FAULKNER'S CONCEPT OF CHANGE AS AN ASPECT OF HUMAN EXISTENCE IN HIS MAJOR NOVELS

ABSTRACT FOR THESIS

Submitted for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in ENGLISH

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Abstract

The present study aims at an approach to Faulkner's novels off the beaten track. It investigates if Faulkner was really indifferent to changes that were taking place around him and opposed to enlightenment. With this view the attention has been mainly focussed on his five major novels: The Sound and the Fury, As I lay Dying, Sanctuary, Light in August and Absalom, Absalom! They are acclaimed by critical opinion to represent his most significant and representative work.

The entire study has been divided into eight chapters: -

1. Introduction
2. The Background of Faulkner's Fiction
3. The Vision of Change
4. Myth and Myth Making
5. Psychological Realism
6. Symbolism
7. Art and Technique
8. Conclusion.

The introduction explains why this study has been undertaken. It provides a brief account of his themes to suggest that there are reasons to believe that
Faulkner was aware of the changes taking place in the South and the world, and was concerned about them. It also discusses Faulkner's attitude towards the problems facing the South.

The second chapter briefly describes the Southern situation in the post-bellum and post World War I era to present an overview of the material used by Faulkner for his novels. It also discusses the world of Faulkner's novels based on this material -- Yoknapatawpha.

In the third chapter, his novels have been analysed to find out his attitude towards change. The chapter reveals that the attitude of Faulkner's characters towards change is not Faulkner's attitude. Faulkner was aware of the problems facing South because of the incompleteness of change in the post-bellum period and his lack of concern with the future is a limitation imposed by his material. He has tried to deal in his novels with the reasons why past so obsesses the Southern mind that it has strangulated the present. His own view is that change is an inevitable process of life, but if the concomitant change in values is absent then it leads to as much corruption as the obsession with the past leads to degeneration.

The fourth chapter discusses an important aspect of Faulkner's fiction: his exploration of myths and
his own myth making. It deals with the transformation of historical material into generalized human experience. It especially explores his analogical view of the old and new religious, social and political values. Through larger archetype mythical patterns that he has used, he successfully conveys how obsession with the past and inequality in the Southern society has led to numerous social, religious and political evils which have degenerated the South. It also reveals how the abnormal characters who try to arrest time and go against the motion of life destroy both life and themselves.

The fifth chapter is about psychological portrayal of his characters. His treatment of characters shows how they are affected by their environment and what happens when their natural drives and impulses are vitiated by their conditioned outlook. He presents the psychological analysis of his characters, their tensions, releases, revulsions and hatred as well as their source of strength. The characters also represent various types who have relevance to contemporary history.

The sixth chapter provides a study of Faulkner's use of symbolism. Faulkner adds sub-surface meaning to his statements by using symbols. These symbols when
associated with characters evoke the reader's sympathy or antipathy for that particular character and also indicate which way the writer's sympathies lie. When symbolic significance is attached to a situation, place or action it makes a comment by either implied irony or paradox or reinforcing the meaning.

The seventh chapter is a study of Faulkner's technical innovations and a modern way of communication. He relates the same story and uses the same material in all of his works, however, the mode of presentation differs from one novel to another. In The Sound and the Fury, he has used the modern technique of interior monologue. In Absalom, Absalom! he has used the 'siron' method which helps him to reveal the different shades of mental states of his characters through different angles. In Light in August, though the technique appears to be traditional because of his excessive use of antithesis and polarities in the conception and characters but, infact, he paints the subconscious of his characters like a great psychologist. To achieve his object, he takes the support of sound and silence, mobility--immobility, turbulence-quiescence and tension etc., abundantly. In Sanctuary, he has used the allegory in its modernized form, that is, we are face to face with humanly figures instead of mere abstract
characters as have been introduced in the traditional allegories.

The last chapter presents the conclusion of the study.
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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Certified that Ms. Hadiha Malik completed her Ph.D. thesis, entitled "Faulkner's Concept of Change as an Aspect of Human Existence in his Major Novels" under my supervision. To the best of my knowledge, the work has been done by the scholar herself.

Zahra Imran
Supervisor
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Preface

Faulkner has been acclaimed as a writer of universal significance and his novels have been compared to Greek tragedies. Like Dostoevsky, he is considered to be in distress over mankind. At the same time, he has also been criticised for lacking a sense of history and being out of touch with contemporary reality. If we take into consideration the themes and characters of his novels, we find a good deal of obsession with the past and a certain amount of distrust of the present. Most of the critical studies, favourable and unfavourable both, are mainly concerned with the traditionalist elements in his works.

Yet, a close study of his novels would show that, although he loves the South very much, he does not approve of many aspects of Southern society. He certainly does not consider obsession with the past a healthy attitude as nearly all his characters with such a bent of mind destroy themselves in various ways. He also disapproves of pharisaical religion and morality, discrimination against the Negroes and the Southern attitude towards women. He has no doubt created some modern types who have no values; but if he is critical

(i)
of them, he is also critical of the fanatic morality of the past. Such an approach does not speak of a rigid mind set.

The present study, therefore, aims at exploring Faulkner's approach to change and the reason for his concern with the past of the South. It has, however, been confined mainly to five of his commonly acknowledged major novels: The Sound and the Fury, As I lay Dying, Sanctuary, Light in August and Absalom, Absalom! They represent the best of Faulkner and deal with nearly all his favourite themes.

In order to inquire into all the relevant aspects, the study has been divided into eight chapters. Chapter I is a general introduction. Chapter II investigates the Southern background of Faulkner's novels. Chapter III discusses his vision of change. Chapter IV deals with his use of myths and myth making. Chapter V examines the psychological reality of the characters. Chapter VI is a study of Faulkner's use of symbolism. Chapter VII explains his art and technique. The last chapter presents the conclusion of the study.

Sincerely wishing to acknowledge, those to whom I feel indebted, I would first take the opportunity to
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Madhu Malik
INTRODUCTION

It is a commonly held critical opinion that the world of Faulkner's novels is a world where time has been arrested. He is concerned only with the romantic past of the South and its tragic degeneration. Future does not seem to exist for him. As such there is no-place for man to go if the past is lost.

But this opinion ignores the fact that though Faulkner bases his stories and characters in the South and deals with the problems with which he was familiar; his basic concern is to delineate those dramas of emotion, passion and feeling which are universal. In other words, he deals with the human predicament as such. Human existence has two poles: one is the facticity of time and place, the other is transcendence. A close study of Faulkner's works shows that he looks for values that would enable man to transcend the limitations imposed by the facts of his lineage, place of birth, prejudices of his environment and his materialistic pursuits. Like the other spokesmen of the second decade of the 20th century, Faulkner had witnessed the sudden collapse of the whole order, but unlike them, instead of being made dizzy by the
whirligig of time and looking for personal codes of conduct, he tries to look for perennial values that would enable man to overcome his vanities and attain serenity of spirit.

It does not mean that he ignores the need for change; but his approach is different. To him, change is of two kinds: one that takes place in man's surroundings and requires readjustment of approaches and attitudes, causing confusion and bafflement as it affects his set ways of life; the other that takes place in man's consciousness leading him from unawareness to awareness of the real nature of human situation and enabling him to endure it. The latter is possible only when one is able to imbibe such values as brotherly love, charity, tolerance, humility, understanding and control of wild passions.

The universality of Faulkner's vision is somewhat obscured by his very palpable recreation of the South. The feeling of its presence is so strong that Faulkner appears to be almost a regional writer. But it is not a shortcoming; it is rather a device that gives his works a ring of authenticity.

An author is born and grows up in a particular society and, unconsciously, imbibes all the fears,
anxieties, hopes and aspirations of that society. As he is an integral part of the society which nurtures him, his personal views and impressions are not entirely his own. The imaginative representation of life in the novels of William Faulkner also reflects the spirit, fears and hope of the society in Mississippi in which he was born and brought up.

Faulkner's chief experience was confined to the rural society of Lefayette county of Mississippi which believed in old pieties and, despite all suffering, led a contented life before the age of Depression. Owing to the Depression, the sudden fall in the prices of all commodities and unemployment, especially in the rural area, the labourers working on the plantations and the farms had to leave their homeland in search of food and shelter. The change in the external circumstances of life made it imperative that the moral and social outlook should also change.

