

## *Go Down, Moses: subversion and beyond*

Sonja Bašić

Faculty of Philosophy, Zagreb

In the effort to redefine the place of *Go Down, Moses* in Faulkner's *oeuvre* the author reconsiders the boundaries between the novels assigned to Faulkner's 'major phase', stretching by more or less common consent from 1929 to 1942. She argues that Faulkner's experimentation is always juxtapositional, his narrative strategy combining two contrasted tendencies: the figural and the parodic. Although present in all Faulkner's novels, this doubleness, however, also allows her to make significant distinctions or groupings within the major period where *Absalom, Absalom!* should be seen as the great divide between the first figural group and the second 'parodic' group. She selects three novels from this second group: *The Wild Palms*, *The Hamlet* and *Go Down, Moses*, stressing their shared hybridity of genre and structure, singling out *The Hamlet* as the culminating point. This 'redrawing of boundaries' finally allows her to place *Go Down, Moses* as another divide, both inside and outside the major phase, introducing the long late period in which 'Faulkner descends from the highest spheres of genius into a strata inhabited by great, even very great but only human writers.' And where *Go Down, Moses* stands wavering, in a somewhat precarious balance between the two spheres, partaking of both: a flawed work but indisputably still the work of a master.

In a series of papers and texts dealing with Faulkner and James Joyce delivered and published during the past decade<sup>1</sup> I have been proposing that in terms of language and narrative all their major works can be seen as textual battlefields in which many representative literary codes and strategies and even genres are pitted against one another or joined in almost unprecedented paradoxical co-existence. I also see this as an important

---

<sup>1</sup> Among them are: 'Parody and Metafiction: *Ulysses* and *The Hamlet*'. *Faulkner, His Contemporaries and His Posterity*, ed. Waldemar Zacharasiewicz, Francke Verlag, Tübingen and Basel 1993, p. 41-55; '(Faulkner's) 'Stories vs. Novels: The Narrative Strategies', *William Faulkner's Short Fiction*, ed. Hans Skei, Solum Forlag, Oslo 1997, p. 63-73 and 'Faulkner's Myriad', *Études faulkneriennes, Naissances de Faulkner*, II/2000, p. 43-48.

and distinctive shared characteristic of these authors which has still not been sufficiently recognized. Generally speaking, these paradoxical juxtapositions, which like Eliot's and Pound's ironic/parodic discrepancies must be seen as paradigmatic modernist traits, create two radically different yet simultaneous tendencies. The first still striving for closure, completion and the construction of meaning, the other (also pointing in the direction of postmodernism) pervaded by undecidability and critical awareness of (literary) difference, resulting in the transgression of many boundaries: rules, conventions, styles, strategies, etc inscribed in their readers' horizon of expectation. As these tendencies are usually mutually incompatible, even exclusive of one another, they can also be considered as mutually subversive. This subversive tendency was recognized in Joyce much before it was also discovered in Faulkner. I call it subversive<sup>2</sup> because it is often not carried out in open rebellion but in underhand ways: for instance Joyce beating romanticism 'into a pulp' by writing sham sentimental parodies in 'Nausicaa', or quietly undermining the naturalist writing of the stories in *Dubliners* by withholding clarifying information and turning them into hermetic texts. Incidentally, it is in texts about Joyce that I have first encountered for example Wolfgang Iser's notion of 'Zerfallen von Repräsentation', Jean-Paul Lyotard's division of modernist anti-realistic trends into writing 'au trop de temps' and 'au trop de livre', or the application of the 'uncertainty principle' (e.g. in the title and substance of Philip Herring's book on Joyce). However, more recently several leading younger Faulkner critics have engaged in this aspect of Faulkner – for example Philip Weinstein in his *Faulkner's Subject: A Cosmos No One Owns*, John Matthews in *The Play of Faulkner's Language* and others (e.g. Eric Sundquist and Patrick O'Donnell) whom I will enlist to support some of my arguments. In *Faulkner's Subject* Weinstein (1992) writes:

For Faulkner's genius is juxtapositional. He rises into power as he broods upon and revisits his materials, submits them to new perspectives (...) In his best work, form and content alike destabilize expectation; they do so through **unpredictable juxtapositions**. *The Sound and the Fury, As I Lay Dying, Light in August, Absalom, Absalom!*, *The Hamlet* and *Go Down, Moses* play off facet against facet, dance from

---

<sup>2</sup>I use the term 'subversive' in the meaning derived from the verb 'to subvert' as explained for example in *Webster's Dictionary*: 'to upset, uproot or the like' (under 1) or 'to render futile, void, inoperative' (under 3). Contemporary critics commonly use the term 'subversion' and it also often appears in recent Faulkner criticism. Some random examples from the critics quoted in this text are found in Eric J. Sundquist's article 'Faulkner, Race and the Forms of American Fiction: 'the notion of 'signifying', the black metaphor of manipulative or **subversive** response to a previous text' (2); 'Mark Twain ...employs outright burlesque to **subvert** the fiction of law and custom...(6); 'As in *Pudd'nhead Wilson* and *Light in August*, murder is at the center of the book's **ironic subversion** of white supremacy' (10). The term also occurs in Patrick O'Donnell, 'Faulkner and Postmodernism' in *The Cambridge Companion to William Faulkner*, ed. Philip M. Weinstein, 1995: 'The idea **subverted** in *Go Down, Moses* is that the formation of identity is a matter of closing out and separating oneself from the 'other'...' (42, my emphasis).

one subjective point of view to another, set into motion reading upon reading of the same (but never the same) materials. (79-80, my emphasis)

Much of this is in line with what I wish to present as a specific hallmark of Faulkner's genius, adding some points which I believe do not change the essence of Weinstein's thinking: first, Faulkner's 'new perspectives' of the same (yet never the same) materials are not merely variations of perspective, but often become juxtapositions of incompatible perspectives. Second, the 'unpredictable' juxtapositions also embrace non-subjective representations including stylistic devices, narrative strategies and speech/thought registers, along with voiced and repressed ideological matrices which in *Absalom*, 'Old Man' and especially *The Hamlet* subvert the epistemological matrix, becoming instead hypertextual and parodic, foreshadowing postmodernism<sup>3</sup>. And finally the amassing of 'reading upon reading' and the 'dance of points of view' in Faulkner's best works are to be seen as dialogic and transgressive, not expressive of individual personality (mind) alone, but also of social and cultural, racial and gender codes, moving alternately and simultaneously in the two directions I have described at the beginning: one striving for meaningful closure, the other remaining (tragically or comically) undecidable.

