing on young Ike's relationship with his cousin, Carothers McCaslin (Cass) Edmonds, in "The Old People" and "The Bear," and on the conversation between "Uncle Ike" and young men in "Delta Autumn," which discloses the failure of his "moral" and "sincere" choice. In other words, my argument puts an emphasis on the theme of inheritance, for the sense of morality is necessarily nurtured within a local community. Charles Taylor refers to what Lionel Trilling has called "authenticity" of the self (*Sincerity* 93) as a moral ideal to describe what a better and higher life would be (*The Ethics* 15–16) without degenerating into what he calls a "facile relativism" (13). According to Taylor, "[t]o know who I am is a species of knowing where I stand" (*Sources* 27), and orientation of the self can be accomplished through historical self-understanding and interlocution with other members of society (28–29). Therefore, one needs a community that shares some common space and experiences to tell the story of his/her self.

Ike deals with the history of the South and his self in the interaction with other

members of the community. Their conversation on the history of the South refers to the Civil War (*Moses* 271–81), and furthermore, World War II, which was underway in actuality at the time when Faulkner worked on *Go Down, Moses,* is alluded to in the narrative present in "Delta Autumn." According to James C. Cobb, "[t]he ideological contradiction was raised by the war" in "the rise of the United States to free world leadership at the end of the conflict" in which "[the] Jim Crow South was the principal blemish" (186). Thus the South was confronted with what we call identity crisis, "an acute form of disorientation, which people often express in terms of not knowing who they are, but which can also be seen as a radical uncertainty of where they stand" (Taylor, *Sources* 27). Put simply, in the modern world, both the paternal order of the Southern society and the maternal law of nature is disappearing, and people cannot have a moral principle to live by. Instead, recognition of contingency, which Cass has nurtured and is revealed in his dialogue with Ike, survives and even grows gradually within the mind of the southern young men.

Arthur F. Kinney remarks on the conversation between Ike and Carothers (Roth) Edmonds in "The Delta Autumn," "What Ike's sudden reference to Hitler suggests—since nothing in the conversation has prompted it—is his own deep psychological struggle and obsession with genealogy" (Go 103). Such obsessive fixation with the self urges "Uncle Ike" to try to convey his thoughts and belief to the younger men, but he fails ironically in communicating with them. Although this failure represents the incompatible discrepancy between him and the younger generation, his anachronism simultaneously questions the deteriorating situation of the world around him. The purpose of this essay is to demonstrate the ethical problematic of the novel that lies in such a hopeless situation of the modern South and the whereabouts of the hope that the author tried to find there.

II

It is true that, as Elizabeth Muhlenfeld remarks, *Go Down, Moses* as a whole is "a masculine novel" and "[i]ts world is a man's world" (198). On the one hand, Ike has four influential fathers—old Carothers, Theophilus McCaslin (Buck), Sam Fathers and Cass (Bernert 181; see also Millgate 204)—and seems to be aware of this fact as he identifies himself with a little "many-fathered" (*Moses* 283) mongrel from which he learns pride and humility, on the other hand he is also a motherless child. His mother, Miss Sophonsiba Beauchamp, dies when he was ten (292), and it is almost simultaneously with her death that he enters the men's world of hunting in the woods (Welling 487; see also Smith 324).

Yet the truth is not that Ike does not have a mother but that he does not have parents. The father, Buck, is already so old when Ike was born that he dies in the early childhood of his son,[1] and three other fathers, except for Buck, are of course no more than *surrogate* fathers. Moreover, not only Ike but also other male characters do not, at least virtually, have their own parents. Truly, as Thadious M. Davis points out, "individual black males... are literally or figuratively orphans" (234): Samuel Worsham (Butch) Beachamps replies in response to the census taker's query about his parents, "Sure. Two. I don't remember them" (*Moses* 352); and Rider also does "not remember his parents at all" (132). However, this situation is not only peculiar to the blacks: Cass, for instance, loses his own when he is fourteen years old or before (260); Roth is also "motherless" (114; 126) because his mother died when he was born and, though his father is alive until the son grows up to be an adult, Zackery (Zack) Edmonds does not act as a powerful father is expected to; Lucas (Quintus Carothers McCaslin) Beauchamp seems ignorant of, or even almost totally indifferent to, his black mother, Tennie, for his whole existence is dependent upon the white-paternal side rather than the black-maternal one.