After the 1st World War, the younger generation in Europe and America lost faith in the premises of the superiority of western civilization. It felt the need for a complete revision of the past value-system in keeping with the changed circumstances. But the South
still clung hopelessly to its past traditions and conventions and wanted to retain the old social norms, unmindful of the fact that they were now a part of history which could only be contemplated not revived. The incompatibility between the changed circumstances and the outdated social and moral moves led to utter confusion and immobility of thought.

The great heroes of the South were buried safely under the ground. The time of proving one's valour and physical prowess in the battlefield was over with the end of Civil War. The glorious past of the South was now a part of the history which could only be contemplated not revived. The South was not only in collision with Europe but also with North America. Owing to the establishment of democracy the individual got more privileges, rights and liberty in the North, while in the South the planters were still ruthless and the Negroes, women and the poor whites were being denied the right of equality. Moreover, the industry developed rapidly in the North making it more prosperous. But, because of resistance to change, the change in the modes of production in the South was rather slow and caused profound tensions, deep inner divisions of loyalties and
despair. The economic prosperity of planters marred the human values. The white traders in the South were getting more prosperous. Every section was scared of the other section. The resultant narrow mindedness, mutual jealousy, hatred and fear created a conflict in the Southern mind. The old problem of racial discrimination was still unresolved. It became more acute and violent.

Inspite of it, the 1st World War, which had an extra-ordinary impact on the United States, did not leave the South untouched. It speeded up the changes ushered in by the Civil War. The attitudes that had once prevailed began to crumble away and the economic, social and moral values seemed to lose their validity. Faulkner was not unaware of the contemporary issues but unlike his contemporaries such as Hemingway, Dospossos and Fitzgerald, he did not try to portray the sensibility of the generation affected by the war. He tried to peep below the crust that degenerated the existing society and found that Sex, Religion and the Negro were the main issues which required a change in the outlook. They were the root obsessions in the mind of the Southerner mainly responsible for the over all
stagnation. The result was that life had lost its charm and harmony and there was dissatisfaction and deep frustration. To communicate this sense distinctively he has created an imaginative past in his novels and used it for comparison with the present to show the loss of values and degeneration in the present chaotic society, which, still believing in the glorious legend of the past, is unmindful of the fact that the past can never be revived. He wishes for changes in attitudes that would make the society harmonious and just and human existence more dignified.

Faulkner is emotionally attached to his 'South' so he is more perturbed by watching its degeneration which is revealed in the following lines:

"Yes, I think the reason is simply that I love my country enough to cure its faults and the only way that I can cure its faults within my capacity, within my own vocation, is to shame it, to criticize, to try to show the difference between its evils, its goods, its moments of baseness, and its moments of honesty, integrity and pride, …"  

He gives a satirical view of the Southern society but he treats himself an integral part of the South; so it is rather the self-analysis of a man who is aware

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of the evil within himself and feels exasperated. His novels are self-searching and not a just critical accounts of the South's dehumanization.

In his imaginative creation of Yoknapatawpha County, he creates the themes and characters that he knew well and gives a realistic account of situations which makes them appear more convincing and real. Being himself from the South he knew it well that the people of the South were finding it difficult to adjust to the changing values of the time. The emotional wrangling of the people he created are a result of their reaction to change from a standpoint of rigidity. They are so obsessed with their past that they even forget that life is always in a state of motion and would ever flow on. The past gives way to the present and future, so they should try to adjust to the new values. But they either resist change or capitulate to it without understanding its requirements, which leads to a conflict between the human will and the circumstances which are beyond control. Faulkner presents his characters in the perspective of a changing world and this perspective goes beyond the 1st World War. It extends back upto 1860 -- the time of Civil War.

The tales told by Faulkner are gruesome, the
characters are abnormal and the situations are grim. So, apparently, it does not appear inappropriate to call him a bard of dark atmosphere, a fatalist or an author with an anti-vision. In his sheer idealism Faulkner forgets all but his own identity. Feeling that he is involved personally in the baseness of the Whites, he looks into the dark recesses of his own being. However, he is submerged in the love of his South to such an extent that his own identity is lost. Being an integral part of the South, his revelation becomes the revelation of the South.

But Faulkner is not devoid of optimism. He is aware of the possibilities of improvement. However, He, therefore, throws the baseness of people into their faces and virtually shames them into looking for improvement. In his novels he brings us face to face with peculiarities of the age and indicates possibilities of improvement. To achieve it, he has created some touchstone characters such as Dilsey, Clytie, Jenny, Byron Bunch and Nancy. These characters expose the hollowness of the Southern myth of the moral differences between the whites and the blacks and superiority of whites. They emphasize the need for necessary social change for
fostering equality of mankind.

Dilsey endures all suffering for the sake of members of the Compson family. For her, work is worship and humanity is above all. In a symbolic way she represents Christ who suffers for the mankind. Clytie endures suffering for all the members of Sutpen's family and ultimately sacrifices her life to save its integrity and honour from the unscrupulous designs of Rosa Coldfield. Nancy sacrifices her life to save Temple Stevens from eternal damnation. Miss Jenny Sartoris serves the four generations of Sartoris family. The Sartoris family is her microcosm. For her the service of humanity is above everything else. Byron Bunch represents a humanistic attitude. On the one side he is known as a sincere worker in the factory along with Christmas and Lucas Burch, on the other he is the only visitor to Hightower, the obsessed priest. Thus he forms a link between the traditionalists and naturalists. He successfully persuades Hightower to save Joe Christmas' life and help Lena Grove in her child-birth. He also persuades Lucas Burch to return to Lena Grove and her child. After Lucas runs away, he marries Lena Grove and accepts her child, that is, he willingly shares the burden of
Faulkner's fictional characters can be bisected broadly into three groups; the traditionalists, the opportunists and the reformists. The traditionalists are those who hopelessly cling to romantic legends, past traditions and conventions. They unconsciously go astray from the right course as the traditional virtues are blended with prejudices and rituals to such an extent that they cannot be separated easily. Unknowingly they treat the meaningless rituals of the past as true Christian virtues and follow them blindly and pay the penalty. The opportunists know that times have changed and reject the traditional values, but they are hypocritical self-seekers who do not have any values. The third group realizes what is wrong with the South and stands for a change in attitudes so that a better society would come into existence.

Faulkner's novels depict that disintegration, vulgarity and other evils of society are a result of man's inability to realize the weaknesses in his set ways of behaviour. We find him constantly asserting that "man can endure", but to endure life man need not accept passively a current code of conduct but has to
acquire those active values which are an outcome of the progress of human civilization.

Faulkner is not an out and out fatalist. He thinks that since man makes no effort to rise above his prejudices, vanities and ego he is bound to meet disaster. His characters like Joe Christmas, Caddy, Addie, Anse, Thomas Sutpen etc. are doomed because they either surrender to instinctive pressures and inner compulsions are unaware of the defectiveness of the collective approach to life of their social group.

Women in Faulkner often suffer because of the defective role assigned to them by the individual and the collective self. The poor simple minded girl Dewey Dell is jilted by Lafe then cheated by Macgowan in the city of Jefferson. Caddy is a 'bitch' for Jason, Charles, Herbert Head, Charley and other men. Speaking of Ruby Lamar in Sanctuary:

'Listen. By tomorrow they will probably ask her to leave town. Just because she happens not to be married to the man whose child she carries about these sanctified streets'.

Faulkner is rather critical of sanctified streets where the rituals and pharisaical norms of society are

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above humanity. The conventional society tolerates the function of a brothel at Memphis but fails to provide any shelter to Ruby Lamar as it is against their code of respectability. Women are denied their rights in a male dominated society which refuses to recognize their existence as separate from objects of male sexuality and adoration.

Faulkner upholds the basic human rights of man. Individual should be in a position to avail of freedom, equality and liberty. No individual should be denied the right to live in the name of race, creed or colour. The womenfolk should be treated as human beings and not as things. An individual should willingly share the burden of humanity, and life should not be denied in the name of respectability. Faulkner also believes that one should not be self assertive. The blind faith in rituals and meaningless traditions should be discarded as it distorts and destroys the present. Rigidity is harmful to the individual and society both.