It is in the light of these propositions that I wish to redefine the boundaries between the (groups of) novels assigned by more or less common consent to Faulkner's great or major period stretching from 1929 to 1942. These novels are usually rather indiscriminately referred to as 'experimental', with the earlier works often pushed into the foreground and no significant narrational distinctions or groupings made within the period. I believe, however, that it is of extreme importance to be aware that the experimentation of the great period is of two kinds, combined as a rule in every novel by Faulkner, often the same page or even sentence, but seen in broader perspective allowing us to discern a division of the novels of the great period into two chronologically consecutive groups. The first, larger, group includes *The Sound and the Fury* and *Absalom, Absalom!* as its two intensely figural tragic peaks, with *Absalom* establishing the first divide **within** the great period. This group is followed by the second group (some of its innovations already prefigured in *Absalom*), with *The Hamlet* as its comic, communal and parodic peak and *Go Down, Moses* as the final divide, still a part of the great period, but leading us **outside and beyond it**, into Faulkner's late phase featuring preeminently *Intruder in the Dust*, *The Town*, *The Mansion* and *Requiem for a Nun*.

The first group of great novels, whose experimental nature has already been canonized by criticism, comprises the great tragic dark masterpieces and includes almost all of Faulkner's internal monologue writing. This group is in no way uniform: e.g. *Sanctu-*

---

<sup>3</sup> Patrick O'Donnell uses an approach quite different from mine, but relates Faulkner's work and *Go Down, Moses* in particular to postmodernism in 'Faulkner and Postmodernism', *The Cambridge Companion to William Faulkner*, ed. Philip Weinstein, 1995.

ary and *Light in August* have little internal monologue while *As I Lay Dying* is all internal monologue, but prevalently though by no means exclusively comic/grotesque. And yet, all these novels are closely interrelated: they are all intensely figural, concentrating on 'mind stuff' and the unfolding of mainly tragic individual destinies. They are furthermore intensely oblique, metaphorical, solipsistic and opaque. The story of *The Sound and the Fury* is claustrophobically enclosed within the minds of the three Compson brothers. Apart from the fact that their interior monologues are dictated by the vagaries of their nearly automatic and utterly subjective, obsessive memories and their very personal, even idiosyncratic emotions in various stages of inchoateness (traditionally seen as structural properties of 'stream of consciousness'), they also answer to more formal narratological criteria: readers are placed in the protagonist's mind from the very beginning (denied any grammatical references to the source of thought), and the author/narrator as analyst and commentator is in abeyance although his artifice looms large. The monologues of the Compson brothers juxtapose three totally different points of view, but the juxtaposition can still be naturalized for psychological reasons and we never for a moment mistake Quentin for Benjy or any of the two for Jason. The same consistency and centrality of character motivation marks *As I Lay Dying*, and the more externalized *Light in August*. However, as if bored with this consistency, in *Absalom, Absalom!* Faulkner (slyly and subversively) abandons it completely! As a result, he creates in *Absalom* a more radical and dissonant juxtaposition, which turns into an inextricable jumble of stylistically different and at times only nominally 'figural' voices, often neither imitative nor consistent, overlaid with thick non-mimetic mannerist encrustations. Thus the source of the voices in *Absalom* is often hopelessly obscured, for example when Sutpen's narratives are mediated through Grandfather and Father and finally taken over by Quentin, at which point their narrative turns into (or is inextricably merged with) Quentin's interior monologue. Similarly Father's style undergoes several notable rhetorical changes for which there are no mimetic psychological justifications, and Miss Rosa who is closest to the time of the novel's narration and should come to us most directly, at times sounds extremely artificial and rhetorical. All these 'tricks of the trade', as Faulkner once called them, make the whole affair of narration in *Absalom* deliberately bottomless.

The fact that in this novel the act of telling becomes both the strategy and subject of the narration has been stressed by many critics. What has been insufficiently stressed, however, is the deliberate formalist foregrounding of the mechanics of telling in this novel, always at the expense of personal individuation: flaunting an abundance of dashes and brackets, interpolations and afterthoughts intruding in both story and discourse and, quite specifically, using formal narrative indexes – 'inquit formulas' (an incredible amount of literal notations that someone is saying, telling, thinking and guessing!). This strategy subverts the illusion of reader-involvement with the figures and is a quite unexpected link of the tragic and figural *Absalom* with the rural/mythic, comic and impersonal *Old Man*, where it figures even more conspicuously. Thus in terms of narrative strategy *Absalom* features a very special narrative blend in which the tech-

niques of overt telling seem to be fused with monologues, so much so that almost all the narrations by other characters (not just those marked by the author as such by italics) can be seen as processed through Quentin's monologue. In this way this novel creatively confuses and subverts a newly set-up narrative mode (interior monologue) by both **streaming its tale and telling its streams**. Moreover, the voices of the 'narrations' (Rosa, Sutpen, father, Shreve) as well as the (ostensible) monologue both tell and (more ramblingly) talk aloud (soliloquize), speak in the manner of thinking, think as if they were formally soliloquizing, which also subverts our customary classification of forms of speech and (self)communication. (Cf. Bašić 1984, 1997) This is why *Absalom, Absalom!* should be seen as the great narrative peak within the major period dividing the first group of Faulkner's masterpieces from the second: the culmination of the former and great progenitor of the latter, partaking of the great innovative qualities of both.

While the insistence on the agonizing consciousness and the figural mode still pervades *Absalom*, making it one of the greatest American novels of the interiorized Self as creator and inventor of history, the subversions we have just outlined also connect it to the next group of works where telling becomes even more foregrounded and the Self (its individual contours blurred because processed through impersonal textual rhetoric) blended into a communal and mythic (un)consciousness, with individual behaviour and speech immersed in folk clichés, extravagant caricature, and other distancing devices. Thus in 'Old Man' the figural voice is silenced almost completely by the blown-up act of telling which is in turn subverted by the author repeatedly stressing that the tall convict is telling his adventure – but at the same time drowning any semblance of his voice and much of his reliability in an incredibly rich and varied assemblage of folk idiom, tall tale, grotesque and parody combined with very sophisticated and facetious hyperbolic authorial rhetoric (the tall convict's companion vanishing upward 'like in a translation out of Isaiah') and paradoxically placed into a mythic framework (the Flood).

