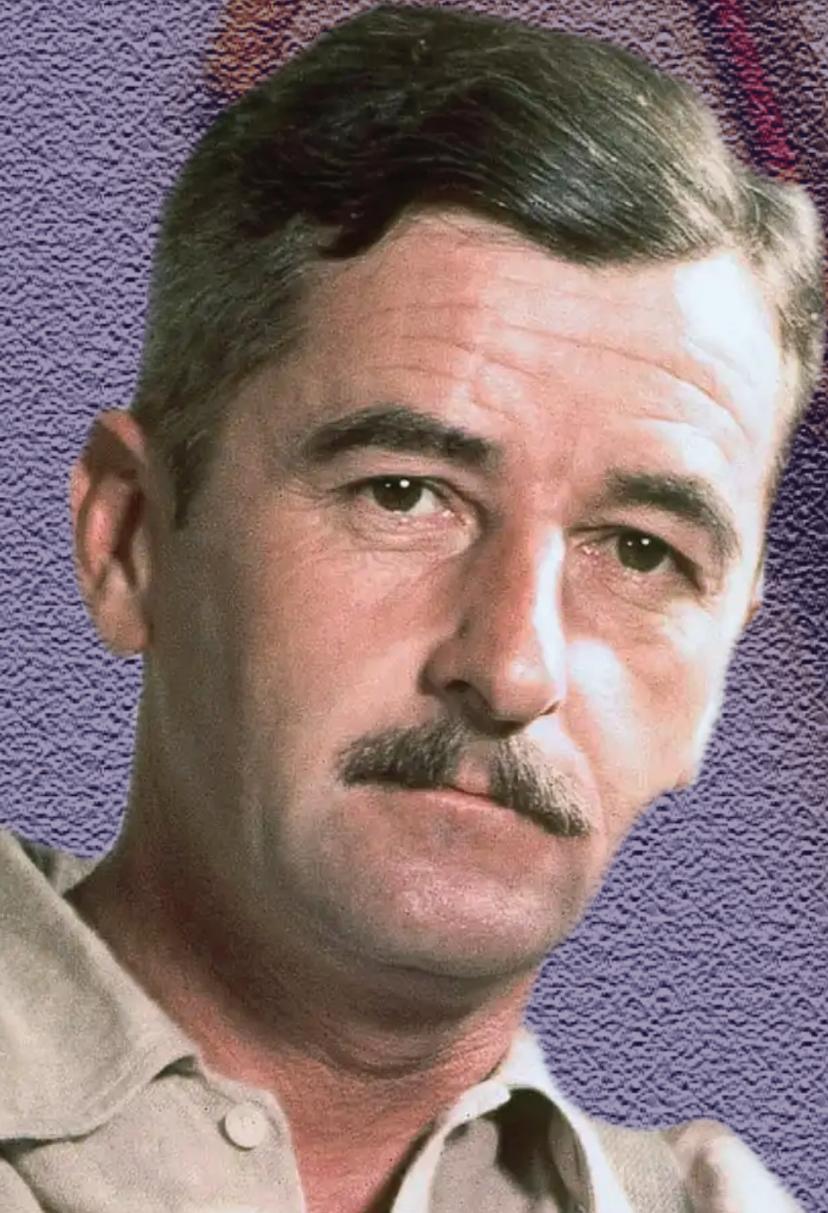


# FROM FAULKNER'S YOKNAPATAWPHA TO WELTY'S MORGANA

Prof. Dr. Bülent Cercis TANRITANIR  
Mehmet ŞENTÜRK



**FROM FAULKNER'S *YOKNAPATAWPHA* TO  
WELTY'S *MORGANA***

**Prof. Dr. Bülent Cercis TANRITANIR  
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**2022**



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TURKEY TR: +90 342 606 06 75

USA: +1 631 685 0 853

E mail: iksadyayinevi@gmail.com

www.iksadyayinevi.com

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## **ABOUT THE AUTHORS**

### **Prof. Dr. Bülent Cercis TANRITANIR**

Bülent Cercis Tanritanır is an author who wrote works in Memoir - Narrative - Diary - Travelogue, Research & Reference Books, and Literature. Major books in alphabetical order; *The Other Side of the Moon* can be counted as the Tradition of Speech by Letter. Bulent Cercis Tanritanır books; Babil Publications met with book lovers through Cartoon Bookstore Publications. The last book, "Letter Lecture Tradition," written by Bülent Cercis Tanritanır was presented to the readers by Babil Publications.

### **Lec. Mehmet ŞENTÜRK**

Mehmet Şentürk was born in Afyonkarahisar in 1984 and completed his primary, secondary, high school and university education in Denizli. He graduated from Denizli Anatolian High School, Language Department in high school, and then moved on to Pamukkale University - English Language and Literature department. He first worked as an English Language Teacher in a private institution; after a few years, he took a break from this profession for military service, and after returning from military service, he started to work as a Sworn Translator to work in English-Turkish translations and established Şentürk Translation office last year. Currently, He works as a Lecturer of English at Hakkari University.

## PREFACE

Yoknapatawpha and Morgana are two well-known fictional settings created by William Faulkner and Eudora Welty respectively. These fictional settings allowed these unique authors to gain their eternal place as the literary founding fathers of Southern United States Literature. Yoknapatawpha by Faulkner and Morgana by Welty have been the center of critical attention due to their importance in successfully reflecting the Southern social, racial and human landscape successfully and authentically. Therefore, this book contains detailed information on the history of Southern American Literature and both authors concerning two novels from each author. The novels to be examined in the book include Faulkner's *Sartoris* (1929) and *The Reivers* (1962), and Welty's *A Worn Path* (1941) and *The Golden Apples* (1949). In addition, two novels or short stories from each author were selected for comparison, including one from their initial studies and one from their maturity period, with the aim of better understanding the change, improvement and maturity in Faulkner and Welty's literary careers.

This book was reproduced from the master's thesis titled "From William Faulkner's Male *Yoknapatawpha* County to Eudora Welty's Female *Morgana* Experience: Southern Reality in Faulkner's *Sartoris* and *The Reivers*, And Welty's *A Worn Path* and *The Golden Apples*" prepared by Mehmet ŞENTÜRK under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Bülent Cercis TANRITANIR in Van Yüzüncü Yıl University, Department of English Language and Literature in June 17, 2022.

## INTRODUCTION

Southern American literature, explicitly referring to the Southern United States Literature, has been a powerful reflection of historical, social and economic changes experienced in the Southern United States (herein referred to as *the South*) for the past four centuries. In addition, various powerful literary figures paved the way for a better depiction of social life in the Southern parts of the United States through their literary works.

In this study, Southern literature will be introduced briefly concerning historical changes in the Southern United States. Two prominent figures from Southern literature, William Faulkner and Eudora Welty, will be reviewed in terms of their social and historical literary perspectives as well as their gender approach in their literary oeuvres. The aim is to examine and compare two Southern American authors in terms of their policies to racism and Southern social problems in their character depiction and fictional settings in light of two novels from each author.

The book's title and thesis is "From William Faulkner's Male *Yoknapatawpha* County to Eudora Welty's Female *Morgana* Experience". The central thesis idea is that, as argued by researchers and critics, Faulkner defined the Southern literature in a way to choose what to mention, what to criticize and what to depict. In contrast, Eudora Welty, a well-known Southern female author, wrote the female perspective of the South in a distinct literary quality. Therefore, two authors' novels were selected and shall be examined to prove such a thesis. However, rather than focusing directly on comparing two authors, each author will also be discussed in terms of their personal and literary development. Accordingly, one novel or short story from the authors' earlier careers was selected. A secondary selection was made considering their final works as a reflection of the change or development in their approach to Southern reality. The only limitation in this selection is that each author created their fictional settings in their works, including *Yoknapatawpha* by Faulkner and *Morgana* by Welty. Therefore, literary works to be selected for analysis were chosen among the ones taking place in the two fictional reflections of the Southern United States.

The novels to be examined in the book include Faulkner's *Sartoris* (1929) and *The Reivers* (1962), and Welty's *A Worn Path* (1941) and *The Golden Apples* (1949). Two novels or short stories from each author were selected for comparison. In addition, since both authors experienced some changes in their literary quality, two early novels from Faulkner and Welty and two late novels from their maturation periods were selected to compare and review both well-known authors in terms of their approaches to changing the Southern settings in their unique and creative way.

Since there is a gender difference first, this study focuses on authors' female and male perspectives on the Southern experience in their literary oeuvres. While Faulkner's novels selected in this book represent Faulkner's fictional *Yoknapatawpha County* as a part of the author's Mississippi projection, Welty's short stories and novels depict fictional *Morgana County* as a part of the female reflection of Southern social life. Primarily in terms of William Faulkner, a change is observed in his approach to racism in the South. Similarly, researchers have critically examined Faulkner's writing style and sociological approach in favor of his positive change. In this study, it will also be revealed that certain aspects of change in Faulkner's style and approach to American history ranging from the Post-Civil War period to the First World War in light of social change in American life.

On the other hand, Eudora Welty reflected a robust and realistic female voice in the Southern Renaissance group of authors. While Faulkner fictionalized a male-dominated *Yoknapatawpha Country* based on colonial cultural heritage, Welty created *Morgana County* in her novels and short stories in which female experiences were depicted realistically and differently from what Faulkner formulated in his literary works. Besides, this study aims to reveal the change in academic quarters and stories from both authors in a way to criticize authors' personal experiences during their writing careers.

## CHAPTER I

### HISTORY AND LITERATURE OF THE SOUTHERN UNITED STATES

Southern United States Literature has been very popular during the 20th century thanks to the rapidly changing social landscape of the country. William Faulkner and Eudora Welty have been among the leading actors of Southern literature for the last century. In addition, authors such as Thomas Wolfe, Caroline Gordon and Margaret Mitchell were among the well-known Southern Renaissance writers (Thorp, 1959, p. 254). These authors shaped the modern American novel in a realistic and modernistic way, reflecting social and racial problems experienced during the long-lasting Southern United States development, the post-civil war period, and the pre- and post-World War I stage.

William Faulkner is undoubtedly the most prominent figure of this period, winning the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1949. Not only did the author become the authority figure of Southern literature, but he also brought along new techniques to Southern narrative in a literary way to modernism, such as “stream of consciousness and complex narrative techniques” in his literary works (Folks, 1979, p. 185). For instance, Faulkner wrote his masterpiece, *As I Lay Dying*, by using two types of narratives from Addie’s perspective and that of her young son later in his novel. While Faulkner discussed themes of slavery, the Southern Resistance, and former slaves living in a new system, the author developed a sense of change in future generations of former slaves and former carpetbaggers. However, researchers have examined Faulkner’s writing style and sociological approach critically and in favor of his positive change as will be discussed in the following chapters. On the other hand, Eudora Welty was among the Southern writers who carried the legacy of Southern literature during the period called Post World War II Southern literature. Although Faulkner affected and encouraged Eudora Welty after reading her novels and writing her a letter of praise, Eudora was unique in her writing style and in terms of her female experience of the South.

To better evaluate both authors from racial, social and gender perspectives separately, it is also necessary to provide a glimpse of Southern United States History. That is because the Southern United States experienced a great deal of shocking historical developments, radical changes in racial practices and pre- vs. post-war clashes, and opportunities for authors of the last four centuries to create a unique richness in terms of literary productivity in the South. Accordingly, this chapter will briefly include historical and literary backgrounds of the South to ensure that a holistic approach will be employed while reviewing and comparing the two well-known authors of the South.

Historical developments shall cover specific topics to be described and analyzed within the context of Faulkner and Welty's literary careers. In terms of literary background, the literary journey of the South from a racial and social contradiction towards a modernist approach to the social life of the Southern shall be discussed in detail in the following chapters.

## **Historical Background of the South**

*"The North lives for getting and having, the South for being."*  
-American Saying (Pace, 2015)

The Southern United States covers the area mainly around the Mississippi River Valley. This region had been home for Native Americans since the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> century (Benson & Berry, 2007, p. 337). However, after the European explorations began, the region underwent dramatic transformation in terms of demography, culture and lifestyle in the 15th century.

As in the whole continent, the Southern United States followed a similar path to democracy and modernity through specific and painful historical struggles. Dating back to hundreds of years, the South experienced similar turmoil of exploration, colonization, and wars for freedom and social justice. But, rather specifically, the South has undergone some sharp and fundamental changes in its relatively short span of history, nearly for the last six centuries.

The significant milestone events in the South—similar to those in the whole United States—can be summarized as (1) the colonization by Europeans, (2) the establishment of the slave trade for agriculture, (3) the American Revolution, (4) the American Civil War, (5) the abolishment of slavery in the U.S., and (6) the American

Civil Rights Movement. Finally, the World Wars can also be considered within this list in terms of their real effect on the Southern experience in literature, but rather in a modern sense than formerly listed early historical developments. To better evaluate the literary domain of the South, it will be helpful to mention these substantial changes occurring in a relatively short period since these historical developments can also be considered as building blocks of the Southern experience, and consequently, Southern Literature as an outcome of the birth of the Southern nation.

Historically, the total collapse of Native American population in the Southern United States began with European contact. Before the exploratory conquest, Mississippi Valley used to harbor Native Americans working on agriculture in the form of small communities. Through the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Christopher Columbus achieved a successful trip across the Atlantic Ocean to commence a new era for explorers, exploiters, and many ecclesiastics. As indicated by Liu and Alley, "the expedition undertaken by Christopher Columbus in 1492 quickly spread to the Appalachian Mountains, the Mississippi River, the Grand Canyon, and the Great Plains" (Liu & Alley, 2019, p. 35). Following this overseas achievement, the Spanish conducted their initial exploratory journeys to this New World to be explored and exploited further. The main motive for these increasing number of expeditions was to find gold and exploit natural resources in this new continent (Gómez-Barris, Macarena). In addition to rich gold sources, there were also mythical motives for new explorers such as the rumor of the Fountain of Youth which was believed to give anyone immortality (Herodotus, 1996). Religious reasons were also significant since Europeans tended to spread Christianity among the Natives to ensure that Christianity was widespread in the New World and that these newly developing colonies could be controlled.

Not long after the initial European steps on American soil, Christopher Columbus conducted the secondary voyage again. This time, another Spanish explorer, Juan Ponce de León, arrived in Florida in 1513 who is considered the first European stepping foot on the Southern United States region (L. Kessel, 2003, p. 5). That would mean the beginning of colonization in the South slowly but persistently. Later in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, more profound and further expeditions were held to find more gold and a direct passage throughout the continent to the Far East. Hernando de Soto was among these pioneers who reached the Mississippi river first, also

died there (Morison, 1975, p. 228). After the first small initiatives to expand deeper into the South, Soto and his men achieved a vast exploration towards “the modern states of Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas” (Morison, 1975). These explorations were also significant in terms of establishing new colonies and creating a competitive environment for pioneers of the South. In addition, Mississippi river banks allowed easier connection to overseas trade routes making these river-bank colonies more powerful than inland ones.

Following successful but painful colonization attempts by the Spanish, colonization attempts by the French and the English also followed this path towards the inland throughout the Mississippi River Valley. Later, the French arrived from “the north after having created agricultural societies in Canada and commenced a fur trading network with Indians in the Great Lakes area” (Rosentreter, 2013, p. 9). The French then began to expand into the Mississippi River Valley with their ultimate goal of governing the vast South. On the other hand, the English also launched their explorations for new opportunities in the South. For instance, an expedition organized by Walter Raleigh established “the first English settlement in the New World, on Roanoke Island, North Carolina in 1585” (Lawler, 2018, p. 45). However, they could not prosper in establishing a robust base in this land until the mighty Spanish Armada was defeated by the English at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century changing the power balance in the New World.

Such prolific expeditions by different European nations brought along various outcomes: the decline of Native American culture, the establishment of power and politics among colonies, incoming conflicts, wars, and struggles, the establishment of the slave trade in the country, which altogether would give rise to the birth of the United States, consequently the Southern Literature. However, earlier colonization could not achieve a systematical establishment to allow literary works to be created due to the harshness of life in the New World, as will be examined in the next section. Only personal journals, notes, and stories used to be published but not for literary purposes in the absence of readers. Tragically, since these earlier attempts to prosper on gold and expedition did not yield ideal results, “Starving Period” began for newly established colonies in the

South urging the New World to look for new ways to survive under these harsh conditions (Zimmerman, 2021, p. 21).

In time, these settlements became populated and more extensive. Furthermore, the need to control and regulate these colonies emerged. Thus, many rulers and many political charters began to be written. Several colonies were established or just abolished as sinking ships. In terms of economic development in the South, the first shock of colonization urged all colonies and settlements to turn their interest to realistic cultivation works rather than following dreams of the Fountain of Youth or unrealistic gold exploitation. Accordingly, agricultural tobacco production gave rise to an extensive need for workforce. During the 15<sup>th</sup> century, long before any industrial revolutions or humanitarian developments, the only source or solution for workforce of such an extended amount was 'slavery'.

Considering the long-term historical background of slavery, Sidney M. Greenfield, in his article, "*Plantations, Sugar Cane and Slavery*", provided a detailed historical roadmap of slavery and sugar cultivation concurrently throughout Europe and towards the New World. According to Greenfield, sugar was first introduced to Europe thanks to European expeditions to India. Then, the Middle East and Cyprus began to be used as a base for sugar plantations through slave power. During classical periods, slaves were obtained as prisoners of war mainly. However, following Ottoman pressure on Europe and the Middle East, this practice turned its face towards the African continent. The Spanish had always been the influential practitioners of slavery for sugar cultivation. Following the huge expansion of slavery and plantation throughout Africa. In an attempt to find India by sailing around Africa, the Spanish accidentally found Brazil, the new continent. Greenfield concluded that within three centuries afterward, South America was destroyed in terms of culture and population. This exploitation was parallel to that of Southern United as well. (Greenfield, 1979, pp. 85-119)

Unlike the past development of slavery around the world, slavery of the Southern United States was rather unique. It was also the primary fuel of money-making in the South before the Civil War through the production of crops such as sugar, rice, corn and cotton. Firstly, tobacco production needed slave workforce. Being one of the largest colonies in the South, the Virginia Colony had the leading

demand for slaves. As emphasized by Susan Westbury in her article, “*Slaves of Colonial Virginia*”, slaves came to colonial Virginia by three routes: “directly from Africa, from Africa with a protracted stay in the West Indies, and from other mainland British colonies” (Westbury, 1985, p. 228). During this slave trade period, many slaves were brought to the region as indentured workers from overpopulated European areas. Since they cost low prices for farmers and plant owners, it was considered cheaper to use servants. However, there was a specific difference between the newly established Southern slave trade and the cruel slavery practice in the Southern American regions called the Caribbean.

Having led to social changes and the abolishment of slave within the next four centuries, even at its height, slavery in the United States was different from the understanding of slavery in the Caribbean. C. Vann Woodward elaborated this difference in his book on the concept of slavery in the South and the North as follows:

*(...) Slavery in the early colonial period differed greatly in the American colonies from that in the Caribbean. Often Caribbean slaves were worked literally to death on large sugar and rice plantations, while the American slave population had a higher life expectancy and was maintained through natural reproduction. This natural reproduction was important for the continuation of slavery after the prohibition on slave importation after about 1780. (Woodward, 1983, p. 85)*

As expressed by Woodward, slavery in the Southern United States had already transformed into a semi-industrialized and organized system. It was an old capitalist system without any humanitarian perspectives. Planters and farmers used their slave workforce sustainably with the plan of maintaining a certain supply of slaves under protection. Later, this approach led to many social advances finalizing with the abolishment of slavery in the 19th century. This period and experiences during slavery have been one of the most productive subjects for literary works to be published in the coming centuries in the United States. As expected, such a sustainable usage of slaves in plants and throughout colonies resulted in more profit and more production, as well as finding new crops to cultivate.

Agriculturally, cotton became one of the main locomotives in growing plantations and farms, ranging from small groups of people to large productive establishments. Therefore, tobacco and cotton became the primary cash income for these plantations and colonies. These goods were extensively sold overseas to English customers.

Rice and indigo were other products to be grown and exported to Europe. Plantation owners became modern factory owners or business people thanks to their high income and trade volume. As businessmen, these plant owners relied on slavery to work their land and protected this slavery system with their rules and slave trade.

In terms of reflection on cotton-picking slavery in literature, one of the most contemporary examples of slavery in the literary domain is *Twenty Years a Slave* by Solomon Northup (Northup, 2014). In his book, Northup narrates a scene of picking cotton on a plantation along the Red River in Louisiana:

*An ordinary day's work is two hundred pounds. (...) The hands are required to be in the cotton field as soon as if is light in the morning, and, with the exception of ten or fifteen minutes, which is given them at noon to swallow their allowance of cold bacon, they are not permitted to be a moment idle until it is too dark to see. (...) The day's work over in the field, the baskets are "toted," or in other words, carried to the gin house, where the cotton is weighed. (...) If it falls short of weight (...) he knows that he must [be whipped]. And if he has exceeded it by ten or twenty pounds, in all probability his master will measure the next day's task accordingly. (Northup, 2014, p. 104)*

Despite these harsh conditions as described in detail by Northup, slavery was well-established because plant owners had been aware that they would need more and more slaves to employ in their vast agricultural factories. Therefore, even reproduction among slaves was allowed under certain circumstances. On the other hand, as will be discussed in relation to the American Revolution, slaves did not remain as the sole source of agriculture; they would be employed in clashes and civil wars as a source of fighters or militia for both rebellion forces and loyalist forces.

The following chapters will discuss detailed reflections of slavery in the South on William Faulkner and Eudora Welty's literary oeuvre. Although slavery constituted a significant portion of Faulkner and Welty's initial approach to racial and social issues to the Southern reality, it will be substantial to proceed with historical developments in the South such as American Revolution, American Civil War, and the Abolishment of Slavery in the following centuries following the early colonization period since these developments paved the way to observe various reflections of these fundamental and radical changes on Faulkner and Welty's literary careers.

Besides, both authors were born in a period corresponding to the final steps of abolishment of slavery and complete reconstruction of the United States as a nation.

Returning to the Southern history, the increasing volume of trade between Europe and the South led to competition among powerful colonies and states. Finally, the American Revolutionary War broke out later as tension rose. Among the leading actors in these developments throughout the early establishment of the Southern American Society were “Fitz-Gerald, Georgia, settled from Indiana; Dudley, Georgia, from Indiana and Ohio; Fairhope, Alabama, from Iowa; Cullman and adjoining colonies in Alabama, by Germans; Independence, Louisiana, by Italian” (Fleming, 1905, p. 285).

Not until one and a half centuries later than colonization did the newly emerged power struggle lead to the American Revolution (1775-1783) and then the American Civil War (1861-1865), both of which broadly contributed to the establishment of the United States as a nation. As emphasized by Brian Holden Reid, the American nation was “born in the disunity of the revolutionary struggles and nurtured in the fratricidal strife of the Civil War” (Reid, 1996, p. 2). That was also the case for the South. The Southern United States shaped its social unity thanks to such radical developments.

As referred in the American saying added under the title of this chapter, “The North lives for getting and having, the South for being” (Pace, 2015, p. 73); while the North during colonization always aimed to get and have new soils, new colonies, new tariffs as loyalists to Great Britain, the South always worked towards their existence or survival in the form of a plantation, colony or nation with a puritan tradition. While the North was very close to the ocean, trade routes and under great assistance from both English and French kingdoms, the South struggled individually in relatively remote regions of the inner South, only through and near the Mississippi basin. Despite these disadvantages, the South established a resistant political stance in the form of colonies and fortifications. Although, there had been powerful colonies led by Virginia in the South, as mentioned earlier, mainly coastal settlements began to achieve higher income via overseas trade with the English. With such cash overflow, the need for more power emerged. As expected, the British loyalist demanded more tariffs and taxes from the Southern colonies as an easy income source, which increased patriotism in the South. Accordingly, within three centuries, earlier and small clashes against Native Americans

were transformed into clashes between colonies in the form of power struggles and patriotism, as well as against Great Britain.

In the South during the last quarters of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Northern and Southern colonies struggled to establish a new government and a set of rules to control the New World. However, as having occurred before, a new conflict emerged every time due to one or two objections to any power centralizations in the new confederation of colonies. The first significant event among these struggles was the American Revolutionary War (1775-1778), mainly in the North between Continental Army and the British Army. Firstly, the fights were between the New England and Middle colonies. The turn of events came with the British Army losing in the Saratoga campaign. As a result, operations in the Northern United States halted. All the remaining powers turned their face towards the Southern colonies. These fights mainly occurred around "Virginia, Georgia and South Carolina, and their tactics consisted of both strategic battles and guerrilla warfare" (Hibbert, 1990, p. 235).

Even the slaves were required as warriors or militia during these power struggles. Accordingly, the first attempts to use slaves as militia emerged. For instance, John Murray, was a significant figure since Murray became royal governor of the Colony of Virginia in 1771, beginning to be known as Lord Dunnermore. The lord legally suggested that "any slaves who gave up their Patriot cause and left their masters to join the British shall be provided freedom" (Lanning, 2000, p. 56). After Murray's attempt, as reported by Lanning, at least "800 to 2000 escaped slaves sought refuge with the British while some served in the army, though the majority served in noncombatant roles" (Lanning, 2000, p. 57). With the appetite for power and control over colonies in the United States, slaves began to be considered soldiers and rebels; therefore, these early attempts led to the final abolishment of slavery in the following centuries. However, these initial steps towards the United States nation in a modern sense still needed various developments and painful events to take its final shape.

The short upheaval of the American Revolution did not last long. It was terminated after the Siege of Yorktown in 1781. Following these power struggles, the South began to establish its political power towards the establishment of modern United States. The Confederation started to put its articles into force to ensure

political stability in the country. These developments finally led to the creation of “the United States Constitution” in Philadelphia in 1787. The United States Printing Office summarizes and defines the history of this Constitution officially in its document as follows:

*The Delegates (...) agreed to construct a new framework for a national government. Throughout the summer months at the Convention in Philadelphia, delegates from 12 States debated the proper form such a government should take (...) The 39 delegates who signed the Constitution on September 17, 1787, expected the new charter to provide a permanent guarantee of the political liberties achieved in the Revolution. (U.S. Government Printing Office, 2007, p. 5)*

Powerful Southern colonies urgently demanded that their political achievements and politically patriotic stance be permanent soon. That can be considered the first steps of the infant Southern Politics towards becoming a modern nation but requiring more stumbling in its journey.

Grant, S. M. emphasized in his article, “*The Civil War and American Nationalism*,” that American Revolution led to creating of many myths about Southern patriotic history. However, during the period between the American Revolution and the American Civil War, as Grant noticed, the North and the South developed different and opposite ideologies, and they began to consider each other as threats to the national ideal. Each side thought that the other party betrayed “the legacy of the Founding Fathers and denying the sacrifice of the revolutionary generation”. (Grant S. , 1998, p. 1368)

Grant concluded his article with the fact that there was still another devastating and shocking event needed to the United States North and South to become an entire nation. Without a complete sense and ideology of nation, it was also impossible to mention a national literature. The final step towards becoming free, independent and ideologically ready to prosper was *the American Civil War*.

The American Civil War is generally attributed or dated back to the period between “the Nullification Crisis in the early 1830s through the end of Reconstruction in 1877” in the educational agenda (Fuchs, 2004, p. 112). It was not a single event as easy to explain as ‘nullification of tariffs’ imposed heavily on the South by the supporters of the Great Britain empire. That was just a final sparkle

to burn down the accumulated hatred throughout the country and between two poles.

