

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background of the Research

Nowadays, a lot of rural residents constantly feel like they are falling behind their city counterparts. In an attempt to get better lives, many people decide to relocate far away from their hometowns to the metropolis. The idea that we can use the village's land to generate more material than living in the city is a better plan. All we need to do is to understand how to use land in the village. Villagers can use their current land as fields for farming, gardening, or raising livestock, or we can use the sea to make ponds or fish. According to Burnard, the difficulty of growing plantations in America is caused by American historians who do not believe in economic development through plantations, especially in small cities such as Boston and New York (Burnard 842).

The land in America is very large and also has the potential to focus and develop the agricultural sector. Clawson and Stewart stated that in 1966 nearly 90% of America's land had potential and could be used for gardening, including rotational pastures, forest lands, and native grazing lands. All cultivated agricultural land, most forest land, and some native grazing land are privately owned, but some of the latter two categories are publicly owned (Clawson 253). Clawson described America's potential in developing its agriculture. But until now this statement has not been able to encourage people in America to make maximum use of their land because the mindset has not yet been ingrained about how big the potential of land in America is for agriculture.

William Faulkner was an American author born in New Albany, Mississippi, on September 25, 1897, and passed away in Byhalia, Mississippi, on July 6, 1962. As an American author, Faulkner won the 1949 Nobel Prize in Literature in recognition of his contributions to the genre of contemporary American fiction. William Faulkner has a lot of notable works in the literary arts and has released numerous incredibly motivational books, such as *As I Lay Dying* (1926), *Absalom, Absalom!* (1927), *Go Down, Moses* (1962), and many more. *Go Down, Moses* is a story collection book comprising seven interconnected short stories. Regarding the title of this book, William Faulkner requested the publisher to write by equating the characters' names in each story.

Many of William Faulkner's works are set in the 19th century, even though he was not yet born at the time and could not directly witness what happened. One of his works, *Go Down, Moses* is set in the 19th century and raises issues about slavery, racism and land use in South America in that century. This was often seen in America before the Civil War. Faulkner's great-grandfather is thought to have fathered a child in this way, but "plantation fiction" quietly ignores the fact. Yet Faulkner centers the plot of his books such as *Go Down, Moses* on this brutality. For example, in the story *Go Down, Moses*. Carothers was a figure that Ike admired but he turned cruel "he became an evil old man who divorced his wife who had given him a child because she was from an inferior race," a man that Ike always admired. Upon learning of this, Ike is overcome with regret and rejects his legacy, rightly criticizing "the whole edifice which is complicated and complicated and based on injustice and based on cruel greed and even continuing in barbarity." (Kindley)

Because of his great-grandfather, Faulkner wrote *Go Down, Moses*, a story that denigrates human behavior during the Civil War in South America. Faulkner was aware that in his great-grandfather's time, he too would have supported the Confederacy and its opposition to racism, slavery, and environmental degradation (Kindley). In Faulkner's writings, there is a tragic sense of the wrongs committed by white Southerners, the depth of that guilt, and the lengths to which these wrongs are sought to be forgotten or denied. But a tragedy has only one possible conclusion or, as Faulkner believed, there will never be a conclusion. Guilt is not enough if we want justice or change. William Faulkner was the greatest writer about white guilt. He was fully aware of his territory, which was the wrong side of history.

According to Custred, *Go Down, Moses* (1947) is representative of Faulkner's prose fiction as a whole in both style and theme. Environmental issues are not extensively discussed or touched upon in most of William Faulkner's works. Land use conflicts are among many addressed in the book *Go Down, Moses*. The story is related to the surroundings and how people use the land set in a village. This will be a helpful guide to land use. Few reviewers discuss William Faulkner's Environmentalism, although most of his work is considered to be concerned with racial issues. Despite this, there has recently been a significant increase in ecological studies. However, no one has examined the ecological differences between urban and rural environments in this research so that it can provide a fresh and practical perspective on everyday life.

*Go Down, Moses* tries to offer a perspective that has never been thought of before regarding the perspective of village life which began to be less exciting

than city life which focused on 1942, by examining it from the perspective of village life. As life becomes more advanced nowadays, people no longer find village life attractive because of the lack of proper facilities for living there. Another reason is the difficulty of reaching the village. With this research, it is hoped that the government will pay more attention to village facilities in conditions that are very lacking in facilities like today. Equitable progress requires village facilities that are equivalent to city facilities because village life is very important for maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Without residents, fruit, vegetables and meat would be difficult to obtain. For example, facilities such as schools, transportation, and even technology can meet the daily needs of people in a village. That way, more and more people will be interested in living in the village. With a perspective that helps to increase interest in village life, this research can help open up the perspective of society, especially in Southern America today.

The Yoknapatawpha County safe landscape created by Faulkner, known for painting natural scenes that readers can safely remember, is a prime example of this. Isaac McCaslin becomes one of the characters as he seeks a true connection with nature and distances himself from his McCaslin heritage. The characters tend to seem connected to their place, so the plot is largely based on the characters moving closer to or away from their places of origin and heritage. Through his grandfather's ledger, Isaac in the story of *Go Down, Moses* rejects his heritage and decides to live a simpler life closer to home naturally after learning of his ancestors' sins in using slaves and committing the crime of incest.