Another subversive element marking the second group of novels of the major period including *The Wild Palms*, *The Hamlet* and *Go Down, Moses*<sup>4</sup>, and allowing us to consider them as a separate group, is their hybridity of genre. Almost without deigning to explain why, with an Olympian wave of the hand, Faulkner simply decreed these narratives to be novels, named them into existence as such, as if gleefully foreseeing future narratologists moiling and panting before the dilemma like the dogs, fices and hounds facing Old Ben. In my view the most stunning act of naming a genre into existence occurs in *The Wild Palms*, imposed on two separate narratives simply pasted together as one within the same covers on which the title of one part becomes the title of

---

<sup>4</sup>I believe in the usefulness of considering *Go Down, Moses* in the context of works chronologically closest to it, but in this text I also keep in the foreground *The Hamlet* and *The Wild Palms* because the three works comprise the Pléiade volume of French translations discussed at the Faulkner conference at Rennes in September 1999 at which a version of this paper was delivered.

the new 'novel' by the addition of a definite article. The act seems as arbitrary as glueing a tennis shoe to a piece of canvas and at the same time as definitive as a calculus or postulate giving meaning to a conceptualist work of art. This act in itself is a massive challenge to the conventions of fiction (only imagine Hemingway doing the same trick by simply pasting together *The Old Man and the Sea* and *To Have and Have Not*, for example) and thus also an implicitly metafictional link with post-modernism, where 'anything goes', and where it is possible to combine in (almost) arbitrary fashion a primitive/mythic extravaganza and a sophisticated urban and socially grounded story of two doomed lovers.

The record of how *The Hamlet* and *Go Down, Moses* were assembled mostly of previously written stories later revised for inclusion in the 'novels' exists and need not interest us at this point. The important thing to note, nevertheless, is the fact that along with the right to act by 'divine decree', which turned groups of stories into novels, Faulkner also seems to have appropriated here the preeminently Joycean subversive right to massive, on occasion almost random juxtaposition of stylistic and narrative protocols disregarding any previously set rules, which in *The Hamlet* especially are stretched to the utmost. These in any case are only some of the reasons why I believe these three novels mark a specific group, owing to chronological and formal reasons. They clearly belong to the latter part of Faulkner's major period (1936–42), but remain ('Old Man' and *The Hamlet* in particular) equally experimental as any of the earlier masterpieces, although in a decidedly different key. I also believe that *The Hamlet* is the greatest of the three, and perhaps one of the three or four all-time Faulkner greats. In it, as I have shown on previous occasions, Faulkner deconstructs the heightening and involving strategies of his earlier experiential and stream-of-consciousness writing, subverting both realist transparency and modernist subjectivity, piling up narrative registers and styles ranging from micro structures (clichés on all levels, redundancies and repetitions, puns, fixed epithets) to large juxtaposed textual segments imitative or parodic of the conventions of entire genres or types of literature (the folk tale, family saga, pastoral, Poesque horror, mythic parable etc). He achieves a happy fusion of all this hypertextual jumble by a stroke of genius, helped by his intimate knowledge of the language of 'Yoknapatawpha' which creates the illusion of 'reality', as well as by the magnetism and versatility of the comic genre, which offers the required minimum of binding matter helping the structure to 'coalesce'.

Approaching *Go Down, Moses* one should not forget that it was composed almost in one breath, along with *The Hamlet*, and published barely two years after it, at a period of intense personal (financial) crisis and historical upheaval (World War II). These few years were also a major watershed in Faulkner's career – coinciding according to some with the end of his 'experimental' period, and according to others (myself among them) with the end of the series of greatest works whose heights were never to be reached again. *The Hamlet* and *Go Down, Moses* can profitably be used as foils to one another, revealing both similarities and differences. They are connected by their analogous birth into the novelistic genre and the subversive potential of their thematically

and narrationally juxtaposed styles. *Go Down, Moses* is yet another volume in a series of hybrid novels, which for all intents and purposes looks like a short story collection (and was incidentally first published as such in 1942, allegedly by editorial mistake). Moreover, its stories/chapters are also written in different modes, tones, and on different levels of rhetorical engagement (including a lot of Faulkner's 'oratory'). The juxtaposition of all these within the same book is certainly subversive of conventional novelistic form and more specifically, of Faulkner's figural (internalized, subjective) earlier masterpieces.

These juxtapositions have worked wonders with *The Hamlet* and '*Old Man*': straining verisimilitude, submitting the often discrepant materials to a lusty writerly treatment, and piling them up with great energy in a predominantly comic and parodic key. Why did it not work wonders in *Go Down, Moses*, why do its pieces fail to find the perfect 'fit'? These questions persist and continue to divide critical opinion.

Contemporary critics have reopened the novel's dossier, prompted primarily by the intense topicality of the race question. However, working on the novel several of them have also felt compelled to deal with the dilemma of its unfitting pieces. John Matthews thus begins his very recent article 'Touching Race in *Go Down, Moses*' (1996) with a dramatic, unequivocal statement which rings like a challenge and calls for a response:

Of all Faulkner's major works *Go Down, Moses* remains the one most beset by anomaly and least certain of its place. Indisputably still the product of a master – emphatically so in the descriptions of the wilderness hunts (...) Appearing six years after Faulkner had published perhaps the greatest of all American novels, *Go Down, Moses* searches out the contemporary consequences of what *Absalom, Absalom!* had already identified as the South's doom. (21)

Implying that *Go Down, Moses* was an inadequate replay of Faulkner's legendary tragic novel of historical and racial agony, Matthews is also critical of its narrative structure 'that presents itself as generically and formally unstable: a book *not* of short stories, as Faulkner insisted after the first edition's mistaken subtitle, but certainly not the unified novel he always claimed it to be'. The stories, he continues, 'remain tangential to each other; they touch without coalescing' (21-2) indicating that Faulkner's ideological disorientation vis a vis this most difficult, most traumatic of questions is also reflected in the novel's form.

Matthews' statement of the case sounds the right note for my argument, consonant yet leaving room for further variation and amplification. I also want to measure *Moses* against *Absalom*, but not only because they deal with the same themes – the impact of history and racism on life in the American South – but because **their shared theme is approached with radically different narrative strategies**: *Absalom* all obliqueness and flow of images, *Moses* veering towards statement and argument, thus much more vulnerable to possible ideological 'disorientation'. I am also interested in the question of 'coalescence' – which in Faulkner is always somewhat miraculous because resting on

the rock of paradox. Like Matthews I also believe that 'it may be possible to detect deeper purposes in a textual arrangement marked by anomaly, disjunction, parallax' as well as an overall 'uncertainty effect' (22), which I find to be Faulkner's greatest and most original contribution to modernism. Even if their deeper purposes remain veiled and unclear, or are finally found to lie too deep for coherent critical recovery, the uncertainties and disjunctions of *Go Down, Moses* and its achieved and failed coalescences deserve to be studied in order to throw more light on my feeling of (relative) dissatisfaction with this novel (shared with Matthews and Philip Weinstein) and the belief that it is flawed, although 'indisputably still the product of a master'.