Accordingly, one of the main reasons for the outbreak of this civil upheaval was the status of slavery in the North and the South. Following the Revolution, the polarization in the United States soil became more and more apparent and sharper. This polarization produced two clashing powers in the pre-united geography: firstly, the Union (a.k.a. *the North*), consisting of states which were loyal to federal union; secondly, the Confederacy or (a.k.a. *the South*), consisting of those voted to secede from the union. Their approach to slavery brought along the final rise against each other. On the one side was the North, "trying to abolish slavery after Abraham Lincoln won the 1860 United States presidential election on an anti-slavery expansion platform" (Levy, 2021); on the other side was the South, having nearly all the Black population as slaves while the North began to implement rules of abolishment slowly. Official figures reported that, almost in the wake of Civil War, there were over four million slaves in the North and South in total, corresponding to one-tenth of the total population, with the exception that the South used to keep the whole black population as slaves (McPherson, 1988, pp. 8-10) The South aimed to protect their possession and trade of slaves; moreover, the Southerners were ready to fight for protecting their status as slave owners. That is why the Civil War was the fight for democracy, but the question was a democracy with or without, in favor or against slavery.

In their chronological work on the life and writings of Abraham Lincoln, Stern and Nevins discussed the reason for the outbreak of Civil War with reference to Lincoln's election results as follows:

*(...) the election of 1860, an election that had long been anticipated with dread as the signal that was to summon the slaveholders to armed revolt if they saw the votes of the people go against them. The issues involved in this election were not simply party matters—the growing cleavage between North and South had become so great that the election cut across party lines; the South was not able to dominate even its own party, the Democratic party that had hitherto been its willing tool. (Stern & Nevins, 1940, p. 96)*

As emphasized in this summative introduction, the North had plans for future democracy and achieved this progress by using slaves as loyalists. However, the South did not consider their

relatively less power but they urged to protect their existence as owners of the Southern nation, and they tried to keep the 'faithful slaves' as their fellow slave citizens.

As a whole, the Civil War was a war of contradictions to be solved in the country. It was not just a clash between the North and South but the battle between the Northerner Yankees and the Southerner Rebels; between Blue uniformed Union army and Gray uniformed Confederate soldiers of less number; between loyalist-free former slaves of the North and faithful slaves of the South; between conversationist Confederate dreams and semi-democratic Union claims.

The year 1861 was the outbreak season for the nation. The Confederate States of America (a.k.a. Confederacy) was established after "seven southern slave states declared their secession from the Union" (Brittanica T., 2022). Following their reestablishment in the South, the Confederates began to attack and capture several forts in their close vicinity. However, the real battles began no later than a month after Abraham Lincoln's inauguration.

In April, 1861, the Confederate won its first battle in Charleston. The Confederate army captured Fort Sumter. With the previous fortification having been placed on the Southern shores, the Federation used its superiority of having a navy. That was why, the following year, the Northerner forces aimed to keep all ports, protect the route along the Mississippi River and proceed forward to weaken the Confederate troops. The naval access to inland was so crucial that even the Confederate armies were named after rivers of Tennessee and Cumberland, then after Mississippi. As inspired by many literary works, the Mississippi River was also crucial for establishing the United States.

The conclusion of the Civil War corresponded to the assassination of Abraham Lincoln in April, 1865 by a Confederate supporter (Abel, 2015, p. 62). The plan was to kill both the president and the vice president. However, vice president survived, sworn in as the new president. After four years of intense battles fought around Mississippi, East Coastline and Virginia regions, finally one of the largest armies in the Confederation, the Mississippi force, surrendered with over 90 thousand men. Together with other surrenders within six months, the Civil War was finally over.

S. M. Grant discussed the significance of the Civil War in terms of the United States as a nation in his article, "*the Civil War and American Nationalism*," with the following statements:

*The Civil War, specifically, is a central component in the construction of American nationalism not only because its outcome held the nation together when it might have come apart, but also because the opportunity was present at that time to change the nature of the nation, to return it to the ideals of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness as set out in the Declaration of Independence.* (Grant S. , 1998, p. 181)

Grant also emphasized that the Declaration of Independence was the founding block of the Nation, and around a century later, the Emancipation Proclamation was shadows of the American pursuit of happiness as a nation. Therefore, the fight for such a holy pursuit enabled the United States to establish its stability after so much turmoil.

In a recent study, Charles P. Roland examined and elaborated the modern approach to the American Civil War and articulated a great metaphor of Iliad for the Civil War in his book, *An American Iliad: The Story of the Civil War*. Roland emphasized the War as follows:

*The victory of the Greeks forever changed the course of Western history, and thereby of world history. More than a century ago the American people engaged in a great sectional conflict that reenacted all of the heroism and sacrifice, all of the cruelty and horror, of the Greco-Trojan war. The Union victory (...) forever changed the course of American history, and thereby of world history.* (Roland, 1991, p. 6)

As is true for the European development of civilization thanks to the Greeks, the Civil War of the United States paved the way for improving civilization as a new nation for the whole United States. Therefore, many researchers have examined and discussed Roland's justification of the Civil War as a contemporary Iliad.

David Blight, in his prizewinning book on the Civil War, noted the effects of this Civil War on the history of nation as follows: "what happened on the battlefields in the Civil War is very important (...) connect with a broader social, cultural, and political history in myriad ways" (Blight, 2001, p. 10). Blight is another example of a modern approach to history in the United States without rationalizing these

fighters into statistics, instead choosing a detailed analysis of the United States with the help of analyzing various factors.

As much as slavery paved the way to constitutionalize the South, the abolition of slavery enforced slowly in the midst of the Civil War was another significant step towards changing the United States nation. The abolition was not a single-day event but a progressive development. The final official attempt was the Emancipation Proclamation. United States President Abraham Lincoln issued an executive order and presidential proclamation on January 1, 1863, during the Civil War (Stern & Nevins, 1940, p. 631). President Lincoln in his Proclamation, openly expressed that all slaves shall be free. However, with the following statements such as “I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defense; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages” (NPS, 2022, p. 2), the proclamation tried to change slavery into paid labor. Until this final step of emancipation, there had already been various anti-slavery unions and movements in the North and partially in the South.

Gordon E. Finne (2014) reviewed the status of anti-slavery movements in the South and upper-South during the antebellum period in his article. Finnie dated these movements back to the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century as follows: “the first of these societies was organized at Wilmington in 1788 (...) the second was also established at Wilmington in 1788 and was quite small, having about fifty members in 1796” (317). Gordon, in his article, provides a list of regions with more anti-slavery unions and establishments towards this goal. Gordon also emphasizes that there were not only one direct movement towards emancipation but three main approaches: immediate abolishment of slavery, gradual abolishment and colonizationists. (Finnie, 1969)

In figures, the Revolution and Civil War had already caused the South a profound destruction in terms of population and agriculture towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In addition, an estimated loss of around one hundred thousand soldiers died from the Confederate army, and that much also died due to other reasons such as epidemic diseases, and imprisonment in Northern jails. In terms of these figures, one of the most realistic statistical studies was published by Thomas L. Livermore in 1900. In his book, *Number of Losses in the Civil War in America*, Livermore used many reports from army

journals, essays and notes directly written by soldiers who participated in this war. During the last century in the United States, more detailed studies have been conducted to correct historical errors and mythical exaggerated figures.

Although many figures have changed regarding losses in these bloody wars on the way to establishing the modern United States nation, there was still left a devastated South remaining to be polished, improved and rebuilt. Therefore, a need for reconstruction emerged. This period is generally referred to as 'Reconstruction era', dated roughly between 1865 and 1896. The ending date of this period is crucial since it was also one year before the birth of William Faulkner.

During the Reconstruction Era, the Union controlled almost all previously Confederate states. That meant the launch of the construction of Union's political, national, and modern ideals. However, as mentioned statistically above, the South lacked workforce for such a vast undertaking. Therefore, if the modern United States was to become 'the land of the free' for the opportunist, the first step would be colonization; in parallel, the second would be the Reconstruction era's primary initiative. Reconstruction was carried out with three similar objectives: rejoining all states politically, changing lives of formers slaves, and adding all elements of nation into the parliament. These elements were mainly listed as "freedmen, scalawags (native Southern whites) and carpetbaggers (migrants from the North)" (History, 2010). Against these incoming invasion forces, the Redeemers struggled to fight for their White Dominance in every aspect of the South.

As much as the abolition of slavery and inclusion of former slaves (a.k.a *freedmen*) into the nation are significant elements in terms of literary narrative to be reviewed in this study, the carpetbaggers are also crucial in terms of analysis. That is because William Faulkner was also a descendant of an old colonial family who prospered during the Reconstruction of the South. On the other hand, Eudora Welty was a member of a family coming from a scalawag background.

These newcomers began to implement their agenda within all standing committees and various constitutions since they were populated in the Southerner committee, reported nearly more than the Southerners (Scroggs, 1961, p. 476). Therefore, constitutions of

the new Southern Post-War States began to be affected from the majority of the Northerner participants. More importantly, educational improvements started to be implemented. That would soon provide more readers in the literary world in the South.

Following advances in education, voting was another issue to be handled. Ante-bellum slaves had become freedmen, then the Union rules urged the Southern slaves could vote in elections. In his article "*Carpetbagger Reform*", Jack Scroggs concluded his ideas on the work of carpetbaggers, freedmen and scalawags with the following statements:

*The success of the Republicans in the South depended upon the adoption of major political changes, for without guarantees of continued political democracy the basis of Radical strength would be undermined; and Northern immigrants, the carpetbaggers, took the lead in providing for the South a democratic political structure. But time demonstrated that democratic institutions, too, were capable of manipulation. (Scroggs, 1961, p. 493)*

Political democracy mentioned here in Scroggs' conclusion also meant land reform for many antebellum slaves. These former slaves became shareholders, sharecroppers and contracted workers in these plantations and newly established farms, some of whom were able to obtain their own land as well. In this fast-paced reconstruction conquest, railroads were the main objective. In a period of twenty years from 1870 to 1890, the Southern Railway Network was staggeringly tripled in length. That meant better and faster rail trade routes for the South. Railroads to be built in the South were also related to Faulkner's life. Since he was from a family, owning a company to rebuild the South. The effects of this event on Faulkner's life will be discussed in the following chapters.

From another perspective, religion was not an exception among the building blocks of the South. That is why the Southern part of the United States began to be called "Bible Belt" by H. L. Mencken in his book, *Prejudices* (Mencken, *Prejudices*, 2018). What Mencken tried to refer to with the late-popular term, *Bible Belt*, was the evangelical Protestantism widespread in the South. After the Revolution and Civil War, the colored population also flew into this faithful port while seeking asylum in the new democracy of the South. John M. Giggie summarized the situation of the Black Community after Civil War as follows: "(...)delta blacks, free from daily hope of living without the threat of being scorned, mocked,

raped, beaten, or killed by white assailants, created their institutions, schools and a new culture that would profoundly influence twentieth-century black life” (Giggie, 2007, p. 6). In terms of white population, “South lives for being,” was the cement for survival, community establishment, and hope for future.

During the period ranging from the Reconstruction to World War II, the South remained a rural land based on individual and small agricultural transactions without many economic powers. Shadows of their old colonial economy persistently lurked among the communities of the South. In his critical work of the Origin of the South, Sheldon Hackney criticized the general misconception about the quick transformation in political, social and economic life in the South during this given period with the following crucial statements:

*The durability of Origins of the New South (...) is the story of the decay and decline of the aristocracy, the suffering and betrayal of the poor whites, and the rise and transformation of a middle class. (...) The Redeemers are revealed to be as venal as the carpetbaggers. The declining aristocracy are ineffectual and money hungry, and in the last analysis they subordinated the values of their political and social heritage in order to maintain control over the black population. The poor whites suffered from strange malignancies of racism and conspiracy-mindedness, and the rising middle class was timid and self-interested even in its reform movement. (Hackney, 1972, p. 191)*

As emphasized and criticized by Hackney, the South never ceased to fight for Redeemer dreams and ideals until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Never-ending greed for money also played itself in the Reconstruction and afterward. Even freedmen dreamt of having their own land and fought for their long-lasting rights accordingly.

The passage from the Old Colonial South to the New South took another half a century to complete its journey. Firstly, through the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Redeemers achieved some segregation on the Black population and gained power as White majority in the South. Effects of Jim Crow laws remained powerful for another century. However, World War I changed the course of history not only around the world but also in the Southern United States. That was because such a global war caused intensive migration movements to the States, increasing the number of immigrants from all races and colors. Economically, another turmoil welcoming the new century was the Great Depression of 1929. Another decade would be needed

for the United States to overcome such stagnation in all parts of society. Amid such dramatic events, there emerged extremist racist groups, the most important of which was Ku Klux Klan, to attack many immigrants and African-Americans. The response by the African-American for such attacks was to move towards to the Northern parts of the country. This movement, called the Great Migration, began in World War I and then peaked during the World War II. Following these incidents, the rural Southern population accumulated in urban Northern cities, which led to the final creation of Black Communities more powerfully in cities. Even during the Great Depression, black women became more self-employed by working domestic jobs. Robert L. Boyd, in his article on the status of Black and White Women during the Great Depression, reports that “census data show that in large southern cities in 1940, the unemployment of black women was meaningfully reduced by the self-employment of these women in domestic service.” Accordingly, the accumulation of the Black Population in the urban North created the Civil Right Movements to provide achievement for the abolishment of segregation for good. That was called the collapse of *Black Belt* in the South, a term used to define black slavery-fueled Southern agriculture, and also this period is also accepted as the birth of *New South*.

In conclusion, during this passage from the colonized New World (or Old South) to the establishment of Modern New South in the United States, there were several proclamative or political steps to be implemented in social and real life regarding the status of the Black. Respectively, the Black People were firstly accepted as slaves and workers; then as rebels and soldiers; afterward as members of the new democracy and reformed religion; however, with enforcement of racial segregation; towards a ‘separate but equal’ approach; not until the 1960s to finalize this partial inclusion of the Black Community in the form of total legal abolishment of segregation. All these listed developments took painful steps, social devastation, and racial upheaval in a dynamic way. This dynamic change lasting almost six centuries was finally ready to create the Southern Literature to be briefly defined and reviewed in the following section of this study.

## Literary Background of the South

*"Yankees don't understand that the Southern way of talking is a language of nuance."*

-Lewis Grizzard

Southern Literature consists of every literary work written and orally produced by authors and by people living in the Southern United States or literary works written about the Southern realities primarily by non-Southerners. However, it is not easy to define the Southern literary world within simple geographical borders of the modern Southern United States since these borders were written interchangeably in blood and turmoil, loyalty and insurrection, ideals and disappointment, slavery and freedom, the Black and the White, nature and human beings. Southern Literature as a literary umbrella term began to be defined at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century during the years between World Wars. Before that period, only the historical importance of the South was reflected in literary works to be produced or criticized with an objective, ideal, or politics. Since then, distinct and varying approaches to Southern Literature have emerged.

Many literary historians, critics and researchers have struggled during the last century to establish a flawless definition and framework for a general cadre of anything considered Southern in literary terms. Among these attempts, Barbara Ladd, in her extensive description of Southern Literature, emphasized that the South cannot be defined alone in terms of literary history. Ladd has elaborated her definition in her book *Literary Studies: The Southern United States*, as follows:

*The traditional definition of southern literature goes like this: southern literature is characterized by a strong sense of place, based on memory, insularity, and a tragic history of defeat in the Civil War (the South was taken to be white); southern literature expresses the "universal" values of honor, chivalry toward women, gentleness with subordinates (the South was taken to be male and privileged); concrete, enmeshed in all the particularities of place and lived history, southern literature is not*

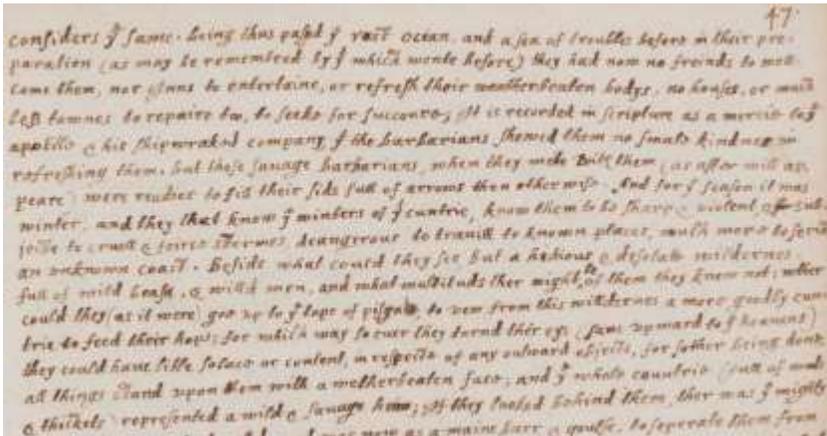
*reductive or abstract (...); southern literature reflects the southern belief in evil, in the Fall, and in the limited efficacy of any progressivist or reform agenda; southern literature, shaped by oral traditions, is as present to the reader as if it were spoken—it demands to be read aloud. Add the social categories (family, community, place), and you have a picture that is as much as anything else a late-modernist critique of modernity. Given the national anxieties of the post-World War II era, it is hardly surprising that the literature of the southern United States and the study of it in these terms had such currency in and beyond the region. (Ladd, 2005, p. 1629)*

What gives this definition by Ladd the quality of an ideal definiens is that the Southern lifestyle and history, as emphasized in the History section of this chapter, constitutes Southern Literature. Still, additionally, various elements should be considered as well. To begin with, Ladd mentions memory in her definition. The memory of the South was very crucial in depicting the offspring and birth of Southern Literature because the South lived, survived, fought, split up, rejoined, and reconstructed, mainly followed through writings, notes, dairies and legislative drafts around the country. These partially written elements, from oral tradition of Native Americans to colonists, created the foundation of the memory of the Southern nation. For instance, “we speak so much of memory because there is so little of it left,” indicated Pierre Nora in his book on memories of the South (Nora, 1989, p. 7). In the progress of time, what made this Southern literary puzzle worth solving for the United States was the sense of protecting and controlling the past, memory and values of the South. The literary circles realized this urge to define the Southern from a literary perspective only after the connection of all elements of nation during World War I and after the triumph in World War II, and only after social, economic and political construction achieved final stability after centuries of struggles.

To begin with these memories, essential tales, notes from the Old South or Colonial Turmoil were selected and appreciated. For instance, William Bradford’s history, *Of Plymouth Plantation* (1651), is a direct and realistically complex narrative about the colony’s beginning. Nevertheless, his description of the initial glance of America is evenly famous, and its original manuscript is a fascinating source, as given in Picture 1 below:

*Being thus passed the vast ocean, and a sea of troubles (...) they had now no friends to welcome them nor inns to entertain or refresh their weather-beaten bodies; no houses or much less towns to repair to, to*

seek for succor (...) savage barbarians (...) were readier to fill their sides with arrows than otherwise. (...) all stand upon them with a weather-beaten face, and the whole country, full of woods and thickets, represented a wild and savage hue. (Bradford, 2010, p. 94)



**Figure 1:** The original manuscript of the well-known quote by William Bradford (1651)

As seen in the picture above, Bradford's language is so clean compared to its period even modern-day English readers can easily understand the situation in the New World. Like notes by Bradford, the initial reaction to the new journey was simply in the form of dairies, letters and certain oral tales about the establishment of new colonies. Accordingly, traditional historiography of Southern United States literature covered the themes of a collective history of the region with reference to factors such as the importance of family in the South's culture, a sense of community and work of the individual, justice, the power and control of Christianity with its positive and negative impacts, racial tensions, social class and the usage of local dialects. However, during the century after the Reconstruction Era, researchers and literary historians have "decentralized these conventional tropes in favor of a more geographically, politically, and ideologically expansive South or Souths" (Smith & Cohn, 2004). This decentralization has allowed many researchers to redefine old patriotic, racist, or modest approaches to the Southern realities.

In one of the official attempts to define the Southern borders of literature, Kathryn VanSpanckeren (1994), in her study, *Outline of*

*American Literature*, defined Southern literature historically and chronologically First, VanSpanckeren introduced the broader American Literature definition with Native America as mentioned earlier. Then, VanSpanckeren in her book reported the Ancient American oral literature consisting of more than 500 Indian languages (3), then continued to define pre-revolutionary southern literature as “aristocratic and secular, reflecting the dominant social and economic systems of the southern plantations” (14). Vanspanckeren also emphasized the importance of initial literary initiatives undertaken by many intellectual puritans from Europe. With the help of slavery, these relatively overread people protected their intellectual and literary ideals freely in their safe environments, namely plantations. However, the South did not have such high-level intellectualism in the fight for survival and existence except some intellectual plant owners. In addition, religion was another powerful way of literary expression in the South. Vanspanckeren emphasized the Southern religion and work life in connection with future hardworking capitalism as follows: “(...) the link between Puritanism and capitalism: both rest on ambition, hard work, and an intense striving for success” (5) and in another commentary, as “the great model of writing, belief, and conduct was the Bible” (8). These two statements by Vanspanckeren indicate religion's power on life and literary styles in the South. Southern Puritans also translated the Bible into native Indian language, which led to the conversion of many Natives to Christianity. Regarding religion in the literary domain, the primary tool was oral narrative of religious facts and stories among communities.

In addition to memory, the conservative Southern culture yielded literary works focusing on the importance of family, religion, community life, Southern dialects, and, most importantly, the strong sense of *place*. Sense of place was a crucial pattern in the initial writings of colonization. Colonization process was critical among newcomers; therefore, their community and place were their only power source. One of the first and most informative texts about early colonization began with Columbus's journals:

*Columbus's journal in his "Epistola," printed in 1493, recounts the trip's drama — the terror of the men, who feared monsters and thought they might fall off the edge of the world; the near-mutiny; how Columbus faked the ships' logs so the men would not know how much farther they had travelled than anyone had gone before; and the first sighting of land as they neared America. (VanSpanckeren, 1994, p. 6)*

Before colonization commenced, uncertain journey from Europe to the New World could be traced literarily from the writing of journals such as Columbus with several trips to bring many slaves and frontiers. Firstly, colonial raids began with pirates, adventurers and explorers, lacking any literary recordings. After a while, “the second wave of permanent colonists, bringing their wives, children, farm implements, and craftsmen’s tools. The early exploration literature consisted of diaries, letters, travel journals, ships’ logs, and reports to the explorers’ financial backers” (VanSpanckeren, 1994, p. 5). There was a cacophony of voices at the beginning of colonial writing practices, most of which could not go beyond a documentary approach to real-life memories.

In terms of the language of the South, English was the language of the South since the English took control of the whole south, then, after the Civil War, they controlled the entire United States as an expressive power in terms of literary productivity. However, even before the Civil War and Northern conquest, the newcomers of the United States just imitated European literature in terms of narrative and worldly view.

Without a completed construction of society as a nation, it would be impossible to define or capture national literature. That was also the case for the Southern United States or its Southern Literature. In a detailed collection of articles on American Literature, Vanspanckeren defined the beginning of American Literature with “the orally transmitted myths, legends, tales, and lyrics of Indian cultures” (VanSpanckeren, 1994, p. 3). This historical fact can also be applied to many ancient civilizations, since all ancient literature constitutes oral literary heritage. However, to become a civilization and a nation producing modern literature would take ten centuries to mature in the case of the United States. In this sense, American literature can be divided into two: the works of the Old World and the products of the New World. Here, the old word refers to the European past of newcomers, while the New World is the colonization opportunity. On the other hand, the South transformed from an Old South during the Confederate period to the New South following the Civil War into its journey into the Reconstruction period. Such dynamic changes in the history of the South make it difficult to date and analyze any literary or official texts since critics should consider several aspects of the Southern reality and reflections of any given periods from the North’s perspective.

Chronologically, the main junction points of the Old and the New Southern World can be summarized as colonization, civil wars, abolishment of slavery, reconstruction and civil rights movements described and elaborated in the previous chapter. Historically, the Southern literature also improved in parallel to these developments. Therefore, in connection with historical developments, Southern Literature can be examined in the following developmental stages, including (a) Southern cultural narratives, (b) the first Southerners, (c) slave narratives, (d) plantation fiction, (e) slavery debate, (f) Southern writers and civil war, (g) visualizing the poor white, (h) Southern Appalachia, (i) Southern literary renaissance, (j) native American South, (k) civil rights movement, and finally (l) the African-American fiction (Gray & Robinson, 2004). This chronology is based on one of the most detailed critical studies and the article collection edited by Richard Gray and Owen Robinson (2004), *the Literature and Culture of the American South*, to be referred from several articles below.

Southern American literature, as referred in modern literary part of United States, can be traced back to Jamestown as an origin for Southern history or culture. Jamestown was not just a small settlement, but one of the initial colonies of America and the South. Therefore, the *First Southerners* can be considered a distinct quality as literary sources in the future. Despite being as oral, primitive and essential as they had to be, settlement narratives, logs and notes reflecting daily-life struggles constituted the primary source of the first steps of United States in the South. Virginia, as mentioned broadly in the history of the South, was also rich in literary production. That cacophony of voices bore the quality of documenting, propaganda and political building blocks. The new 'home' in the New World had not yet forgotten all remnants of England and Europe. Thus, political and social conflicts were mentioned in these early attempts to narrate the South literarily. Literary quality was brought along with elites of the New World, and political struggles began to take shape as new colonies were established. These elements can be traced back to Captaine John Smith's autobiographical work, *True Travels*. Mary C. Fuller emphasized the importance of these narratives in her article, "*the First Southerners: Jamestown's Colonists as Exemplary Figures*," as follows:

(...) appeared in 1630, some sixteen years after Smith had returned to England from America for good; it begins with an account of his adventures in Europe, Asia, and Africa during the years 1596–1605. The book matters here because Smith describes the events of *True Travels* as shaping what he did as a colonist. (Fuller , 2004, p. 34)

The significant contribution of Captain Smith to the Southern literary narrative was the fact that Smith had already travelled around the world including places such as the Ottoman Empire, Europe and Far East. That was why his commentary on and political contribution to the New World were regarded as crucial and comparative. As also emphasized by Fuller in her article, these early “titular” narratives were trapped in personal accounts of this new adventure for newcomer colonists. Literarily based on English and European pencil, the South also had a similar resonance to the Spanish since they were the most powerful colonial force in terms of human-flow to this new environment. That was why Smith even admired the Spanish for their powerful entry into the South American Continent; however, the Spanish were depicted as cruel to kill every native population in the Southern continent, which was not the fact for the prospective-United States (Fuller , 2004, p. 37).

In terms of literary historiography, adversely, these initial steps to establish the Southern narrative would later on be scorned because they included so much chivalry and fictional depiction of the colonial ideal. Therefore, it is necessary to complete literary history of the South to conclude a final approach to these initial steps of notes on Southern life.

Returning to the chronology of Southern literature and history, the next most prominent, relatively-biased and contradictory theme of Southern literature has been the subject, or rather problem, of *slave narrative*. That was because, while the slave contribution to United States Civilization had been ignored and scorned for four centuries from colonization to civil rights movement, anything literarily related to the slaves was just considered titular for anything of literary quality for a period. According to Ulrich Bonnell Philips, in his *Life and Labor in the South*, “ex-slave narratives in general (...) were issued with so much abolitionist editing that as a class their authenticity is doubtful” (Ulrich B., 1929, p. 219). During early criticism of slave narrative, these works of extensive oral tradition were regarded as “partisan fictions” as Philips indicated as well.

Despite early literal quality of antebellum writings of Southern origin, these texts or sayings were read as truth rather than fiction.

Both colonization era and antebellum era were full of oral narratives told among the African-American communities in religious gatherings and some colonial texts. However, Stroyer (1968) in his book on life in the South, emphasized the first part of Southern approach to the slave narrative with such as statement: “a negro’s word was not taken against a white man’s in the days of slavery” (74). Similarly, Ulrich Bonnell Philips criticized that earlier slave narratives used to be mainly “partisan fictions”, so they were not considered literature by researchers for a long time (Phillips U. , 1963, p. 219). However, this approach to the slave narrative changed during the antebellum period. During that time, all slave narratives began to be considered as literary texts. That was because narratives started to talk about real events rather than religious myths or propagandist works. Thus, these realistic depictions were all potent sources of social and racial realities of the era both literarily and sociologically.