Based on a statement by Faulkner in an interview conducted by The Paris Review, Faulkner believed that the only way for a writer to create confidence in

people in his writing was to convey the writer's own beliefs (Nerhovde 26). One way was to borrow the landscapes from the real world that Faulkner was most familiar with into his writing. When he implemented this, he used the environment where he came from, Yoknapatawpha in the south, as inspiration to improve the quality of his writing. The fictional location in *Go Down, Moses* is a fictional conversion of the town of Lafayette in Mississippi with most of the historical and geographical details included in the writing.

Literary criticism is likewise compelled to investigate human interaction to recover nature from human disaster. Ecocriticism is “an investigation into the connection between literature and the environment carried out with a dedication to ecological praxis” (Buell 430). There have been many writers who have researched land use in villages. This theme is no longer a common topic in literary research. An example includes research by Souza and Silva entitled “Regional Planning in the Land Reform Literature: A Gap to be Bridged.” In this research, Souza and Silva explain the importance of development and land use in villages from various aspects, such as social and economic. In order to realize socio-economic growth and property security rights, developing countries must maintain rural areas (24). This indicates the importance of land use in villages.

I chose *Go Down, Moses* as the object because William Faulkner, in this novel, is concerned about the environment. He does not show it directly by looking at the background of the book, where the story takes place, and how the characters use the existing land. I will use the American Pastoral theory as the main theory and focus on the land uses in the village represented book as the data.

## 1.2. Identification of the Problem

Basically, William Faulkner's work is claimed to address racial issues and economic conflicts rather than environmental issues. The number of research works with an ecological perspective has recently increased, but not many have studied ecological values in their works, especially regarding land use. I found William Faulkner's concern for land use, which can be seen from several activities in various ways, to show his concern for land use. This concern can be seen in one of his works, *Go Down, Moses*. In the couple story of *Go Down, Moses*, William Faulkner shows some of the jobs of the characters, such as farmers, hunters, and others. He also created a character with a hunting hobby. If we look at the environmental issue in *Go Down, Moses*, the characters in each story can utilize their land in better ways. Therefore, I believe this topic has not been studied much using Abrams' expressive approach and ecocritical theories, including Garrad's American Pastoral.

## 1.3. Review of Related Literature

Several previous researchers have conducted research using pastoral theory in order to increase people's awareness of nature. Pastoral theory is a theory that focuses on ideal rural environments such as agriculture and animal husbandry. However, many activities in a village are rarely done because people are more interested in living in a city. Therefore, I aim to maintain the traditional life in the village to preserve the existing environment.

The first research is an article written by Agustin and Najma entitled "William Faulkner's Environmental Awareness in His *Go Down, Moses*." They explored the environmental consciousness of *Go Down, Moses* author, William

Faulkner by applying two types of ecocritical theory, namely Garrard's Pastoral theory and Leopold's Land Ethic theory. They also used Abrams' Expressive approach to relate the novel to the author's ideology and personal experiences. They discovered that the main character, Isaac McCaslin, expressed Faulkner's awareness on nature. The area of this study is divided into two divisions, namely the depiction of human-nature relationship and Faulkner's environmental awareness. By using Garrard's Pastoral theory, they observed how nature is represented in the novel as nature as relaxation, contrast between rural and urban, and rural area for farming. Moreover, they state that environmental awareness consists of attitudes such as appreciating, understanding, and caring for nature (40).

Even though, in this research, I applied the same approach, namely Abrams' expressive approach. However, my research is not only limited to author's environmental awareness but also observes the author's ideology on land use. My research also refers to the environmental condition of the setting in the real world. It means that I tried to relate the author's perspectives as a criticism to the real condition in his work instead of only mentioning his concerns about nature.

, I chose to use several different stories with this research and focus on a different problem that is land use by adding one theory, American Pastoral which focuses on land use in villages in Southern America.

Next research was done by Love entitled "Et in Arcadia Ego: Pastoral Theory Meets Ecocriticism" (1992). In his article, Love discusses humans who destroy the environment in various ways, such as by drastically increasing the

population, logging for development, and many more. Love also quoted that pastoralism is just a “simplified civilization.” If people can understand this statement, understanding what pastoral means will not be difficult. Love also mentioned that pastoralism can be a serious and complex critique of life concerning rural landscapes and incidents, with explicit or implicit contrast. Pastoral theory can be a serious criticism of the perpetrators of environmental destruction and can provide a new perspective on the use of the environment.

This article is written by Tick entitled “The Unity of *Go Down, Moses*.” This article discusses the structure of writing *Go Down, Moses*. Many readers are confused when they first read this book because it consists of seven stories and speculate that *Go Down, Moses* is a complication of short stories. Tick mentioned that at least there are three related stories in this book, and a comprehensive rereading is important to prove the interdependence and structure of each story (67). This explains that *Go Down, Moses* is a collection of stories that are connected to each other if read in more depth. This is the reason why Faulkner considered it a novel.