## II

Let me begin by investigating some reasons why the parts of this novel do not (quite) coalesce in the novel or, as is often the case, why some of the individual parts (stories) do not achieve coalescence within their limits, trying **to keep in the foreground the functioning of both 'old' and 'new' narrative strategies, but also aware of their interdependence with ideological issues.**

One might start by pointing out that the story of the McCaslin family unfolds as a dramatic plot comprising a new realist strand and massive chunks of agonizing serious argumentation, requiring a considerable measure of consistency and verisimilitude. However, this particular requirement is at odds with the very diverse narrative keys of the book: the burlesque of 'Was', the medley of 'low' humour and high seriousness in the 'The Fire and the Hearth', the mythic hunt in counterpoint to the tragic family history of incest and miscegenation and Ike's disquisitions about race, land etc in 'The Bear', the alternation of the bantering, sober and ponderous tones in 'Delta Autumn' and the (apparently light) ironical focalization of the concluding story, constituting a motley assortment of narrative pieces strongly reminiscent of *The Hamlet*. Such a medley was fitted perfectly in *The Hamlet*, but does not always function in accordance with the earnestly ideological presumed purpose of *Go Down, Moses*. Parts of this novel are pervaded by a new meditative rhetoric of argumentation and by realist elements demanding what the modernist Faulkner was free to ignore (subvert), such as clarity of plotting and motivating, verisimilitude, stylistic unity, chronology. The narrative model of *Go Down, Moses* opened the way for Faulkner to address more directly the contemporary moral, social or racial issues which were to be his dominant preoccupation in the novels that followed. Thus one of the reasons of its refusal to hang together may lie in the fact that Faulkner's modernist protocol was in the process of changing into a new type of narrative, including a new sense of logic and decorum and leading to a more pedagogic and monological discourse less flexible than Faulkner's earlier modernist narrative and less capable of the fusions and juxtapositions which were the trademarks of his major phase.

It is perhaps not an accident that the individual chapters/stories which I feel to be most unsatisfactory when seen from this angle are those most directly related to the



black McCaslin line, 'The Fire and the Hearth', the second longest part of the novel dedicated to the presentation of Lucas Beauchamp, (the most ambitiously conceived black male protagonist in his entire *oeuvre*), and 'Delta Autumn' coming last in chronology and emplotment, the climax and virtual end of the McCaslin narrative, followed only by the short title story as a coda.

'The Fire and the Hearth', a long narrative (which together with the even longer 'The Bear' comprises almost two thirds of the entire book) constitutes the central story about Lucas Beauchamp, the black counterpart to Ike and one of the two leading characters, the illegitimate part-black descendant of Old Carothers, the founder of the white and prosperous McCaslin family line. Lucas is presented as intractable and proud, strong and majestic in stature, unlike any black previously presented by Faulkner. Very important for our awareness of Faulkner's intention to portray Lucas as a **black hero** is the symbolic fire which Lucas and his wife Molly never extinguish on their hearth. The sense of importance attributed to Lucas rests among others on an episode early in his marriage, when Molly must move with their infant son to live in Zach Edmonds' house to take care of his newborn child after his wife dies in childbirth. During the six months in which Molly sleeps at the house of her husband's white relative, an ambiguous sexual situation is created which is of notorious historical import, bringing back the ghosts of Eunice and Tomasina whose tragic story lies at the very centre of the McCaslin family curse. When Lucas finally confronts Zack and asks to have Molly back, he acts with passion and courage, though never getting completely out of line, and wins the showdown although, in spite of Zack's earnest disclaimer, he (we) can never be sure of what 'really' happened while Molly was sleeping at his house. In the story Lucas's doubts remain unvoiced (because repressed?) and this silence is very expressive.

A large part (more than half) of 'The Fire and the Hearth', however, recounts in humorous but rather tedious detail irrelevant to the development of Lucas as a fictional hero a trivial 'ruse' concerning Lucas' secret whiskey still whisked from place to place like the corpse moved in and out of the grave in *Intruder in the Dust*, along with two shorter incidents of the same type – his stratagem to sell Roth Edmond's mule and buy a 'divining machine' to hunt for hidden treasure. Granting the significance of other serious references to Lucas showing his dispossession through social and economic white supremacy and unmasking the inherent drama of the exploited black population, the other bantering half of the story destabilizes the constituting of Lucas as a pivotal black character facing Ike McCaslin across the gulf of their grandfather's sin of miscegenation and incest. Here Faulkner has failed to observe the necessary broad consistency in character presentation, a rule he almost never breaks even in his most riotous and formally iconoclastic texts. As a result the Lucas of the fire on the hearth fails to coalesce with the Lucas of the sham divining machine. He remains unrealized, half-hero half-'Sambo'. Placed between the perfect (folksy, loony, fairy-tale funny) 'Was' and the perfect (ritual, mythic, oracular) 'Old People'-cum-'The Bear', 'The Fire and the Hearth' remains problematic.

In his excellent presentation of *Go Down Moses*, in his book *Faulkner's Subject: A Cosmos No One Owns* Weinstein does not explicitly criticize Faulkner's presentation of Lucas in this novel, but seen in broader terms this is implied in his statement: 'To say who Lucas Beauchamp is to map the career of his creator within a ten-year history of trying in different ways to say black, and always failing.' (65) He descends, however, very hard on the Lucas of *Intruder in the Dust* whom he sees as a 'congealed icon' used by Faulkner almost as a mere device to open up a white mind: that of Chick Mallison. (76) Weinstein further dismisses *Intruder* as 'a racially safe book':

Perhaps the book's racial discourse is safe, finally, because we know too surely that Lucas *couldn't* have done the murder. Perversely, I would like to envisage a Lucas at least capable of murder, one whose embroilment within the racism of the South was reciprocal, unpredictable, threatening. Faulkner will not imagine this possibility in *Intruder in the Dust*. To glimpse what such a Lucas might have been, we must go elsewhere, go backward in Faulkner's career, and conceive a shadowy tripartite figure composed of Joe Christmas, Rider, and Samuel Worsham Beauchamp.' (79)

I cannot help feeling that this indictment also works backwards, throwing at least some of its negative impact on *Moses*, reminding us at the same time of the great creative potential of Faulkner's portrait of Joe Christmas.