Thus in a word, the main male characters in *Go Down, Moses*, actually or symbolically, are all orphans, but as particularly evident in Ike's case, the novel as a whole has an unbalanced structure in which, while the presence of the father is palpably recognizable, that of the mother is relatively inconspicuous. In fact, powerless paternity has been a continuing theme from previous works. For example, the conversation between Cass and Ike reminds us of that between Mr. Compson and Quentin in *The Sound and the Fury* and *Absalom, Absalom!*; and especially in *The Unvanquished*, before he goes to town to meet Ben Redmond, Colonel John Sartoris, whose model is the author's own great-grand father, William Clark Falkner, tells his son Bayard, that after the Civil War ended, "the land and the time too are changing" and what will be needed in the new era is "consolidation" and "pettifogging and doubtless chicanery" in which the Colonel would be "a babe." Saying he is going to do some "moral housecleaning" because he is "tired of killing men," he goes to the duel without having a pistol (*The Unvanquished* 231–32). Nevertheless, the whole speech, "full of irony," contains "the Colonel's practicality" to recover his honor in the inescapable changes of time; that is, "moral housecleaning" is nothing more than "Colonel's practical planning for the future" (N.D. Taylor, "'Moral'" 360–61). Besides, though Bayard repudiates avenging his father, as Cleanth Brooks has suggested, his decision "stems not at all from any rejection of his father,

[1] The date is hard to determine. See Smith 321–23.

but rather from a love for, and understanding of, him" (88). In other words, for Bayard, the act of repudiation does neither simply mean revolt against nor relinquishment of the order of the Old South symbolized by Colonel Sartoris.

Go Down, Moses can be read as a Bildungsroman along with *The Unvanquished*, which is a story "about growing up—the story of an education" (Brooks 84). Yet the significant difference is that Ike's education, interwoven with the race problem, is more complicated than the case of Bayard. As it is so complicated, the author had to deal with some other dimensions of his life separately with multi-faceted juxtapositions with different characters, to render the story not only as Ike's own, but also as that of the whole South. The theme of the absent mother, which is an underlying theme in the text, plays this part and offers him another choice instead of the powerless father. In the sequence after his opening "the burlap lump," the Legacy from maternal side which Hubert Beauchamp has given him, the third person narrative focuses on Ike's point of view which contemplates himself, thinking "how much it takes to compound a man (Isaac McCaslin for instance)" (*Moses* 294–95). Moreover, Albert J. Delvin points out the source of Ike's unconscious sexual anxiety in the antecedent sequence of his childhood experience. When he was a small child, in the Beauchamp mansion, he saw Hubert's mistress being expelled by his mother Miss Sophonsiba, which can be considered as a psychological cause of his hysterical behavior when he encounters Roth's mistress later in "Delta Autumn": "The prior Warwick experience constitutes for Isaac a shocking, traumatizing center around which future experiences cluster and derive their essential coloration" (416). This experience inscribes "fear of maternal disapproval" (411) upon the depth of his consciousness. In other words, the maternal invokes Ike's orientation toward the self and simultaneously alienates him from it.

Such unconscious anxiety naturally leads him to reenact "a return to the imaginary with a substitute mother" (Fowler 134) in his initiation in the woods: "summer, and fall, and snow, and wet and saprife spring in their ordered immortal sequence, the deathless and immemorial phases of the mother who had shaped him if any had toward the man he almost was" (*Moses* 311). Indeed, hunting in the wilderness, involves entry into a man's world as Sam Fathers says to Ike, "You'll be a hunter. You'll be a man" (170). However, it is also undeniable that "Ike learns a way of communion with the wilderness as maternal substitute" and therefore "learns to relinquish," as he leaves not only his gun, a phallic symbol, but also his watch and compass, with which "patriarchal culture attempts to govern, divide, and categorize" the unarticulated world of nature (Fowler 134–35). Namely, it can be said that the wilderness is for Ike the locus of "self-extinction" (149) and his renunciation of patrimony is a "form of self

denial" (138).[2] The closer affinity with the maternal nature he has, the farther he goes away from his social, historical self.