In a way Faulkner implies that society should reevaluate its norms and attitudes. As without revaluation it is likely to lapse into prejudices, meaningless rituals and self-complacency leading to hypocrisy and
corruption. He is conscious of the fact that change is an inevitable process of life and if we don't renew our value system it can only lead to tragic consequences. His concept of time is closely related to it. To a certain extent he has been influenced by the Bergsonian concept of time, according to which 'past experiences of a man never pass into oblivion'. The past always seems to cast its shadow on the present in Faulkner's novels. But Faulkner uses it not because he is enamoured of the past, but to show how an imprisoned present leads to catastrophe. For, the South that Faulkner depicts obstinately lived under the shadow of its past.

Writers like Marcel Proust, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce etc. have also used the concept of two times, but Faulkner uses it in a different manner. Marcel Proust's quest for 'lost time' is an attempt to recapture the memories of moments that have long disappeared but which still live somewhere in the human consciousness.

To Virginia Woolf, all the past experiences are related to the present moment in a manner that though they are not in a chronological order but they are regulated by time. The past experiences help in guiding and evaluating the present actions in relation
to the past. The present remains the focal point, but the impact of the past lightens it up like a flash. James Joyce in his Ulysses is also preoccupied with the presentation of two times, but it is merely to retrieve the memory that is relevant to the presentation of eighteen hours of experience. Joseph Conrad's narratives may cross the past and present in the consciousness of his characters but the lives evoked in each retain a chronological order. The depreciation of present and future is used as a literary device to hide the linear movement of the narrative rather than a means of showing the grip of the past on the minds of his characters.

The core of Faulkner's work is the 'orbitary dial' whose shadow marks the present and absorbs the past. Thomas Compson tells Quentin "not that you may remember time, but that you might forget it now and then for a moment and not spend all your breath trying to conquer it." Quintin spends the last day of his life in a kind of time rage trying to conquer it. In tearing the hands off the watch he seeks to obliterate the present. Obliteration of the present, is a denial of life but life refuses to be denied. So Quintin destroys himself

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as he is unable to put the present into a meaningful relationship with the past. Likewise, other protagonists of Faulkner also try to deny life as their minds seethe with violence. Bayard too tries to arrest time and denies life but he fails in his effort. He gets tumultuous and when his mental tension mounts too high he is forced to deliberately traverse the path of self-destruction. Joe Christmas realizing the futility of his escapade surrenders himself at Marston. Thomas Sutpen, realizing the failure of his design of pure dynasty, walks like a great Greek hero to court his death.

In Faulkner's novels time in many cases appears to be frozen. He uses the concept of two times to show the rigidity of the mind of his characters that makes it difficult for them to comprehend the changes around them and the consequent loss of the sense of values.

Though many of Faulkner's characters live only in the past, this is not true of all his characters. Faulkner's touchstone characters such as Dilsey, Clytie, Jenny Sartoris are not obsessed with the past. Dilsey's religious experience is determined by her faith in the Compsons. Her phrase "I've seed de first en de
last,... Never you mine me.\textsuperscript{4}, indicates the union of Dilsey's religious and social life, for she uses the language of the book of Revelation to state her critical observation of the Compson family. Her participation is the symbolic suffering of Christ who endures all suffering for others, that is, all human beings. For her service of humanity is above everything else. Likewise, Clytie the daughter of Thomas Sutpen from a Negro woman endures suffering throughout her life for the Sutpen family. She is not obsessed with the clock-time but believes in the service of humanity. She even sacrifices her life in defending the honour and integrity of Sutpen's Hundred from the nefarious designs of Rosa Coldfield. To quote:

\begin{quote}
... then for a moment may be Clytie appeared in that window from which she must have been watching the gates constantly day and night for three months - the tragic gnome's face beneath the clean headrag, against a red background of fire, ...\textsuperscript{5}
\end{quote}

Like Dilsey and Clytie, Jenny Sartoris has no rage against time. She serves the four generations of Sartorises without expecting any reward. She endures suffering for the other members of the family. Though

\textsuperscript{4}The Sound and the Fury, p. 264.

she has greater love and affection for Bayard, yet, when she is informed about Bayard's death, she adopts a sober and quiet posture which indicates that she is far above the clock-time. The characters like Lena Grove abide by the motion of life. To her, her future child is a symbol of hope.

In short, time has been used by Faulkner as a device to depict the stagnation and dehumanization of his contemporary society in order to emphasize the need for change. His 'Momentary Avatars', who only live past and unconsciously try to arrest the flow of time, meet tragic ends.

His main aim is to probe into the inner recesses of his character's minds in order to find out the causes of human degeneration and social and moral ills of society. He differentiates between two kinds of change: the change that is merely a drift and the change that comes through an understanding of the nature of human suffering and weakness. While the former leads only to misery, the latter leads to regeneration.
THE BACKGROUND OF FAULKNER'S FICTION

The material that Faulkner has used to create the world of his fiction comes from the world in which he was born and brought up. It constitutes the backdrop to the drama of universal emotions played out by his characters and grounds them in specific time and space. Faulkner having grown up in the South sought inspiration both from his observation of life as well as from his personal experiences. The vision he thus tries to convey is also the vision of his social environment as he was an integral part of the society which had nurtured him. In his works he has tried to probe deeply into those aspects of life which were presented to him by his heritage and circumstances. His 'South' is a cluster of images, experiences and fantasies inherited from the world of his youth. He is concerned with the culture that emerged with the changing economic, social and intellectual scenario. Thus, the imaginative representation of life in his novel reflects the spirit, fears, hopes and aspirations of the society of Mississippi where he was born and brought up.

Faulkner's South is an imaginative representation of the life of a particular community which despite
diversity in its cultural heritage, faith, traditions, legends and myths lived in the South-West of America during the 19th century. Although it was haunted by inner conflicts, yet it was one community, at least on the surface. It had its own roots and cultural history. Faulkner deals with the historical reality of this community, but his impressions are subjective. They have been generalized to the extent that they can be identified with man in general.

The difference between the attitude of settlers in the North and the settlers in the South went back to the time of early settlements. The white settlers in the South were different from the settlers in the North. The immigrants to the North were those who wanted to escape the tyranny of class and church in Europe. The new world was a haven for the nonconformist protestants seeking refuge from persecution. They were hard working, thrifty and independent. The immigrants to the South were colonizers who were connected with the court. They received large chunks of land as reward after the restoration of monarchy. They were mainly persons from the prosperous classes and a few were cavaliers.
"... Having capital they bought and cultivated large estates, and having power or influence, they were often able to enlarge these estates from royal lands ..... After the influx we meet in Virginia history such notable families as the Harrisons, the Carys, the Masons, the Randolphs, and the Byrd ..." 1

These families established huge plantations and became practically masters of what they saw, but mentally they tried to retain their British customs and traditions. Being men of position, they had a sense of pride and dignity and idealized the cult of chivalry. English culture remained dominant in their folk ways, language and laws etc., although they tried to modify themselves with the changing environment.

The onflow of immigrants from the European continent to America continued till it was checked. Gradually the intruders created their own pattern of life. By the end of the 18th century there emerged a distinctly American society with its own social, economic and political traits, quite distinct from the European type in the old homeland.

During the first half of the 19th century there was unprecedented growth in the American economy. In the South the society became stratified among the

aristocratic planters, small planters, farmers and tradesmen, yeomen and poor whites. At the lowest wing were the negro slaves. The slaves produced cotton in the South which was demanded by textile mills in the North. The life of these slaves, who were brought chiefly from the west coast of Africa, was harsh and brutish at the large cotton establishments. The aristocratic planters considered it to be the only feasible method of controlling the great mass of slaves and maintaining their supremacy. The rich planters themselves lived in beautifully designed mansions, furnished with handsome mahogany furniture, heavy silver services with London hallmarks, good family portraits, engravings and considerable libraries. They were passionately interested in parties, balls, card-playing, racing and politics. The small planters, however, were hard-working, intelligent and thrifty men. They were self-reliant, independent in temper and determined to maintain their liberties.