On the other hand, some critics saw the picturesque quality in these early texts. For instance, in “*the Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Henry Bibb*” (1849), Lucius Matlack described the American slavery as “(...) naturally and necessarily, the enemy of literature, it has become the prolific theme of much that is profound in argument, sublime in poetry, and thrilling in narrative” (Osofsky, 1969). As much as critics and historians tried to consider slave narrative as a romantic and naturalistic approach to colony or plantation life in the vast Southern alleys, the long-lasting *problem of freedom* was another critical problem in these texts.

In a way, freedom came too fast for the Southern slave to understand or comprehend its practical meaning. For instance, J. W. Pennington describes life after gaining independence: “It cost me two years’ hard labor after I fled to unshackle my mind; it was three years before I had purged my language of slavery’s idioms” (Pennington, 1999, p. 141). Even abolition as a term was too challenging to comprehend for many ex-slaves. It was not just a fight for freedom. As emphasized and discussed by Jerry Phillips (2004) in his article, “*Slave Narratives*”, certain keywords like “master, slave, black, white, happiness, kindness, cruelty, freedom, Christian, and American” (47) changed in usage among antislavery and proslavery writers, and even among literary critics for so long. Philips also emphasized, “this

war of words between antislavery and proslavery writers as a war over the practical meaning of certain keywords like master, slave, black, white, happiness, kindness, cruelty, freedom, Christian, and American" (47). The South remained a dynamic unity and separation in terms of these ideological and sociological realities.

Following the Civil War, however, slave narrative flourished in literary quality by combining slave idioms and tools into literary works. For example, a passage by William Parker's *The Freedman's Story* (1866) is a flow of literary euphemism:

*How shall I describe my first experience of free life? Nothing can be greater than the contrast it affords to a plantation experience, under the suspicious and vigilant eye of a mercenary overseer or a watchful master. Day and night are not more alike. The mandates of Slavery are like leaden sounds, sinking with a dead weight into the very soul, only to deaden and destroy. The impulse of freedom lends wings to the feet, buoys up the spirit within, and the fugitive catches glorious glimpses of light through rifts and seams in the accumulated ignorance of his years of oppression. (Parker, 1999, p. 753)*

Even in this small example of the slave narrative, it is possible to find literary quality and tools. Examined by Philips (2004) from this text, 'nothing can be greater' is a hyperbole; 'like leaden sounds' is a simile; the words 'deaden and destroy' are alliterations; and internal rhyme is used such as 'leaden/deaden'; finally, 'freedom lends wings to the feet' is a great metaphor (49). This qualified usage of figures of speech and literary aspects in a straightforward slave narrative can be easily given as an example of how powerful and colorful the Southern sound was.

From a sociological perspective, this passage from slavery to freedom revealed itself in problematic passages: from oral literature to textuality; from plantation places to cities and towns; from rural life to late urban life, especially during the Great Migration. Following the Revolution and the Civil War, the antislavery movement also changed literary criticism on the slavery narrative. From then on, slaves also emphasized that they were the true inheritors of the Revolutionary and Civil War rights rather than their masters. Although the African-American community began to gain rights to vote, speak, and participate in social matters, there were still problems in practice between the antebellum era and the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. As Philips (2004) concluded in his article, these literary

writings were “in one sense a Northern literature about the South produced by exiled Southerners” (54). This was literary foreshadowing of the Great Migration which would happen at the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. When oppressed substantially, the borders of social and racial domains changed in the United States. Further analysis and review of the slave narrative shall be discussed in light of Faulkner and Welty’s literary works in the following chapters.

Returning to chronology and background of the Southern literature, another important narrative type is *plantation fiction* which should also be elaborated to understand the South in historical, literary terms. Both slave narrative and plantation fiction cannot be easily separated from each other; rather have they concurrently existed in late novels narrating life in the South. Plantation fiction is considered a unique genre of Southern literature and the South’s principal contribution to American literature. As much as approaches to slavery have evolved and distinctively changed in the making of the United States nation, plantation fiction was no exception. Approaches to this genre have also varied throughout the historical journey of the South.

Firstly, the romantic approach to plantation life had once been a powerful picture of the works in this genre. Each reader or modern movie viewers can easily define a standard plantation life with a popular picture containing ‘a large mansion among hills and green fields, a master family in the high veranda with wooden columns, and finally a pack of slaves chanting songs while working’. This picturesque romanticism was directly provided by plantation owner literary elites of the South in the past.

Intellectuals from Europe during colonization created this plantation life with the ease of workforce provided by slavery; therefore, these elites experienced pleasures of the rural South. However, with such an established comfort came the feelings of appropriation of ‘place,’ and the fear of losing these values. Therefore, literary reflection on plantations mainly included this fear or threat within their plot. Such a generic plot of economic and agricultural fight between nature and man in a plantation narrative can easily be mistaken for a colonial narrative which was a realistic representation of harsh conditions in early Southern life. However, as time passed and colonies grew, plantation life began to be established, even on a scale as larger as industrialization in the West.

Former fights against nature were then transformed into control over nature in plantations.

The United States literary universe has used plantations in two contradictory ways: those proslavery texts trying to justify the unity and harmony in plantations, to defend them against the North; and those anti-plantation and antislavery approaches criticizing these establishments. Even the book, *the Partisan Leader* (1836) written by Nathaniel Beverley Tucker, contained political objectives into antebellum Southern defense of slavery. The book tried to justify “the essential rightness of slavery as a system of labor and a morally appropriate condition for Africans” (Grammer, 2004, p. 65). Tucker did not stop there and depicted the slaves fighting for this cause. Such examples of plantation fiction initially aimed at a social ideal to test these places' legitimacy. Pastoral factors and social elements used in these novels did nothing but to romanticize the vast slavery-fueled agricultural factories. Postbellum era allowed for defending old plantation ideals and criticizing old practices. Accordingly, anti-plantation novels could also be produced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as well. The novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), was a well-known attempt by Harriet Beecher Stowe to rationalize the dilemma of slavery and abolishment in a dramatic narration.

Historically, it is possible to conclude that, while antebellum writers were not accessible in criticizing plantations and slavery, postbellum writers began to consider the issue from different perspectives. In the following century, new and better fictional works would be produced. For instance, William Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936) is considered one of the most popular works of plantation fiction with its realistic approach to the ideals and tragedy of plantation people. Another popular fictional plantation novel, and shot into a movie, was *Gone with the Wind* (1936) by Margaret Mitchell. Then following the conclusion of Civil Rights movement in the United States, criticism against such plantation romanticism was relaunched. That is why it is crucial to carry out a holistic approach to the Southern literary oeuvre to find out precisely in which era these texts were produced and how they were considered in the evolution of literary criticism.

Another element in the chronology of Southern literature, *slavery debate* constituted the next two centuries over the first attempts to abolish slavery in the South enforced by the Northerner

legislators. Before these radical initiatives by the Union, slavery in the South used to be taken for granted, not a thing to consider politically or literarily. Historically, it was not directly the abolishment of slavery that caused the Civil War but the Southern Victorianism or conservatism over their values, states or plantations. For instance, the American Revolution, of course, caused the Southern intellectuals to reconsider slavery problem. As Davis put it his book on slavery during the Revolution, although “the Revolution did not solve the problem of slavery, it at least led to a perception of the problem” (Davis, 1975, p. 285). Within the next two centuries of continuous political and social clashes, the South finally realized that their stance was not directly about slavery but their legitimacy and power in the region. In addition, Thomas Jefferson summarized this political and conservative approach to the idea of liberty against the facts of slavery as follows: “Americans the wolf by the ears; and we can neither hold him, nor safely let him go. Justice is on one side, and self-preservation on the other” (Finnie, 1969, p. 327). As Finnie reported in his article on antislavery in Upper South, the Southerners did not want to lose their lifestyle and prosperity with any liberation movements.

Compared to the Civil War’s outburst, outcome, and reflections in the Southern nation, the American Revolution was nothing but a single foreshadowing of what would destroy the Old World. The American Civil War meant a new era, a new world and a new defeated South filled with Northerners, as mentioned in the history section above. Warren, in his book, *the Legacy of the Civil War*, simply summarizes the Southern status as such: “Before the Civil War we had no history in the deepest and most inward sense (...), during the next century, custody of the War was for the most part relegated to Southerners” (Warren, 1998, p. 80). Of course, this legacy oppressed the South politically and sociologically as reflected in the changing literary atmosphere.

Similar to Warren’s approach, Richard Harwell (1992) considered as Civil War as “the common heritage of all Americans – the defeated Rebel and, still defiant Southerner, the Yankee yeoman, the Midwesterner, Americans of later immigration now established in a new world and seeking American roots” (5). Critics and historians of the 20<sup>th</sup> century also emphasized the Civil War’s milestone-like quality in creating the new literary world. Finally, a general summary was written by Louis D. Rubin, in this observation:

“more than a thousand novels have been written about the war by Southerners alone,” and conclusion: “most of the South’s Civil War fiction (...) is wretched stuff (...) There is no *War and Peace* about the South and its army (...) all we have is *Gone with the Wind*” (Rubin, 1956, p. 185). This fictional summary with two references to well-known literary works is crucial because there is a classical approach to Southern matters and the ultimate loss of every important ideal of the Old South during the postbellum period.

In light of this criticism and views, it is possible to mention a significant timeline of literary facades of Southern literature because it has never been a one-dimensional approach to social and historical realities in the South. These facades can be listed as rage of defeat in the South, Northerner justification of a better future, Southern pride even after defeat, moral guilt of slavery, romanticizing the past, some remnants of patriarchal and aristocratic past, and the effects of lost cause.

Susan-Mary Grant, in her article, *Southern Writers and the Civil War*, defined the period between post-Civil War period and World War I with a holistic approach:

*The Civil War and World War I were very different conflicts, but the overlap between the semicentennial of the Civil War and the outbreak of conflict in Europe brought them, in some ways, together. In purely practical terms, as both Northerners and Southerners joined up to fight, sectional differences – already blurred by the Spanish–American War of 1898 – further diminished. Living in an environment shaped in so many crucial ways by the Civil War, Southern writers were well placed to consider the parallels.* (Grant S.-M., 2004, p. 103)

This period from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century to the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century paved the way to conclude American nation socially and politically which in turn led to the creation of a proper literary movement, enough to be called the Southern legacy.

Another element considered significant in Southern literature is the theme of ‘*Visualizing the Poor White*’ from the chronological list given in this section. Not directly literary in quality, during the 20<sup>th</sup> century onward, photography of the Southern rural settings gained significant importance among photographers and artists. Following the Civil War defeat in the South, the South gradually became poor. In addition, agricultural aids to South rural farmers declined. As a result, agricultural tenancy increased by 20 percent. As reported

Stuart Kidd (2004) in his article, “*Visualizing the Poor White*”, “tenancy had increased from 25 percent of all American farmers in 1880 to 42 percent in 1935. Two-thirds of the nation’s tenants were in the South, of whom the majority—again, two-thirds—were white” (110). This poor status of the South began to attract attention among the Northerners. The commoner, or ‘folks’, became a target for visual art. Suffering was a *sine qua non* of these Southern folks. The photography of the Southern commoner became a great practice of documenting reality. In relation, Eudora Welty was also a photographer of Southern life before her early writing career which finally led to her dramatic depiction of the lifestyle in the South from a photorealistic perspective. Photographs were powerful enough to arouse emotions among their followers. In this lost cause future of the Old World, the theme of ‘place’ had already lost its meaning because plantations had shrunk into farms, and erosion-destroyed towns. Accordingly, the Southern tenant began to be captured as a central element in the iconography of the depression years and this new cultural nationalism in the South, which cheered and often sentimentalized the oppressed communities.

Another element in the Southern literary building blocks is *Southern Appalachia*. This mountainous region in the central South began to be intensively visited and observed by outsiders. Mainly contemporary criticism and literary production related to this specific region have established a distinct literary culture in terms of social, racial and gender realities. Writings of this region began at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century by local color writers. Strong women and old Southern poverty characterize the social of this region. The main criticism on this region’s literary style is that they were free from “anxiety of the William Faulkner influence” (Tate L. , 2004, p. 133). While Faulkner was an influential Southern figure and the primary reference for authors during the 19<sup>th</sup> and throughout the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, these mountainous community kept their unique tone and setting, thus earning titles such as ‘stepchild of the Southern literature’ or ‘Other’s Other’ while the South was the other according to the North (Cunningham, 1996, p. 42).

All these elements summarized and referenced previously had completed the first version of *the Southern literary tableaux* which still needed some restoration to become a critically worthy field of literature. This need for restoration would occur throughout World Wars, Great Depression, Great Migration, Southern Renaissance, Civil

Rights Movement, and African-American fiction. Since all these new elements are also parallel to William Faulkner's and Eudora Welty's lives, they will be reviewed and discussed briefly under the umbrella term and title, *the Southern Renaissance*, in the following section.

### **From *Black Belt* to the New South: Southern Renaissance, Civil Rights Movements, African-American Fiction, and Gender Studies in the South**

Beginning with the Reconstruction period and intensely during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the South witnessed the collapse of the old World, the Black Belt socio-economic plantation system, and also witnessed the birth of the New South, which can be defined as a modernizing, industrializing, urban new social and political establishment in accordance with the needs of modern United States and World. All these developments and crucial changes could be traced back literarily and sociologically. However, the passage from the death of Black Belt to the New South took almost two centuries, starting from the postbellum South after the American Civil War to the postbellum South following World War II resulting in a halt or even regression in terms of Southern literary quality.

With the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many scientific discoveries were made substantially changing the worldview of humanity in terms of psychology, anthropology, sociology and literature. These changes, combined with the Southern migration directed towards North concluded a final but grotesque picture in the South. Then as a reaction to this vast desert of literature, a new leap forward emerged in the form of the *Renaissance*. However, the Southern journey has never occurred without declines, clashes, wars, turmoil and fight for certain rights, such as racial, sexual, and social ones. Thus, the modern history of the Southern literature is as complicated as before, during its emergence.

Long before the modernist approaches varied in their branches, the Southern authors had already told the stories of "Lost Cause" of the Confederate States, which lost the war and had to accept changes imposed by the Northern Union. Their propellant was the belief in South's lost cause. The main themes of these novels revolved around (a) 'the burden of history of slavery, reconstruction, and a devastating military defeat'; (b) secondly, 'South's conservative

culture'; and (c) the final theme of 'racial problems in South's past'. These writers approached these themes objectively because they were historically closer to the Civil War and slavery. With the leading figure, Faulkner, these authors discovered new modernistic techniques such as "stream of consciousness and complex narrative techniques as Faulkner did in his novel *As I Lay Dying*". (Tate A. , 1945)

Another perfect example of genuine Southern literary production was *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain in 1884. It was considered one of the most significant Southern literary works of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1935, Ernest Hemingway discussed this novel as "all modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*" (Hemingway, 1935, p. 29). Issues mentioned in the book also became elements that paved the way for the development of Southern literature in the following century.

However, during its development, the South lost the Civil War and the opportunity to prosper with support from the Union during the Reconstruction period. Despite some unique examples of literary creativity, literature of the South lacked behind its Northern counterpart during this fast-paced development period.

Harold D. Woodman, in his article on the reconstruction of the South, defined this process of collapse and reconstruction in terms of economic situation as follows:

*When a significant change finally occurred, its impetus came from outside the South. Depression-bred New Deal reforms, war-induced demand for labor in the North, perfection of cotton-picking machinery, and civil rights legislation and court decisions finally (...) destroyed the plantation system, undermined landlord or merchant hegemony, diversified agriculture and transformed it from a labor- to a capital-intensive industry, and ended the legal and extra-legal support for racism. The discontinuity that war, invasion, military occupation, the confiscation of slave property, and state and national legislation failed to bring in the mid-19th century, finally arrived in the second third of the 20th century. A "second reconstruction" created a real New South. (Woodman, 1987, pp. 273-274)*

These economic developmental stages in the South reported by Woodman also led to some literary reflections. Since the plantation system was destroyed, the old aristocracy became a 'memory' of the

past, remembered, lamented on, defended, or romanticized sometimes by authors of this period. Previously, a well-known literary practice, a genre called *anti-Tom literature* that supported plantations, began to change into more realistic depictions of Southern slavery rather than romantic narrations on aristocratic intellectualism. Through the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, one of the most influential literary figures was Kate Chopin, a female author of the post-Civil War period. She was regarded as “an American Madame Bovary” (Seyersted, 1970, p. 153) by researchers working on realism in the South between 1870 and 1910. However, Chopin would not receive enough critical praise for her realistic depiction of female psychology in her two short collection books and novels because the South was still unprepared for an influential female figure in its literary circle. The scathing attack from the North came at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a simple article criticizing the South. Still, as a result, it commenced the Southern Renaissance indirectly.

H.L. Mencken astonishingly described and deeply criticized the South in terms of aesthetic values in his milestone article, “*the Sahara of the Bozart*” (1977). Since then, many critics and literary historians have considered Mencken as ‘the father of the Southern Renaissance’. The underlying reason for this acceptance was not his contribution to Southern literature but his realistic and daring criticism. In his article, Mencken directly drew a dramatic picture of the modern South at the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with a statement: “down there, a poet is now almost as rare as an oboe-player, a dry-point etcher or a metaphysician” (157). Mencken’s emphasis on art, or the lack of it as a Southern reality during the 1920s, was followed by a comparison of the Southern compared to the European progress and development following World War I with a striking statement of “almost as sterile, artistically, intellectually, culturally, as the Sahara Desert” (158). Mencken, in his article, extravagated his criticism with the term “drying-up a civilization” and explained thoroughly changing from “a civilization of manifold excellences-perhaps the best that the Western Hemisphere had ever seen-undoubtedly the best” to “the New England shopkeepers and theologians never really developed a civilization; all they ever developed was a government” (158). This lack of civilization was a reference to lack of stable national literature in the South yet, because even the society was still recovering from post-Civil War traumas.

This harsh criticism and realistic comparison made by Mencken began to be felt by all literary and artistic circles in the South. Because so many authors, critics and intellectuals from North and South began to realize such a demoralizing picture after a long and romantic journey from aristocratic colonization to modern but intellectual poverty. Mencken finalized the great social-depression portrait of the South, as he called *the Sahara*, with a great signature in his article as follows:

*There is not a single picture gallery worth going into, or a single orchestra capable of playing the nine symphonies of Beethoven, or a single opera-house, or a single theater devoted to decent plays, or a single public monument that is worth looking at, or a single workshop devoted to the making of beautiful things. (Mencken, 1977, p. 159)*

This depressing portrait and criticism of the South was a great reaction coming from the North. Naturally, the intellectual southern response to such relentless attacks by a Northerner would become a reunion of literary and intellectual circles aimed at defending or renewing the South. Going further in his criticism, Mencken (1977) gave the example of Virginia describing the region as the home for the first American university as a place like "*arbiter elegantiarum*" (159) of the Western World, namely a social guide for the nation. Following this old picture, Mencken summarized the deteriorating situation "the old aristocracy went down the red gullet of war; the poor white trash are now in the saddle" (159). This 'poor trash' term refers to old plantation owners who became only poor and undereducated farmers after agrarian changes and loss of slave workforce. Compared with the elegant past of Virginia state, Mencken defined this Southern intellectual capital having "no art, no literature, no philosophy, no mind or aspiration of her own," (159) and, additionally, in terms of education, criticized Virginia's system "sunk to the Baptist seminary level; not a single contribution to human knowledge has come out of her colleges in twenty-five years" (159). Of course, religion was not excluded from Mencken's critical arrows. That was because Southern Victorianism in the religious sense used to urge colonial people to work with Christian prescriptivism. However, following the Lost Cause period and Southern oppression on its poor led to deterioration in religious matters. Education was also behind the progressive atmosphere of the North. During the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the good old aristocracy began to lose its power in social sphere of the South. More importantly, the Southern oppression of the Black Community led to

migration among both the White and the Black. As Mencken asserted, "The vast hemorrhage of the Civil War half exterminated and wholly paralyzed the old aristocracy, and so left the land to the harsh mercies of the poor white trash, now its masters" (161); the whole South forgot its glorious past leading to becoming a Sahara. Another side effect of the Southern intellectual migration to the North was also mentioned in the History section of this book under the general theme of "the Great Migration". Accordingly, Mencken emphasized this fact with a statement, "a Southerner of good blood almost always does well in the North (...) his peculiar qualities have a high social value, and are esteemed" (162), indicating that the Southern intellectual, the highly educated and Lost Cause aristocrats even found a place in big cities to produce a value. Still, the South sadly remained filled with 'the trash' as he previously called.

To conclude Mencken's detailed criticism of the South, other elements palpably drawn by the critic included the lack of analysis concerning Southern artistic values; lack of modern scientific studies; the worst quality of European blood having flown into the South; faster progress among Southern Black community while the white population remained undereducated; lack of Black literature productions in the South; intermarriage rules of the old aristocracy to protect high social level in past having lost; mixing of blood due to mistresses every colonial landlord had. "The old repose is gone. The old romanticism is gone. The philistinism of the new type of town-boomer Southerner is not only indifferent to the ideals of the Old South" (168) finalized the words of Mencken's realistic portrait of the quasi-modern Southern existence. Reactively, the Southern *Renaissance* would be born out of rage, a defense or protection against this great piece of rhetoric by Mencken in his influential article, "*The Sahara of the Bozart*" (1977).

The Southern Renaissance after Mencken's rhetoric sparkles the outburst of American Southern literature during the beginning of the 1920s and late 1940s (Brinkmeyer, 2004, p. 148). This literary, or even aesthetic, outburst was not an instant element to discover but in the form of a reaction to much criticism directed towards the South by the developed Northern literary circles. Regarding the name of this genre, the first critic to coin the term 'Southern Renaissance' was Allen Tate in his article, "*the Profession of Letters in the South*" (1935). Even Tate did not call this movement a renaissance yet, but the author called it "*renascence*". As in the case of Mencken, Tate also

criticized the South for lacking “a tradition in arts (...) we lack a literary tradition. We lack even a literature” (Tate A. , 1968, p. 520). That lacking literature began to show its face on the surface throughout the 1920s and 1930s in the South. Both Tate and Mencken came to realize an oncoming change in the Southern literary atmosphere in the coming years. Even the launcher of the popular protest, “*The Sahara of the Bozart*”, Mencken began to realize that new energy was emerging within texts of Southern writers with the following statements:

*Just what has happened down there I don't know, but there has been an immense change of late. The old sentimental snuffling and gurgling seem to have gone out of fashion; the new southern writers are reexamining the civilization they live under, and striking out boldly.* (Mencken, 1974, p. 62)

Therefore, according to Mencken and Tate's suggestions, Southern literature became a new mixture of the old aristocracy and its values, the shadows of the Civil War, and the modern approach to the country's social life. Additionally, there were several factors affecting the South as reflected in its literary productions: (1) the powerful effect of the literary figures called Southern Agrarians; (2) Jim Crow laws and etiquette, which was a shameful fallback for the South during the 19<sup>th</sup> century; (3) mass culture elements such as motion pictures and photography; (4) the end of local isolation which was provided by the use of automobiles, highway and rail systems; and (5) the system of tenancy farming, or sharecropping. These factors all together changed the way of life in the South, and then these changed also revealed themselves in the social experiences.

In definitive terms, in his epochal article on the South, entitled “*A Southern Renaissance: The Cultural Awakening of the American South*”, Richard H. King approached the Southern picture with reference to modern aesthetic values around the World with such a detailed paragraph:

*Put briefly: the writers and intellectuals of the South after the late 1920's were engaged in an attempt to come to terms not only with the inherited values of the Southern tradition but also with a certain way of perceiving and dealing with the past (...) It was vitally important for them to decide whether the past was of any use at all in the present; and, if so, in what ways? (...) The 'object' of their historical consciousness was a tradition whose essential figures were the father and the grandfather and whose essential structure was the literal and*

*symbolic family. In sum, the Re-naissance writers sought to come to terms with what I call the 'Southern family romance'. (King, 1930, p. 7)*

It was, of course, natural that the power of family and community in the vast Southern planes had not lost their importance. Thus, their modern reflection would be easily defined as 'Southern family romance'. The South began to fight its final war in pages of literary works this time. The first bullet of this literary triumph of Southern Literature was Faulkner's *the Sound and the Fury* in 1929. Donald A. Ringe emphasized the importance of this work as follows:

*The publication of Faulkner's The Sound and the Fury in 1929 is generally regarded to be the start of the Southern Renaissance, a flowering of imaginative and critical intellectual activity concerning Southern literature that would last until the late 1940s. (Ringe, 1982, p. 28)*

Ringe also mentions other critical members of the Renaissance. Ringe included authors such as Katherine Anne Porter, Tennessee Williams, Robert Penn Warren and Allen Tate in his list of influential literary pioneers of the Southern Renaissance. Other critics and authors also began to analyze this new genre of United States literature. In his detailed article on the Renaissance, Robert H. Brinkmeyer (2004) summarized Tate's and other Southerner intellectuals' approach as follows:

*Despite their decidedly formalist aesthetics, which downplayed the significance of biography, history, and politics in critical analysis – in effect bracketing off artistic expression from social and historical reality – these critics nonetheless linked their aesthetics to cultural politics. They saw the great theme of the Southern literary renaissance as the clash between traditional and modern cultures, with the refined order of traditionalism giving way to the rapacious forces of cultural modernism. (Brinkmeyer, 2004, p. 151)*

Brinkmeyer (2004) was legitimate in his criticism of the approach towards the Southern literary renaissance based on the "clash between traditional and modern cultures" (151). During Southern development, the North remained the ghost of the Old Union, which was oppressive, opportunist, and destructively reconstructive toward the South. Therefore, the 'traditional' one was always the South compared to 'modern' Northern culture.

Each cause-and-effect relation in the complex history of the United States left its hidden shadows on the pages of literary works.

However, the Southern Renaissance was a concurrent event emerging together with the more powerful *Harlem Renaissance*. Both genres or movements were halted and diminished slowly at the end of World War II. In terms of closing these two significant genres, Allan Tate indicated in his late article in 1945 that “the renaissance was over (...) the South was no longer looking backward but forward; unlike in 1918, when the South was reentering the modern world, in 1945 the South was the modern world” (Brinkmeyer, 2004, p. 151). Therefore, the year 1945 can be called the completion of the construction of New South. This exact and powerful dating applied by Tate used to be the official framework for critics and researchers during the following decades. Until the 1970s when a serious reassessment began among critics, Tate’s definition remained the sole guideline for anyone who wanted to study the Southern Renaissance in literary terms.

Another powerful effect on Southern literary development came from the Civil Rights movement of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. That was because, after the World War II victory, the nation finally began to finalize its past division and racial debate thanks to United States inclusion. Civil rights movement was the final uprising as a nation together. In his detailed analysis of this period, Richard H. King examined the long-lasting debate on the Civil Rights movement, asserting his discussion based on three elements as follows:

*(...) I want to take up three historiographical issues involving the civil rights movement in whole or in part. One concerns the relationship between the civil rights movement and mainstream Southern (and American) politics from roughly 1945 to 1972. The second bears on the international dimensions of, and emerging global perspective in, the movement and its aftermath in the late 1960s. My third focus will directly deal with the civil rights movement as an intellectual and cultural movement. (King, 2004, p. 221)*

King (2004), in his *The Civil Rights Debate*, examined the civil rights movement and its implications for the South. King emphasized that if something is to be called ‘movement,’ it should include many participants, including the Black and White community, with a particular objective to destroy the Jim Crow system at that time (222). Therefore, the author defined the period as “the era of the civil rights movement would be roughly between 1954 and Martin Luther King’s assassination in 1968” (222). King remarked that, following the final attack on Martin Luther King, there have been no further

mass movements or uprisings, and the myth of Martin Luther paved the way for an ideal figure, also remarked that no further legislative steps have not taken after the end of the civil rights movement. King also associated the foreign policy of the United States gave rise to more civil rights measures to be taken, especially during the Cold War period (228). The South, as King observed, did not have enough political experience among the Black community. The mixture of blood and race with the Great Migration affected the sociology of the region. Criticizing that the civil rights movement was mainly examined and described by politicians and historians, King proposed that more cultural and intellectual insight be needed for a better analysis of the South. That created a need as well, as King termed: "The historiographical point here (...): the history of slavery and slave culture had to be rewritten in the light of the civil rights movement's catalytic role in reconfiguring black consciousness" (233). Therefore, African-American literature was extensively and progressively born.