Thus, Ike's logic, which results in his repudiation of the McCaslin patrimony in spite of Cass's persuasion and accusation, is based on the unconscious obsession with his mother and his experience in the maternal woods. Still, the fact is that not only the paternal social order embodied in Cass but also the maternal nature law merely functions as a substitute for his parent. Then, how and to what extent is he different from Cass, who is also an orphan? Although in Part IV of "The Bear" Cass opposes and tries to persuade Ike, saying any attempt at repudiation is nothing more than an "escape" (*Moses* 271), his educational background is not so much different from Ike's. Donald M. Kartiganer maintains that "Ike's mythic vision is one the others do not share" (134), but Cass has undergone the same experience in the woods as Ike has. He also grew up in the woods, killed his first deer, and saw the mythic buck with Sam Fathers, as he himself tells Ike (*Moses* 180). Ike learns to repudiate in the woods and his vision comes from this experience as he himself says "Sam Fathers set me free" (286); and Cass should have understood or at least sympathized with Ike's decision. Although it is undeniable that "they are so alike in so many ways, virtually the two sides of the Southern coin" (Millgate 207), the disparity between them must be discerned inasmuch as we assume that Ike is the protagonist of the whole novel.

III

Among the four fathers, Cass is particularly significant to Ike's self in relation to his family members, for the cousin is not only his kin but also distinctly represents his surrogate father:

> his kinsman, his father almost, who had been born too late into the old time and too soon for the new, the two of them juxtaposed and alien now to each other against their ravaged patrimony, the dark and ravaged fatherland still prone and panting from its etherless operation... (*Moses* 284; see also 4 and 158)

As is evident in this passage, the theme of the powerless father is also presented as a matter of heritage. Moreover, Ike's statement about "truth" in the repudiation derives from Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn," which Cass cited to him in a recollection scene. He repeatedly tells Ike of the "truth," which is what the poem is supposed to be

[2] See also Rollyson 152–53 and Sultan 55.

about: "*Truth is one. It doesn't change. It covers all things which touch the heart—honor and pride and pity and justice and courage and love. Do you see now?*" (283); "*Courage and honor and pride, and pity and love of justice and of liberty. They all touch the heart, and what the heart holds to becomes truth, as far as we know truth. Do you see now?*" (284) To these inquiries, Ike says nothing, or at least the text does not show his answer. Yet significantly, in an earlier version of "The Bear," the one who talks to "the boy" in the same manner is his father, and to the last question, the son answers obediently just, "Yes, sir" (*Uncollected* 295).

Several critics have discussed this poem by Keats for it was Faulkner's favorite and was mentioned over and over again in essays, interviews and novels such as *Sartoris* (*Flags in the Dust*), *Light in August* and *The Sound and the Fury*. Faulkner's own remarks in an interview in 1956 are indicative:

> The writer's only responsibility is to his art. He will be completely ruthless if he is a good one. He has a dream. It anguishes him so much he must get rid of it. He has no peace until then.... If a writer has to rob his mother, he will not hesitate; the *Ode on a Grecian Urn* is worth any number of old ladies. (Meriwether and Millgate 239; italics original)

In the light of such comments by the author himself, the poem has been conceived to represent an ideal of art that would never change with the passing of time; but simultaneously this idealism, of course, has the connotation that it is impossible to achieve such a dream. Joan S. Korenman's comparative study of Keats' poem and Faulkner's works in general (4–5) and Blanche H. Gelfant's argument about its function particularly in "The Bear" (46–47) have both pointed out a fundamental ambiguity toward time and conflict with reality in his attitude to pursue a genuine form of high art.