Before passing on to 'Delta Autumn' and its problems, one should point out that in respect of style and ideology not even the famous canonical 100-page novella 'The Bear' has been left untouched by recent critics. More and more often its first three sections (the hunting story proper) of 'The Bear' are separated from Part IV, where the cryptic, almost hieroglyphic ledger entries are juxtaposed to the long streaming disquisitions of Cass and Ike concerning the topics of lineage, guilt, land and race which are seen by some as rhetorically blown-up and 'garrulous'. In accordance with my view of *Go Down, Moses* as the final divide closing the major phase, it should be pointed out that it is here for the first time in this novel that we can feel the full impact of a new narrative principle at work—strongly marked by ideologized arguments and statements, and spoken in dead earnest.

Thus, passing on to 'Delta Autumn', the reader is already prepared for the tone of Ike's musings, although he/she is also aware of the presence of what in Faulkner's canon might be termed realism, new in the novels, although known from stories such as 'Dry September' or 'Barn Burning' (considerably and masterfully changed for inclusion in *The Hamlet*). The story begins on a low key. Driving to the hunting camp hallowed by Ike's initiation (which seems to have taken place at another time, almost in another country), the group of men including Roth and Ike are regaled with Legate's inferior wit concerning Roth's interest in 'does', followed by cursory conversation mentioning Hitler, unemployment and strikes, thus placing the story in the context of World War II, along with some more of Ike's pronouncements, formulated in the spirit of his commissary dialogues with Cass in 'The Bear'. The story is full of clichés. For example, the

girl who bore Roth's child looks white, but Ike soon realizes with horror that she is a 'nigger', then he realizes she's a McCaslin (although she never disclosed this secret to Roth). The girl is idealized - educated, self-possessed, brave and generous – only to make Ike's rejection seem more absurd and unjust. Ike's sententiousness in this story culminates in his affirmation that at some privileged moments of union, men and women can 'become God' (263). Considering that what happened just before his wife laughed may have been Ike's only experience of such a moment of intimacy, one becomes doubtful of Ike's right to use it as a ground for his metaphorical identification of man and god. The culmination of the monologic idealized (sentimental?) tone is reached in the rejected young woman's dismissal of Ike's desperate 'racist' plea for her to return north and marry a man of her own race: to his plea she replies with very articulate disdain: 'Old man,' she said, 'have you lived so long and forgotten so much that you don't remember anything you ever knew or felt or even heard about love?' (270-1) After the mute Benjy, the 'catatonic' Quentin and Christmas 'who can hardly speak', here is a new articulated and assertive language we rarely found in Faulkner before. The young woman has the potential to become a free Afro-American heroine, but she remains a sketch and her speech is gratingly pompous like much of Faulkner's later oratory. At the end of the encounter, after the young mother and her baby have left, Legate furtively enters the tent looking for a knife to finish off an animal shot by Roth, presumably a deer. In a flash of revelation Ike realizes Roth has committed the ultimate crime – he has shot a doe. The symbolism is too pat, the presentation sentimental and melodramatic. But sentimentality, even melodrama are also a part of the composite image of Faulkner (think only of Caddy running after the racing carriage to catch a glimpse of her baby through the back window!), although this incident is not quite up to his highest mark and strikes a note that cannot be easily amalgamated with the rest.

The question of defining why *Go Down, Moses* represents a turning point in Faulkner's writing, a movement away from modernist juxtaposition and subversion, can be approached with the help of some of Philip Weinstein's arguments put forward in *Faulkner's Subject: A Cosmos No One Owns*. This book is of particular interest to me because in each of its four sections (Gender, Race, Subjectivity and Culture) Weinstein begins as a rule by discussing three of Faulkner's great earlier novels (*The Sound and the Fury*, *Light in August* and *Absalom, Absalom!*), which in his opinion set the highest standards of Faulkner's achievement, and at the end of each chapter juxtaposes them to *Go Down, Moses*. *Go Down, Moses* thus remains at the very centre of the writer's attention, but is at same time subjected to serious reevaluation and receives a considerable amount of criticism.

In a schema which uses *Absalom* as the measuring rod of the highest excellence, Weinstein places *Go Down, Moses* decidedly below *Absalom*, declares the narrative presentation of Joe Christmas and Quentin as undoubtedly superior to the presentation of Ike, seeing both Ike and Lucas as characters already prefiguring the 'congealed' protagonists of Faulkner's later novels (Lucas in *The Intruder in the Dust* regressing to a

flat cliché of himself and Ike as the locus of moral consciousness replaced by the decent but decidedly less interesting figures of Gavin Stevens and Chick Mallison).

Never fully successful in his presentation of women and blacks, Weinstein argues, Faulkner was at his best producing white male subjectivity never fully empowered, forever in turmoil, placed in 'a field brimming over with contradictory injunctions'. (82) His thesis concerning Faulkner's treatment of subjectivity is of special interest to me because it rests on the opposition of the early conflictual and fractured subjectivity of Joe Christmas in Faulkner's 'most disturbing' novel, *Light in August*, with that of Ike McCaslin in 'Delta Autumn' as a product of Faulkner's 'calmer, autumnal phase (...) with identity-sustaining boundaries now more or less in place'. (83)

According to Weinstein, in the early masterpieces characters are 'fissured'; 'encoded within unworkable scripts – they seek ineffectually to impose unity upon, to preserve identity within, their own lives and the lives around them.' (85) The presentation of character in *Go Down, Moses* (or *Intruder in the Dust*) is inferior because it cannot embody the 'threatening' and disruptive force of the racism of the South. For such force we must go back in Faulkner's career to Joe Christmas<sup>5</sup>. Seeming white, but potentially black, at the end of the novel Weinstein sees Christmas entering a state of 'permanent disruption' (106); in spite of being almost inarticulate, he is 'a hundred times more interesting than anything he manages to say about himself' (107). Indirectly, Weinstein shows his preference for those of Faulkner's protagonists who remain 'poignantly incomplete' (93) and 'decentered' subjects (99). Christmas of course belongs pre-eminently to the pre-'autumnal' group of fissured, tortured, enigmatic, mysterious and passionate protagonists of Faulkner's earlier great masterpieces. Opposed to Joe, 'Ike talks...Protector of blacks, cherisher of wild things, articulator of God's plan for the post-Civil War South, he embodies the most authoritative stay against confusion – of the cultural coming to terms with the natural and the divine – in all of Faulkner's work'. (106)