Research was conducted by Phillips and was entitled “Ecocriticism, Literary Theory, and the Truth of Ecology.” This research reveals how to figure out ecocriticism. Based on Lawrence Bull’s theory, Philip has given many statements about ecocriticism in America. He quoted that Buell’s view of realism is related to American literature, which indicates support for democracy and naturalism as opposed to European views (586). From this statement, Phillips explained that literary works in America have always been passionate about the values of advocacy and nature. There is a lot of research from America regarding



damage to nature or the environment, but there is still a lack of it in the field of nature and land use, so this research will focus on the use of the environment.

The next research is from Gleeson-White entitled “William Faulkner *Go Down, Moses: An American Frontier Narrative.*” In this article, she shows the journey of William Faulkner in writing the book *Go Down, Moses*. She said that Faulkner, in his writing process, visited Delta businessmen and farmers in Cleveland, Mississippi (389). During his journey, William Faulkner saw and paid attention to the situation in America in 1942 as a background reference for making the book *Go Down, Moses* and to create conflict and the environment in the story. William Faulkner conducted interviews and gave speeches to local residents, so the issue raised in this book concerns the environment among Americans in 1942. However, the Americans still saw less than optimal land use that year. They even damaged it and did not utilize the potential contained in the land.

Research issued by Myers entitled “Voluntary Measures Environmental Stewardship in Faulkner’s *Go Down, Moses.*” Myers argued that the death of Ben in the story is a symbol of the destruction of forest and land caused by exploitation triggered by fear of wilderness (653). This means that a person’s fear of the environment is one of the reasons for destroying the environment, even though if they know how to take advantage of the potential of the environment around them, they will definitely take better care of the available natural resources. To address the lack of human concern about land use and the environment, my research will focus on land use, especially in rural areas, such as land use in agriculture, animal husbandry, and fisheries.

This article is from Braden in his journal entitled “William Faulkner and the Land.” In this article, Braden found that the idea of nature in Faulkner’s works is associated with the liberty and freedom of human beings in the context of land use (347). This proves that we can find William Faulkner’s concern for the use of the environment in his work *Go Down, Moses*. He also created a character who always talks about nature and also conflicts over land issues in his stories.

The article is from Leonard and Gutmann in their “Land Use and Transfer Plans in the U.S. Great Plains.” This article discusses land use in America, such as farming, animal husbandry, gardening, etc. Not only focusing there, this research also examines the details of the fate of land use by American society in the future, like who will take care of it, how their children will live on the farm, etc. They mentioned the importance of children maintaining the agriculture sector, who will manage it, and how it will be in the future (188).

Last article is written by Weeks entitled “Rural Development and Social Theory Building in The Third World.” In this article, Weeks discusses the developments taking place in the village to see how the lives of breeders, farmers, etc. Not only that, this article also discusses how the government helps village development with a large budget and is focused on farmers who really need it. In this research, Weeks also emphasized that even the smallest elements of society, namely the poor, also contribute to agriculture (21).

With these research carried out by previous researchers, I am sure this will significantly contribute to the research being carried out. These research illustrate and support this research, especially regarding land use issues in William Faulkner’s *Go Down, Moses*.

#### 1.4. Research Questions

This study focuses on the land use by the Southerners depicted in *Go Down, Moses* by William Faulkner. The research questions of this study include.

1. How do Southerners treat their land in 19<sup>th</sup> century in William Faulkner's *Go Down, Moses*?
2. How should Southerners utilize the land properly in 19<sup>th</sup> century in William Faulkner's *Go Down, Moses*?

#### 1.5. Scope of the Research

This study focuses on American Pastoral Theory as applied to William Faulkner's book, *Go Down, Moses*. By looking at the perspective of village life in this book, the author aims to provide views and perspectives regarding land use in rural areas in the 19th century, especially in South America. A lot of illegal logging occurs for development, even though South America is famous for its fertile land and many of its people work as farmers. Therefore, it is very important for the people of South America to know the potential of their agricultural land. Village life is also important for a country's economy and also for producing food for that country. If people do not use the land, getting vegetables, meat and fruit will be difficult. The facilities I mean above are schools, transportation, even technology. If all of that can be fulfilled for life in the village, I'm sure people will be interested in living there. William Faulkner's perspective on land use can help South American people in land use

#### 1.6. Objectives of the Study

The purpose this research is to analyze what life was like in America in 1861-1865, at which time there was a civil war in South America and show

people's lives in earning a living. Some people in rural areas earn a living by gardening, farming, and animal husbandry. Especially in southern America, which is the part of America that has the most plantations, with its fertile soil, the southern part has great potential for development in the agricultural sector. America also carried out development on a large scale so that many forests were cut down on a large scale. This is my aim in researching land use so that not just anyone replaces land that has the potential to be a source of life with development.