As to the transcendent "truth" that the Keatsian ode shows being in Part IV of "The Bear," J. Douglas Canfield remarks: "Cass understands, just as Quentin's father understands in *The Sound and the Fury*. He knows that the Grecian Urn is an expression of desire and is thus itself a vessel full of significance but essentially empty, a symbol of the eternal absence of Presence" (366). That is, he is an adherent of the nihilism that negates all horizons of significance, and therefore in this sense is also a relativist. Considering Ike's universal and absolutist understanding of what is associated with God's will, the fact is that the "truth" can be either. Nonetheless, the odds are in favor of Cass. For him nothing, even the divine will, is better and to be preferred than anything else in the name of ubiquitous history. It seems that Faulkner

himself was not, at least simply, affirmative about Ike's choice:

> 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, 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 do something about it, I'm going change it. (Gwynn and Blotner 245–46)

Cass is not any of these because he does not face up to and cope with the problem. For him, the "truth" works to blur the boundary of value. On the other hand, its transcendence isolates Ike from the world around him.

Such a perspective can be reinforced by the structural position of the third chapter, "Pantaloon in Black," as to the unity of the novel, which has been a main topic within Faulknerian study. In a review of the book, Lionel Trilling complains that the placement of this particular episode diminishes the coherence of the whole book, but probably this structure concerns the general theme. In fact, Trilling guesses that Faulkner wished to make the book a novel, emphasizing that it was unsuccessful ("The McCaslins" 647). Though this speculation was wrong as is well known today, in the light of the assumption that the novel is the story of Ike's self-formation in relation to his family members, "Pantaloon in Black" has a role to harmonize its form and content. Given that the ideality of art, the "truth" of "Ode on a Grecian Urn," is represented with its impossibility of achievement just because it is perfect, it can be assumed in thematic connection that the authenticity of Ike's self is also hard to establish. "Pantaloon in Black" threatens the unity of *Go Down, Moses* with its relative foreignness, and by doing so it demonstrates the protagonist's identity crisis and impossibility of authenticity within the thematic harmony. As Malcolm Cowley informs us (113; see also Polk), actually Faulkner intended Rider to be a McCaslin, a descendant of old Carothers, but he did not write nor give the reader any clue of this fact in the text. This was probably because the author thought that the totality of the whole novel might not be accomplished as well as the integrity of Ike's self, but instead be supposed as an ideal, "truth," which is forever elusive. Conceivably with such anticipation, Faulkner maintained that *Go Down, Moses* is a novel.

However, Cass's thought is evidently problematic as long as he himself represents a powerless father, who is supposedly a successor to Mr. Compson. Simply put, his

historicist relativism means that things happen only in the context of history and that no one can avoid this. Since the circumstances of the American South have compounded a man like Ike in mythic nature, also a part of history, Cass does not have the effective logic to persuade him from repudiation. What Cass could do, at the very best, is to "repudiate" Ike's repudiation too (*Moses* 286). In fact, Ike's tragedy revealed in "Delta Autumn" results from the recognition that even he could not be free from the network of Southern history. Yet in the sense that it is also relativism, Cass's historicism contains the recognition of contingency as a logical conclusion. As I will explore in the next section, he thinks that, while the events that happen in history are necessary, the fact per se that such a history occurs is merely an accident. He was accidentally born in the American South, but once that had happened, he cannot transcend the boundary of that history. What is worse, it is meaningless for him to face and cope with its problems, for what happens within is inevitable.

IV

Cass's idea is well described in the conversation between him and Ike in "The Old People." He develops the metaphor of Sam's being "an old lion or a bear in a cage":

> He was born in the cage and has been in it all his life; he knows nothing else. Then he smells something. It might be anything, any breeze blowing past anything and then into his nostrils. But there for a second was the hot sand or the cane-brake that he never even saw himself, might not even know if he did see it and probably does know he couldn't hold his own with it if he got back to it. But that's not what he smells then. It was the cage he smelled. He hadn't smelled the cage until that minute. Then the hot sand or the brake blew into his nostrils and blew away, and all he could smell was the cage. That's what makes his eyes look like that. (161)

Nancy Dew Taylor notes about the smell of "the hot sand or the cane-brake" that "[t]his phrase refers to the background of [Sam's] Negro forebears: African sands, Louisiana cane-brake" (*Annotations*, 102). According to Cass, the smell of anything is so evanescent that any nostalgia for his old home country vanishes immediately, and what remains in front of Sam is the overwhelming reality of "the cage." The point in this passage is "anything, any breeze"; whatever the smell is, it momentarily changes into "the hot sand or the cane-brake." In other words, the smell is interchangeable with "anything." Right after this statement, as to Sam's recognition of his own mixed blood, Cass also states:

> Then he grew up and began to learn things, and all of a sudden one day he found out that he had been betrayed, the blood of the warriors and chiefs betrayed. Not by his father.... [He] was *betrayed through* the black blood which his mother gave him. *Not betrayed by* the black blood and *not willfully* betrayed by his mother, but betrayed by her all the same. (161–62; my emphasis)

This statement seems to indicate that the "black blood" which happens to have intervened between Sam and his mother as a mere means of betrayal, also negates her autonomous will. Thus, Cass's recognition of history is based on contingency. He conceives that what happened is an accident though it cannot be changed.

Not only Cass, but also the race problem in *Go Down, Moses* generally concerns the interrelation of history, myth and contingency. For example, the awakening of Roth's racial consciousness is also represented by a recognition of historical contingency: "Then one day the old curse of his fathers, the old haughty ancestral pride based not on any value *but on an accident of geography*, stemmed not from courage and honor but from wrong and shame, descended to him. He did not recognize it then" (107; my emphasis). Truly, this particular passage is a remarkable example of repressive description, showing his unconscious fixation and trauma of being aware that his mammy and foster brother are blacks (Hiraishi 82).[3] However, conceivably it was not only difficult for Faulkner to write frankly about the unconscious sphere of Roth's mind and his own affection toward Caroline Barr, the model of Molly Beauchamp, but also difficult because the author's purpose was to dissolve the inner conflict of the white Southerner into a recognition of contingency and the weakening of historical consciousness.

Indeed *Go Down, Moses* was dedicated to Faulkner's own mammy, Caroline Barr, and the words of dedication that she gave "to my childhood an immeasurable devotion and love" are very close to the description of Molly's affection to Roth that she offers the "constant and abiding devotion and love which existed nowhere else in this world" (114), both of which indicate the similarity between Roth and the author himself. In terms of the general theme of the book, the "relationship between white and negro races" (Blotner, *Selected* 139), to uncover Roth's complex feelings toward his mammy and foster brother is unavoidable, but Faulkner did not do so, at least not sufficiently. Instead, he obfuscated such inner conflict under cultural circumstances in which the recognition of contingency is strengthened and historical consciousness is

[3] Judith Sensibar observes, Rider can be regarded as Faulkner's black mask, the part of his self which has to be killed to express his secret affection toward the black woman, which is shameful and taboo ("Who" 105–08; see also Snead 191)

weakened. It is probably in the sense that "Molly was...transferred to Henry" (Hiraishi 83) which develops the particular relationship with the black mammy into the general theme of black-white brotherhood.

As Eleanor Cook notes, there is a crucial motif of black-white brothers in *Go Down, Moses*, based on the Biblical myths (702). Aside from Tomey's Turl and Buck and Buddy McCaslin, who in fact share Old Carother's blood, Roth's father Zack and Lucas Beauchamp "could have been brothers, almost twins" (*Moses* 46), and they also "lived until they were both grown almost as brothers lived" (54). Moreover, it seems, as Cook proposes, that our primary concern, Ike, is also paired with a black descendant, albeit implicitly: "Ike would have grown up with [Tennie's] Jim, just as the other white McCaslin descendants grew up with the descendants of the black half-brother" (702). Therefore, the problem of the black mammy and the black brother also involves Ike and is crucial to the formation of his self.

Roth's relation to his black mammy Molly is a serious problem which derives from "the tragic complexity of his motherless childhood" (*Moses* 126), but in such a tragedy which is universally oriented in essence, the idiosyncratic racial struggle of the white Southern man is reduced to being just a kind of prejudice which can exist anytime and anywhere else in the world. Faulkner must have expected Cass's role of bringing an individual sense of history into the mythic world of the American wilderness in Part IV of "The Bear" to prevent such an alleviation. However, as mentioned above, his position as a historicist relativist also contains the same dilution as it logically develops. To Faulkner, who attempted to keep his distance from mythic tragedy, rather than Roth's racial conflict, the weakening of historical consciousness was the primary problem: the repressive descriptions of Roth's mind show, not the ambiguity of the white man's attitude toward blacks and the failure to confess it, but another serious problem of the weakening of historical consciousness and the recognition of historical contingency that the "orphans" commonly have whether they are black or white, in which any standards of good and evil are obscured by relativism. In fact, Roth is a direct descendant of Cass.