A latent-genre has always existed in the South: African-American literary productions. However, as in the case of Southern literature, the history of African-American fiction was also affected by the harshness of Southern life. Firstly, the slavery meant the ignorance of Black pencils from outsiders for centuries. Just as in the White man's early notes, there were only realistic or propaganda-oriented texts written by the Black community. To begin with, William Wells Brown's *Clotel* was "the first African-American novel, published in 1853; possessing a disconcerting generic fecundity, drawing upon not only fictional models, but also abolitionist documents, sermons, and slave narratives" (Ellis, 2004, p. 256). The initial African-American works of art contained stories of slavery and freedom, epic struggles for survival. R. J. Ellis (2004), in his "*African-American Fiction and Poetry*", focuses on the histography of the African-American literary journey. Allen criticized the initial attempts to frame the Southern writing as "whitened" and African-American Southerners as "deregionalized" (255). Ellis also provides insight to the African-American melody in literary world of the South. Similarly, in his extensive study, "Southern Music", John White described the African-American contribution with the following words: "among the South's most fertile and enduring musical forms have been the spirituals and gospel music, minstrelsy, the blues, ragtime, and jazz. All these forms were characterized by black/white

interaction” (White, 2004, p. 185). Such melodic Southern contribution to art showed itself in the future Southern birth of a unique literature that was melodic in style, holy in approach, original in its quality, and authentic in a humanistic sense.

In addition, New Criticism and Feminist discourse-analysis popularizing during the 1980-1990s have produced much insight into literary and cultural criticism based on gender approach, racial equality and social problems of the past in the South. However, as emphasized by many researchers, the main problem in early critics was that they excluded female literary productions from the scope of the Southern Renaissance. This book includes one influential female figure who defined the female South, Eudora Welty.

Based on the historical and literary journey of the South, further detailed analyses of the gender approach to works of both Eudora Welty and William Faulkner will be included in the following chapters. The long and tiresome journey of the South will be researched within the section related to Welty and Faulkner’s creative attempts in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERARY PORTRAITS of WILLIAM FAULKNER and EUDORA WELTY

*"It was like living near a mountain..."*

-Eudora Welty

Eudora Welty, a well-known female figure of Southern American Literature, once answered the question of William Faulkner's literary influence on her with her modest words: "it was like living a near mountain" (Polk, 2008, p. 6). However, despite the power and significance of William Faulkner as a leading and defining figure in the South, Welty herself achieved to become another literary 'mountain' with her distinct literary quality. Noel Polk (2008) emphasized this fact in his book, *Faulkner and Welty and the Southern Literary Tradition*, as follows: "Unspoken in her image, and perhaps even unthought, is the simple fact that what most often lives near a mountain is another mountain" (6). Both Faulkner's and Welty's importance and literary contribution to Southern literature cannot be denied. However, certain aspects define both authors uniquely in their approach to Southern social and racial matters from their own literary perspectives.

This chapter discusses the life of William Faulkner, and his literary importance with regard to his literary period. Since William Faulkner was influenced by his familial roots and the historical era in which the change was powerful and felt in every aspect of American geography, it is possible to find references of such historical and philosophical changes throughout Faulkner's writing career. Various references will be provided both in sections related to William Faulkner's life and his two selected novels that represent the developmental change in Faulkner's writing style and approach to historical development in racial matters. On the other hand, Eudora Welty will be briefly described with regard to her development in her literary career with reference to her connection to the Southern setting in her life.

## William Faulkner

*“William Faulkner’s life was a passage from the Falkner legacy to the Faulkner reality.”*  
(p.50)

Winner of the 1949 Nobel Prize in Literature and one of the most prominent literary figures of the last century, William (Cuthbert) Faulkner was born in New Albany, Mississippi on September 25, 1897. William Faulkner was the couple's first child, Murry Cuthbert and Maud Butler Falkner. Faulkner was also “the great-grandson of the soldier, author, banker, and railroad builder William Clark Falkner, known as the Old Colonel, a near-legendary figure and the prototype of Colonel John Sartoris of Faulkner’s fictional Jefferson, Mississippi, and Yoknapatawpha county” (Fargnoli & Golay, 2008, p. 3). The family gained some more Southern opportunity to prosper following the Civil War, as indicated by Farnnolie and Golay (2008) in their Faulkner’s biography: “the Old Colonel rebuilt his law practice and, like the fictional John Sartoris, gained influence, power, and prosperity as a banker and railroad developer” (3). Faulkner’s great-grandfather was a significant figure since young Faulkner was brought with stories of the Old Colonel’s life. In addition, his great-grandfather also wrote a melodramatic novel called *The White Rose of Memphis* in 1881. Following his ancestors’ path, Faulkner’s father, Murry, also established some businesses in the South. After Faulkner’s birth, the family moved to another Mississippi county, Ripley, where his father found a family business, Gulf & Chicago Railroad Company. Thus, Faulkner was born into a semi-aristocratic family rebuilding the Southern America railroads. However, Faulkner’s father, Murry was unable to achieve progress and happiness in his marriage due to his drinking problem, which would be the same fate for the young Faulkner. This failed father figure would also be a prominent source of inspiration in Faulkner’s novels, as will be examined in the next chapter.

The family was upper middle class but “not quite of the old feudal cotton aristocracy” (New York Times, 1962, p. 5). In other words, Faulkner was born to a family not from the South initially but from a family coming from the North to rebuild the South after the American Civil War of 1861. Faulkner’s large family contributed to his creative writing style very much. His parents divided into two in terms his education: while Faulkner’s father, Murry, allowed him to

experience outdoor life, adventures and social developments; his mother, Maud, was keen on reading and taught her child to read before he attended school, provided books to improve his imagination. David Minter (1997) described Faulkner's source of writing creativity based on his familial life: "His family, particularly his mother Maud, his maternal grandmother, Lelia Butler, and Caroline 'Callie' Barr (the African American nanny who raised him from infancy) influenced the development of Faulkner's artistic imagination" (85). As emphasized by Minter, Faulkner's vivid descriptions in his novels and short stories were both the products of familial experiences in terms of outdoor adventures and extensive reading of classics, and the outcome of Faulkner's exposure to his nanny, Caroline, who showed him the racial lifestyle in the family. By this way, as much as William Faulkner heard stories about his ancestors fighting in Civil War and coming to the South to rebuild the country for profit and money. Faulkner observed the change in social life among the black population, former slaves, and the white population, some of which objected to such a change.

During his childhood, the young Faulkner lived a period in a small town, Ripley, then his family moved to further South to Oxford town, which was three times larger. During his childhood, the Falkner family lived in the Big Place, a mansion and Old Colonel's house. The house was located among trees, so Faulkner had many opportunities to explore the surroundings with his African-American caretaker, Mammy Callie, another prominent figure. In addition, the big house in a small town meant that Faulkner could gather with other neighborhood children to play football, baseball and other activities. One of the most notable names, Linda Estelle Oldham, was among this child group. Linda Estelle would become the love of Faulkner's life in the future with many break-ups, marriage to separate them then final union to a long-lasting dramatic marriage later in Faulkner's life.

In their *Companion to William Faulkner*, Nicholas Fargnoli and Micheal Golay (2008) examined the life of William Faulkner. Fargnoli and Golay narrated Faulkner's educational adventure beginning with: "Faulkner, age 8, entered the first grade in Oxford's all-white elementary school in September 1905" (6). Due to Faulkner's childhood education by their parents before school, he could learn to read easily. Therefore, his teacher made him skip the first to the second grade. During their early education, Faulkner's teacher

introduced him to the world of literature, including works of “James Fenimore Cooper, Charles Dickens, Mark Twain, Robert Louis Stevenson, and the Grimm brothers and later to Shakespeare, Balzac, Poe, Kipling, and Conrad” (6). However, during an interview, William Faulkner recalled that he did not like formal education and used to skip school for many days. Rather than formal school education, Faulkner improved his imagination and learning through observation and experiences. “The majority of Oxford’s African Americans lived in Freedmantown (...). The Falkners employed Callie Barr and other blacks as servants, and the boys always had black playmates,” (6) indicated Fargnoli and Golay. The researchers also mentioned that Faulkner had African-American cousins and the Old Colonel had a “shadow family” consisting of African-American members. However, the details were not known to the Falkners. This influence from social circles in Oxford allowed the young Faulkner fed from many sources both socially and intellectually. The researchers in their study traced back many elements to be reflected in Faulkner’s future novels from his early childhood: “(...) his novelist’s education outside the schoolroom. Helping out at his father’s livery stable, he absorbed the lore of horses and horsetrading that would infuse the Snopes Trilogy, *The Reivers*, and other works” (6). During his passage from childhood to adolescence, his friends, such as Philip Avery Stone and his well-known love, Estelle, were his primary urge to live, change and learn. Mr. Stone was an educated boy who taught Faulkner more than Oxford school. Indicating that “Faulkner dropped out of high school after the 10th grade and went to work in his grandfather’s bank,” the researchers also dated his first steps towards literature with verses that Faulkner showed to this friend, Stone, “He had met Phil Stone in the summer of 1914 and had tentatively shown him his adolescent verse,” (6). Phil Stone was one of their tutors Faulkner who would become the main guide for his future literary career.

This whole childhood and adolescence period of Falkner legacy is shaping young Faulkner’s mind. Most importantly, William Faulkner’s life was a passage from *the Falkner* legacy to *the Faulkner* reality. Young William added another “u” to his surname. This passage occurred during the outburst of World War I. During 1915-16, the war in Europe filled the young Faulkner’s thoughts and imagination. However, after the United States had joined the World War in 1917, Faulkner wanted to join the army as a pilot due to his admiration of these new aerial war machines, a new invention of the modern world. Rather than a patriotic cause for Faulkner’s motive to

join the army, other motives were mostly related to his long-term relationship with Estelle. "Lemuel Oldham [Estelle's father] refused to accept Billy Falkner as a suitor for his daughter. Estelle's mother maneuvered her into an engagement with a young lawyer named Cornell Franklin, (...) married in April 1918," Fagnoli and Golay (2008) summarized the situation (7). Although for a period, Estelle had been willing to elope with Faulkner, but Faulkner felt unready for marriage and even without a family's consent, he rejected such an offer. This rejection led to Estelle's marriage to someone else. Therefore, Faulkner instantly decided to escape from Oxford, his solution was to try an escape by applying to "U.S. Army Air Corps recruiting office". Sadly, due to his short stature, Faulkner's application to the army was initially rejected.

The young William then changed his surname from 'Falkner' to 'Faulkner' while applying for another job with an expatriate name as Faulkner, as also indicated by Fagnoli and Golay as follows:

*Faulkner briefly worked as a clerk in an office of the Winchester Repeating Arms Company there before managing to pass himself off as an expatriate Englishman named William Faulkner (he had added the u to the family name on his application for the Winchester job) and enlisting as a cadet in the ROYAL AIR FORCE. Around the same time, Jack Falkner enlisted as a private soldier in the U.S. Marine Corps. (Fagnoli & Golay, 2008, p. 7)*

Fagnoli and Golay (2008) reported that Faulkner's younger brother enlisted as a private soldier. On the other hand, Faulkner achieved entering air force but could only obtain a pilot license in 1933, during those years when the end of the War was completed. Therefore, Faulkner never flew in the war. As a social and creative story-teller young soldier, Faulkner returned home, and then even "roamed in Oxford in his British officer's uniform" (Fagnoli & Golay, 2008, p. 7). Faulkner was consistently reported to have a man of social plays; he used to like mentioning himself in disguise of several characters within social circles. In this respect, in his biographical work on Faulkner, Frederick Karl (1989) remarked this fact as "the war turned Billy into a storyteller, a fictionalist, which may have been the decisive turnabout of his life" (111). After his return from training, Faulkner narrated many war stories in his social circle in Oxford, even those he did not experience. Such a social play approach by Faulkner led to his future literary career from only verses of love to deep social trials within his own fictional universe.

The University of Mississippi, commonly known as *the Ole Miss*, was another lead in Faulkner's life. In 1919, he enrolled in the Ole Miss as a particular student. This time, his social role was of an expert in literary world. Faulkner studied so many languages and world literature, including French, Spanish, and English. Therefore, his lack of linguistic expertise began to cease. Faulkner's first poetry works were published in many books, journals and magazines during the Ole Miss period. In terms of prose, "In November [1919], the student newspaper, *The Mississippian*, accepted the short story 'Landing in Luck,' his first published prose work" (Fargnoli & Golay, 2008, p. 8). During this period, Faulkner had already stayed at family home and felt secure in his social circle. This period would finalize after a total decade, and Faulkner began to become a "hard-drinking bohemian poet."

Another social and literary journey by William Faulkner occurred when he was invited to the North, to New York by his friend, Stark Young. For some time, Faulkner worked for a bookstore in 1921. However, his most influential friend, Phil Stone, worried that his friend might be lost artistically in a big city, he called Faulkner back to Oxford after a few weeks. In addition, Stone and others found a job for Faulkner as a postmaster at the University of Mississippi. Faulkner was pleased in his new job since he could do whatever he wanted, including reading, playing cards with friends, and having parties. Faulkner achieved working for three years in the post office. Finally, Faulkner's scandalous working routine was found out by an inspector leading to his resignation. Phil Stone was again ready to help Faulkner in his literary improvement. "Phil Stone arranged and subsidized the publication of Faulkner's first book, *The Marble Faun*, a collection of poems (...) an edition of 1,000 copies on December 15, 1924," wrote Fargnoli and Golay in their biography study. In the preface of his book, Faulkner thanked both his mother and Phil Stone for believing in him.

Faulkner began to write more and more. That was because he had already earned 20\$ for short stories he wrote for a newspaper in Oxford. This side-income encouraged him to write more and more. "All the while, Faulkner worked on his first novel, originally titled *Mayday*, eventually published as *Soldiers' Pay*" reported Fargnoli and Golay (2008: 8). Then came other novels with a more systematic approach to his own literature.

Jay Parini (2004) in his biography of Faulkner suggested that “Faulkner envisioned a *Yoknapatawpha* cycle from the start. [Faulkner] had been reading Dickens and Balzac,” and also emphasized “and wished to create a shelf of books that had some unity and purpose” (154). That was why Faulkner had already created a fictional scheme, county, and a great family tree in his mind, and begun to implement his vision slowly. Faulkner had already collected stories of the Old and New South during his childhood, and following his trips to the North allowed him to focus on the South more and more. Being homesick during his army training and his stay in the North, Faulkner realized the importance of the South in his mind and the past.

Two years after his first published novel, Faulkner applied for another publishment with his detailed planned work: *Flags in the Dust*. Unfortunately, Liveright publishing company rejected Faulkner’s novel with the following statements: “[The novel] is diffuse and non-integral with neither very much plot development nor character development” (Fargnoli & Golay, 2008, p. 9) leading to a complete shock and disappointment on Faulkner’s side. Recovering from his rejection, Faulkner convinced another company to publish the manuscript but with a new title, *Sartoris*, in January 1929. The importance of *Sartoris* (1927) was that it was Faulkner’s first work set in *Yoknapatawpha County*.

While in his fast-developing writing career, Faulkner faced many difficulties in making agents publish his novels. However, the author also accepted later in an interview that the initial rejection by the Liveright company allowed to forget about earning money through writing. Thereupon, Faulkner only wrote for the sake of writing, not for making a name or money. This urge was so powerful that, chronologically, Faulkner’s creativity peaked. As described by Fargnoli and Golay in Faulkner’s Biography:

*“Twilight” touched off an astonishing creative explosion. Faulkner would produce much of his best work between 1928 and 1936: The Sound and the Fury, published in October 1929; As I Lay Dying, written in a short burst—47 days—during his nightshift supervisory job at the Ole Miss power plant and published in October 1930; Sanctuary, published in February 1931; Light in August, published in October 1932; and Absalom, Absalom!, published in October 1936. (Fargnoli & Golay, 2008, p. 9)*

Such as prolific period ensured Faulkner's literary legacy be established in the South, in the United States, and around the globe. Faulkner worked various jobs and never ceased writing during his long shifts. During these productive years and with incoming literary fame and money, the next part of the puzzle Faulkner had considered throughout his life also began to come closer. In April 1929, Faulkner's long-lasting love of his youth, Estelle, finally divorced with two children. Therefore, Estelle's family also encouraged her to meet her love, Faulkner finally. The couple was "married in the parsonage of the College Hill Presbyterian Church in Oxford on June 20, 1929" (Fargnoli & Golay, 2008, p. 10). This fast change in Faulkner did not retain him from writing more and more. This quick marriage also came with a quick child but unfortunately not end as expected:

*Estelle became pregnant that summer; Faulkner corrected proofs of As I Lay Dying and saw the book into print in October. The Faulkners' first child, Alabama, named for a favorite Faulkner great-aunt, was born prematurely on January 11, 1931, and lived only nine days. (Fargnoli & Golay, 2008, p. 10)*

This was another shock to the new Faulkner family. However, Faulkner's income from sales of short stories and novels allowed him to buy a new home in Oxford. *The Rowan Oak*, as Faulkner called, would be their new home, a dilapidated antebellum house outside Oxford. Another significant event regarding houses also occurred during that period. The Old Colonel's house, the Big Place, where Faulkner was raised, was also sold after the Young Colonel died in 1922. This loss of the Big Place was considered the metaphor for the Falkner Family decline.

However, Faulkner overcame all these new deaths developments thanks to the Rowan Oak. That place was his sanctuary in terms of his meetings with his past, present, and fictional future. Ironically, he completed his well-known novel, *Sanctuary* in this safe sanctuary home. Another successful piece of literature was *Light in August*, the novel some critics judge "his most satisfying work artistically; the novel's genesis was in a short story whose central character, Gail Hightower, is obsessed with his grandfather, a Civil War soldier" (Fargnoli & Golay, 2008, p. 11). Again, William Faulkner revealed some shadows of his colonial past with a mixture of modernist approaches to social connections between his characters and finally became expert in producing grotesque, gothic but realistic literary pieces.

Amid this prolific period came the Great Depression, which led to bankruptcy of the publishing office that published his novels and owed Faulkner. Thus, he moved to Hollywood to work as a screenwriter since Hollywood looked for new changes of making movies about Southern Life and Post-Civil War society during that period. Faced with such a depressing economic situation, Faulkner found relief and a new turn of events in Hollywood. Fargnoli and Golay (2008) report this surprise as follows: "Faulkner's first offer from Hollywood, a \$500-a-week screenwriting contract with Metro-Gold Wyn-Mayer" (11). Unfortunately, Hollywood would become another devastating event unlike his youth trips to New York. During his stay in Hollywood, Faulkner received the news of his father's death in 1932. Fargnoli and Golay summarized the events leading to Faulkner's father's death: "Murry had lost his university job in a political shuffle in the late 1920s and afterward had failed rapidly. Heavy drinking accelerated the decline; he died of a heart attack a few days short of his 62nd birthday" (11). This rapid decline of health and drinking problem was nothing but just a foreshadowing of what would also happen to William Faulkner. The next year, Faulkner's and Estelle's "only surviving child, Jill Faulkner, was born on June 24, 1933" (12). Jill's life would also be difficult with a drunk mother at Rowan Oak and a frequently absent father figure. The life in the Rowan Oak was not economically easy for the family. Financial problems rained down again. However, Faulkner again focused on another masterpiece, *Absalom, Absalom!*, "evolved from the 1931 short story 'Evangeline'" (12). In addition, screenwriting also brought enough income to the family.

Another traumatic event in Faulkner's life was the death of his youngest brother in a plane crash:

*(...) nothing could assuage the pain of the death of his youngest brother, Dean Swift Faulkner, who at age 28 was killed in an airplane crash during an airshow near Pontotoc, Mississippi, on November 10, 1935. Faulkner had introduced Dean to aviation; he blamed himself for his brother's death and said long afterward that he still saw Dean's shattered form in nightmares.* (Fargnoli & Golay, 2008, p. 12)

Faulkner could not achieve a pilot stance in aviation but made his young brother become one. Therefore, this event was devastating for him. Heaving drinking contributed to Faulkner's total collapse in the future. Amid these event, Faulkner's screenwriting and countless literary achievement had already ensured a powerful and popular in

the United States. To seek asylum for his accumulating pains, Faulkner began to live a liaison with Meta Carpenter, a script girl. Thanks to income from new novels published, Faulkner bought Greenfield Farm, this time, he began to play the role of a farmer. This farm also led to the birth of many Faulknerian masterpieces such as *the Hamlet* (1940), *Go Down, Moses* (1942), *the Unvanquished* (1938), and *the Wild Palms* (1939).

Faulkner's late marriage was not also helping him recover much. His wife, Estelle, learning about his liaison, did not intend to divorce but threatened Faulkner with another marriage. Therefore, the couple remained in conflict for an extended period. Seeking refuge from all miseries, Faulkner again tried to join the Army when World War II but was again rejected since the Army did not want a mid-aged drunk man in its lines. During the end of World War II, among Faulkner's 17 novels, only one was still in print, *Sanctuary*. However, in Europe, especially in French, Faulkner's fame increased. Through the end 1940s, Faulkner's novels and collection of stories began to be republished again by Random House printing company. Later that year, the Swedish Academy considered Faulkner for the Nobel Prize in Literature for his contribution to "America's new literature of the novel". Faulkner's Nobel acceptance speech was still regarded as one of the best speeches in Nobels:

*I believe that man will not merely endure: he will prevail, he is immortal, not because he alone among creatures has an inexhaustible voice, but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance.* (Fargnoli & Golay, 2008, p. 15)

This literary award ensured his literary fame, Faulkner then felt complete. Still, Faulkner was aware that the United States did not regard his literary fame as expected critically. In one of his letters to editors of a newspaper in his hometown, Oxford, Faulkner directly indicated: "Sweden gave me the Nobel Prize. France gave me the Legion d'Honneur. All my native land did for me was to invade my privacy over my protest and my plea" (Blotner, 1977, p. 354).

Returning to his Greenfield Farm, Faulkner wrote another novel, which was different from the others. *A Fable* was a novel taking place in French during World War I. This was the only literary work of Faulkner that did not take place in his 'beloved' South.

William Faulkner lived in Rowan Oak and Greenfield Farm in his final years. In 1960, he completed his final novel, *the Reivers*, a

comic but rich novel that reflected Faulkner's longing for his young Oxford days. Faulkner returned to Rowan Oak in 1962. During that spring, he fell from his horse twice to bring back his old injuries and pains. Drinking heavily and taking a lot of painkillers would deteriorate his health. Exactly one month after the *Reivers* was published on June 4, Faulkner accepted Estelle's offer to take him to a sanitarium on July 4. However, during the first night in his stay in Wright's Sanitarium in Byhalia:

*William Faulkner sat up in bed and then collapsed, dead of a heart attack. He is buried in Oxford's St. Peter's Cemetery, at the foot of a hill and underneath a large oak tree, in a setting suggestive of the natural world that he loved so well. (Fargnoli & Golay, 2008, p. 17)*

In brief, born in the Southern plains in the small town of Ripley, being raised in the garden of the Old Colonel's *the Big Place*, having established a home for his name in *the Rowan Oak*, and collecting stories of his colonial past in *the Greenfield Farm*, the final stand for one of the best pens of the Southern literature, William Faulkner, would be a grave under a large oak tree; the irony of Faulkner's life was completed with a death similar to that his father's leaving a great culture of literature to the Southern United States Literature as will be examined in the next section.

### **Faulkner's South**

*"Only Southerners have taken horsewhips and pistols to editors  
about the treatment or maltreatment of their manuscript (...)  
we no longer succumb to the impulse.  
But it is still there, within us."*

- William Faulkner.

Having written almost all his novels in Southern settings, except *A Fable* narrated in a French setting, William Faulkner has been one of the most influential writers of this Southern United States literature since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Faulkner was more of a Southerner than a modernist writer in his approach to social matters; however, in terms of his writing style, Faulkner was far beyond his period in his fictional creativity, which finally led to his receiving Nobel Prize Literature late in his writing career. His literary voyage was from past to present; from colonization to industrialization; from the Black Belt to the Modern South; from

carpetbaggers, redeemers to social justice warriors; finally, from regionality to universality. At the end of this voyage, Faulkner became the first laureate from Mississippi after receiving Nobel Prize in Literature in 1949. His works, *A Fable* (1954) and his last novel *The Reivers* (1962) won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction posthumously. The author is primarily well-known for his novels and short stories about the characters and stories depicted mostly in his fictional *Yoknapatawpha* county. Faulkner lived much of his life in Lafayette County, Mississippi; similarly, reflecting his observations, social experiences and familial heritage in his imaginary world perfectly. His choice of characters and settings from the changing Southern life earned him a name for himself. Consequently, the South embraced Faulkner so did he do the same for his beloved South.

In detail, Faulkner has been extensively examined in terms of his familial past with regard to his literary structure. However, to achieve a cultural and gender study approach on Faulkner's oeuvre, it is necessary to reveal the real journey in Faulkner's racial, social and literary approach to Southern life. William Faulkner, one of the most significant figures of the 20th century American Novel, has been subjected to various literary criticism regarding his approach to writing and literature. He was one of the members of a post-civil war reconstructionist family; however, in time, Faulkner became aware of the change in social life and racial matters, then wrote about realities of both former slaves and future black society in a more realistic manner. Despite the change in Faulkner's writing style and approach to social life of Southern America during the period between post-Civil War and World War I, the certain aspects of his heritage continued to haunt his character development and writing style.

Similar to the South which historically underwent a dramatic change from the colonized New World (or Old South) to the establishment of the Modern New South, details of which were elaborated in the history section, William Faulkner experienced similar improvement and experiences in his self-realization and literary passage from *the Lost Cause* reality to *the Lost Generation* reality. Critically, this passage was not realized in a day. Faulkner ensured this critical appreciation with his deep love of writing and his South. Faulkner's universal literary quality and his Southern locality have been a subject of crucial debate for so long. In this respect, Granville Hicks (1951) in his article, "Faulkner's South: A Northern Interpretation", emphasized this comparison as follows:

*There is the Nobel Prize to remind us that the writings of William Faulkner belong to the world and not to a single nation, much less to a particular region of that nation (...) Writings of William Faulkner belong to the world and not to a single nation, much less to a particular region of that nation. For that matter, much recent criticism of Faulkner's work, by offering allegorical interpretations of his novels, has emphasized the universal almost to the exclusion of the regional. (Hicks, 1951, p. 269)*

Accordingly, William Faulkner's writing career began with his love of writing, thanks to his socially and intellectually elite friends in the South, his familial support in terms of reading, and vivid Southern experiences provided by his father and nanny. His main motives in the South had been his familial roots, his familial heritage and the changing social perspectives of the South during early days of his youth. However, as the author got older, his attitude gained a new and more humanitarian perspective. In addition, Hicks (1951) suggested that "Faulkner is (...) a Southern writer, not merely in literary but also in biographical terms, not only because he has written almost exclusively about the South but also because all but a small part of his life has been spent there" (269). Having been summarized in the biography section of this book, William Faulkner learned many aspects of modern life outside the South but the basics of everything related to human beings in the South.

