William Faulkner’s Religious Concepts Revealed in *The Mansion*

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ABSTRACT

William Faulkner’s *The Mansion* (1959) unifies the human situation of the Snopes trilogy, *The Hamlet* (1940), *The Town* (1957) and *The Mansion* (1959), with man continuously in a state of tension between guilt and salvation. With its enigmatic concluding phrase, “Helen and the bishop, the kings and the unhomed angels, the scornful and graceless seraphim,” one of the distinguished characteristics of the story is its moral ambiguity, since Mink is described as a sympathetic character even though he murders two men. However, *The Mansion* is given a final religious connotation through Mink lying on the ground after the ordeal. There, under the light of the great mercy of God, “equal to any, good as any, brave as any” (*M* 435), Mink joins “the shining phantoms and dreams” (*M* 436) of which Eula, as “Helen,” and “the bishops, the kings and the unhomed angels, the scornful and graceless seraphim” are finally one.

Thus, the aim of this paper is to clarify Faulkner’s religious concepts during the last stage of his life, which presents the spiritual drama of Christian redemption, as revealed by Gavin and Ratliff through the story of Mink Snopes who has come to believe in “Old Master” in God’s fullest grace.

Key Words: moral ambiguity, redemption, God’s mercy