On the other hand, Ike's experience in the woods is a dramatically mystified vision of contingency. For instance, one of the most significant incidents in Ike's life, the encounter with Old Ben after relinquishing his gun, watch and compass, is depicted as follows:

> He had left the gun; by his own will and relinquishment he had accepted not a gambit, not a choice, but a condition in which not only the bear's heretofore inviolable anonymity but all the ancient rules and balances of hunter and hunted had been

abrogated. (*Moses* 198)

Even if the "relinquishment" is "by his own will," the encounter with the old big bear, which is especially mystified in a dramatic manner (200), is not, and intrinsically there is no necessary connection between them. Sam Fathers tells him, except for using dogs, "[t]he only other way will be for [Old Ben] to run by accident over somebody that had a gun and knowed how to shoot it" (193). Realistically speaking, the encounter with wild bears must depend on chance. Thus, it seems that what remains is a relativism that negates the standards of good and evil after the strong historical consciousness of the Old South and the American Nature myth, represented as the father and the mother, have disappeared; and therefore it also seems that no one questions how to live under such circumstances. In other words, in *Go Down, Moses*, the orphanage of the male characters represents the cultural circumstance of the postbellum South as an ethical question.

V

"Delta Autumn" is in a sense the story about the situation of the young men of the third generation after the Civil War to which Faulkner himself belongs. The sense of relativism and the recognition of contingency seem to be strengthened in these men, and the tragedy of Ike's life raises the question of how to live in such a new world. The narrative present is 1940 when World War II is under way, and the possibility of unspoiled nature is receding further and further as time passes: "Most of that was gone now. Now a man drove two hundred miles from Jefferson before he found wilderness to hunt in" (324). As this description suggests, the underlying theme of the absent mother foreshadows the story of "Delta Autumn." Moreover, Cass's grandson, Roth, is now the head of the family, which also implies that the thought of the relativist historicist is left to the younger men.

Thus the episode is set, and in such a situation, as Roth's defiant remark (329) suggests, Uncle Ike is represented as an anachronistic old man. Primarily, the unfathomable gap and crucial miscommunication between Uncle Ike and the young men—especially Roth and Will Legate, "two of the sons of his old companions, whom he had taught not only how to distinguish between the prints left by a buck or a doe but between the sound they made in moving" (320)—is marked by their recognition about Roth's affair. On their way to the camp Legate repeatedly makes fun of Roth's hunting a "doe," but Uncle Ike seems unaware of what he is talking about. After arriving, when they talk over dinner, Uncle Ike says, "A while ago Henry

Wyatt there said how there used to be more game here. There was. So much that we even killed does. I seem to remember Will Legate mentioning that too—", and then one of the young men cannot help but laugh. This "single guffaw, stillborn" (331) is outstanding evidence of Ike's failure of communication with them. Then at the crucial moment of the story near the end, the critical words of Roth's mistress give a finishing stroke to the old man (346). In the last scene, which implies the inevitable recurrence of old Carothers's sinful past and the emptiness of Ike's life, he realizes at last that what Roth killed was just "a doe" (348) and that he does not at all share common perceptions with the young men.

Such a tragedy of Uncle Ike, however, is deeply rooted in a more radical discrepancy between him and the young men, which is also demonstrated in their dialogue in the camp. Although the Faulknerian scholars who have researched the composition process of the novel, such as James Early and Joanne V. Creighton, did not mention, introducing only the change from Don Boyd to Roth Edmonds and the revised conversation between Ike and the mulatto mistress, the dialogue with the young men over dinner in the camp is also a significant addition of "more than five pages" (Creighton 139), which the *Story* version of the narrative that was published almost at the same time as the novel does not include. The magazine versions of "The Old People," "The Fire and the Hearth" and "Pantaloon in Black" were revised in the middle of 1941 in accordance with the revision of "The Bear"; but "Delta Autumn" was revised after finishing Part IV.[4] Therefore, this revisions can be regarded as a conclusive part of the whole novel, and more specifically, of the life of the protagonist.