Not only did the Southern United States mean a region, a live setting and a distinct escape from the world, but the Mississippi also created a great alternative to the change in the modernizing world during the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century for Faulkner. Donald A. Ringe (1982), in his gothic analysis, suggested:

*Faulkner's fiction charts the progression from pre- to post-Civil War territories, from premodern to modernized, and one of the great "terrors" of his work—aside from the spectral spatial locales—is generated by the economic transformation of the South. (Ringe, 1982, p. 26)*

The economic transformation mentioned by Ringe could not be achieved until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century because there was a complex social establishment in the South concerning social issues. The Lost Cause of the Civil War had been haunting the South from the Reconstruction to the New South until its literary Renaissance. These official actions implemented during this period, including abolishing slavery, always faced Southern reaction: this time, the reaction would

be Jim Crow laws for a century and the redeemers trying to protect their White supremacy. Faulkner and his family experienced various difficulties but also opportunities during implementing these amendments and political changes. As a semi-aristocratic family, the Falkners achieved in building their name in railroad business before the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Despite structural implementation, the Southern American social life and Faulkner's family and friends underwent various difficulties in social spheres. As "the first child of Murry Cuthbert and Maud Butler Falkner and the great-grandson of the soldier, author, banker, and railroad builder William Clark Falkner, known as the Old Colonel" (Fargnoli & Golay, 2008, p. 16), Faulkner experienced the change in post-Civil War South period America in terms of racial problems, slavery and its abolishment. Concerning personal experiences in his youth, they are all reflected in special character development in Faulkner's vivid and modernist description of his Yoknapatawpha county, which was a fictional Mississippi containing real life reflections from Faulkner's own familial heritage.

This Yoknapatawpha projection had always been in Faulkner's mind in his writings, but initially, he tried his pen with verses with inspiration his reading, education and friends. The most significant inspiration sources of Yoknapatawpha were Dickens and Balzac with their rich character maps in their novels. Therefore, Faulkner began to try his pen with short stories taking place in small Southern towns followed by detailed writing practices to include many families living in the same fictional town. Carl Rollyson (2020), in his study on Faulkner's life describes this progress as follows:

*The elements of Faulkner's southern heritage, and particularly his family history do not come fully into play until his third novel, *Flags in the Dust*, published as *Sartoris*, a truncation that magnifies, sometimes simplifies, and debunks Falkner family lore. The old Colonel figure, John Sartoris, embodies the myth more than the man William C. Falkner. The man, more townsman than plantation owner, and certainly no cavalier with legions of slaves, was a lawyer and businessman who came out of the war with a fortune—how, no one knew, although he may have acquired his wealth as a blockade-runner after leaving the Confederate army in 1863. (Rollyson, 2020, p. 19)*

Many unique characters in Faulkner's novel were shadows from the past, effects from that period's family affairs and global reflection of human psychology. The old Colonel Jefferson and various other characters in Faulkner's novel reflected a certain

aspect of his own experiences of the post-Civil War South in America. Minter expressed this change in his book on William Faulkner's life as follows:

*Because William Faulkner's characters are obsessed with the past, the same has been said of their author. Biographers dwell on his family history, especially the example of his great-grandfather, the old Colonel, William C. Falkner (1825-1889), who embodied the three major legends of the South: the Cavalier Legend, about family origins and personal style; the Plantation Legend, about 'the golden age' before the war; and the Redeemers Legend, about the glorious unseating of the carpetbaggers. (Minter, 1997, p. 19)*

That is because the colonel in Faulkner's life also influenced his former approach to slavery and the social change in the South. The old Colonel was in reality William C. Falkner (1825-1889) then became "a near-legendary figure and the prototype of Colonel John Sartoris of Faulkner's fictional Jefferson, Mississippi, and Yoknapatawpha County" (Fargnoli & Golay, 2008, p. 3). Fargnoli and Golay, in their *Critical Companion to Faulkner*, stressed the effect and presence of Faulkner's grandfather while describing his familial past:

*Faulkner's ancestry was mostly Scots or Scots-Irish. He evidently regarded the violent, impulsive, grasping, creative Old Colonel as his spiritual father. W. C. Falkner, born in 1825, migrated from North Carolina via Missouri to northern Mississippi, settling in Ripley, Mississippi, in the early 1840s. He read law, served in the Mississippi militia during the Mexican War, and established himself during the 1850s as a prosperous, slaveholding lawyer, businessman, and farmer. (Fargnoli & Golay, 2008, p. 3)*

This type of grandfather's past was narrated heavily to Faulkner during his childhood and adolescence leading to a general picturesque Southern life in Faulkner's mind and fiction. There were many details regarding the family's past during both reconstruction and World War I. For instance, the Falkner family used to have many African-American cousins who were not mentioned enough due to Jim Crow laws preventing any mentioning of African-American citizens of the South after the abolishment of slavery since the old aristocracy tried to protect its legacy utilizing ignoring the Black community for a century. In terms of change in Faulkner's approach to racial matters, his treatment of race was also influenced by what Bama informed him about his great-grandfather's help to Ripley's

black citizens. One of them, Gus Green, wrote to his sisters on December 16, 1948:

*I borrowed \$50.00, a lot of money in those days from Col. W. C. Falkner (...) during my stay in college and would pay him back when I taught a country summer school. (...) I restate these few things so you may see I have many good things to recollect about my old home. The fact is there was no real hatred on the part of either race toward the other in those days. We neither learned to hate or to fear each other. And these attitudes have helped me to go through the world in a good way. (Rollyson, 2020, p. 26)*

Donald Philip Duclos from William Patterson University studied the life of the old Colonel in detail. The old Colonel's daughter, Bama, reported to Duclos that the old Colonel was a very good man for unfortunate people, namely, servants of the past (Duclos, 1825-1889, p. 263). That is another thing that Faulkner used to listen as memories and stories from the old Colonial well-known in the family.

*Once Faulkner has created a group of characters, they go on living in his imagination and often in his writings. Quentin Compson served him as narrator in several short stories; both Quentin and his father appear in *Absalom, Absalom!*; and General Compson is a minor character in *Go Down, Moses*. (Hicks, 1951, p. 275)*

Similarly, as the Old Colonel wrote a melodramatic novel supporting the positive change in the South, Faulkner also believed in such virtues among Southern communities regardless of race, religion and social degree. However, the reality was different for both old Colonel Falkner and the Young Faulkner.

In the outburst of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century psychology, anthropology and social sciences, however, American modernist literature was a popular literary style between World War I and World War II. Ward defined the borders of the modern American Literary oeuvre as follows:

*The modernist era highlighted innovation in the form and language of poetry and prose, as well as addressing numerous contemporary topics, such as race relations, gender and the human condition. Many American modernists became expatriated in Europe during this time, often becoming stalwarts in the European movement, as was the case for T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound and Gertrude Stein. These writers were often known as the Lost Generation. (Ward & C. Ward, 1997)*

Besides this general approach to modernism based on World Wars' influence on American authors, Faulkner also contributed to this movement from his unique point of view. Faulkner's great contribution to Southern American Literature includes many venues of literary movements such as Harlem Renaissance, Southern Modernism and Southern Renaissance. While many authors of the Harlem Renaissance supported black rights in modern cities of America, Faulkner was different in terms of his peculiar importance to the Southern Social life changes, he was in an equal eye-distance to both white people and black people of America. Leigh Anne emphasized this difference between general modern approach and southern literary experience as follows: "Many writers of this movement used modernist techniques to represent African American life (...) Southern modernism similarly represented the life and unique experiences of the South using modernist aesthetics, with celebrated figures including William Faulkner and Tennessee Williams" (Duck, 2018, p. 10).

World War I influenced many American modernist writers in a way to lead their exploration of "the psychological wounds and spiritual scars of the war experience" (Smethurst, 2011). Furthermore, the economic crisis in America at the beginning of the 1930s also had its reflections on literature. Many negative aspects of the American experience at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century can be easily traced back in literary works of art. Still, Faulkner implemented a realistic and highly creative way of describing the realities of many distinct characters in a Southern American setting of that period.

In terms of his approach to black society and his radical past, many researchers criticized and discussed Faulkner's writing style differently and in contradiction. For instance, Cep discussed Faulkner's initial writing style based on Southern experiences as follows:

*The Civil War features in some dozens of Faulkner's novels. It is most prominent in those set in Yoknapatawpha County, an imaginary Mississippi landscape filled with battlefields and graveyards, veterans and widows, slaves and former slaves, draft dodgers and ghosts. In "Light in August," the Reverend Gail Hightower is haunted by his Confederate grandfather; in "Intruder in the Dust," the lawyer Gavin Stevens insists that all the region's teen-age boys are obsessed with the hours before Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg. In these books, no*

*Southerner is spared the torturous influence of the war, whether he flees the region, as Quentin Compson does, in "The Sound and the Fury," or whether, like Rosa Coldfield, in "Absalom, Absalom!," she stays. (Cep, 2020)*

The war had huge influences on every aspect of life without sparing any races, sociological levels and characters in Faulkner's fictional world. Every character in Faulkner's domain was both characteristic, realistic and vividly reflective of his own life. Not to forget his fictional social life, Faulkner even himself lied about his inclusion in the War. He was happy for interest in post-war traumas of soldiers and pretended to be a wounded soldier as well; however, it was not true that Faulkner joined any fights in France.

In another study, Taylor examined Faulkner's approach to Southern lifestyle and his racial thoughts and uttered as follows:

*In the course of this search, we are told, Faulkner did make considerable progress in accommodating his vision to modern realities, especially in his ability to come to terms with the region's tragic racial history. His two great triumphs in this regard were Light in August and Go Down, Moses, but, Taylor insists, even in those novels Faulkner clung to his initial racial paternalism and failed to comprehend the true culture and feelings of southern blacks. (Taylor, 1983)*

As indicated by Taylor, Faulkner's late novels differed from his previous works. As much as Faulkner refrained from using his racial approach to Southern lifestyle, he still tried to change his approach to slavery, black society and the new life in the Southern America. These visible changes came with an elaborated and detailed depiction of Yoknapatawpha county. In every new work of literature, Faulkner introduced new and more complicated South from every racial and social aspect.

In terms of modernism and Faulkner's storytelling, in one of his letters, Faulkner himself indicated his way of telling a story in his own words as follows:

*With regards any specific book, I'm trying primarily to tell a story, in the most effective way I can think of, the most moving, the most exhaustive. But I think even that is incidental to what I am trying to do, taking my output (the course of it) as a whole. I am telling the same story over and over, which is myself and the world (...) This I think accounts for what people call the obscurity, the involved formless 'style', endless sentences. I'm trying to say it all in one sentence, between one*

*Cap and one period. I'm still trying to put it all, if possible, on one pinhead.* (Cowley, 1978, p. 14)

Faulkner's rich writing style and his closeness to the fictional world in realistic depictions he created were also emphasized by his own words. However, he experienced many different periods ranging from start of abolitionist period to post-war stresses of America which finally led to a change in his attitude towards his own setting and character line.

Certain characters in Faulkner's life were so significant that they gave names to many colorful and realistic characters in his novels. Some changes in fates, in racial experiences, traumas and stories were the outcome of Faulkner's changing ideas towards the Modern Southern American society. Faulkner began his career as a member of a redeemer family and reflected in characters, and then, he became a justice warrior in his final novels in a way by criticizing southern racial matters and unsolved problems of world wars.

Consequently, Faulkner entered the literary scene with his fresh memories from the American South in Post-Civil War period and reflected all his observations and feelings on his fictional world, namely *Yoknapatawpha* county. However, in time, Faulkner experienced World War I and heard stories of racial matters that would slowly change his views on social matters. Finally, in his final novel, Faulkner consulted to satiric comedy to reflect post-abolitionist problems and social and racial matters happening throughout the Southern soil. It is possible to find more examples of Faulkner's carpetbagger past and his redeemer future in many of his novels in further studies.

In his writing career leading to two Pulitzer Prizes and the 1949 Nobel Prize in Literature, Faulkner experienced both Post-Civil War period and World War I. Then, Faulkner reflected his experiences and observations in his vivid settings full of characters and social changes. "As he approaches the fundamental problems of the nature and destiny of man by way of the South, so he approaches the South by way of Yoknapatawpha County" (Hicks, 1951, p. 270). What made the South a quality in literary terms was Faulkner's keen eyes on everyday life, eternal misery of human psyche and the never-ending struggles of poor people surviving under harsh conditions of industrialization.

## Eudora Welty

Born in Jackson, Mississippi, Eudora Alice Welty (1909-2001) grew up in the Southern American setting in a modern family with two younger brothers. Welty lived a similar childhood to Faulkner since she was also born into an educated family with three children, “she grew up with her younger brothers Edward Jefferson and Walter Andrews” (Marrs, 2005, p. 20). Welty’s mother, Mary Chestina (Andrews) Welty, was a schoolteacher. The Weltys living in a small village, began to prosper as Jackson, Mississippi began to expand in population. The Weltys family was not originally Southern, “(...)not originally from Mississippi. They moved South from the North: Christian Welty was born in Ohio mother, Chestina, lived in West Virginia” (Brown, 2012, p. 7). Having lost a son after its birth in 1905, Eudora Welty came as a source of happiness for the family; accordingly, both parents were very protective of their daughter.

Her mother was the main source of her childhood steps into the world of literature. Her father, Christian Webb Welty, was an insurance executive, and he was interested in gadgets and machines as well as photography. Therefore, Welty’s father gave her a love of mechanical things. Welty later “used technology for symbolism in her stories and also became an avid photographer, like her father” (Johnston, 2011). In summary, Carolyn J. Brown, in her biographical work, *A Daring Life*, concluded that “From her mother, Eudora would get her strength, independence, and love of the written word; from her father, her passion for photography and travel; and from both a sense of adventure” (Brown, 2012, p. 7). This situation was very close to William Faulkner’s familial connections. In comparison, there was parallelism in terms of reading passion and the love of social events. Even Eudora Welty herself defined her book-filled environment in her house in her own biography book, *One Writer’s Beginnings*, in detail:

*(...) any room in our house, at any time of day, was there to read in, or to be read to. My mother read to me. She’d read to me in the big bedroom in the mornings, when we were in her rocker together, which ticked in rhythm as we rocked, as though we had a cricket accompanying the story. (Welty, 1984, p. 5)*

Thanks to this environment and opportunities at home, even at the age of five, "Eudora was able to read as well as be read to, and her mother felt the time had arrived for a more formal education than home and neighborhood could offer" (Marrs, 2005, p. 8). Not surprisingly, with her love of reading and her passion into mechanical world, Eudora Welty was trained at Central High School in Jackson (Fowler, 2015). Not long before she graduated from high school, Welty moved with her family to a house built for them at 1119 Pinehurst Street. She lived in this house until her death. Following Welty's death, Wyatt C. Hedrick "designed the Welty's Tudor Revival-style home, which is now known as *The Eudora Welty House and Garden*" (Eudora Welty Foundation, 2011). This house and garden were also significant elements to be considered while analyzing her literary development.

Unlike Faulkner's life, Eudora Welty could not escape the outer world despite familial protection. In Welty's case, this source of outside knowledge and stories was a neighbor lady telling stories indicated by Suzanne Marrs in her Welty's biography:

*(...) the lady who "invited me to catch her doodlebug; under the trees in her backyard were dozens of their holes. When you stuck a broom straw down one and called, 'Doodlebug, doodlebug, your house is on fire and all your children are burning up,' she believed this is why the doodlebug came running out of the hole. My mother could never have told me her stories, and I think I knew why even then: my mother didn't believe them. But I could listen to this murmuring lady all day. She believed everything she heard, like the doodlebug. And so did I."* (Marrs, 2005, p. 18)

The neighbor lady and another 'seamstress' visiting the Weltys told many stories about the small town. As Marrs (2005) emphasized, young Eudora was very impressed from these live stories outside the official story reading by her mother. These stories, characters from normal life in the South, allowed for future references by Welty. In her early novellas, Eudora Welty described these African-American characters in a vivid and picturesque manner.

During her childhood, the young Welty even created her own theatre scenes from large dolls, improving her creativity and imagination. Not much time was needed for her imagination and literary creativity to be awarded. Even at age twelve, in 1921, "Eudora

won the Jackie Mackie Jingles contest and received twenty-five dollars along with a citation expressing the hope that she would improve in poetry to such an extent as to win fame” (Marrs, 2005, p. 28). In the same year, the young Welty prepared a book for her two brothers for their reading. During her educational period, still African-American children were segregated in their education, therefore, Eudora Welty did not attend school with black students. One of the well-known African-American authors, Richard Wright was also the same age as Welty and attended one of these segregated schools in the same town.

Rather than racial discrimination, Eudora Welty would face another type of social discrimination during her education. There were children and grandchildren of southern landlords, Jews, immigrants, businessmen, and civic leaders. Suzanne Marrs (2005) reported the diversity and academically prolific environment in Welty’s school as follows:

*Among Eudora’s friends who graduated between 1923 and 1928 were an artist (Helen Jay Lotterhos), a composer and conductor (Engel), two college professors (Frank Lyell and Bill Hamilton), a journalist (Ralph Hilton), a lawyer (Joe Skinner), an Episcopal priest (George Stephenson), and a New York Times Book Review editor (Nash Burger). (Marrs, 2005, p. 11)*

Such a rich and diverse academic environment boosted Welty’s creativity and knowledge. Welty achieved a 95% score success in her high school education. Her love of writing and ideal to become a writer had already taken shape during high school. Welty attended the Mississippi State College for Women from 1925 to 1927, from which she later received a 1981 Medal of Excellence” (PBS, 2021, p. 1). Welty, in a short period, attended studies on English literature in the University of Wisconsin. Welty’s father recommended that she take courses on advertising at Columbia University, because Welty finished her higher education at a period coinciding with the Great Depression, meaning that she would not be able to find a proper job in her literary profession.

New York, Columbia University would be her final journey in colleges. Welty graduated during the Great Depression, meaning she could not find a job in New York. Following her journeys from college to college, Welty finally returned to Jackson in 1931. In the same year, “her father died of leukemia” (Brown, 2017, p. 33). Then, her secondary journey began ranging from different works to her full-

time authorship in three years. At first, Welty found a temporary job at a radio station. Then, she wrote about Jackson society for the Memphis newspaper *Commercial Appeal* (Makowsky, 1998, p. 341). After Eudora Welty began to work as a publicity agent for the Works Progress Administration. During her studies in the field of advertisement, Welty started to collect stories from people. Additionally, the author was keen on taking pictures, a legacy remnant of her father. Photography allowed deeper and meaningful depiction of social life in a small town in the South.

The most significant opportunity had been Welty's tendency for her own isolation. Her upbringing and secure family environment had allowed that factor for so long. However, Welty began to realize the Southern life and its discrimination scattered around the town. Because her privileged life in Jackson was distinct compared to lives of African Americans in the town. Her photography studies allowed her to get a glimpse of the real South. Progressively, the author began to observe these social problems and changes individually. Eudora Welty achieved female creativity within the strictly defined male-dominant southern description. Therefore, her career path to winning a Pulitzer's Prize for Fiction was laid in her vivid description of southern female experience rather than harsh male conditions of slavery, post-civil war racism and difficult psychological experiences during World Wars.

Within three years of working in different Jackson sectors, Eudora Welty left her job to become a full-time writer. During this period, Welty organized meetings and talks with her friends and other writers, which she called "the Night-Blooming Cereus Club." Since her father left her a great income from the insurance company, Welty did not feel any economic problems for the rest of her life. This allowed her a secure passage to literary focus. Her literary journey literally began. In 1936, she published "The Death of a Traveling Salesman" in a literary journal, *Manuscript*. Welty then published several new stories in other periodicals such as *The Sewanee Review* and *The New Yorker* (Marrs, 2005, p. 52). Welty began earning fame among significant Southern writers after publishing her first collection of short stories, *A Curtain of Green*. "Her new-found success won her a seat on the staff of The New York Times Book Review, as well as a Guggenheim Fellowship which enabled her to travel to France, England, Ireland, and Germany" (Eudora Welty Foundation, 2011). Her journeys and education outside the South also supplied

her with great insight into human psyche, and as in the case of Faulkner, her sense of place began to take shape.

In her biographical work of Eudora Welty, Suzanne Marrs emphasized that Welty as an author was widely recognized and awarded during her lifetime. Marrs added the list of honorary prizes for Welty as follows:

*(...) Received a Pulitzer Prize, the French Legion of Honor, the Howells' Medal for Fiction, the Gold Medal for Fiction from the National Institute of Arts and Letters, the National Book Foundation Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and the National Medal of the Arts. She was elected to membership in the National Institute of Arts and Letters and then elevated to the American Academy of Arts and Letters. (Marrs, 2005, p. 8)*

Such a powerful and quick ascension to the league of famous American authors had many reasons, which will be elaborated in the next section.

Eudora Welty continued to live in her family house in Jackson throughout her life until she died in 2001. Welty was buried next to her lost brother in Greenwood Cemetery with her headstone bearing a quote from her best novel, *The Optimist's Daughter*: "For her life, any life, she had to believe, was nothing but the continuity of its love" (Wilson, 2016, p. 798). Eudora Welty now rests with her most beloved flowers, similar to those she had cared for throughout her life.

## Welty's South

*"Southerners love a good tale. They are born reciters, great memory retainers, diary keepers, letter exchangers (...) great talkers."*  
- Eudora Welty

The relationship between the South and Eudora Welty was her secure heaven, as her hometown Jackson, her intellectual power in her social circle, her love of writing, her keen photographic eye towards daily life in the South and her universal values refrained from political and racial struggles in the South. In her late biographical work on her own life story, *One Writer's Beginnings*, Eudora Welty (1984) described precisely his isolation from the

temporary world of conflicts as follows: "As you have seen, I am a writer who came of a sheltered life. A sheltered life can be a daring life as well. For all serious daring starts from within" (140). Welty herself had been against biographical works of art throughout her life. However, during the late period of her life, maybe based on missing her younger experience with her family, wrote a detailed book on her becoming an author. After her death in 2001, Associated Press published an article, titled "Eudora Welty, Voice of Southern Simplicity, Dies." It was also the case; Welty's legacy began to be established during the 1930s and carried on the next century. Authors such as Robert Penn Warren and Katherine Anne Porter first observed her literary vivid characterization and promising style in literature, thus encouraged her to publish her first story collection, *A Curtain of Green*, in 1941.

As emphasized in the Southern literature section, the sense of place was also powerful and decisive in Welty's approach to both regional and universal issues. As already felt by Faulkner himself, Eudora Welty was the female counterpart of the hidden love of the South, which emerged during a young and curious author's journey to the North. Both young authors discovered their roots after completely escaping their homes. Welty's higher education in Mississippi, Wisconsin, and finally New York allowed her to realize the power of a secure home.

Isolation meant home for Eudora Welty. Her family home with a colorful garden ensured her creativity boost. Jackson, Mississippi, was also another secure heaven for her since her family provided the author with high level of security and isolation from the Southern social turmoil in her childhood. Even after discovering realities in the South, Welty did not forget her secure place in Jackson town. That was why she described her life as "sheltered " in her biographical work.

In her detailed article on Welty's South, Daniele Pitavy-Souques (2000) resembled Welty's literary development in connection with her painting studies during her childhood, remarked the significance of visual arts on the author as such:

*Although she abandoned the idea, visual arts have remained a lifelong interest, and in many ways, they have fed her writing. And like the great innovative artists of this century—Picasso, for instance—she developed early an interest in all forms of popular art and performance, with a*

*sure sense that nothing human was foreign to her. The exploration of New York when she was a student has been of capital importance for the artist because that city introduced her to modernity. (Pitavy-Souques, 2000, p. 91)*

Her family ensured Welty's interest in all forms of art during her early education. In addition, in her "*The Fictional Eye: Eudora Welty's Retranslation of the South*", Daniele Pitavy-Souques (2000) emphasized the importance of modernity intertwined with Welty's love of art. The source for this realization was her stay in New York during the last part of her college days. However, this realization resulted from artistic qualities to be observed in a big city and the Great Depression in New York, ensuring that Welty began to observe social realities in such a financial bottleneck. Following her return to home after many exploratory voyages, it is possible to examine all her productive photography, mainly consisting of images taken when Welty wrote her literary works for *A Curtain of Green, and Other Stories*. Pitavy-Souques defined Welty's photographic quality as reflected in her works, "Welty's photographic approach of her subject is comparable to a translator's approach to a text. Because her eye is a writer's eye, she produced the equivalent of a literary translation" (99). Besides, Pitavy-Souques elaborated Welty's photographic South compared to predecessors such as Edith Wharton and Willa Cather. Unlike authors directly with Southern origin and supporting Redeemer themes, as an author coming from North but adopting the South as her home, Welty was "pitting the New World against the Old World, the United States against Europe, then in confronting the South she knew so intimately with the South as political and literary tradition" (92). Although, Welty's South was almost distinct and grotesque compared to other Southern writers, it was because Welty was raised in a more controlled and refined environment in the South that she did not bear a biased approach to Southern matters. Accordingly, Pitavy-Souques concluded her article by discussing the "two kinds of Arcadia contend for dominance" in the South and finalized with a general picture of Welty's South in her literary quality with the following words:

*It is just this borderline of experience, the treacherous path of daring that characterizes Welty's retranslation of the South, which is far more ambitious and ground-breaking than has been acknowledged so far. Because Welty examines the very foundations of the South—religion and bi-racialism—in an entirely new way, iconoclastic, visionary, and ahead of its time. (Pitavy-Souques, 2000, p. 93)*

The comparative chapter will give detailed comparisons between Eudora Welty's and Faulkner's South. However, Southern roots and modern evolving South were briefly different motives in Faulkner's and Welty's literary universes. While Eudora Welty observed a realistic picture with artistic and literary colors she implemented, Faulkner was the defining power behind the Southern way of considering many problems.

As much as Faulkner's *Yoknapatawpha* was a significant defining place in the author's male South, there was a female counterpart creatively elaborated by Eudora Welty, *Morgana*. Similar to Faulkner's beginning of his literary journey with short stories from a small Mississippi town and then configuring the detailed of a future fictional South, Welty's Morgana County was also fictionalized and planned following the author's initial short stories. Welty wrote a letter to her literary agent Russell about a new "Mississippi book" which would become her Morgana experience.

*There are some things about a state that nobody could even know about who has not lived there a long time, and those things should determine the whole approach, don't you think? (...) and I believe I could find stories, old ones & new ones, and beliefs and songs and violent events all over the place to show what the life here is, to my belief (...) Think of all the people who would be in my book—wonderful Indians to start with, and the Indian tales are beautiful and dramatic and very touching some of them—and Aaron Burr & Blennerhassett, and Lafayette, and Audubon, and Jefferson Davis, and the bandits (...) and Lafitte the pirate, and all kinds of remarkable people. (Marrs, 2005, p. 68)*

Welty returned to her motherland to ensure that she would fictionalize a great Mississippi land to be called Morgana in the future. Following her intentions on writing something new for the South, Welty wrote *A Worn Path* which was the story of Phoenix, an African-American woman making regular journeys from her village to a far-away town to fetch some free medicine for her grandson. Welty in future letters wrote to Russell indicating that feedback from the agent had helped so much in articulating such a great story. That story, Welty said in one of her interviews, was just written over a picture the author had taken some time ago in a Southern town.

Having lived a literarily prolific life, Welty Eudora spent most of her writing sessions in solitude. "In her upstairs bedroom at the Pinehurst Street house," indicated Suzanne Marrs (2005) Welty's

writing routine adding “she established a pattern that would typify her writing career, devoting most mornings and early afternoons to composing, taking time off for reading and gardening” (47). Even beginning with her first short stories, e.g. *A Worn Path*, gardens and flowers were taking their place in Welty’s fiction. When the author was away from her home and garden, she could not write anything new. Even the author wrote a letter to her agent about the importance of her garden in her literary therapy.