The Blacks, who were used as slaves were robbed of all their rights. They were given harsh physical punishment. Black women were used by the white people for their sensual pleasure and were maltreated.
The ante-bellum society of the South took life easy. The southerners had a traditional outlook of life. They clung to old verities. They were convinced of the goodness of their life. Being out of touch with the industrial ethos, their minds had not yet come under the influence of science. They knowingly delayed the growth of cities, libraries and colleges because such a step would have made the slaves conscious of their rights leading to huge losses to the planters. The spirit of nationalism was missing in the South till 1835, though such a spirit could be traced to have existed in the North for long.

"Slavery secession and defeat in the war had made Dixie a place apart. After 1865 the majority of whites in the section were determined to keep it so".  

The North and the lowland South were very unlike each other in many ways. Though small farm agricultural economy continued in the North, New England and middle states turned increasingly to industry. As towns grew up, factories gained in importance. The main work force consisted of wage earners. Even people having small farms either worked with their own hands or employed

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free labour. The Northerners, though fanatical puritans, were a self-disciplined and optimistic lot. They stood for democracy and equality and abhorred slavery.

Plantation economy in the South rested on slave labour and plantation owners considered slavery essential to their existence and economy. Small farmers in the North did not need it and they were opposed to the expansion of slavery and plantations into the free area. The Northerners attacked the evils of slavery whereas the Southerners exaggerated the evils of industrial society. This conflict led to the Civil War.

The Civil War commenced in 1861, when eleven Southern states of America, including Virginia, North and south Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas, which were economically dependent on slave labour, broke away from the United States to form a new Southern Confederacy. This resulted in a conflict between the New Englanders of the North and the planters of the South. It continued for four years and finally came to an end with the defeat of the South.

The Civil War solved two questions which had led
to the division of the nation. It ended slavery and it established the ultimate supremacy of the federal government. The end of slavery brought about the emancipation of the blacks and made it possible to introduce a system of universal education for both the blacks and the whites. Another important effect of the war was that it stimulated the economic life of the North and developed individual and financial capitalism. The industry expanded rapidly leading to improved productivity. It raised the overall standard of living and people became more prosperous.

Inevitably, it led to a kind of hatred between the North and the South. People in the South resented the intrusion and influence of the North. The break down of the old order gave rise to new inequities. A new class, that of the newly rich, came into existence. They lived ostentatiously and flaunted their wealth. But most of the people lamented an idealized past and tried to resist any change.

The opposing section, on the other hand, became a 'solid South', under the democratic banner, raising its grievances for generations and romanticizing its past - slavery, the plantation system and the War.\(^3\)

\(^3\)Allen Nevins and Henry Steele Commager, *A Short History of the United States*, p. 262.
Inspite of the abolition of slavery, the planters continued to suppress the rights of the blacks and exploited them ruthlessly. The Negro became a symbol of threat to their cherished ways of life. He became the target of their rage at their humiliation and defeat in the Civil War. They withdrew into their own shell and invented myths of a glorious past when society was more harmonious, moral and charming. A curious result of this inverted psychology was an idealization of the white woman to extent of divesting her of her sexuality, and conversely, the degradation of the black woman as an object of animal passions. The glorification of the past became a trap that forced each succeeding generation into making an effort to return to it. Those who tried to challenge it were treated as traitors and had to face most often violent hostility. The new rich, inspite of their effort to gain respectability by making a show of their wealth, were treated with contempt. As a result of all this South became a seething pot of social tensions, violent reactions and stagnation.

The Ist World War brought about profound changes in the American outlook. American participation in the Ist World War was not inevitable. Neither American
integrity was threatened nor were America's political interests at stake; so politically it was unjustifiable for America to take part in the War. But the Americans were beguiled by a romantic idealism and they considered it to be their moral duty to safeguard the land of their fore-fathers, forgetting the fact that their fore-fathers had been persecuted and forced to go into self-exile to save their skins and their religious ideals. However, after the close of the War, they realized the hollowness of their political blunder when they came to know that thousands of lives had been lost on the battlefield and innumerable soldiers returned home either permanently disabled or seriously wounded. Their sufferings, miseries, lamentations and agonies were unbearable and untenable. Above all the job of the rehabilitating of soldiers who had returned from the war was an uphill task, and a great burden on the American exchequer. Moreover, the ex-soldiers found it difficult to adjust themselves in the civilian society. They felt disillusioned, foresaken, lonely, segregated, frustrated and dejected.

At the economic level, the situation was even more grim and serious. It was an age of great depression.
There was no demand for American goods and other commodities in the world market. As the share market lost its creditability, the prices of all commodities fell down considerably. Since there was no demand, there was no production. All the industries were at the brink of ruin, which led to greater unemployment. Because of the enactment of Anti-Slavery Act the agrarian economy of the South had already been badly shattered. Owing to the depression, the planters needed fewer labourers than before, at the same time, as there was tough competition amongst the job seekers, the planters reduced the daily wages. The labourers often got violent, but they were helpless. They had to choose between starvation or reduced wages. The industrialists and planters both were engaged in the exploitation of the poor workers and the farm labourers.

The conflict between the 'haves & have nots' was deepened and became more violent. It created greater tension, mutual hatred and suspicion. The human relationship was marred. Many people sought solace in the drink and dissipation. Some of the writers tried to depict the sensibility of the Age at the outer level but the maturer writers believed that the American disgust
and disillusionment represented the universal human desire to realize the true self.

The overall picture of America that emerges from the end of Civil War to the beginning of the first World War is that of dynamic economic expansion. The incomes went up, industry developed at a rapid pace and a vast network of railways connected the various parts of the country. By the turn of the century, the individual enterprise gave way to corporate organization, leading to greater concentration of wealth. The acquisition of wealth produced a new consumer psychology which most often, because of lack of change in moral outlook, gave rise to corruption. The uprooting of village societies and growing urbanization and greater influx of immigrants caused a complete social, cultural upheaval. The economic crash after the 1st World War brought about not only economic but psychological depression also. The younger generation found a new meaning in the moral freedom of the Jazz age and challenged all existing social and ethical norms.

However, the old attitude did not give way immediately and the threat of change created resistance to it, also. In the South, the conflict took the shape
of intensification of segregation, greater persecution of the blacks and insistence upon puritanical morality. The issues of discrimination against negroes, position of women and change in the outlook, therefore, became the main issues regarding change in the South.

The world of Faulkner’s novels has been created out of the South. He has created a South of his own in order to present his own understanding of the issues that faced his region. According to him, the name Yoknapatawpha is a "chikasaw Indian word. They were the Indians that we dispossessed in my country. That word means 'water flowing slow through the flat land', which to me was a pleasant image, ...." 4

The image 'water flowing', represents lifeforce. It suggests the idea of continuity with change. Though Faulkner has depicted the life experienced in his South yet he is, in fact, basically concerned with human predicament. To illustrate the central problems of man in general, he needed some material and the most appropriate and reliable material for him, being an artist, was that with which he was fully familiar, so the South is his microcosm. The World that he was trying to capture was the Mississippi where he was born and brought up.

4Robert A. Jellife, ed., Faulkner at Nagano, p. 82.
His concept of change as an aspect of human existence is closely linked with his views about the South. He not only reveals the picture of the South as a dying society, but also hints at the need for change and the kind of change society should undergo. He, no doubt, acknowledges the need for change in society, but in the way he presents his concept of change, he is different from his contemporaries. According to Walter Taylor:

Faulkner's .... each work may be seen as part of a progressive effort to imagine what the 'South' might have been or might become, in both its benign and nightmarish aspects - and to imagine a series of protagonists who cope, or fail to cope, with it.

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VISION OF CHANGE

Faulkner has been criticized for ignoring three-dimensional time in his novels. Sartre has charged that he "has decapitated time and deprived it of its future. His vision of the world can be compared to that of a man sitting in an open car and looking backwards."¹ This has created an impression that Faulkner does not consider change an important aspect of life. But a close study of his novels shows that Faulkner considers change an inexorable process of life. Without recognizing the need for change in keeping with times and progress of civilization a society is likely to become stagnant and degenerate, no matter how important it considers its past. If past appears to be so significant in his novels, it is because of the material out of which they have been composed. They reflect the attitude of the Southern society which failed to give recognition to the present let alone the future. The problem of change, therefore, in Faulkner's novels is the problem of change from the past to the present.