In the camp, Uncle Ike tries to tell and convey his thought and belief to them as a senior of their community, but it turns out that their relativistic thought about circumstances is crucially disparate from his faithful view and contains the recognition of contingency. Curiously, one of the young men prefers Ike's opinion to Roth's. Roth refutes Ike's nostalgia for the good old days and his seeming assumption that there were better men hunting, which Ike denies, saying that most men are good anytime and anywhere, and that some are just unlucky "because most men are a little better than their circumstances give them a chance to be." Then "the third speaker" asks Roth whether he means that people behave well only because they happen to be watched over by others. Roth affirms this: "Yes,...A man in a blue coat, with a badge on it watching him. Maybe just the badge." And to his inquiry asking who makes the circumstances, this "third" young man answers, "Luck[....] Chance. Happen-so." The fact is that his opinion differs from Ike's, and Roth's is not the same as Ike's as the

[4] Blotner, *Faulkner* 1089; 1092–93; Gresset 60–61; *Uncollected* 272–73; 695–96.

third man says (329–30). To the same question, Ike would answer, "God," as he actually tells them that God created humans, and the world for them to live in (331). Thus their opinions about circumstances are totally different and, what is worse, they don't even notice this fact.

Immediately after the "third" young man, Legate says, "Well, I wouldn't say that Roth Edmonds can hunt one doe every day and night for two weeks and was a poor hunter or a unlucky one neither. A man that still have the same doe left to hunt on again next year—" (330). According to the context of the conversation, this remark suggests that the gap between Ike and the young men and the race problem represented in the relationship between Roth and his mistress are intertwined with each other. The nameless mistress later comes to the camp and says of the money that Roth is going to give her, "Provided. Honor and code too" (345). Although "he does love his mistress and...without the barrier of race he would marry her" (Ragan 308), Roth is also bound by the ethics of Southern honor. To be blunt, the reason why Roth repudiates the option of living with love for her and their child must be that Legate's mockery is more intolerable for him as his opinion about circumstances implies; to him, honor is "the badge." It just happened to be there. But as soon as it happens, it is impossible to evade it. Legate's mere ridicule will change to a label of shame as it turns out that the mulatto mistress is his remote relative.

The nameless "third speaker" is not of course a main character of the novel. Nevertheless, as well as the black preacher (Fonsiba's husband), Ike's wife and Roth's mistress, the namelessness of this character acts as a "significant other" to Ike. He exchanges some words in this encounter, but cannot understand. As the analogy between a doe and a black mistress indicates, Legate's words on a doe that Roth killed, "Nothing extra" (348) signifies the fact that the young men including him perceive Roth's having a mistress as nothing but a trifle. Unlike Ike, the experience in the woods does not provide them with any existential basis for their life. Whereas Ike's status as an anachronism is undeniable and Faulkner himself belonged to the same generation as the young men, the author conceivably sympathized with Uncle Ike's spirit to some degree. Asked which he expected the reader's sympathy toward in "The Bear"—nature or hunters—Faulkner answered as follows:

> I doubt if the writer's asking anyone to sympathize, to choose sides. That is the reader's right. What the writer's asking is compassion, understanding, that change must alter, must happen, and change is going to alter what was.... It's not to choose sides at all—just to compassionate the good splendid things which change must destroy, the splendid fine things which are a part of man's past too, part of man's heritage too, but

> they were obsolete and had to go. But that's no need to not feel compassion for them simply because they were obsolete. (Gwynn and Blotner 276–77)

In *Go Down, Moses* too, Uncle Ike gives the horn that General Compson left him to Roth's illegitimate child probably with a little bit of hope. Truly, it is quite ironical because this hope comes out of the same kind of spirit that the act of his repudiation in his youth represented. Faulkner's sympathy, nonetheless, undoubtedly lay in nature; but there is no use simply grieving for its loss, for it inevitably disappears in the face of civilization as time passes. Human thought and perception also change with time. It seems that, through the Cass-Ike dialogue in "The Old People" and "The Bear," "Delta Autumn" makes us question whether and how it is possible for the younger generation to lead an affirmative life without negating their own values and heritage in a world where the positive recognition of contingency prevails.

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