During Welty’s serenity of writing in Jackson, the most practical side of such solitude was that World War I and II affected the Southern authors in the form of Lost Generation but skipped Welty mostly. Welty only questioned the human side of such worldwide conflict then began to question humanity. Welty’s naturalist and realist portrayal of the South finally aroused her curiosity in mythology. As in the case of Faulkner and other Southern authors, mythology, especially Greek myths, gained importance in social questioning human values in the literary world globally. Accordingly, by 1935, Welty tried to find something valuable for her literary cause. In a letter to one of her friends, Welty indicated “having nothing else to do all day I read *The Golden Bough*, the *Decline of the West*, and all kinds of folk tales and fairy tales and take notes” (Marrs, 2005, p. 48). *The Golden Bough* (1890) was one of the most distinguished mythical and religious anthropological studies by well-known anthropologist, James George Frazer. This book, thus, was a great explosion of creative approach to ancient human past in Europe and globally. This study was just a beginning of the mythical approaches in the literary world. Welty aimed to create more detailed and elaborated universal values in her characters and narration. Myths were a good way to achieve her goal. Not only the Greek but also Irish myths were also significant sources for Welty. Sigmund Freud is another striking figure to change psychological approach to humans. Carl Gustav Jung’s predecessor combined the psychological approach with mythical archetypes to universalize this approach.

Consequently, Welty’s mythologic readings ensured her a place among myth-supported creative authors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. “The critical consensus nowadays seems to place Welty as a Jungian postmodernist and as an early feminist” indicated Jan Nordby Gretlund (2008) in her article on Welty, emphasizing the author’s approach to Jungian elements in her characters (503). Following her

self-education on mythical world, Eudora Welty wrote a series of stories in fictional Morgana country, *The Golden Apples*, which would capture further literary attention. The following chapters will examine mythical analyses based on gender in both authors' works.

### CHAPTER III

#### LITERARY ASSESSMENT OF WILLIAM FAULKNER'S YOKNAPATAWPHA COUNTY

This chapter aims to compare and examine two different novels by Faulkner from the point of William Faulkner's literary development and his views on life and American social history. In this respect, two novels from Faulkner's oeuvre were selected for comparison and analysis of change. *Sartoris* is the first novel selected for study since this literary work formed the basis for Faulkner's approach to changing Southern life. Furthermore, this novel represents the familial post-civil war heritage as a middle-class family member. Most importantly, many characters and the setting in *Sartoris* are familial to Faulkner's real life. The second novel chosen for discussion in this book is *The Reivers*, the final novel by Faulkner.

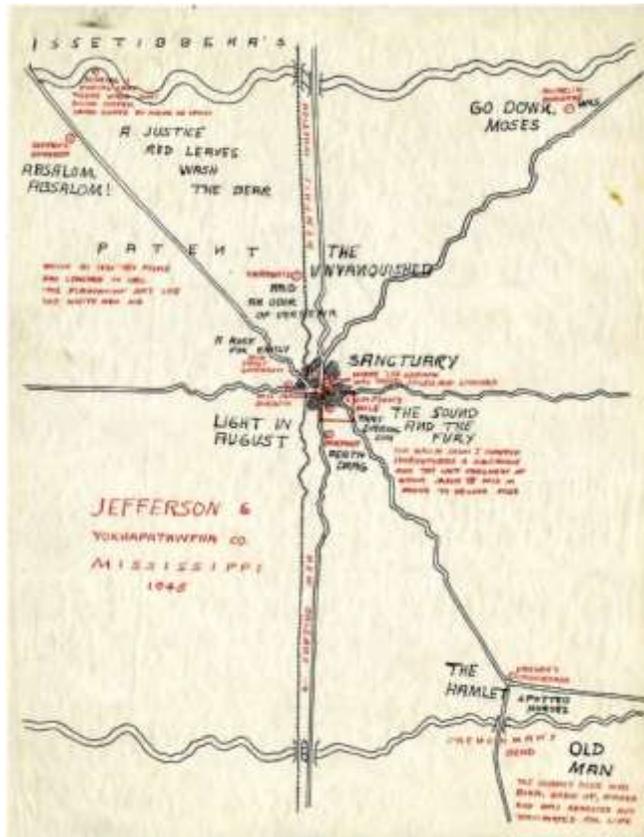
The reason for choosing Faulkner's initial and final works of art is that this study aims to show a glimpse of the change in Faulkner's literary adventure in broader terms of literary quality, social and historical influence in Faulkner's life, and finally Faulkner's own eye becoming more precise, more qualified and more mature in terms of racial or gender issues.

In his "Faulkner's South: A Northern Interpretation," Grenville Hicks discusses the beginning phase of Faulkner's *Sartoris* saga as follows:

*One of Faulkner's recent stories, "A Name for the City," describes the earliest days of Jefferson, when it was "a store, a tavern, a jail or calaboose, a half-dozen log cabins set in the middle of the wilderness domain which Ikkemotubbe, old Issetibbeha's successor, was ceding to the white man." This is the background for the Yoknapatawpha saga. Into this wilderness domain came various men to make their fortunes and work out their destinies. Of these various men, four have thus far been of importance for the saga: Jason Lycurgus Compson, Lucius Quintus Carothers McCaslin, Thomas Sutpen, and John Sartoris. (Hicks, 1951, p. 271)*

Accordingly, William Faulkner mapped this detailed literary voyage of Yoknapatawpha saga during the preparation of Malcolm

Cowley's edition, *The Portable Faulkner*, and drew these stories and novels in a detailed map given below.



**Figure 2:** Jefferson & Yoknapatawpha Co. Mississippi 1945

Such a successful and calculated approach to the Southern fictional creativity by Faulkner ensured his global fame leading to the Nobel Prize in Literature. Therefore, one novel from the first sight of Yoknapatawpha, *Sartoris*, and the final resolution referred to as the golden book of Yoknapatawpha by Faulkner, *The Reivers*, will be described and examined briefly in this chapter.

## **SARTORIS**

Regarded by literary critics as the final work of William Faulkner's apprenticeship in literature, *Sartoris* is Faulkner's third

novel in which the author began to articulate the famous Faulknerian setting called *Yoknapatawpha* county which would also be elaborated and included many future novels. This novel introduced Faulkner's first line of characters with a plot story planned to take six novels in total. The novel was Faulkner's other artistic trial of his pencil, different from his initial short stories and two novels, and a great showcase of his literary creativity based on his own familial feet and observations from Southern United States.

Published in 1929, *Sartoris* was the revised and sharply cut version of *Flags in the Dust* (1976). That was because Faulkner experienced difficulties publishing *Flags in the Dust* manuscript since it included so much detailed story and character line and was found too complicated by the editors. Finally, one of Faulkner's editor friend, Ben Wasson, took on the responsibility of cutting and simplify the book in a more printable version. Although many researchers then criticized this revision, *Sartoris* was regarded as the beginning of the unique Yoknapatawpha experience.

After a brief synopsis analysis, literary significance of the novel shall be examined in the following sections with reference to Faulkner's life and his literary oeuvre.

## **Synopsis**

*Sartoris* begins in the spring of 1919 after the fugitive return of young Bayard Sartoris, the novel's protagonist, from France. Young Bayard Sartoris is a World War I aviator who is devastated with guilt since his twin brother, John, has already died in a plane crash after he had to jump out of a burning plane without a parachute. This means that young Sartoris feels uneasy even after his return to home, Jefferson town. Young Sartoris finds a solution in drinking, reckless driving around the town and violence against many people.

The novel opens with the story of young Bayard Sartoris return, but before finding the fugitive young Sartoris in the town while he is drunk and lost. The old Bayard Sartoris, the son of Colonel John Sartoris, talks with a long-term friend, Will Falls, who always narrates legendary stories of Colonel John Sartoris from the Civil War period. As an act of carrying on Sartoris legacy, Will Falls gives the old Bayard the pipe given as a present to him by Colonel John Sartoris himself in the first scene of the novel as follows:

*"What are you giving it to me for, after all this time?" he [the old Bayard] had asked. "Well, I reckon I've kept it long as Cunnel aimed for me to," old man Falls answered. "A po'house ain't no fitten place for anything of his'n, Bayard. And I'm gwine on ninety-fo' year old."* (Faulkner, Sartoris, 1983, p. 2)

The protection and usage of a pipe given by a noble friend is considered a past aristocratic tradition. Therefore, Will Falls, as the long-term helper of the family, here completes his colonial legacy even during the modernizing South at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The old aristocratic life is reflected in these dialogues as the old Bayard Sartoris comments on the new life in the South.

As time passes, young Bayard marries Narcissa Benbow without any intentions of doing so. This marriage, even, could not stop young Bayard Sartoris's rage against life. One day, young Bayard kills the old Bayard in a car accident after the old Sartoris has a heart attack. Afraid and ashamed of his grandfather's death, young Bayard is now reluctant to return home, seeking shelter on another farm outside Jefferson town. MacCallums are yeoman farmers in the hill country away from Jefferson. Young Bayard also suspects that the news of his grandfather's death will be heard soon, then leaves the MacCallums' farm.

When the fall comes, young Bayard seeks refuge in a stable run by black sharecropper family. It is a time close to Christmas Eve. After a night-say, young Bayard leaves that shelter as well. The African-American host drives him to the close railroad station. Finally, young Bayard Sartoris leaves Jefferson forever. His long journey will take him to many states and countries such as "Mexico, South America, the U.S. West Coast, and finally Chicago" (Fargnoli & Golay, 2008, p. 256). After many tries to commit suicide and kill himself, young Bayard Sartoris achieves in killing himself in an airplane crash. Young Sartoris pushes an experimental aircraft to its limits in an air show, then crashes back to ground. The last generation of Sartoris dies there, but in the same day, Narcissa Benbow gives birth to another male Sartoris to carry on the line.

In line with young Bayard Sartoris's story, Faulkner narrates another story of Horace Benbow, brother of young Sartoris's wife, Narcissa. Although Horace is also another veteran of France, he is depicted in a contradictory way compared to young Sartoris. Horace is full of love for arts. In their analysis of *Sartoris*, Fargnoli and Golay

(2008) indicate the parallel storyline with distinct qualities of both characters as follows: "Faulkner presents Horace and young Bayard as opposed romantics, one a man of reflection, the other a man of action; both are equally out of place in the rapidly changing world of 1920s Jefferson" (256). Throughout the story, Horace also involves in a bad marriage with a married woman, Belle Mitchell (Benbow). Belle divorces and marries Horace although his sister, Narcissa does not want such a marriage. This marriage also destroys Horace's life but not to a final death as young Sartoris experiences.

### **Literary Significance of *Sartoris***

William Faulkner completed *Sartoris* under the name of *Flags in the Dust* (1976), but many publishers rejected publishing that novel which was very detailed and criticized the novel as "lacking plot unity". Nevertheless, Faulkner did not give up trying to find a publisher for his great literary work in which he had faith. The author sent his copy to his agent, Ben Wasson, in New York. However, his agent applied to eleven different publishers with the manuscript. Every publishing company rejected the first manuscript called *Flags in the Dust*. Finally, Harrison Smith, an editor of Harcourt, Brace & Company, accepted the typescript. Alfred Harcourt agreed to publish this novel but stipulated that someone other than Faulkner perform a cut for this detailed manuscript. On September 20, 1928, these publishers sent a contract to Faulkner. The book was then named *Sartoris*, which was planned to have 110,000 words in length, nearly 25,000 words shorter. That was why Faulkner did not regard this book as complete. In a letter to his publisher, Faulkner also said "at last and certainly, I have written the book, of which those other things were but foals. I believe it is the dampest best book you'll look at this year, and any other publisher" (Leo Blotner, 1974). Similarly, many recent critics criticized *Sartoris* as not having Faulknerian qualities of a book compared to its original and full text published nearly half a century later.

*Sartoris* is the first of Faulkner's stories narrated in Faulkner's popular setting, Yoknapatawpha county. The book includes and describes many of the characters who would live in Faulkner's fictional universe in almost every future novel, excluding *A Fable* taking place in France. *Sartoris* was Faulkner's fictional foundation, well-prepared and well-structured for future reference in his career. This novel was also the closest precursor of some of the most famous

and well-criticized Faulkner novels such as *The Sound and the Fury*, *As I Lay Dying*, *Sanctuary* and *Light in August*.

However, contemporary critics have not discussed Faulkner's writing style in unity;. In contrast, some of the critics praised Faulkner's writing style, they also indicated the book's lack of consistency and its loose plot. Cleanth Brooks criticized the novel as "extremely well-written, full of literary allusions and exploring the plight of a lost generation (...) compared Sartoris to the poem 'The Waste Land' by T. S. Eliot" (Brooks, 1989, p. 108).

*Sartoris* reflected Faulkner's cultural heritage, with its effects still felt in his approach to post-civil war period and the abolitionist south. His heritage as a great-grandson of the Colonel from the Civil War and a redeemer who ran his business for profit in his pursuit to rebuild the South could be observed while protecting their White supremacy. The most famous character in this novel is the old Colonel figure, John Sartoris, the surname of whom gave the book its name, and many characters in the novel narrated legacy of whom. Many critics examined Faulkner's characters in relation to his life. For instance, Rollyson summarized Faulkner's family tree in parallel to his character line in various novels as follows:

*The elements of Faulkner's southern heritage, and particularly his family history, do not come fully into play until his third novel, Flags in the Dust, published as Sartoris, a truncation that magnifies, sometimes simplifies, and debunks Falkner family lore. The old Colonel figure, John Sartoris, embodies the myth more than the man William C. Falkner. The man, more townsman than plantation owner, and certainly no cavalier with legions of slaves, was a lawyer and businessman who came out of the war with a fortune—how, no one knew, although he may have acquired his wealth as a blockade-runner after leaving the Confederate army in 1863. (Rollyson, 2020, p. 19)*

As indicated by Rollyson, the title character, old Bayard Sartoris, embodies all characteristics, remembrances, familial heritage told by Faulkner's parents and grandparents realistically. Accordingly, in the novel, people around the town salute the old Bayard Sartoris described by Faulkner: "One or two passers and a merchant or so in the adjacent doorways saluted him with a sort of florid servility." (Faulkner, Sartoris, 1983, p. 5). This approach to old traditions of colonial South can be seen in many scenes throughout the novel. In the first section of *Sartoris*, old Bayard Sartoris and his

family talk about the Civil War's heroic past, actions and heroic killings, and capturing the Union commanders when they gather around a fire or in old Colonel's house.

As much as the old Colonel tries to establish a great family business in Southern America by building rail roads to this newly establishing countryside after the Civil War, Faulkner also tries to keep the importance of Southern people's feelings, experiences and realities in the most creative manner in this novel and in his following literary works. "Work on the railroad had ceased for the holiday season and John Sartoris and his engineer had ridden in at dusk from the suspended railhead in the hills to the north, and they now sat after supper in the firelight," (Faulkner, Sartoris, 1983, p. 12) describes Faulkner at the beginning of a scene. Following this introduction of a new scene, old Bayard Sartoris talks about the lack of coffee during the Civil War period. In a story, old Bayard talks about capturing a colonel and drinking his coffee since it was unavailable during that period.

Another example inspired by real stories of the family is that, after the great grandfather Falkner was killed on the street by one of his competitors, the whole family moved to another part of Mississippi. Similarly, in the novel, Sartoris, the main character old John Sartoris was also killed on the street. Just as the old Falkner family's pursuit of South's case ended with the old Colonel, and William Faulkner's fiction reflects the same attitude. However, the past could not be so easily buried as the old Colonel hoped. Throughout his writing career, Faulkner continued to reflect his familial heritage in his characters, stories, and settings.

In terms of literary significance of Sartoris, many researchers had ruled out Faulkner's initial work in terms of literary significance due to reasons mentioned earlier such as lack of plot. However, in his article, *"The Influence of Poetry on the Narrative Technique of Faulkner's Early Fiction"*, Jeffrey J. Folks discussed the early narrative stages of Faulkner's fiction in detail (Folks, 1979). Folks (1979) indicated that Faulkner employed high level of commentary and an omniscient approach to telling the story of "Bayard's haunted consciousness is contrasted with Narcissa's cloistered repose in *Sartoris*" (1985). Folks also emphasized abrupt shifts in technique from an example of stream of consciousness to external description through "its theme of dislocation of the romantic sensibility" (185).

Folks wrote on the narrative technique used by Faulkner in *Sartoris* as follows:

*In terms of narrative technique, Bayard's inability to achieve a creative balance of spiritual and physical levels is expressed in the novel's alternation between those devices which penetrate human consciousness (commentary, omniscience, stream of consciousness) and those methods which present external reality (scenic description, dialogue). (...) the novel Sartoris focuses on the internal consciousness of the romantic hero. Only at the conclusion of the novel does the narrative return to physical reality as Bayard dies in a suicidal test flight on the same day his son is born. The techniques in the final scenes, in which Doctor Peabody and his son encounter Miss Jenny at the cemetery and in which Narcissa corrects Miss Jenny concerning the naming of her child, parallel a thematic return, at least temporarily, to quotidian reality. (Folks, 1979, p. 185)*

This type of metanarrative-like setting can be observed in *Sartoris*. The main characters, families and Southern folks always discuss their past and present concurrently throughout the novel. This technique developed by William Faulkner became more and more powerful as Faulkner's literature matured with each published novel from *Yoknapatawpha*.

Consequently, it is possible to refer to the novel *Sartoris*, both bearing title character and familial grand ancestor of Faulkner, as the primary source of Faulkner's roots in literary and creative fictional universe. Incentives from the past caused Faulkner's first but powerful step into the Southern modernity, still felt psychologically and socially throughout the author's life.

### ***THE REIVERS: A REMINISCENCE***

Faulkner's final novel, *The Reivers: A Reminiscence*, was published in 1962 one month before the author's death. Although Faulkner planned to write another novel as his final piece of work, he wrote this novel in a sense as a final piece to recollect his memory, to face his colonial past, and finally to resolve his inner problems with his life. Since this book aims to compare two distinct novels by Faulkner, *The Reivers* can be easily shown as the most distinct literary work in terms of his general career as a Southern author.

After a brief synopsis analysis, literary significance of the novel shall be examined in the following sections with reference to Faulkner's life and his literary oeuvre.

## Synopsis

William Faulkner's *The Reivers: A Reminiscence* (1992) is set in 1905, in the past of a present character, in Jefferson, Mississippi setting. The novel opens with the words "Grandfather Said:" (8), then continues to narrate the childhood stories of Lucius (*Loosh*) Priest. The novel is about the comical and tragicomic adventures of the young Loosh, the protagonist. Loosh, now grandfather, tells his grandson about his experience during his eleventh age. Then, Lucius is deceived by a plot to go to Memphis with another ill-minded family friend and manservant, 41-year-old Boon Hogganbeck, and another African-American coachman of the family, Ned William McCaslin who has "a mixed heritage and achieves in surviving, even prospering in a white man's world" (Fargnoli & Golay, 2008, p. 227).

Boon Hogganbeck, as a cunning man, prepares and plans his scheme. There is a funeral in St. Louis for young Loosh's maternal grandfather, therefore, young boy's family is absent in the town. This opportunity allows Boon to deceive young Lucius Priest about his plan for a great adventure. Boon "dearly loves Loosh's grandfather Lucius (Boss) Priest's Winton Flyer" and takes care of one of the first automobiles in Yoknapatawpha (Fargnoli & Golay, 2008, p. 219). Even Boon calls this dear car by a different name, as mentioned in *The Reivers* (1992): "So, he bought the automobile, and Boon found his soul's lily maid, the virgin's love of his rough and innocent heart. It was a Winton Flyer," (28).

By achieving the goal set by Boon Hogganbeck, Lucius's grandfather's Winton Flyer brand car is taken for a trip. Finally, Boon meets his 'soul's lily maid'. Both young Loosh and their family helper Boon go to Memphis to stay in a Miss Reba Rivers's brothel. The reason for the long 85-mile trip from Jefferson to Memphis was that Boon had a lover, one of Reba's girls, Miss Corrie. The third person for this adventurous misdeed group is the coachman, Ned William McCaslin. He hides himself in the trunk of the car. But during the middle of the journey, Loosh and Boon find Ned hidden in the back after he has to let a fart:

*(...) suddenly Boon said, "What's that smell? Was it you?" But before I could deny it he had jerked the automobile to a stop, sat for an instant, then turned and reached back and flung back the lumped and jumbled mass of the tarpaulin which had filled the back of the car. Ned sat up from the floor. (Faulkner, *The Reivers*, 1992, p. 62)*

Ned persuades these two to join them since they have already ridden at least twelve miles from Jefferson town. After continuing their journey, the three watch the scenery, nature, the first iron bridge in Jefferson called Wyatt's Crossing the Iron Bridge (64). There are also difficult crossings such as Hurricane Creek and Hell Creek Bottom. They must get off the car to save it from swampy roads and cross several times.

In the following chapters of *The Reivers* (1992), Loosh, Boon and Ned try their way from the South's harsh conditions and sometimes swampy roads. They stay at Ballenbaugh's for the night because they consider passing the river with a ferryboat but they are recommended to stay near a roadhouse. During their stay in Ballenbaugh's, the region's history is described about historical development of the region both during the heights of river trade and plantations. When the three arrive at the roadhouse, Miss Ballenbaugh is surprised to see an automobile for the first time, and she recognizes Boon saying "So you really did make it to Jefferson, after all," (67); more to her surprise, Boon replies "In a year? (...) Lord, Miss Ballenbaugh, this automobile has been a hundred times farther than Jefferson since then. (...) You might as well give up: you got to get used to automobiles like everybody else" (67). Following her reaction to automobiles, Boon asks, "You mean to say you ain't never rode in one?" (67) then tells Ned to take Miss Ballenbaugh for a ride showing the importance of these new inventions in Southern life. Even, Miss Ballenbaugh has counted a total of thirteen automobiles passing before her roadhouse for a year.

After an overnight stay at Ballenbaugh's, the group overcame other geographical obstacles on their way to Miss Reba's house on Catalpa Street. During their passage to the Hell Creek Bottom, Loosh defined the scenery around the bridge and muddy road in a stream-of-consciousness flow in a relatively long sentence:

*There was something dreamlike about it. Not nightmarish: just dreamlike—the peaceful, quiet, remote, sylvan, almost primeval setting of ooze and slime and jungle growth and heat in which the very mules*

*themselves, peacefully swishing and stamping at the teeming infinitesimal invisible myriad life which was the actual air we moved and breathed in, were not only unalien but in fact curiously appropriate, being themselves biological dead ends and hence already obsolete before they were born; the automobile: the expensive useless mechanical toy rated in power and strength by the dozens of horses, yet held helpless and impotent in the almost infantile clutch of a few inches of the temporary confederation of two mild and pacific elements—earth and water—which the frailest integers and units of motion as produced by the ancient unmechanical methods, had coped with for countless generations without really having noticed it; the three of us, three forked identical and now unrecognizable mud-colored creatures engaged in a life-and-death struggle with it, the progress—if any—of which had to be computed in dreadful and glacier-like inches. (Faulkner, *The Reivers*, 1992, p. 76)*

The power of nature over these three Southerner adventurers is elaborated with feelings and 'reminiscences' of an old man, the Lucius Priest (or young Loosh), in a stream-of-consciousness narrative. Finally, thanks to another man's help, the three reach the opposite side through the Hell Creek Bottom, and they have to pay another six dollars to the man helping them pass the creek. The passage ends the fourth chapter in *the Reivers* (1992), "Boon had told Ned and me that, once we had conquered Hell Creek bottom, we would be in civilization; he drew a picture of all the roads from there on cluttered thick as fleas with automobiles" (81) opens their next journey. Boon, Loosh and Ned consider the Creek bottom passage a way to civilization with new opportunities and adventures ahead.

When Loosh, Boon and Ned arrive at Miss Reba's house, they begin to have fun. This time Ned is the one with another plan in their adventures. Ned plans to save his African-American cousin, Bobo Beauchamp, from a debt of over one hundred dollars to a white fellow. Thanks to his experience and social hustle among the Southern White people, Ned knows how to save his cousin from such trouble. On the first morning of the group's stay in Miss Reba's house, the automobile is lost, then Ned comes up with a racehorse in tow, a horse that he exchanged for the car. The name of the horse is Coppermine, renamed by Ned to Lightning. Ned plans to take the horse to Parsham, Tennessee, for a race against another white man, Winton Flyer. Thanks to help from Boon, young Lucius and girls, he sends the horse to Parsham via railroad. If the race is won, Ned will

be able to pay off his cousin's debts and recover Boss Priest's automobile.

During plans towards horserace, Otis and Loosh fight over Boon's lover, Miss Corrie. Otis, the cousin of Corrie, tells details about Corrie's profession as a prostitute in Miss Reba's house. Although, Otis is a very ill-mannered 15-year-old boy, as Carrie's cousin, he hides Carrie's real name from others to ensure that the two cannot be found since they have escaped from their family. Otis even makes money in the house from secretly observing Carrie's intercourses from a peephole. Filled with such hideous information, Loosh attack Otis but finally, Otis slashes Loosh with a knife. Such an attack and respect from Loosh also affects Miss Corrie, then Miss Corrie decides to live a life of virtue by giving up her name and job. Firstly, Miss Corrie changes her name back to her given name, Everbe Corinthia.

Expecting a wind of change on Boon and Everbe's life, winning a race turns out to be a disaster. Both the race is lost, and Butch Lovemaiden, a corrupt and bullying deputy sheriff coming to town for horserace, comes to town, desires Everbe and ensures that Boon is put into jail after irritating him to attack. Both Ned and Boon are now in jail, malevolent Butch requests intercourse with Everbe for the price of releasing the two. Boon attacks this bad sheriff more than once since he calls Everbe a prostitute.

Boon, Ned and Loosh still need a horserace win to retain their automobile. The Priests family is due home soon from their funeral visit to St. Louis. Lightning wins the second race as "Ned employs an artifice—in the form of a sardine (the horse responds to sardines)—to make the creature run faster" (Fargnoli & Golay, 2008, p. 220). With this trick, Ned ensures wins even against Colonel Linscomb's favorite horse, Acheron. Things get better for the adventurers in the town. However, as days pass, Acheron's owner Colonel Linscomb meets Grandfather Priest, also joining the fourth and final race. Both the Colonel and Grandfather begin to question Ned about the situation of stealing the car, entering races and entering the jail. Feeling aware of their misdeed, Ned persuades the two about the difficulties of being a Black among the White, about Boon's love affair and his rightfulness in these deeds. Finally, Colonel and Grandfather Priest are now persuaded about the Lightning's speed thanks to usage of sardines, they offer another race to be won against Colonel's horse. In a perceptive manner, Ned gives these greedy people a

lesson by losing the final race and betting on Colonel's horse as opposed to the others. Ned wins a significant amount, and saves his cousin. With disappointment, Grandfather Priest buys back his car and the group returns home.

After the whole Priests and others return home, Boss Priest saves Lucius from a serious punishment by his father by whipping. Boss Priest is aware that the turmoil and experiences Lucius went through at such a young age is punishment enough. When asked by Loosh, Boss Priest tells "Nothing is ever forgotten. Nothing is ever lost. It's too valuable," then adds "Live with it" (The Reivers, 1992, p. 257). On the other hand, Boon and Corrie eventually marry and name their son Lucius Priest Hogganbeck. The story resolved peacefully finally.

### **Literary Significance of *the Reivers***

The final work of the fictional Yoknapatawpha county or Jefferson, Mississippi, *The Reivers* was not a typical Faulkner's gothic or Southern reality novel but a distinct final touch to Faulknerian literary universe. *The Reivers* is a comical work at its first layer. On the other hand, the book did not seem to show parallelism with Faulkner's overall vision of life reflected in his many other novels. Many critics also discussed this novel similarly to emphasize the final resolution for the well-known storyline in Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha county. For example, Irving Howe remarked that "*The Reivers* is an excursion into the pleasure of fantasy, an act of comic praise to the refreshments of mischief and less 'ponderous' than other late Faulkner novels" (Howe, 1962). As indicated by Howe, Faulkner tried to use satire and comedy to criticize his own colonial past in a way to combine young ill-fated southern characters into action, also in a dramatic irony to show the southern struggle in social life.