In 'Faulkner's Myriad' I also expressed a preference for Faulkner's (earlier) works which are 'multitudinous, discrepant, enigmatic, non-discursive and dialogic – wide

---

<sup>5</sup> Eric Sundquist also addresses this dilemma: '...Faulkner's achievement in *Light in August* has greatest significance, for the novel is a further improvisation on the motif of racial tautology that draws into it the mass of theorizing about Jim Crow and black regression available by the 1930s. (...) contaminated by an idea, the concept of the 'white nigger' that pervaded much current race theory, Joe Christmas is simultaneously white and black. His role is to knit together the stories that surround his own in the novel while taking upon his own body the blood sacrifice the community requires. The form of the novel purposely embeds the story of Christmas's life within other lives, revealing it in brief flashes of significance and defining his hypothetical mixture of blood as the mysterious essence of the community's gravest fears and anxieties. (Its) form gives expression to forces that destroy narrative coherence – disruptive ironies, memories, and family histories strained into tortured shapes.' ('Faulkner, Race, and the Forms of American Fiction', 12-13)

open to (re)interpretation, therefore FREE, resisting closure and canonization....' In line with my criticism of *Go Down, Moses* I pointed out that following this line one can see the narrative passages of *Requiem for a Nun* (another 'autumnal' book) as 'the ultimate canonical construction of the Yoknapatawpha saga, reinscribing Faulkner's late, monologic and authoritative vision of American history, human community, and the myth of Christianity into the much more indeterminate and dialogic, much freer literary space of his great earlier works'. (47).

In all fairness one must admit that there are distinguished critics who for thematic, moral and other reasons place *Go Down, Moses* very high. Extremely interesting for me was the Introduction to the *Cambridge New Essays* collection on *Go Down, Moses* written by its editor Linda Wagner-Martin whose frankly evaluative comparison of *Absalom, Absalom!* and *Go Down, Moses* clusters around the same points as mine in this article, but reaches diametrically opposed conclusions. For her as for me *Absalom* and *Go Down Moses* are important turning points in Faulkner's oeuvre. However, for Wagner in *Absalom* Faulkner uses 'narrative forms to interrogate, expand and finally **confound** whatever ostensible 'story' he is telling', and his narrative leads to '**blockage**' because Quentin '**cannot face the truth about either the South or himself**'<sup>6</sup>. (7, my emphasis) For me *Absalom* is the ultimate modernist/postmodernist masterpiece, not in spite of but because of its obsessive (self)interrogations. While Matthews is doubtful whether Ike's renunciation can add anything 'to Quentin Compson's catatonic rehearsal of flawed design and his grief-stricken plunge into oblivion '(21), Wagner has no doubts about the greatness of *Go Down, Moses* and is consistent in her disapproval of *Absalom*:

*Go Down, Moses* is, then, the beginning of Faulkner's **mature statement about responsibility**. It is as if Faulkner himself needed, in writing the book, to be led to the **meaning of his own fictional statement**. (...) I would propose that this 1942 novel is, in some ways, **a new start**. (...) After forty years of privileging irresponsibility in his own life, romanticizing its foibles, glorifying its legends – both in oral storytelling and in writing – **William Faulkner fell through to the truth** (...) *Go Down, Moses* was his **testament to adulthood** (7-8, my emphasis)

I could not disagree more. For me *Go Down, Moses* is problematic not in spite, but because of its often so ponderous statements and affirmations of responsibility and its pedagogical moralizing bent.

<sup>6</sup> 'Six years previous, Quentin's narrative in *Absalom, Absalom!* marked a definite end to Faulkner's use of narrative forms to interrogate, expand **and finally confound** whatever ostensible 'story' he is telling. What really happens in *Absalom, Absalom!* is **blockage**. Quentin cannot face the truth about either the South or himself (...) Mr Compson, blind to the implications of sterility in his recounting of the Sutpen tale and **caught in fantasy** as he shapes that story (...) **gives in to endless repetition** (...) **and to blatant falsification...**' (7, my emphasis)

Luckily in *Go Down, Moses* the old great ways still persist – and not only in 'The Bear', but especially in the delightful 'Was' (placed first in the book) and 'Go Down Moses', the story which closes the novel 'in a minor key' but with some major resonances.

In *Go Down, Moses* the narrative of 'Was' followed immediately by that of 'The Fire and the Hearth' creates the first significant unsuccessful juxtaposition of this novel. Seemingly no more than an extravaganza, 'Was' turns out to be a very rich and revealing story (not just a game such as that of the 'Spotted Horses' in *The Hamlet*). On one level, it is just a delightful comic tale of Uncle Buck's pursuit of his lovelorn slave Tomey's Turl. However, as 'Turl' is a black slave, from some later, more dramatic vantage point of the novel this pursuit can be seen as a reenactment of some 'real' slave-hunt, not to speak of the lurid and unspeakable fact that the hunted man is not only Buck's and Buddy's half-brother (as if this weren't enough), but a fruit of incest (their father's one-quarter-black son by his own half-black daughter). Seen in this perspective 'Was', which on the surface may be a nostalgic story out of an apparently innocent past, exposes its nostalgia as sham, masking Cass's, Ike's (Faulkner's?) repressed memories of guilt, to be juxtaposed with the (real or sham?) dream of the lost Eden represented in 'The Bear'. The apparent invitation to read 'Was' as a comic idyll is probably just one more of Faulkner's subversive moves, enticing the reader to follow the wrong track. There is ironical discrepancy also in the fact that this story about an old maid finally catching an old bachelor (who has a fox living in a crate under his bed postmodernly and metafictionally referred to as **old Moses!**) is in fact a totally unsuitable comic prelude to the conception of the main hero, Ike McCaslin, who throughout the book is consistently presented in a dramatic, even tragic (and at his best moments mythic) light.

'Go Down, Moses', the last story/chapter in the book, does not seem to amount to more than an anecdote, somehow childishly humorous in its absurdity, with far-fetched coincidences (do census-takers visit the inmates on death-row? on the eve of their execution?), a lot of pathos (the black boy gone astray, the child-sized grandmother who wants to bury him right) and a provincial lawyer, Gavin Stevens, presented as 'Phi Beta Kappa, Harvard, Ph. D., Heidelberg, whose office was his hobby (...) and whose serious vocation was a twenty-two-year-old unfinished translation of the Old Testament back into classic Greek' (278) This description of Stevens is so preposterous – the translation back into Greek in particular – that it can only be seen as a fantastic joke, an absurd metaphor of idealism and pedantry. Stevens comes into this book at the last moment, as a belated and absurd *deus ex machina*, who, however, has an important function in Faulkner's later novels and can therefore not be dismissed as and absurd minor character. On the other hand, just apart from seeming quixotic, Stevens also has another, very humane side: he collects the quarters and half-dollars around the square and goes into a lot of trouble to arrange for the funeral of Mollie's grandson. He has been accused of being paternalistic and so he probably is, telling Miss Worsham that Samuel

was 'the bad son of a bad father'. But at a previous point he 'sat perfectly still' in his office, thinking and remembering it was Edmonds that had sent the boy to Jefferson in the first place after he had broken into the commissary store: '*And not the sheriff, the police*, he thought. *Something broader, quicker in scope...* (280) Whatever he is referring to here rumbles threateningly like a deep undertow of the collective unconscious of the racist South.