The South had pretended to be impervious to the changes brought about by the Civil War, but the first World War shook it up from its somnolence. The new

opportunities gave rise to a new class that wanted to have its share of the national prosperity. Its values clashed with those of the landed aristocracy that clung to its cherished dreams. As a matter of fact, the impact of the war was much more intense on the South, even though it was not so obvious, than on the North. In the North, the change that it brought about was only a matter of degrees; in the South it caused a cultural shock, giving rise to new social, economic and psychological tensions.

Faulkner could not but be aware of changes that were taking place around him not only in the South but also in the North, as well as in Europe. But Faulkner's approach to it was different from that of most of his contemporary writers. His view of change as Heinrich Strauman remarks, "throws light both on his view of the world as an ever changing reality, and on the stress which he lays on man's ability to shape his own destiny." 2

With fascism in the air, accentuation of Depression and increasing socio-economic conflicts, many writers felt obliged to take sides as recordists and prescribers. Faulkner, instead of it, tried to explore

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the forces that compel human beings, inspite of their knowing better, to drift along in the direction of self-destruction.

His exploration was imaginative rather than purely historical. His purpose was to understand events in terms of the human experiences which had produced them: the ambitions, the needs, the attitudes of mind and heart that had shaped destiny. The result was a series of volumes which, collectively formed a single saga.

Undoubtedly, the contemporary life and the sensibilities that he paints, depict the degeneration of his society, but it does not imply repudiation of change. His intention is to shame people into realizing their situation so that they would bring about the necessary change for a better life. To quote him:

I expect to see instances in which he has failed, yes, but they're temporary failures. I think that given time he will solve most of his problems, except the problems which he is doomed for ever to, simply because he is flesh and blood.

Faulkner's profound vision is revealed in his firm belief that we can guard ourselves against corrupt inhuman values - the root cause of our degeneration - and try to bring about a change in our consciousness. So

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he is deeply interested in man, his problems, his feelings and his actions.

The world of Yoknapatawpha created out of the South that he knew provides a context to his studies of the impact of change on human mind and emotions. He has even drawn a map of his imaginative land of Jefferson, specifying its geographical boundaries, physical features and its population. He also prophesies further changes on account of the growing population of the blacks, who may outnumber the whites in due course of time. The Yoknapatawpha county, as Cleanth Brooks and Frederick J. Hoffman have painstakingly worked out has twelve major families of planters: Hebersham, Holston, Crenier, Benbow, Stevens, Sartoris, Compson, McCaslin, Edmonds, Sutpen, McCallum and Snopes. All these families were once renowned for their chivalry. Now they have degenerated because of their refusal to accept change and desire to arrest time. They do not realize that past can only be contemplated not revived.

Sartoris is the first novel of his Yoknapatawpha saga, in which he has shown the decline of Compsons, Sartorises, Benbows and McCaslins --- the representative of the Old South and the rise of unscrupulous Snopes, who displace them. He has traced the life of this region
from the days of Indian possession, through the Pre-
Civil War era, down to the modern times. He has tried to
link the theme of soldier's return from France to the
theme of decay of an old Southern family and of all the
traditions which once supported it. The historical
perspective involves a period comprising two wars: the
American Civil and the Ist World War.

The theme of the novel may be interpreted in many
ways. First, it may be said to be about an excessive
obsession with the past. Secondly, it indicates the
disillusionment and loneliness of the modern man. Thirdly,
it reflects the frustration of the post-World War
I generation. Finally, it also depicts the conflict
between the traditional values of the Sartorises and the
Jazz era values of the Snopes.

Bayard Sartoris, an aviator, returning from the
war is the first character of Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha
county saga to have a compulsive drive. He belongs to
the post-World War I disillusioned American society, but
he is obsessed with the memory of his brother's death,
who was lost in an air crash during the war. Bayard
believes in the romantic legend of chivalry and
wants to lay down his life like a martyr in the battle
field, unmindful of the fact that the war is over and the situation has changed with time. Being over-whelmed by romantic idealism, he knowingly flies an aeroplane whose engine is defective and heads towards self-destruction in a classical pattern like some great Greek hero.

Old Sartoris, on the other hand, is a person who realizes futility and sterility of that ethical code for which the Sartorises, including young Bayard have been laying down their lives prematurely.

"I am the first of my name to see sixty years that I know of. I reckon Old Master is keeping me for a reliable witness to the extinction."

Old Sartoris and young Bayard both represent two opposite poles of history. In between the two, the period of sixty years shows the change in the historical perspective and the devastation wrought by the hold of the past. Bayard lacks the sagacity of old Sartoris who has witnessed the gradual extinction of his family on account of rigidity in attitudes. Thus, with the help of these two antithetical characters, the writer indicates the detrimental effects of stagnation in a society.

By creating the characters of Horace and Belle, the representatives of Jazz era, the author has hinted at the rebellious attitude of a section of society against the hold of the past. Miss Jenny's comments provided an inkling of what the direction of change ought to be. She has nursed the last four generations of Sartorises and knows well about the violence in their nature. She believes in allowing natural instincts to be free of artificial restrictions.

In Sartoris, the writer also depicts the degenerated value of those who make opportunistic adjustment with changing times without change in attitudes. Snopeses are 'poor whites' who inspite of gaining wealth remain morally poor. The short-coming of the traditionalists is their inability to recreate their past in a fast changing world, but they, at least, have the dignity of their past. The opportunists have neither the past dignity nor any sense of responsibility to the present.

In his next novel, The Sound and the Fury, Faulkner artistically shows how the Southern aristocratic families, isolating themselves from the course of history, gradually degenerate. Their inability to adjust to the
changes is the main cause of their decay. The crumbling looks of Compson's house symbolise the crisis which has gripped the family.

The theme of the novel may be interpreted mainly in two ways. First, as the title suggests, it is an indication of futile efforts, vain concerns and inexorable doom. The novel reveals complete disintegration of Compson family on account of the inadequacies of characters. They, at first, isolate themselves from the society and, later on, get isolated from each other. It is almost a Greek tragedy on excessive pride and lack of love. The downfall hints at the possible alternative which could have prevented their doom.

Secondly, it "is a complex treatment of a Southern household's role in the historical process of change, decline and endurance". Unable to cope with the change, in the modern times, the proud family of ante-bellum planters declines and shatters. Mr. Compson tries to seek refuge in whiskey and Latin authors, and dies young. Jason, the businessman of the family, makes an adjustment with the times but it is a sordid adjustment as it is grossly materialistic without any accompanying spiritual change.

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Then, there is Quentin's excessive obsession with the past. He has a rage for order and wants to arrest time. Being a puritan, he can not come to terms with his sexuality and wishes for the innocence of childhood. Failing in his attempt to put his obsessions into practice he stops time by committing suicide.

Caddy's promiscuity is an attempt at experiencing love physically in an environment where it is spiritually absent. She is a victim of a social system which denies human feelings and emotions for the sake of rigid outdated abstractions. Finding it impossible to find natural expression, these emotions and feelings lead to chaotic behaviour. Benjy's castration is an indication of the sterility of his environment.

As a matter of fact, the problem of Compson children is their inability to come to terms with their adulthood. Their ineffectual and neurotic parents watch helplessly, one through the fumes of whiskey, the other lost in self-pity. The situation is a symbolic expression of the lack of proper adjustment to change in life.

Dilsey serves her purpose of a touch stone in the novel. Her attitude can be used to assess the validity of the attitudes of the various members of Compson
family. Inspite of belonging to a section of the Southern society which is looked down upon as sub-human by the dominant class, she proves to be better than most of them. She is warm, loving, compassionate, generous and sacrificial. She lives with courage and dignity. She is the only one who challenges Jason's work in the household and defends Caddy, Miss Quentin and Benjy from his anger. Her wholesome attitude exposes the fallacy of the whites claim to superiority and their refusal to allow changes in the social structure.

As I lay Dying through its interior monologues provides a psychological study of several perspectives of truth and truth in this case is the various perspectives of the relationship between the living and the dead. The author has portrayed in it the conscious, unconscious and, sometimes, hallucinatory impressions of the husband, the daughter and the four sons of Addie Bundren, as they carry her dead body through fire and flood to her parental cemetery in Jefferson.