In terms of its characters, Faulkner also guested his long-lasting characters from his previous works for a glorious finale, as emphasized by Fargnoli and Golay in their analysis of Faulkner's oeuvre:

*The priests are the "cadet branch" of the McCaslin-Edmonds clan of Go Down, Moses. Boon Hogganbeck is an antic figure out of the novella "The Bear." Ned McCaslin is a cousin of Lucas Beauchamp of Go Down, Moses and Intruder in the Dust. Faulkner lifted Miss Reba's brothel from Sanctuary. There are coming-of-age parallels with Ike McCaslin of*

*"The Bear" and Chick Mallison of Intruder.* (Fargnoli & Golay, 2008, p. 219)

There were also references from Faulkner's life as well. The story was based on two significant occasions in Faulkner's own life: "his grandfather's purchase of a car, and the occasion when Faulkner took his youngest brother Dean, then just twelve, on a visit to a Memphis brothel" (Wittenberg, 1979). Throughout the novel, the automobile versus horses was a great theme; many stereotypical Southerners were also in awe against automobiles. In addition, Edmond Volpe indicates critically, "To dramatize this philosophy of acceptance by an elite male character, Faulkner had to write a didactic fairy tale, ignore reality and create a sentimental, make-believe world" (Volpe, 1964, p. 344). Volpe also observed the change in regular Faulknerian story development that could be achieved through his great line of characters from novels written in Yoknapatawpha setting.

With reference to the Falkners family, this story had closer bounds with the Black family members even to a point where a black coachman could give a lesson to the old members of a White family and to a Colonel in living in the South. Shadow black members of Falkners have been examined by many researchers and William Faulkner finally implemented these characters successfully, a sort of remorse to the harsh past of the South. Yayoi Okada (1995), in her article "*A Study of The Reivers: William Faulkner's Finale*" studied the change in Faulkner's last shadow of pencil on papers. Okada emphasized that "By redeeming Lucius Quintus Carothers McCaslin, Ned saves Ike McCaslin, who represents the writer, from his problem of racial heritage, specifically from his persistent obsession with blood and race" (2). Therefore, it is possible to conclude that Faulkner successfully completed his literary journey beginning from a colonial past, heritage of an old Colonel to the modern southern changes in social life and racial matters.

Other characters in this novel were also symbols for Faulkner's ideas on racial matters. For instance, the characters Ike and Faulkner had the same problem of racial heritage. As Lillian Smith indicated "by slavery white slaveholders yielded to the temptation when juxtaposed to natural and vigorous dark women in the backyard and black women were subjected to the whims and desire of white men" (Smith L. , 1961, pp. 116-117). Therefore, there were real characters

in Faulkner's life who were mulattoes or mixed-race person. It was also discussed that "By 1860 there were 411,000 mulatto slaves out of a total slave population of 3.9 million" (Franklin & A. Moss, 2000). In this respect, this novel also included this questioning of racial contradictions. While there were laws not allowing blacks and whites to marry, there were many mulattoes living in-between in a great depression and loss. In the novel, for example, at the age of sixteen, Ike discovered that his grandfather, Lucius Quintus Carothers McCaslin, had many adulterine children and left white and unknown black descendants. However, redeemers in the South did not allow talking about mixed-race descendants even in fictional works as Faulkner refrained for so long.

Okada, in his study of *the Reivers*, also emphasized integrating a mixed-race boy into a white family with all social problems and redeeming facts of Southern lifestyle.

*Only in The Reivers does Faulkner willingly integrate a mulatto family member into his fictional white family. Instead of struggling to get away from the obsession of the phobia of what might have been, to accept the past as it has been, and redeem the past in the present moment as a responsible man open to the future, is the way to cope with time. That is the solution Faulkner reaches at his last stage of life. (Okada, 1995, p. 87)*

This observation and fact in this novel can prove that Faulkner had finally ceased to stay as a redeemer and integrated black people into white families as members of families rather than as a nanny or servant as in the past. Compared to earlier novels of William Faulkner, *the Reivers* employed some of the most productive and professional African-American people living and working with the Southerners, for instance, the cook in the Ballenbaugh's roadhouse.

Although *the Reivers* cannot be considered the most mature novels among the late Nobel winner novels of Faulkner, it easily led researchers and critics into old habit of looking traces of his familial and philosophical roots. However, the outcome from analyses and studies was that Faulkner concluded his story line from a contradictory past-present war with the help of adventures of characters in southern setting. Although *the Reivers* was deemed worthy of the Pulitzer Prize in the United States, it was sadly a posthumous prize but the final resolution between the United States and William Faulkner.



## CHAPTER IV

### LITERARY ASSESSMENT OF EUDORA WELTY'S *MORGANA COUNTY*

This chapter aims to compare and examine two different stories by Eudora Welty from the point of the author's literary development and her views on life and Southern social history. In this respect, two stories from Welty's oeuvre were selected for comparison and analysis of change. Unlike Faulkner, Eudora Welty articulated her detailed Morgana experience as she matured in literature, mainly around her short stories and collection of stories. In this book, *A Worn Path* was selected for the analysis of Welty's early approach to literature. Her masterpiece reflecting her Morgana experience, *The Golden Apples* was chosen for detailed analysis.

#### ***A WORN PATH***

Being one of the first short stories written and published in 1941 by Eudora Welty in her literary career, *A Worn Path* carries traces of Welty's photographic eye and her own experiences with South's geography. Although this short story is not set in Welty's well-known fictional setting, Morgana, this novel is the first step to Welty's Southern creativity experience, mainly regarding her Southern perspective taking shape slowly.

After a brief synopsis analysis, literary significance of the short story will be examined in the following sections with reference to Welty's life and her literary journey in the South.

#### **Synopsis**

*A Worn Path*, an eight-page short story, takes place during a journey from a rural area called Natchez, located within the Mississippi region's borders to a town. The story is named after Natchez Trace, a.k.a. a worn path, along which "the heroine, an elderly African American woman named Phoenix Jackson, undertakes an arduous journey twice a year to retrieve medicine for her sick grandson" (Qiqun, 2020). Told in the third person point of view, *A Worn Path* follows Phoenix on her journey along the Natchez

Trace towards the town where she regularly visits, as later mentioned by a nurse, to grab some medicine for her grandson who swallowed lye and since then having difficulty in swallowing and eating.

*A Worn Path* (1980) opens with a brief description of the protagonist, Phoenix, "It was December—a bright frozen day in the early morning. Far out in the country there was an old Negro woman with her head tied in a red rag, coming along a path through the pinewoods" (142). This winter scenery is emphasized with tapping of this lady's cane on the ground: "small cane made from an umbrella, and with this she kept tapping the frozen earth in front of her" (142). Third-person narrative is used until the old lady, Phoenix, comes across another white male during her journey. The old lady is indicated as an illiterate post-slave who lived throughout her life in a small village. Phoenix keeps reacting to her environment by talking to birds, flowers and trees as she progresses in her journey:

*Out of my way, all you foxes, owls, beetles, jack rabbits, coons and wild animals! Keep out from under these feet, little bob-whites. Keep the big wild hogs out of my path. Don't let none of those come running my direction. I got a long way.* (Welty, *The Collected Stories of Eudora Welty*, 1980, p. 142)

Phoenix is very aware of her environment, and it is emphasized that she is accustomed to this monthly voyage of hers. This time, the old lady wears a long dress as a courtesy of the importance of her visit to the town. Therefore, she tries to protect her dress from any thorns, or bushes in the wild. After being tackled by one of the thorns, old Phoenix takes a little break while checking the time by looking at the sun's position in the sky. During this little stop, old Phoenix experiences are described as: "She did not dare to close her eyes, and when a little boy brought her a plate with a slice of marble-cake on it she spoke to him" (143), following this little instance of ghostly approach by a boy, Phoenix answers "That would be acceptable" (143), but as soon as old lady tries to move, the only thing she can grab is air. After this brief shock of daydreaming, old lady Phoenix keeps on her journey, passes under a barbed-wire fence into cotton fields. Amid the field, Phoenix sees a shadowy figure of a long man dancing in the middle of the field. After finding out that it is a scarecrow only, old lady bursts into laughter and begins to dance with it saying: "My senses is gone. I too old. I the oldest people I ever

know. Dance, old scarecrow,” and adding “while I dancing with you” (144).

Reacting to every step, type of roads and hills, even sleeping alligators hidden in the swamps she passes by, the old lady Phoenix reaches a passage filled with high trees then a black dog rushes towards her. A white Southerner sees the lady and calls her “Granny,” and asks what she is doing in the middle of nowhere in the woods. A white male hunter asks the old lady whether she is going home, and after receiving the news of her journey to town, the hunter warns her about the long path ahead of her. Phoenix replies: “I bound to go to town, mister,” and indicates her urgency “The time come around” (145). The hunter thinks that the old lady visits the town for Christmas events and laughs at her saying “I know you old colored people! Wouldn't miss going to town to see Santa Claus!” (145). At that moment, while the man is laughing, old Phoenix sees that a nickel drops from his purse, in an instant, Phoenix directs the hunter man to another target, a fearsome black dog, telling “Sic Him!” (146). Triggered by such a daring motive, the hunter rushes towards the woods to attack the other dog. In a quick reaction, Phoenix bends down and takes the nickel; concurrently, a bird passes by screaming a loud noise. Phoenix thinks this bird reaction is a symbol of holy warning telling “God watching me the whole time. I come to stealing” (146). Ironically, the hunter returns after shooting a few rounds in the woods, telling he would give such a brave old lady a dime if he had any.

The old Phoenix reaches the town, where Christmas decorations fill the streets with colorful lights even during the day. On her way to the government building where she receives monthly medicine for her grandson, old Phoenix stops a lady carrying some ornaments to sell during Christmas time, and asks her to tie her shoes since she is too old to bend. This shoe-tying scene reveals the importance of old Phoenix to be ready to visit a government building with ideal apparel. When old Phoenix arrives at the building, she knows the floor with government announcements, there she stops. An attendant still not knowing Phoenix remarks: “A charity case, I suppose” (147). The charity chase here indicates government medicine aids to Southern towns. The main nurse then comes to the scene, recognizing Phoenix and giving details about her town trip to the attendant. Then the attendant finally gives Phoenix another nickel for her journey back to her village. With two nickels in her

hand now, Phoenix decides to buy a paper windmill toy as a present, finishing the story with these lines: "She lifted her free hand, gave a little nod, turned around, and walked out of the doctor's office. Then her slow step began on the stairs, going down" (149).

### **Literary Significance of *A Worn Path***

*A Worn Path*, one of the earlier works of Welty's oeuvre, was once considered a short trial of pen-stroke by Young Welty. However, repeated readings and analysis of this short story have already revealed its further sophistication. This story is a journey from the "Negro" or "Colored People" (as directly called by the White man in the story) to the Black Community in the South. It was a small but significant step towards modernist approach to Southern realities by picturesque literalness rather than direct opposition or biased experiment.

This story covers nature, soul and body intertwined deeply. A young and alive nature around the old but good lady in an exhausted but determined body wanders throughout the harsh Southern geography on a near-Christmas day with tranquility of the journey towards the final objective of grabbing some medicine for a patient grandson. Regarding the creation of this work, Welty reported in one of her interviews as follows:

*One day I saw a solitary old woman like Phoenix. She was walking; I saw her in the middle distance, in a winter country landscape, and watched her slowly make her way across my line of vision. That sight of her made me write the story. I invented an errand for her, but that only seemed a living part of the figure she was herself: what errand other than for someone else could be making her go?(...) The real dramatic force of the story depends on the strength of the emotion that has set it going. (...) What gives any such content to 'A Worn Path' is not its circumstances but its subject: the deep-grained habit of love. (Welty, *The Eye of the Story: Selected Essays and Reviews*, 1990, p. 161)*

Welty herself observed a photographic memory, then reconfigured this story into a powerful fiction of journey in the Southern setting. This journey by Phoenix, a mythical name, has been considered as mythological by many researchers. For instance, in his article, "*Welty's Mythic Travelers*", Jim Owen (2001) discusses the mythical elements in *A Worn Path* stating:

*In granting Phoenix Jackson mythic and heroic status in "A Worn Path," Welty succeeds in ennobling a character that many writers had overlooked or pushed to the sides of their fictive worlds in 1941. Phoenix is "an old Negro woman with her head tied in a red rag" (142). Her race, her gender, her age, her oddity, her frailty, her poverty, her illiteracy all work against her in the segregated patriarchal world of the old deep South, yet she manages alone repeatedly to travel a path fraught with obstacles. (Owen, 2001, p. 30)*

Since the name Phoenix refers to the mythical bird bearing the same name and which resurrects from its own ashes from its funeral pyre, depicted at the beginning of her journey as an old woman hardly able to walk with the help of a cane, Phoenix becomes a powerful figure who can overcome any natural or humanly obstacles. Therefore, Welty also indicated that this story was her favorite one. This theme was also emphasized by Theodore Bilbo and John Rankin "her belief in the common humanity of black and white and her rejection of racial oppression were evident (...) in which a very old and courageous black woman walks miles and overcomes white hostility in an effort to obtain medicine for her grandson" (Marrs, 2005, p. 253).

In addition to mythical and racial elements, some critics regarded Christian elements in Phoenix's journey since she was a December pilgrim as in Christian religious tradition and she endured this difficult travel for sake of a fallen son as in the myth of suffering Christ child. (Brower, 1972, p. 9)

In *A Worn Path*, the author "focuses largely on the description of a wide variety of plants, including pines, thorny bushes, barbed-wire fence, old cotton, a field of dead corn, and the quiet bare fields, showing the biodiversity of the nonhuman world" (Qiqun, 2020, p. 591). As emphasized by Han Qiqun (2020) additionally, "Just as Faulkner's biographers often mention Rowan Oak, where Faulkner used to live, in Oxford, Mississippi, Eudora Welty's biographers, too, talk a lot about Welty's former residence on Pinehurst Street in Jackson, Mississippi" (588). Welty's whole life was spent in her family house called "Eudora Welty's House& Garden" posthumously. Rowan Oak and Welty's Garden were sources of natural creativity in both authors' writing styles.

Another controversial approach to *A Worn Path* is about whether the grandson waiting in the village for Phoenix is already dead. This question is directly asked to Eudora Welty but the author

has replied with simply “No” (Marrs, 2005, p. 639). This idea of a dead grandson originated from a ghostly appearance during old Phoenix’s short break in the woods and also her forgetting the reason for coming to the town after reaching the nursery house, which altogether led to them consider that the lady is too old to remember anything about her reality. However, old Phoenix was too cunning to pave her way through the woods against all odds. She achieved in overcoming a White hunter, a Southerner prototype male scorning her, undermining her stance and laughing on her decisive journey to town, but she eventually manages to deceive that boy into running for a dog, and makes him loose a nickel he dropped. Eudora Welty’s success in this short story was also the beginning of her journey towards creating her Morgana fictional county.

### ***THE GOLDEN APPLES***

Published in 1959 during literary maturation period of Eudora Welty, *The Golden Apples* is a collection of seven short stories, including “Shower of Gold”; “June Recital”; “Sir Rabbit”; “Moon Lake”; “The Whole World Knows”; “Music from Spain” and “The Wanderers” (Welty, *The Golden Apples*, 2013).

Following Welty’s literary career beginning with short stories and realistic photographic memories of the Southern lifestyle, this time in *The Golden Apples*, Welty employed her mythology readings of Ancient Greek and Irish myths into powerful depictions of a fictional Southern setting she called *Morgana*, a small town in the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta.

After a brief synopsis analysis, literary significance of *The Golden Apples* will be examined in the following sections concerning Welty’s life and her literary journey in the South.

### **Synopsis**

*The Golden Apples* opens in the fictional setting, Morgana including seven short stories, some of which are set in Morgana while a few is set in different settings. Eudora Welty fictionalized a proper Southern life full of life, adventures, mythical elements and realistic dramas which all connected to each other consistently.

“Shower of Gold” (2013) is the first short story in the book. The first short story opens with “a new straw hat” (21) left by the King MacLain on the river bank. Then comes the description of the first woman characters in the book: “That was Miss Snowdie MacLain” (21). This story is narrated by Katie Rainey, the wife of Fate Rainey. Mrs. Rainey introduces herself then talks about sad events and marriage of Snowdie. Snowdie is described as an albino-like white lady, beautiful, educated and from a good family in Morgana. However, “King figured out that if the babies started coming, he had a chance for a nestful of little albinos, and that swayed him. No, I don’t say it. I say he was just willful. He wouldn’t think ahead,” (21) reports Mrs. Rainey directly summarizing the instant and unexpected marriage with the ghostly character of King MacLain. Other families such as Hudsons are also introduced. Following the quick marriage with King MacLain, Snowdie lives alone in her house since MacLain instantly leaves his house for “a good spell” but does not return for a while. Three years later, King returns with a note only to Snowdie saying “Meet me in the woods” or “Suppose you meet me in the woods” (22) as narrated by Mrs. Rainey. Snowdie’s history is given here in detail:

*He was educated off, to practice law – well needed here. Snowdie was Miss Lollie Hudson’s daughter, well known. Her father was Mr Eugene Hudson, a storekeeper down at Crossroads past the Courthouse, but he was a lovely man. Snowdie was their only daughter, and they give her a nice education. (Welty, The Golden Apples, 2013, p. 23)*

Snowdie is supposed to be a teacher or a law by folks of Morgana. But, to their surprise, she marries King MacLain, then lives a life on her own. Following this general information about Snowdie’s life, Snowdie returns from her visit to the woods to meet King MacLain. On her return, she says “I’m going to have a baby too, Miss Katie. Congratulate me” (24) to Katie. Therefore, Snowdie is now pregnant to twins. She continues to care for her house and garden daily during her pregnancy while King MacLain is on the loose again. Then come two boys at the beginning of next year:

*The twins come the first day of January. (...) Snowdie had the two little boys and neither one albino. They were both King all over again, if you want to know it. Mrs Stark had so hoped for a girl, or two girls. Snowdie clapped the names on them of Lucius Randall and Eugene Hudson, after her own father and her mother’s father. (Welty, The Golden Apples, 2013, p. 26)*

Rather than albino like their mothers, the twins resemble to their father, King MacLain or as Mrs. Rainey calls him, 'scoundrel'. Snowdie gives her grandfathers' names to the boys. As time passes by, there are many rumors about whereabouts of King. Many people speculated about seeing King in the West, in many towns. As days, months and years pass, no news is heard from King. When the twins reach their playtime ages, Mrs. Rainey and Snowdie prepare Halloween costumes for the boys. On the road, a Black member of the Morgana society who is a fine lad helping everybody in the town, the Old Plez Morgan sees an unknown White man resembling King MacLain. "Next thing, the stranger – oh, it was King! By then Plez was calling him Mr. King to himself – went up through the yard and then didn't go right in like anybody else" (30) reports Mrs. Rainey as a rumor in the town. Then, the White man or MacLain approaches to Snowdie's house and waits at the entrance. The twins are getting ready for their Halloween show, and "It was the twins seen him. Through those little bitty mask holes, those eagle eyes!" (31). The twins gather around the stranger, their papa, and try to scare him by dancing, running around him and skating around the man. Then, King MacLain waits there a bit, and runs towards the woods, never to be seen again. Mrs. Rainey concludes the story with words: "But I bet my little Jersey calf King tarried long enough to get him a child somewhere" (35).

"June Recital" (2013) is the second short story in Welty's elevated literary collection. This time in the short story narrator is two characters: firstly, from Loch's perspective, then another third person narrative by Loch's sister Cassie. Loch is a young boy living next to the Vacant House, the abandoned house of Snowdie and MacLain. Loch is keen on using telescope to explore his surroundings and even to spy on Cassie's friend Virgie and her family, Fate and Katie Rainey, from the previous short story. Cassie narrates the second chapter of the story regarding her relationship with Rainey's daughter, Virgie. These two girls have grown together and they take piano courses from a German immigrant teacher Miss Eckhart. However, despite all Cassie's troubles, Virgie is always better in their training. Miss Eckhart always congratulates Virgie by saying "Danke Schoen" while Virgie always plays a piano song, *Für Elise*. Thus, the second section of this shorty opens with the sub-title: "*Für Elise*." (48). The two girls' relationship is defined as "To Cassie, Virgie was a secret love, as well as her secret hate" (56) by the author. The girls

take piano courses in the Vacant House hired to Miss Eckhart by Snowdie, who is from the previous short story. Such connection and consistency towards past stories are also protected throughout this story. After a while later, Snowdie has to sell that house, making the house called now the Vacant House. Cassie remembers her whole past in the town together with funerals, music, sound of piano filling her dreams and her childhood. For instance, Rainey's barn house has been burnt down, making piano lessons impossible for Virgie, but Miss Eckhart accepts to give free piano courses to Virgie. As years passed, the World War I times have arrived, and Virgie ceased to take piano courses since her brother is martyred in France (73). The change of events after Snowdie sells her house has arrived to town. One by one, Miss Eckhart loses her piano students but does not feel lonely, the whole town prepares a June Recital where every child plays piano and families watch their children. After everything finished, Loch returns to narrate the next section. Continuing his observations of the Vacant House, Loch sees a lady hidden in the corner of a dark room coming back to the piano and beginning to tear up some papers. Opening the upper cover of the piano, the lady fills the piano with pieces of paper. Then, the lady finds a candle and fires the papers. In the meantime, Virgie and another sailor boy are still upstairs without knowing anything about fire depicted as:

*Flames arrowed out so noiselessly. They ran down the streamers of paper, as double-quick as freshets from a loud gully-washer of rain. The room was crisscrossed with quick, dying yellow fire, there were pinwheels falling and fading from the ceiling. And up above, on the other side of the ceiling, they, the first two, were as still as mice. (Welty, The Golden Apples, 2013, p. 88)*

Loch instantly sees two other Morgana men coming from the road, "Mr Fatty's and Old Man Moody's." Loch cries for help, then the two men try to solve the bursting fire. Finally, and surprisingly after all these years, Mr. King MacLain arrives at the burning house asking the men "Will you please tell me why you're trespassing here?" (90) and receives the answer: "Oh, 'tain't your house no more, I forgot. It's Miss Francine Murphy's house. You're late, Captain" (90). Confused and surprised, King MacLain also leaves the house again. When men finally achieve in putting out the fire, the old lady hiding in the blind corner shows herself asking why they put out the fire. Another ticking sound comes from a box hidden on the ceiling over the piano. Loch also reminds the men that dynamite will soon be blown in the house. Having seen that the whole operation is botched, Miss Eckhart

shows herself and runs away from the house. To make things more complicated, Loch, Carrie's mother, and other ladies return from their party. They also find out that Virgie is with the sailor boy in the house, concluding their story dramatically with these statements:

*It was not only past; it was outworn and cast away. Both Miss Eckhart and Virgie Rainey were human beings terribly at large, roaming on the face of the earth. And there were others of them – human beings, roaming, like lost beasts.* (Welty, *The Golden Apples*, 2013, p. 103)

Eudora Welty keeps suspense and past connections as each story passes.

The third short story in the collection is "Sir Rabbit" (2013). The story begins with narration by Mattie Will Holifield in two different sections. In the first part of the story, Mattie remembers her first meeting with the twins Ran and Eugene MacLain whom she thinks is seeing King MacLain but she finds out the twins. This 15-year-old story of Mattie ends with a curious sexual encounter briefly told by the narrator. In the second part of *Sir Rabbit*, Mattie is a married woman. Mattie is married to a black man named Blackstone. This time again, in the woods while hunting with her husband, Mattie comes across Junior and King MacLain. After some talking and shots for fun in the woods, Mattie's husband proceeds to work on plumb collection while Mattie finds King MacLain about who she has heard stories and myths all through her life, and she has intercourse with King. King instantly sleeps after their intercourse, and Mattie Will examines sleeping MacLain, when King awakes, he just gets rid of Mattie by telling "Go on! Go on off!" (116), concluding the story.

The next story of *The Golden Apples* (2013) is "Moon Lake" which is a story inspired by Welty's stay in Camp McLaurin at the age of nine. "Girls from a Jackson orphanage also attended that camp, and Welty included them in her story" (Shimkus, 2006, p. 21). "Moon Lake" is narrated from a summer camp. The camp is arranged for girls, and is located at Moon Lake near Morgana County. The action takes place among three girls including "Jinny Love Stark (daughter of Lizzie and Comus Stark), Nina Carmichael, and an orphan girl named Easter" (Shimkus, 2006, p. 27). Mrs. Gruenwald and Miss Parnell Moody are responsible for controlling and supervising the girls at the camp. Also, Loch from the previous story is now "Boy Scout and Life Saver" in "Moon Lake" (117). Firstly, Jinny is cold towards orphans but then they become best friends. The three girls

begin to play all together, mainly a game of throwing pocket knives on targets which they call “mumblety-peg” (123). During one of their hikes in the woods, girls even find an abandoned boat. While they are playing, Exum McLane, one young black boy, hurls a stick over girls resulting in Easter dropping into the lake “like one hit in the head by a stone from a sling” (143). Loch saves the drowning girl from the lake. During Loch’s intervention to resuscitate Easter seems like a parody of making love for those watching. These images, as Welty commented on later on, are symbols of these young ladies’ passage to another realm which is adolescence.

The next story in *the Golden Apples* (2013) is “The Whole World Knows”. Written in 1947, this story opens with a direct speech to a father:

*Father, I wish I could talk to you, wherever you are right now: Mother said, Where have you been, son? – Nowhere, Mother. – I wish you wouldn't sound so unhappy, son. You could come back to MacLain and live with me now. – I can't do that, Mother. You know I have to stay in Morgana. (Welty, The Golden Apples, 2013, p. 157)*

Again, in another connection to the previous short story, “The Whole World Knows” is related to Ran MacLain, Jinny Love Stark and their troubled marriage. Before their marriage problems, Ran MacLain lives a successful life, starts working as a teller in the bank. After a while, Ran is separated from his wife. Then, he moves to his old house, a boarding house owned by Francine Murphy. During this separation, Jinny is reported to have a love affair with another bank clerk, Woodrow Spights. Lizzie Stark, on the other hand, supports her daughter Jinny against Ran telling “Of course I see what Jinny’s doing, the fool, but you ailed first. You just got her answer to it, Ran” (169). This joyful life and new love on Jinny’s side frustrates Ran. So much so, Ran even thinks of killing Jinny’s new lover. During these suicidal thoughts, Ran finds another lover who looks similar to Jinny, a new country girl Maideen Sumrall. The story concludes with their final fight over suicide with a gun at Ran’s hand.

The next story in *the Golden Apples* is “Music from Spain” which is about Eugene MacLain’s life in San Francisco, a different setting from Morgana. In the last line of the previous story, Ran poses a question to his father: “Father, Eugene! What you went and found, was it better than this?” (178). The answer to this question is told in “Music from Spain” in a third person narrative. In the story, Eugene and Emma live in San Francisco as a newly married couple. Eugene

works as a watch repairer. The couple lost a daughter named Fan a year ago. During their breakfast in the opening scene, Eugene looks at his still sad wife, then instantly slaps her and goes out for a walk. Rather than going to his office, Eugene decides to wander around the city. During his walk, Eugene comes across with a Spanish guitar player whose concert the couple has visited lately. However, guitarist and Eugene cannot communicate while walking since the Spanish man does not speak English. After the two men arrive at the beach, Eugene tries to grab the guitarist to raise him but the man is more powerful than Eugene, thus he holds Eugene instead and lifts him easily. During their journey through the city, Eugene always remembers things about himself and his wife, and finally, finds peace. He returns home and normally speaks to his wife, concluding the story normally in their house setting.