Thus, on one level this concluding story shares some of the weaknesses of earlier (and later) Faulknerian 'black Sambo' comic episodes (in the manner of *Tom Sawyer* as several critics have remarked). At the same time, however, Faulkner also suggests to us that his own (and Stevens' or anybody else's) white difficulty to 'imagine black' in the context of a racist past is a very human limitation applicable to all things involving the most complex and painful historical and personal issues. 'Go Down, Moses' is a slight story with poor dialogues and questionable humour and a superficial flippant manner. It is indeed, as O' Donnell states, written in a minor key. But a careful reading yields some imponderables and intimations of deeply submerged traumas which have great tragic potential in spite of remaining mostly unrealized (perhaps because looking them straight into the face might turn us into stone). What finally saved the story for me was not just its very moving use of the verses from the Bible (this alone would perhaps be too easy), but, rather, Hamp's wife's 'true constant soprano which ran without words beneath the strophe and antistrophe of the brother and sister' (286), and which made Gavin run for his life from the room of mourning out into the street.

What remains most exciting in this great flawed book (apart from 'The Bear' whose mythic power remains beyond my scope here because it must be treated singly) are thus the seemingly peripheral things, fragments shored against the ruins: a few of the shorter stories, a handful of great passages and some situations and images suggesting more than meets the eye. Deconstruction has taught us to prize the omissions and blind spots of a literary text, and to look for the places where the smooth (totalitarian?) surface can be penetrated and (creatively) subverted. A number of scenes, sounds and images appear dislocated and unrecoverable in terms of meaning, but are teasingly memorable. What, for example, are we to make of Ike's wife's wild laughter in the bewildering bedroom scene, or of Boon rambling, sitting with his dismembered rifle under the tree full of squirrels, or of situations which seem trivial yet are conducive to multiple or contradictory readings of character: Ike pathetically helpless in bed in one of the climactic moments of the novel, old Molly seen by Roth as a doll or ornament, the utterly hermetic yet haunting high soprano voice soaring above a black wake? The name of the fox in 'Was' is a semiotic sign which in its playfulness alerts us to postmodern notions of the metatextual and ludic; the other situations are designed to prevent us from 'falling through to the truth', inviting us instead to go on weaving our reader's webs of conjecture and create feelings of imponderables richer than any statement of meaning or truth, and ask questions that cannot be answered directly: Why is Molly seen by Roth

as a doll, an ornament? Has Boon gone mad? What makes Gavin run? and especially and quite perversely Why can't Ike get out of bed?

We are not told in so many words why Stevens ran blindly from the small party of black mourners, but the omission suggests unspeakable barriers of culture, class and race, pity and horror before the suffering of others etc etc, teasing us out of thought, but also out of the need to condemn and judge; nor do we know why Ike's wife is laughing, although the laughter tells us something about a nameless, mostly absent female figure, and about what Ike's relinquishment may have done to her life, or what her rejection of his 'ascetic renunciation' of his patrimony may have done to his. In the sleepless night hours described in 'Delta Autumn' Ike recapitulates his life, aware that his renunciation had lost him his son and his wife although he believed she had loved him. (Had she?) 'But women hope so much.' he muses 'They never live too long to still believe that anything within the scope of their passionate wanting is likewise within the range of their passionate hope.' (266) Here Ike's meditation and sober retrospection is an example of Faulkner's late manner at its best. It is not overblown, sentimental, certainly not garrulous. Many similar passages will enrich Faulkner's late writing and make it well worth reading. The description of Ike's night vigil in 'Delta Autumn' unfolds before the reader clothed in a new kind of discursive clarity. It is transparent, offering easier access to the critic (but also perhaps deceptively inviting him to blunder to a clear-cut conclusion, explaining Ike's relinquishment as either saintly sacrifice or contemptible cowardly withdrawal), its surface deceptively smooth and compact, hard to crack. While Ike ruminates, Faulkner also gives close attention to some trivial little physical details. Thus when Roth's young woman comes into the tent she finds Ike in bed. She looks down on him 'where he sat upright on the cot now (...) the soiled undergarment bagging about him and the twisted blankets huddled about his hips'. (270) At some point he wants to get out of bed: '*Turn your back,*' he said. '*I am going to get up. I ain't got my pants on.*' **Then he could not get up.** He sat in the huddled blanket, shaking, while again she turned and looked down at him... '(274, my emphasis). He is shown 'sitting there in his huddle of blankets' while she makes her pronouncement about love. Then she leaves and he is 'Lying back once more, trembling, panting, the blanket huddled to his chin (...) And cold, too: he lay shaking faintly and steadily in it, rigid save for the shaking. This Delta, he thought: This Delta.' (275)

This ending is of course just another version of Quentin's shaking with historical fever at the end of *Absalom, Absalom!* As in that scene, the description subverts any heroic or nostalgic interpretation of Faulkner's vision of the South. So does Ike's 'soiled underwear' (soiled how?), and his failure to get up and put his pants on. Images such as these are unconnected by discursive logic; they construct this (ideological) situation in a more enigmatic tone than any of Ike's meditations, and perhaps by their very triviality discouraging us to search for 'symbolic meanings' or conclusions. They seem to me to belong to the earlier great manner and together with the virtues and flaws of the new manner they are signs of the doubleness of *Go Down, Moses*, standing both inside and



outside the great phase, at the threshold of the late period, on its way beyond subversion, into calmer waters.<sup>7</sup>