There is a certain apparent dignity in the way the children try to fulfil the last wishes of their mother. But as the journey proceeds, not only does the absurdity of the entire mission is revealed but we discover the
hidden motives of each of the characters in this tragi-comic epic. Addie's character, on the one hand, shows the plight of women in the South, who in the male dominated society thirst for real love and feel betrayed; on the other hand she herself becomes a symbol of past imposing its will on the present. Her loveless existence forces her to extract loyalty from her children and husband even in her death.

Like *The Sound and the Fury, As I lay Dying* is also a story of family fragmentation owing to an obsession and lack of love. Addie's attitude finally destroys the most insightful of her sons. Darl senses his mother's and his sister's secret. He also perceives the selfishness implied in Addie's desire to be buried at Jefferson and considers it wrong. Yet he tries to go along with the plan. The burden is, however, too much for him and the conflict in his mind pushes him into madness.

There is a similarity, though not very obvious, between Mrs. Compson and Addie Bundren. Both of them are complaining figures, and their selfish natures are partially responsible for the destructive obsessions of their children. Both of them instead of taking interest
in their children willingly adopt a pessimistic attitude towards life. They treat children as a kind of burden with no moral responsibility.

In her private life Addie declines to make a social gesture of love and acceptance of family's responsibility; resulting in alienation which is mirrored in the maladjustment of her children. She showers her favour on Jewel, her illegitimate son by Whitefield, which creates jealousy in the mind of Darl. Malin Irving appropriately comments that "Addie is the only representative of design which neglects pity for pride, understanding for domination, life for death".  

The next novel, Sanctuary deals with the miscarriage of justice in a stagnant society. One of the recurrent motifs in the novel is change. Horace Benbow comes back to Jefferson because he wants to change his life and fight against evil and corruption in Jefferson. When he meets with all round resistance he remarks:

'When this is over, I think I'll go to Europe', he said. 'I need a change. Either I, or Mississippi, one'.

But the hold of the prejudices handed down from the past is so great that Benbow is completely

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8Sanctuary, p. 107.
frustrated in his efforts. His own sister, who in spite of her surreptitious attempts at gratifying her sexuality, stands for the sanctity of marriage, thwarts his efforts to get justice for Goodwin. The dilapidated house that provides sanctuary to the moonshiners but fails to provide it to Temple could well be symbolic of the Jefferson society which provides sanctuary to prejudices but fails to support justice. Even religion in Jefferson is used to deprive a mother and child of shelter. The hypocrisy and moral hollowness of the Jefferson establishment becomes obvious when Temple's father, a judge, makes her commit perjury. Temple's violation is symptomatic of the violation of the South's concept of the purity of its ideals by forced mechanical changes. For Popeye stands for the kind of mechanical and sterile change that overtake a stagnant society and corrupts it.

*Light in August* is a novel that not only presents the conflict between abstraction and concrete experience but also highlights the Southern blight of segregation and injustice to blacks. It is more historically determined than any of the preceding novels. In delineating characters like Hightower, Doc Hines, McEachern and
Percy Grimm, Faulkner appears to provide a study of the psychology of contemporary fascism.

The novel begins quietly with no trace of violence to come. Lena Grove, expecting a child, is on a long voyage to Jefferson, sometimes on foot but most of the times on unidentified wagons, to meet the father of her child. When the wagon approaches Jefferson, the driver points out from the top of hill two fires, one at the mill and the other at Joanna's house.

The next chapter establishes the source of violence. Joe Christmas enters the tale. He is a victim of the Southern prejudices. He does not know whether he is white or black. His is a life long search for his identity which ends in the murder of Joanna Burden and his own murder. Faulkner invests him with characteristics that make him a Christ figure and highlight the moral and religious deviations and distortions in the Southern outlook.

His story begins in an orphanage, where the dietitian finds him eating toothpaste behind the curtain of her room while she is busy in love-making with her friend Charley. It is his first encounter with hypocrisy. She calls him a "little rat spying on me", but later
on, gives him a dollar to keep him from telling anybody what he, as a matter of fact, does not understand.

Sometimes afterwards he is taken away by a self-righteous presbyterian, Simon McEachern. The dietition had made him consider himself a "Nigger bastard". McEachern adds his doctrine of the elect and the damned, thus mixing the calvinist harshness with the problem of race and blood. Joe's love for a prostitute, 'Bobbie', leads to a clash with McEachern and McEachern's murder.

When Bobbie turns against Christmas, he steps out into the "street" to be on the run for fifteen years. Through his experience he learns that self-definition is a brutal, forcibly derived experience, while love is a softness, a weakness and a deception. He, therefore, wanders around aggressively demanding his identity, and goading and hurting all soft, weak and contradictory creatures.

After fifteen years the road runs back into Jefferson and to the house of Joanna Burden. Both of them are obsessed. Joe, forced from within to assert his identity violently, is now faced with a woman whose being has been forced from without. Each of them is afflicted by a burden -- an assumed martyrdom; each of
them is firm, violent and tortured by an inner fear of corruption. She is obsessed by the burden of negro race; he as an imagined victim, she as an imagined heiress to the guilt complex. Both violently struggle to impose their ideology upon each other. When she tries to force him to kneel and pray to her Calvinist God and he refuses, they both realize that there is just one end to it and unified action takes place: she is murdered and he is lynched. After hiding with Negroes, and sometimes from Negroes, he finally gives himself up in the neighbouring Mottstown.

The novel is full of characters who represent forces of retrogression and fanaticism. Gail Hightower is obsessed with the loftiness of his vision of the past; Doc Hines is a racial fanatic; McEachern is a religious fanatic, and Percy Grimm is a white supremacist. Together they reveal tendencies that lead to fascist tendencies and sadistic violence. Hightower is redeemed from his plight when he changes his attitude and helps Lena Grove.

The emphasis in the novel is on the degeneration that takes place in a society which resists change and is not ready to give up its dehumanized values. Joe
Christmas, Hightower, Joanna Burden, McEachern all are in the grip of a self-destructive drive. Bobbie, and the other spectators who watch silently the lynching of Joe Christmas at the hands of Percy Grimm and the white persuers cannot shirk off their responsibility. Their passivity contributes as much to the perpetuation of brutality as the action of the persuers. The entire episode shows what kind of soil is fertile for the rise of fascism.

Opposed to the characters who represent abstractions are the characters of Lena Grove and Byron Bunch. They stand for concrete experiences and continuity of life. Lena Grove could well be the symbol of earth mother. These characters through their active love and human outlook suggest the norms to be adopted by the South.

Absalom, Absalom; invests a drama of inner compulsion with historical and social richness to an even greater extent than Light in August does. It deals with the failure of human design in the face of time and throws light on the actuality of the ante-bellum planter, his post-bellum obsessions and rigidity and the tragic grip of the past on succeeding generations.
The story of Thomas Sutpen, as rescued from the views of several narrators is that of an energetic man who through sheer force of his character rises from a poor boy from the mountains to be one of the most powerful and richest planters. He represents in that the aggressive adventurer who by accumulating wealth laid the foundations of modern America. But his growth is arrested. Once having become a part of the establishment he acquires its prejudices and refuses to acknowledge any change in the established relations and outlook.

The turning point in his life comes when he faces humiliation at a big house, where he goes to deliver a message. Hitherto, he had never thought that possession of a house or land was worthwhile in anyway, but now he is compelled to think that apart from the distinction between the blacks and the whites, there is also a distinction between the rich and the poor; which leads to the exploitation of many poor people like him. The awareness of the distinction between man and man produces in him a violent desire to be a great planter, with a huge mansion and a number of Negroes to rule over.

To fulfil his desire he goes to Haiti. There he
suppresses an uprising, earns money, marries and gets a son. But his childhood obsession of having a mansion and a pure dynasty persists. He discards his wife and son on the pretext that she has 1/8th Negro blood.

He thinks that once he has provided for her and their son, his duty as a husband and a father is over. He forms his relations with others not as I-You-Thou but as I-It. Marriage for him is not a moral obligation but a mere business transaction. However, in discarding his wife and son he unconsciously plants the seeds of his own misfortune.