The final resolution to Morgana stories of the Golden Apples comes with "The Wanderers". This story takes place in honor of Katie Rainey's funeral. She was the narrator of the first story. Characters gather around this event including King MacLain and Virgie Rainey. In a remembrance, Virgie's love affair with her sailor lover from "June Recital" is told, and it has taken twenty years. Virgie has been consistently reluctant to stay in Morgana, however, having already lost her father, she cannot leave the county. So every member of Morgana gathers in Rainey's house, now only left with Virgie. Since deceased Katie Rainey carried out many errands in the town in every occasion, and she is dead now, it is Snowdie MacLain's turn to help this funeral works as a payback to the former helps by Mrs. Rainey. Following the funeral rites, everyone leaves. Leaving alone, Virgie visits the river, takes off all her clothes then enter the water ensuring her unity with Morgana geography finally:

*She saw her waist disappear into reflectionless water; it was like walking into sky, some impurity of skies. All was one warmth, air, water, and her own body. All seemed one weight, one matter—until as she put down her head and closed her eyes and the light slipped under her lids, she felt this matter a translucent one, the river, herself, the sky all vessels which the sun filled. (Welty, The Golden Apples, 2013, p. 237)*

Then the funeral is completed in the cemetery by memorizing many deceased members of Morgana. Finally, Virgie decides to leave Morgana. She sells every belonging of her family. With her old car, she is now on the road. First, Virgie stops by MacLain's farm. There,

Virgie sees her beloved teacher, Miss Eckhart's cemetery. Later on, Virgie talks with King. King tells a story about an affair of him with her mother. But now, King is old enough, although he is still trying to find a new woman. Following these stories heard, Virgie goes on her new adventure as initially started by MacLain as a "wanderer" throughout the whole Morgana experience.

### **Literary Significance of *The Golden Apples***

A complete and creative sequence of seven short stories, *The Golden Apples* can be regarded as one of the most modernist Southern literary works of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In her memoir, Eudora Welty indicated the projection of these stories and her intentions to articulate such as complex and connected Morgana experience after her decades of reading and photographing the South as follows:

*I had been writing a number of stories, more or less one after the other, before it belatedly dawned on me that some of the characters in one story were, and had been all the time, the same characters who had appeared already in another story (...) They touched on every side. These stories were all related (...) by the strongest ties – identities, kinships, relationships, or affinities already known or remembered or foreshadowed. From story to story, connections between the characters' lives, through their motives or actions, sometimes their dreams, already existed: there to be found. Now the whole assembly – some of it still in the future – fell, by stages, into place in one location already evoked, which I saw now was a focusing point for all the stories. What had drawn the characters together there was one strong strand in them all: they lived in one way or another in dream or in romantic aspiration, or under an illusion of what their lives were coming to, about the meaning of their (now) related lives. (Welty, One Writer's Beginnings, 1984, pp. 98-99)*

With such objectives and awareness in her mind, Eudora Welty completed her finest study, "The Golden Apples of the Sun," then the title is shortened to "Golden Apples." Following her readings on mythical worlds of Greek and her Irish ancestry, Welty is now ready to create her own mythical and modernist reality filled with remnants from her own life.

In *The Golden Apples*, Eudora depicted a town called Morgana, Mississippi, as it evolved over a forty-year period:

*(...) the Feed and Seed Store, Morgana's public park, the MacLain and Stark and Morrison houses, the Big Black River, where Virgie Rainey*

takes her late-night swims, Morgan's woods on the outskirts of town, the local cemetery, are all subject to time and change. Homes fall into decay or are converted to boardinghouses, woods are depleted by loggers, the cemetery acquires more and more headstones, and the passage of time brings to characters like Virgie Rainey and Loch Morrison a sense of vulnerability and urgency. (Marrs, 2005, p. 277)

As emphasized by Suzanne Marrs in Welty's biography, this extensive scenery in her short stories allowed Welty to control every connection between characters and across stories.

It is possible to observe certain mythical and recurring elements in Welty's *Morgana* experience which ensured her literary fame. For instance, the use of "telescope" by narrator, Loch, a young boy in "June Recital" is a great way of photographic memory of Welty's observations and photography studies in the South. The author openly stresses the power of realistically peeping through scenery and human relations from a far-away position rather than critically. Another example of powerful depiction is music in *The Golden Apples*. Every story has its own and unique pieces of songs, poems and recurring lines from artistic creations. Accordingly, while Rainey family as workers in town always sing songs during their journey, the young girl of the family, Virgie, is keen on musical representation of her best piano work, *Für Elise*.

As emphasized by the author herself, Eudora Welty posed a great importance to place. In her book, *Place in Fiction* (1957), Welty asserted, "without necessarily moving an inch from any present address," but she added that "there may come to be new places in our lives that are second spiritual homes—closer to us in some ways, perhaps, than our original homes" (130). Accordingly, in *the Golden Apples*, place and journey are significant. Welty observed "Regional (...) is a careless term, as well as a condescending one, because what it does is fail to differentiate between the localized raw material of life and its outcome as art," (131) indicating that Southern literature cannot be too much regional as shown by critics so far. However, Welty defined the place of regionality in literature as "Regional is an outsider's term; it has no meaning for the insider who is doing the writing, because as far as he knows, he is simply writing about life" (132). In "June Recital", Welty used an empty house left by a previous story's protagonist, Snowdie, and called this place "A Vacant House" in which the whole action, story and drama were experienced. Such a powerful symbolism of place allowed Welty to create a great feeling

of continuity, suspense and powerful faith in locality versus places by emphasizing temporariness in all these elements. Even the fictional county called Morgana is derived from a Southern tradition of calling towns based on families living in the region by adding a letter -a to the end of familial name. In his introduction to *The Golden Apples* (2013), Paul Binding also exemplified the importance of place throughout these short stories as follows:

*Morgana, and its neighbor, MacLain, seven miles away, are the setting for all the stories except the penultimate, 'Music from Spain', which takes place in San Francisco. Yet here, too, Mississippi is a palpable presence; the dreams it has engendered live on. Eugene MacLain's long absence from his native state tears at his heart, and we know, as he does not, that he will eventually return there. (Welty, The Golden Apples, 2013, p. 10)*

Another great approach to Welty's Morgana as a reflection of the South is described by Katherine Anne Porter in her introduction to Welty's *A Curtain of Green*. Porter indicated that Welty created a sense of Hemingway-like adventure through travels, places, and adventures. However, Porter stressed that Welty achieved this literary quality by showing a basic character type without using so many stereotypes of the South such as black fellows with wrong deeds, and biased men living in the past Confederate times but rather creating more realistic and universal characters.

In terms of long-lasting and picturesque racism of the South in literature, Welty was again the first author to rationalize and sympathize with the Black community in the South by logistically integrating any African-American characters as emphasized by Paul Binding in his introduction to *The Golden Apples* (2013):

*The black characters' inferior status is taken almost wholly for granted by the white families with whom we are centrally involved. This was emphatically not the case with Welty, who abhorred the South's institutionalized racism, which during her life was given frequent specious intellectual justification. Unusually among writers of the Southern Renaissance, she refused to indulge in any Confederate patriotism - she hated the Civil War, and in *The Golden Apples* deliberately denies King MacLain's Confederate grandfather a solemn memorial. (Welty, The Golden Apples, 2013, pp. 13-14)*

Paul Binding re-evoked the issue mentioned in this book, the biography of Welty, that Welty refrained from using stereotypes of the South, and she used refined and universal characters rather than

those pens writing with an understanding of Confederate supporting redeemer South.

All these qualities, in additional mythical gender elements discussed in the next chapter, have ensured Welty's literary place among Southerner authors in the 20th century, leading to her winning the Pulitzer Prize in 1973.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **GENDER REVIEW of FAULKNER'S MALE SOUTH vs. WELTY'S FEMALE SOUTH**

If the Southern landscape, including all colors or aspects such as social realism, racial status, economic development and human progress, were a painting to be drawn by a well-known artist, Eudora Welty would be the holder of the genius signature in the lower corner of that painting, and William Faulkner would be the canvas, oil colors and the brush to be used for painting this picture in terms of its typical quality or perspective.

William Faulkner and Eudora Welty can be compared broadly in terms of their approaches to social gender experiences in Southern Literature. That is because both writers extensively use their fictional social circles from a third-eye perspective which is significant in reading and reviewing both authors' novels and short stories. In this perspective, Faulkner used special and relatively unique narrative methods such as stream of consciousness and commentary by characters while Welty extensively used mythological and modern symbols in her depiction of Southern gender issues and experiences of female in her stories.

To understand gender issues and relationship between male and female characters in fictional worlds of these two powerful literary figures, there are plentiful articles and criticism on the general picture with regard to both authors. A great example for understanding the difficulty in comparing male and female experiences in the Southern fictional settings is Margaret Jones Bolsteri. In her article, Bolsteri argues that "in the South, the chasm between the men's and women's cultures is so wide that crossing from one side to the other is difficult and rare" (Peckham, 2001, p. 194). Bolsteri portrays the clash between male dominance, racial issues of "miscegenation" and keeping women "caged" to protect women from outside world as much as protecting the White dominance. However, this distinction can also be observed in language use, characters and storyline. Bolsteri, however, deepens her approach to gender issues and the utmost difficulty to observe these differences as follows easily:

*In order to visualize the relationship between the different spheres assigned women and white men in Southern culture, it is useful to imagine them as separate transparent bubbles which occasionally combine and then separate again into discrete entities. The integrity of neither sphere is altered by its momentary merging with the other.* (Bolsteri, 1984, p. 182)

Bolsteri emphasizes here that, even can be exemplified in the four works examined in this book, female and male existence in the fictional South, which was divided into *Morgana* experience and *Yoknapatawpha* experience in this study, is an interchanging adventure. Here, dominant male figures and heroes cover the main plot while female characters are separated from their male partners in their psychology after anything happens in a story. Peckham in his "Abjection and the Maternal South," emphasizes the distinction as follows: "In a society in which the lines between paternal and maternal cultures are both ferociously distinct and transparent, both rigid and malleable, no simplistic approach to its literature that divides along gender lines is sufficient to its understanding" (Peckham, 2001, p. 194). Accordingly, this chapter will provide a brief analysis of both authors' approaches to social life and male-female experience in their literary domain. Finally, the chapter will be concluded by giving comparative findings and considerations about gender by Faulkner and Welty.

### **Faulkner's Male Experience of the Southern Society**

*"William Faulkner fears and hates women."*

-Maxwell Geismar

William Faulkner has been the last century's most influential figure in Southern United States literature as well as around the world. As emphasized by Noel Polk (2008), "William Faulkner's eye is a defining eye," and adding that many future Southern writers considered "The South through his eyes (...) experiencing it as a barrier to be gotten around behind above or below in order to keep from seeing only the South that he saw" (Polk, 2008, p. 3). Faulkner's vision of the South has created a sub-genre for literary practices beginning with plantation fiction's popularity during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Faulkner's colonial or confederate roots exposed him to many chivalry stories, and his exploration of the Southern society with keen eyes provided him with many biased stories long before the Southern Renaissance period. Therefore, it is natural that Faulkner's initial stories were harsh on women, still with some wit in his depiction of Southern women. However, Faulkner created Southern social pattern so powerful that future gender studies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century have mainly focused on Faulknerian South and characterization by disregarding the whole United States.

There were rapid and substantial changes implemented in Southern social life during Faulkner's life (1897–1962) including correlations between “race, class, gender, and sexuality and in the meanings of personal and communal identity” (Jones, 2007, p. 49). According to Kimmel (1996), “American manhood tried, tested, and failed at the project of Self-Made Manhood, a manhood based on self-control, independence, and individualism, all virtues useful for the new corporate economy” (Kimmel, 1996, p. 73). These changes can be tracked in characterization in Faulkner's oeuvre. For instance, while Faulkner's *Sartoris* employed stereotypical African-American characters despite all their socially creative elements, on the other hand, Faulkner's *The Reivers* contained a self-sufficient African-American character, Ned, who could control and manipulate the White population and even prosper among them. In addition, female characters had also evolved within Yoknapatawpha from simple housewives and caretaker African-American nannies to finally becoming roadhouse owners in the final novel. *The Reivers* also hosted a prostitute, Miss Corrie, who then gave up her lifestyle and changed her fake name to the original one, Everbe Corinthia, then she was married to her lover, moving back to Jefferson.

Anne Goodwyn Jones (2007), in her gender study of Faulkner's literary works, summarized the use of sexuality and gender as follows:

*In fact, Faulkner also imagined sexually anxious young white men, feminine or gay military men, love- and grief-stricken black men, sexual murderers, white spinsters with violent sexual fantasies, young boyish girls who look like saplings, maternal prostitutes, pregnant questers, vindictive bitches, and moralistic ladies along with rapists like Popeye. He questioned accepted beliefs about gender and sexuality with what seems an almost untrammelled sense of freedom. (Jones, 2007, p. 46)*

Making references to Faulkner's own life and relationship with women, Jones indicated that Faulkner always tried something new in terms of love and relations. As is known, Faulkner is married to his childhood love but after her divorce from a marriage with another man, then the author could not find the ideal happiness he had dreamt of, then he had love affairs with two different women while he was married.

The changing womanhood and manhood of the South can be attributed to many events such as colonial past, slaveholding and old aristocracy empowering men. Conversely, constitutional victory, sudden economic problems empowered women compared to men. There were also intercultural relations based on religion, European cultures and historical developments. Consequently, as time passed, Faulkner's male South had evolved into a mixture of male-female unity. However, during this passage from the Old South to the New Modern South, many incidents of sexual abuse and interracial hidden relations changed the South into a complex system of devastation and turmoil.

The Civil War and new rights allowed the North to prosper socially much faster than the South. Therefore, Southern social panorama had always attracted literary attention as a romantic but dangerous picture of the past that was desired by some and despised by others. William Faulkner successfully harnessed these contradictory desires, gender politics and racial dynamics in his great literary works.

### **Welty's Female Experience of the Southern Society**

Recent critical consensus tends to define Eudora Welty as "a Jungian postmodernist and an early feminist" (Gretlund, 2008, p. 503). Unlike Faulkner, Eudora Welty lived a life of isolation and artistic inclination towards photography. While Noel Polk (2008) defined Faulkner's eye as "defining eye," Welty's eye can be defined as a writer's eye. Eudora Welty is also defined as "a literary agrarian" by Gretlund (2008). Gretlund also reported Welty's remarks on Northern effect on the South as "The ravishment of their countryside, industrialization, standardization, exploitation, and the general vulgarization of life, have ever, reasonably or not, been seen as one Northern thing to the individualist mind of the South" (506). In this

respect, Welty created her own Southern picture by completing her fictional puzzle with each short story and novel she wrote. In addition, "She spent time in New Orleans, San Francisco, and particularly in New York, and the cities played an important role for Welty's development," (506) indicated Gretlund. As in the case of Faulkner, Southerner young pens visited the North, observed life in the industrial North but finally they chose South as the home for their creativity and social reality.

Since Eudora Welty did not have a colonial or confederate background in their familial heritage, she was raised in a more confined environment filled with books, knowledge and curiosity. That is why the author lived her whole life in her family house in Jackson, now called the Eudora Welty House and Garden. Her photographic and author eye on Southern landscape consistently articulated stories with women from every age.

Beginning with her old, historically dramatic but powerful woman figure, Phoenix Jackson, in *A Worn Path*, Eudora Welty succeeded in creating the most colorful female characters and female world of isolation finally in her Morgana County where female unions, parties, recitals and activities were experienced together with bad marriages, fallen ladies, sold houses, continuously raped women. This mixture of good and evil was the ideal Southern picturesque from which a whole generation of Confederate-Redeemer writers refrained from showing or telling.

In Welty's *The Golden Apples*, Welty also "manages to convince us that black people are present and play an important part in the community's life. They are never just 'blacks' or the inhabitants of any town; they are highly individualized Morgana blacks" (Gretlund, 2008, p. 510). The black community lived and prospered in Welty's Morgana, they were good citizens, Church members, garden helpers and honest people without so much bad deeds as depicted so far in the Southern plantation novels.

In terms of gender approach in Welty's works, Brennon Costello (2000) emphasized the sexual and mythical references in *The Golden Apples*. For instance, Moon Lake is located in the center of Morgana County. Costello defined the lake as "practically bursting with almost too-obvious phallic imagery" (82). The three camper girls' journeys into the lake ending in drowning of one of the girls was also shown as their sexual passage to adolescence in the short

story "Moon Lake." Another significant young lady, Virgie, and her powerful German-descendant piano teacher Miss Eckhart were also other examples of powerful female figures. Virgie is a sexually free girl who lives in a relationship with a sailor boy by visiting an abandoned house. At the same time, Miss Eckhart returns to that abandoned house to burn down the piano as a symbol of losing her youth and power in music.

Gender roles have been extensively examined in Welty's fiction so far. However, *The Golden Apples* has been the most controversial and prominent target of criticism. Peckham examined the setting in her literary works: "Welty's stories show a maternal world dependent on, corrupted by, and resistant to men's culture and masculine sexuality" (Peckham, 2001, p. 195). Accordingly, King MacLain and her twins were the dark of masculinity in *The Golden Apples*. King resembled to mythical kings such as Zeus, who just wandered around Morgana having sexual intercourse with any woman he liked. However, during forty years passed in these stories, King MacLain became an old and mature man, and women of Morgana then began to see the reality behind all mythical stories and exaggerations regarding King. Even Welty's most simple old African-American lady, Phoenix Jackson, was a powerful woman in a Southern masculine world without no fears and even with cunning control over a White hunter in *A Worn Path*.

## **Comparative Findings**

Intending to depict certain contradictions in two authors from the same geographical region but from two different genders, and moreover, from two different southern American literary historical periods, this book describes and examined two powerful Southern authors in terms of their approach to Southern settings in their unique fictional worlds.

Living nearly 150 miles away from each other, Faulkner and Welty lived in the South following their Northern journeys. Although their lives intersected at some point, they talked about music and life, not literature. Faulkner wrote a letter to Welty in 1943 from Hollywood to encourage her in her literary journey as a young writer. On the other hand, Welty criticized many Southern novels and sent these critical texts to Faulkner from time to time.

The importance of locality and place, family and past, desires and sins had always been in the center of both authors' novels. However, Noel Polk (2008) in his comparative study, *"Faulkner and Welty and the Southern Literary Tradition"*, summarized their differences "Faulkner's historically canonized themes and epic struggles are larger, more cosmic, more significantly responsive to crises in western culture and are therefore more important than the seemingly tamer, less grandiose, more domestic, work of Welty and other women writers" (8). Suggesting that "there was no evidence of Faulkner borrowing anything from Welty" (20), Polk indicated that fictional Morgana County bore some resemblance to Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County. Moreover, Polk suggested that the importance of place was evident in both authors' roots in the South (20). The only apparent difference between roots of both authors was that Faulkner was raised in a post-colonial and confederate family heritage which allowed him to fictionalize Southern chivalry with regard to Civil War past, Lost Cause period and redeemer present of the South; on the other hand, Eudora Welty was a daughter of Northerner family moving to South during the Reconstruction period, and Welty was raised in a more secure environment filled with love of art and literature. Accordingly, these themes and familial roots were the line dividing literary qualities of Faulkner and Welty, but the Southern landscape was their exact and fixed quality of literary creation, although their approach to Southern social, racial and sexual problems varied. Polk concluded her detailed analysis of both author with some remarks on Welty's literary creativity compared to Faulkner's 'defining eye' in the South:

*Eudora Welty's eye, too, is a defining eye, but it is also a subversive eye that looks at things other eyes don't know to look at or, worse, avoid. But hers too can be an enlarging and enriching vision, if we have the courage to see what she is showing us instead of what we want to see.* (Polk, 2008, p. 21)

That was why the previous section defined Welty's eye as a writer's eye. Another critic observing the differences between Faulkner and Welty was Gretlund (2008). The author elaborated his approach to Faulkner and Welty as follows:

*Welty is without doubt, like William Faulkner, her fellow Mississippian, to be seen in the first row of the exponents of the Southern renaissance in literature, but her mentality was very different from that of Faulkner, and possibly more representative of her time and place. It is clear that*

*any assessment of twentieth-century cultural development in the South has to consider Welty's achievement. Her obvious identification with her town, her state, and its people was only augmented by her short periods of living outside the South. The Agrarian ideas, the city experiences, the racial conflicts, the ignorance, the violence, and the clashes of local men and women of her times are reflected in her fiction with a compassion and a sincere concern that made her literary achievement one of international significance. (Gretlund, 2008, p. 506)*

Welty became a more prominent and well-known writer thanks to her tendency to keep everything simple by not missing any hidden details in human psychology. Her mythical readings also ensured her place in Southern literature as another female giant next to the great place of Faulkner.

Accordingly, it can be concluded that Faulkner was a cinematic chivalry of the South evolving into modernism and reconciliation during his last novels, Welty had always been a black-and-white nostalgia filled with realistic power of fictional creativity without following any movements, beliefs or agenda. Faulkner was the South; Welty was a realistic reflection of mythical destructiveness on daily life of humans in the South. While Faulkner was raised as a redeemer, Lost Cause member of the Old South (despite he did not internalize), Welty was a new Agrarian of the South as the new feminist of the United States in the making.

## **CONCLUSION**

Southern United States has always been a problematic geography for its natives, colonial explorers and exploiters, founding colonies of the United States and modern community of the new South. Various stages such as colonization, Revolution, Civil War, Lost Cause, abolition of slavery, redeemers, agrarians and World Wars had to be experienced and resolved into their final form, the New South. Finally, this six-century old turmoil began to settle during the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Literarily, William Faulkner and Eudora Welty were both parts and witnesses of this final step towards modernity through their powerful literary voices.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century combined with historical legacy in the South created a difficult social struggle against poverty, gender-biased approaches, racism and World Wars. However, human qualities and Southern stubbornness in locality ensured that socially changing landscape became a new and unique home for these grotesque communities. That was why the South attracted so much attention in literary circles during the last century and yielded the ideal literary production thanks to many creative and modernist literary figures.

As the history of the South progressed into a modern reality, the Southern literature changed accordingly and in parallel to social, racial, political and religious matters in the South. The Southern United States Literature began with oral tradition of ancient natives; changed its course with colonial texts, colonial fiction and slavery narrative; evolved with Revolution and Civil War narratives of Lost Cause; matured in Southern Appalachia and Southern Renaissance; finally, became a unique and grotesque genre of the United States literature, totally costing over ten centuries in the South. Following the 20<sup>th</sup>-century developments in every corner of life ranging from technology to social, psychology to myth-analysis, anthropology to feminism, the South began to be accepted, recognized and felt deeply and intensively. Therefore, ancient romantic South, Southern colonial drama, Lost Cause chivalry reaction and Reconstruction naturalism have finally created a New Modern Southern Literature which has been the center of attention in literary critical circles.

Parallel to the literary, historical and social development in the South, both William Faulkner and Eudora Welty approached the modernist landscape of the United States in terms of their male-female portraits in Southern realities. However, it is possible to

observe their concurrent development in literary creativity in relation to their fictional settings, such as Faulkner's *Yoknapatawpha* and Welty's *Morgana*. These two places have become genre-creating milestones in Southern United States literature.

As described in this book, Faulknerian novel represented a branded quality attributed mostly to the colonial heritage of the Falkner family. However, William Faulkner also changed his setting and characters in a large and interconnected manner to create a great map of *Yoknapatawpha* society, beginning with his novel, *Sartoris*. The author completed this southern literary picture in a complex way to pose some questions, show some regret and criticize the overall changing southern racial matters including social approach to women in the Southern setting, in his final work, *The Reivers*, as examined in this book. On the other hand, Eudora Welty created her own Weltian quality in her picturesque representation of the Southern realities. Welty, a woman of solitude, was able to stay away from the political, social and historical biases of the South, and she created a pure Southerner experience in her short stories and novels. Eudora Welty successfully created a female picturesque representation of a realistic South. Both *A Worn Path* and *The Golden Apples* have been the symbol of Southern Weltian approach to female Southern experience together with human qualities and powerful social references regarding gender issues experienced in the past.

In accordance with the thesis of this study, it has been concluded that both William Faulkner and Eudora Welty experienced some changes in their approaches to Southern problems that had been experienced since the colonization period, and also in their approach to racism, gender issues and modernity in literature thanks to their characters and fictional counties. For instance, Faulkner was a member of a well-known Southern colonial family responsible for building the Southern railroads during Reconstruction period; however, late novels of Faulkner showed a serious change towards a more justice-warrior socialist reality in which hidden African-American stereotype characters began to be depicted more realistically and more powerfully. On the other hand, Eudora Welty was a great photographic memory of the South as a woman raised in a secure and elite environment in a scalawag family who migrated from the North. In time, Welty also realized the power of mythical stories reflected in the Southern landscape. Therefore, the author

created a systematical approach to Southern social, racial and gender issues to conclude a great outcome in her short stories.

With regard to fictional counties each author created in their literary maturation works, it has been observed in this book that both Faulkner and Welty created their own fictional settings in which their creative literary explosion occurred. First, Faulkner wrote some Southern stories, poems and novels which reflected his colonial background successfully but on the surface of Southern bias. However, the author achieved in planning, characterizing and creating *Yoknapatawpha County* with a versatile depiction of Southern social landscape. This fictional world was so detailed that even Faulkner could draw a map of any novels or stories on the point where they were narrated or occurred. Characters and families in these Yoknapatawpha novels were interconnected in such a creative way that even in the final novel of this series, *The Reivers*, there were at least four different characters from previous novels. The only problem may be observed in their order of introduction in this fictional county; most families entered this landscape in a historically mixed order. Secondly and similarly, Welty created some initial short stories as photo-realistic depictions of the Southern lifestyle. Following her mythical readings worldwide, Welty created a unique *Morgana County* in which masculine aggression, female social strength and reality, social turmoil and tension among equal members of society, regardless of their skin colors, were depicted in an ideal way. Unlike Faulkner cacophony of voices with mixed inclusion to a fictional South, Welty's characters in her linear short stories were consistent participants of her Morgana experience.

Rowan Oak and Welty's Garden were the exact representatives of the importance attributed to 'place' in Southern literature. Both authors examined in this book were global enough in their universal human psychology and social depictions, but they always sought a secure place for their substantial literature to emerge. Rowan Oak was the place for Faulkner's solitude in literature and peace amid the Southern turmoil. Similarly, Welty lived her whole life in a small town, Jackson, in her family house with her addiction to her garden full of flowers. Even, Welty could not write creative stories when she was abroad or away from her home.

Other findings of this study have suggested that familial background of both authors ensured their future literary qualities and social curiosity. Both Faulkner and Welty had bookish mothers,

and both authors could read and write before commencing their primary educations. Raising in such literary diverse familial settings, both authors were inclined to read and write creatively. Great European and American authors inspired Faulkner and Welty in their fictional creations in their literary future. Similarly, both authors have unique social skills based on their experiences with their fathers and their surroundings. Faulkner's father was a great figure for social explorations and Southern social manners that was conveyed the author's future literary creations. Welty's father, in addition, was a man of photography and engineering who finally created a world of photography and curiosity for new things for Welty.

Consequently, William Faulkner and Eudora Welty were the shadows of the Southern locality, but the successful performers of universality in anything related to human relations. Their creativity was remnants of modernist literature around the world, authors such as Charles Dickens, Mark Twain, the Grimm brothers, Shakespeare, Balzac, Poe, Kipling, and Conrad had left their creative heritage to Faulkner and Welty since they were from bookish families. Both authors loved to create social play in their daily lives whenever they could during their childhoods. Their maturation in literature came with more in-depth observations and analyses of human relations, gender and racial issues in the South. Therefore, both authors were regarded worthy of Pulitzer Awards during their lives and posthumously. Welty and Faulkner's lives were success stories from locality to universality, romanticism to modernism, racism to egalitarianism, family to community, and simplicity to complexity with variations from basic to universal.

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