Critics have suggested that the 'flaws' of *Moses* may derive from Faulkner's deeply ingrained ambiguous feelings about race. He embodied these harrowing and unspeakable feelings splendidly in *Absalom, Absalom!* and *Light in August* in his early figural modernist manner. By the time he wrote *Go Down, Moses* he had progressed in racial awareness and tolerance as a citizen, but the subject was still too forbidding, bearing immeasurable implications buried in Faulkner's deepest personal and cultural unconscious. *Moses* was his gallant attempt to take a stand about the race question, but in it, and especially in *Intruder in the Dust*, his ideological and emotional disarray was too often reflected in evasive therefore unsatisfactory narrative moves. This may indeed be the reason why at least some parts of two race stories – 'The Fire and the Hearth' and 'Delta Autumn' – seem to me unsuccessful. In addition, biographers have indicated that some weaknesses of the novel were perhaps also due to the fact that this was a time of personal crisis for Faulkner who was pressed very hard for time and money and may therefore have written the McCaslin materials too quickly and or revised them too superficially. Faulkner probably also found it difficult to fully and creatively grasp and absorb the implications of new developments in the South, during World War II and especially in the postwar period. In *Go Down, Moses* Faulkner is for example unable to let Ike accept a mixed marriage on the level of the plot, or imagine it positively himself (as the author) either in theory or practice. And, while striving to show Lucas as a self-confident, independent free black person, he lets Lucas achieve his Selfhood as a free man through his identification with his white ancestor rather than his identification with the black race. *Go Down, Moses* demonstrates Faulkner's full consciousness of the profoundly tragic disabling and disrupting effects of racism, but also his inability to imagine in his novels the full integration of blacks into white society – not even in his protagonists' projections of some possible immediate future. This stance seems to be shared by Gavin Stevens (and Chick Mallison), as the white protagonists/focalizers of several later Yoknapatawpha novels. Along with Ike McCaslin they represent moderate white liberal southern 'gradualism'. As moral people they are exceedingly humane, helping blacks and whites alike out of goodwill, love of justice (and need to atone); and yet, as middle-class southern whites they cannot take the final step towards empowering the idea of full emancipation. This remains one of the principal dilemmas in evaluating the treatment of race in the late novels. In *Light in August* and *Absalom, Absalom!* Faulkner's protagonists lived the agonies of racism but did not have to reason them out or imagine solutions. In the arguments, disquisitions and realist strategies of Faulkner's

---

<sup>7</sup> O'Donnell writes of *Go Down, Moses*: 'This fictional assemblage is, arguably, Faulkner's most transitional work, as it oscillates between tragic nostalgia for a lost past of certain, integral origins and the parodic embracing of an indeterminate future in which identity is aggregate, mixed.' (Weinstein 1995, 32)

late novels ideological and political positions must be spelled out and are therefore more easily caught in the crossfire of contemporary militant criticism.

Nearing conclusion, I am aware that in spite of having indicated what I believe to be the principal elements of Faulkner's later narrative, my findings are not complete. A fuller presentation would require a detailed study of other novels of the late period, which although written in an unmistakably different narrative key, are not uniform. An approach to *Intruder in the Dust* for example would have to accommodate critical standards required by the genre of detection and adventure story. *The Requiem for a Nun* must also be treated as potential drama, while *The Town* and *The Mansion* would require a closer look at the claim of Faulkner's later 'realism'.

*Go Down, Moses* can indeed be seen as a new start. But a new start always follows the end of something that preceded it, and thinking of Faulkner's writing in 1942 my feeling of nostalgia for what had ended clouds my happiness for whatever was beginning. The works of Faulkner's long late phase have many elements of greatness, but are on the whole less exciting and revealing. In them Faulkner descends from the highest spheres of genius into a strata inhabited by great, even very great but only human writers. And *Go Down, Moses* stands wavering, in a somewhat precarious balance between the two spheres, partaking of both: an uneven work but 'indisputably still the work of a master'.

### Works cited:

- Bašić, Sonja. (1984) 'Telling the Stream and Streaming the Tale. Narrative Juxtapositions and Fusions in Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!*', *Studia Romanica et Anglica Zagrabiensia*, XXIX-XXX, Zagreb.
- (1993) 'Parody and Metafiction: Ulysses and The Hamlet', in *Faulkner, His Contemporaries and His Posterity*, ed. Waldemar Zacharasiewicz, Francke Verlag, Tübingen and Basel, p. 41-55.
- (1997) 'Faulkner and Joyce: A Joint Narrative/Stylistic Protocol', *Studia Romanica et Anglica Zagrabiensia*, XLII, Zagreb.
- (1997) 'Stories vs. Novels: The Narrative Strategies', *William Faulkner's Short Fiction*, ed. Hans Skei, Solum Forlag, Oslo, p. 63-73.
- (2000) 'Faulkner's Myriad', *Études faulknériennes, Naissances de Faulkner*, II/2000, p. 43-48.
- Matthews, John T., (1982) *The Play of Faulkner's Language*, Cornell UP, Ithaca.
- (1996) 'Touching Race in *Go Down, Moses*', *New Essays on Go Down, Moses*, Wagner-Martin, Linda (ed.), Cambridge UP, Cambridge.
- O'Donnell, Patrick (1995) 'Faulkner and Postmodernism', *Cambridge Companion to William Faulkner*, Weinstein, Philip (ed), Cambridge UP, New York.
- Sundquist, Eric J. (1987) 'Faulkner, Race and the Forms of American Fiction', in *Faulkner and Race*. Fowler, Doreen and Abadie, Ann (eds), UP of Mississippi, Jackson.
- Wagner-Martin, Linda (1996) *New Essays on Go Down, Moses*, Cambridge UP, Cambridge.

Weinstein, Philip M. (1992) *Faulkner's Subject. A Cosmos No One Owns*. Cambridge UP, Cambridge.  
– (1995) ed. *The Cambridge Companion to William Faulkner*, Cambridge UP, New York.

### *SIDI, MOJSIJE: S ONU STRANU NARATIVNE SUBVERZIJE*

U nastojanju da redefinira mjesto Faulknerova romana *Sidi, Mojsije* unutar njegova cjelokupnog opusa, autorica pokušava pregrupirati romane njegova velikog razdoblja (1929-1942) u kojem vidi roman *Abšalome, sine moj!* kao veliku razdjelnicu između prve faze koja je pretežno 'figuralna' i druge koja je pretežno 'parodička'. U drugoj parodičkoj grupi izdvaja romane *Divlje palme, Zaselak* i *Sidi, Mojsije* zbog njihove žanrovske hibridnosti. Istovremeno definira neke razloge relativnog neuspjeha romana *Sidi, Mojsije* polemizirajući s nekim vodećim suvremenim američkim kritičarima i predlaže da taj roman valja držati završetkom njegove velike faze i prvim djelom njegova dugog kasnog razdoblja.