He returns to Jefferson and marries Ellen Coldfield, who belongs to a very respectable and religious family of Jefferson. He acquires one hundred square miles of land, kidnaps a French architect and with the help of thirty Negroes, brought by him from Haiti, builds a plantation mansion. He gets two children from Ellen: Henry and Judith. But his past catches up with him. Charles Bon, his son born of his discarded wife comes to Jefferson. He pretends to fall in love with Judith in order to force his father to acknowledge him. But Henry kills Charles because of the threat of incest and miscegenation and absconds.
Thomas Sutpen's fortune declines and he is reduced to running a crossroads store. He makes two more attempts to restore the family. First he proposes to Rosa Coldfield that they live together and promises to marry her if she gives him a male heir. When she indignantly rejects him, he tries to gain a son from Milly Jones, the grand daughter of his old retainer. When their child turns out to be a daughter, Sutpen goads Wash Jones to kill him.

Absalom, Absalom! has been intricately constructed from the knowledge of different narrators each of whom has a particular individual perspective compounded of a special knowledge and a special ignorance.

In the beginning Rosa Coldfield, outraged by Sutpen, tells her version to Quentin Compson just before he leaves for Harvard. She treats Sutpen as a demon, a source of evil and a cause of South's defeat. Her version is charged with her special hatred and prejudices. Nothing in the account is told quietly of graciously or with charity.

The second version of the tale is shared by Quentin's father and grand father. It provides external details. Quentin's father is an outside observer,
curious, indulgent but not well informed so he is hopelessly at a loss to explain many things. He believes that Sutpen's tragic end is a punishment for his hubris.

Ultimately, Sutpen's story becomes Quentin's own responsibility. With his room-mate Shreve, he tries to reconstruct it from the account he has. Since he is a son, he thinks of the errors committed by Sutpen's children in responding to their father's arbitrary decisions. His zeal to recast and understand Sutpen's story intensifies his obsession with the past and hastens his suicide.

In short, every viewer of the legendary stories has his own perspective, and unfortunately none of these perspectives is totally correct. However, we get a view of the South from different angles. We realize that the past was after all not so idyllic as the legends make it out to be. They merely present a view of the lives of planters when the plantation economy had a validity. Those who built the plantations from the scratch seemed to be more than life size. But their energy became diabolic once they stopped keeping pace with the changing times. The hold of the attitudes of the older
generation on the younger generation resulted in the stultification of the latter.

The only character with an ability to survive is Clytie. Through her character, Faulkner once again suggests that black could well be superior to whites. She, like other blacks in Faulkner's novels, proves to be the survivor and can endure change because of her value system.

The problems posed in the novels discussed above clearly show that Faulkner considers that most of the problems of the South are a result of the incomplete changes since the Civil War. Segregation, miscegenation, incest, suppression of women, hypocritical and pharisaical attitudes, inability to attain emotional stability and adulthood, all are a result of stagnation. A change is needed in the outlook in order to come to terms the reality of historical changes and to make a healthy adjustment. The attitude of the survivors, that is the touchstone characters, who are mostly blacks, points out the shortcomings of the whites outlook. Further these novels also suggest that change does take place within a society even if it resists it. But, in the absence of any accompanying conscious change in the values, it only causes more confusion and conflict.
MYTH AND MYTH MAKING

Faulkner's novels have a complex structure. They are firmly rooted in the South but they draw inspiration from the entire heritage of human culture and civilization. Faulkner's comments on the title *Light in August*, reproduced by Cleanth Brooks reveal how his mind perceives the link between the past and the present:

In August in Mississippi there's a few days somewhere about the middle of the month when suddenly there's a foretaste of fall, it's cool, there is a lambence, a luminous quality to the light, as though it came not just from today but from back in the old classic times ... from Greece, from Olympus.

This quality of his imagination expresses itself in his novels through constant reference to Greek and Biblical myths. It lifts them from their regional locality to a universal significance. Since myth represents a primordial consciousness of the aspects of human existence, it emphasizes the fixed patterns of human behaviour through the different stages of history. Human society may be in a state of flux, moving from one stage to another, but there is an element of repetitiveness in human behaviour which can best be depicted

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through myths. Faulkner has alluded to Biblical and classical myths or used mythical patterns to underscore the tragedy inherent in the overbearing hold of the past on the present.

In addition to that Faulkner has explored the Southern myths about the superiority of the Dixie. In the aftermath of the Civil War, the South invented myths about the origins and values of the planter dominated society, the position of women and the inferior qualities of the Negro race. These myths captured the imagination even of the poorer sections of society and sustained the inherited prejudices and resistance to change. Faulkner even invented myths of his own to evaluate Southern myths and to represent the collective consciousness of the South.

Among the classical and Biblical myths that he has mainly used are the myth of Oedipus, the myth of Fall, the myth of redemption, the myth of scapegoat and Christ's persecution and the myth of earth-mother. These myths have been used either to invest a character with traits that condition the readers' response of fear, hate, sympathy, awe or fascination according to his predetermined attitude to the analogous mythical
figure or impregnate a situation with the referential meaning of a myth. Sometimes the myth is reversed or refrained either for the sake of an ironic comment or to suggest some distortion. Very often different myths are combined to depict the various dimensions of the same character or situation.

The myth of Oedipus has two ingredients: One is Oedipus' pride — his confidence in his own shrewdness — and the other conflict between the father and the son and incestuous desires. "The element of pride, as Cleanth Brooks has pointed out is based on a kind of innocence about the nature of reality. It is the basis of hamartia in Sophocles' Oedipus Rex". Oedipus thought that by running away from his adoptive parents, he could outwit gods and change his destiny but the very act of running away from his fate led him to it. The other element is the usual component of the Oedipus complex. Faulkner has used the former aspect of the myth of Oedipus to reveal the baneful effects of the Southerner's self assurance that made him resist the course of events, and the latter aspect to show the disastrous impact of the hold of past on the present.

The extent to which myth of Oedipus has been used by Faulkner differs from novel to novel. In As I Lay Dying, there is just a suggestion of it. The role of father here has been transferred to Addie, who imposes her will on her children even in her death. It brings her most perspicacious son, Darl, into conflict with her. He not only feels that the will is morally wrong but also senses the reason for her attachment to Jewel, which he resents. His relationship with his mother is that of love and hate. He is in tears when his effort to cremate his mother's stinking body fails. After the rescue, Vardaman finds him lying on the coffin under the apple tree:

The moonlight dappled on him too. On her it was still, but on Darl it dappled up and down. "You needn't to cry", I said. "Jewel got her out. You needn't to cry, Darl".

The dappled moonlight could as well be an indication of the conflict in his mind. His final breakdown is certainly a consequence of it. The end also marks the failure of his design to change the course of events. Cash is puzzled when Darl laughs crazily, for he can not see 'anything to laugh at', but Darl might be

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laughing at the inane human action arising out of vanity.

The Oedipal myth has been most extensively utilized in *The Sound and the Fury* and in *Absalom, Absalom*. Quentin's problem is basically his pride and his heritage. His father, like the legendary King Fisher, watches his domains wasted and nurses his injured pride with whiskey. He advises his son also to treat existence as meaningless:

> Quentin, I give you the mausoleum of all hope and desire; it is rather excruciatingly apt that you will use it to gain the reducto absurdum of all human experience which can fit your individual needs no better than it fitted his or his father's. I give it to you not that you may remember time, but that you might forget it now and then for a moment and not spend all your breath trying to conquer it. Because no battle is ever won he said.4

To Mr. Compson, time brings about devastating changes and the best way to deal with it is to ignore it. Quentin accepts his father as the source of family tradition and authority, and, like him, considers time as the destroyer of his ideal of purity and beauty, yet he does not like to be a mere spectator like his father. He resents his father's relegation of family duties.

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4 *The Sound and the Fury*, p. 73.
His situation has been very aptly described by Michael Millgate:

... a major cause of Quentin's tragedy, is that just as his mother has failed him as a source of love so his father fails him utterly in all his roles of progenitor, confessor, and counselor. He has become, indeed, Quentin's principal enemy, his cold and even cynical logic persistently undermining the very basis of all those idealistic concepts to which Quentin so passionately holds.

Quentin has a love-hate relationship with his father, but his incestuous longing for his mother is transferred to his sister. As Caddy grows up and gives expression to her natural instincts, his sense of honour, inherited from his father, is outraged. He holds time responsible for it, and, failing to stop it, puts a stop to his own existence.

So forceful is Quentin's obsession with time that it is often cited as an example of Faulkner's own attitude to time and change. A careful consideration of all those characters, who are obsessed with the past, however, would show that Faulkner in no way approves of the attitude of his characters. The obsession with the past and the refusal to change is a 'fatal flaw' in a character otherwise possessing many admirable qualities ---

it young Bayard Sartoris, Quentin or Sutpen.

The story of Sutpen, indeed, is replete with mythical references and mythic meaning that reveal that Faulkner in no way upholds stasis, though his characters do. In the words of Patricia Drechsel Tobin:

Faulkner throws the entire weight of Absalom, Absalom! against this paternal arrogance. The book is at the same time a negative critique of the dynastic assumptions of Sutpen and Quentin, and a positive celebration of literature as the corrective to all ambitions of inhuman consistency.  

The quotation from John T. Irwin makes the point more explicit:

What characterizes the life instinct and the death instinct in terms of the compulsion to repeat is that they both seek through repetition to restore an earlier state which has been lost .... Freud asserts that in the light of the repetition compulsion, all instincts, both those of life and death, are regressive. And I think we are justified in adding that the form which this regression takes is the urge to do away with the category of difference.

Tobin adds:


7John T. Irwin, Doubling and Intcest/Repetition and Revenge, quoted by Patricia Drechsel Tobin in Time and the Novel, p. 125.
Faulkner's novel is forever inscribing difference while his characters are writing sameness.

Sutpen's insistence upon keeping the things same fulfillment of his design to establish a great dynasty is the main cause of his tragic end. It results in the clash between his two sons, ending in the death of one and the exile of the other, and, later on, leading to his own death. He is so obsessed with it that he hardly cares how his actions and thought affect others and shocks Rosa Coldfield by suggesting that she should produce a child for him before he decides to marry her. He is akin to protagonists of Greek tragedy because of his hubris.

Quentin is fascinated by the story of Sutpen because he finds in Sutpen a father figure. The Sutpen story represents for him the hold of the past on the present:

He knew it already, had learned it already without the medium of speech somehow from having been born and living beside it.

In reiterating the story, he identifies himself with Henry and Bon. The Oedipal triangle of father/

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9 Absalom, Absalom! p. 212.
mother/child is replaced by the brother-avenger/sister/brother-seducer. In challenging Dalton he repeats the role of Henry, while his indulgence in incestuous delusions is a repetition of role of Bon.

When he merges his identity with those of Henry and Bon, Quentin is ratifying life as doomed repetition, past as prophecy, and time as a circle. The Sutpen story teaches him that this kind of vicious enclosure is devastatingly universal: the South after the Civil War turns in on itself, the family shows in its successive generations that all behaviour is a return to a past pattern, each family member is encircled by his own psychological and sexual impotence.  

The Oedipal myth, thus, has been used by Faulkner to make a statement about the destructive regression that takes place when the child (present) is dominated by the father (past) and cannot overcome his incestuous obsession with his mother (traditional honour). It retards the natural emotional growth of the child and makes it difficult for him to adjust to the changes brought about by age. This was the predicament of the South in Faulkner's time, and by using myth he converts it into a universal truth about any society that persists in holding on to the past in an ever changing world.

10Patricia Drechsel Tobin, *Time and the Novel; the Genealogical Imperative*, p. 121.
The Biblical myths have mostly been employed to expose the hollowness of Southerners' claim to the purity of their ideals and sincerity of their religious commitment. The myth of the Garden of Eden implied in Sutpen's transformation from a simple lad of the mountainous region of Western Virginia into a typical planter counters the Southerners' claim that the South in the ante-bellum period was an area of innocent bliss. In the frontier community of mountains, Sutpen lived in a state of innocence, like Adam in the Garden of his:

"Because where he lived the land belonged to anybody and everybody and so the man who would go to the trouble and work to fence off a piece of it and say "This is mine" was crazy; .... but they had living human men to perform the endless repetitive personal offices .... 11

His very first experience of the planter dominated Southern society sows seeds of corruption in his mind:

That's the way he got it. He had learned the difference not only between whitemen and black ones, but he was learning that there was a difference between white men and white men .... 12

The experience tempts him to become a planter with a big house and slaves, and leads to his fall. His sin

11 Absalom, Absalom! p. 182.
12 Ibid., pp. 185-186.
is inherent in his creative energy. It is the values that he has to adopt as a respectable planter which are responsible for the failure of his design. Again, in keeping with the myth of Fall, his sin does not die with him; it is inherited by succeeding generations. As Brylowsky remarks:

"The house waits to play its final role in the cycle of the myth, the final and ultimate catastrophe, the conflagration that should mark an end to, Sutpen's world .... Sutpen's idiot great grandson haunts the scene at the close and the moral guilt remains, not wiped out by the gothic flames."^13

The Southerner's view that the values deteriorated after the Civil War, therefore, does not appear to be well substantiated.

Another Biblical myth, that of redemption, is put to ironic use in As I Lay Dying. Addie's faith in her illegitimate son, Jewel, and the journey of her body through fire and water is a perfect parody of the journey of soul. When Cora Tull reproaches Addie for being partial to Jewel, Addie replies:

He is my cross and he will be my salvation. He will save me from the water and from the fire. Even though I have laid down my life, he will save me."^14


^14The Sound and the Fury & As I Lay Dying, p. 460.
The events after her death follow a pattern that turns Addie's trust into factual reality in the material world. The heroic action on the part of Jewel and Cash, the simplicity of Yardman's feelings, the selfish motives of Anse and Dewey Dell, and the stinking corpse, when viewed in the light of Darl's questioning and horrified outlook, underline the fact that, no matter how heroic an action seems to be, it is futile, even sacrilegious, if it is based only on a meaningless sense of honour. But, Faulkner seems to say, it is done in the South and admired as an act of faith even though, instead of helping a soul to attain a state of bliss, it means carrying a dead, stinking body around.

The myth which is most forcefully applied to bring out injustice, inhumanity and distortion of faith involved in the Southern insistence upon keeping the things as they were, is that of the scape-goat invested with Christ like characteristics. Its best example is the character of Joe Christmas in Light in August. Many images establish analogies between Joe Christmas and Christ. Myth and theme are inseparable here. Myth not only arises from the theme but also informs it.

Three years of Christ's life correspond in ...
time to three phases of Joe's relations with Joanna Burden. The last phase of this relationship may be loosely compared to the pre-Easter events; the crucial three days, beginning with Good Friday, in Christ's life. The triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem is paralleled to Joe's triumphal entry in Mottstown and Joe's efforts to escape the mob at Mottstown is also comparable to the events of Christ's life. His birth is also mysterious like Christ's. He is found on a Christmas eve, lying before a boarding house, so he is named Christmas. He has to fight with a pharisaical society throughout his life, exposing the social and religious evils, entrenched in the Southern society. Like Christ, who was betrayed by Judas, one of his disciples, Joe Christmas is also betrayed by Lucas Burch whom he had provided shelter. Sometimes the apparent parallelism in fact represents a direct contrast. Whereas Christ cleanses the temple, Joe desecrates it.

"... with the faces gaped for screaming falling away before him, straight to the pulpit and put his hand on the minister .... He stood there in the door, with the light behind him, laughing loud, and then he begun to curse again and we could see him snatch up a bench leg and swing it back."

Doc Hines, his grand-father has analogical relations with the Jewish priests who demanded Christ's crucifixion. He imagines himself to be the representative of God on this earth. He says: "It's the Lord God's abomination, and I am the instrument of His will." He treats Christmas as a bastard, an embodiment of evil, who is a pollution and an abomination on this holy land and wants to purify his earth by destroying Joe.

"That bastard, Lord", and God said, "He is still walking My earth", and old Doc Hines kept in touch with God and at night he said, "That bastard, Lord", and God said, "He is still walking My earth", and old Doc Hines kept in touch with God and one night he wrestled and he strove and he cried aloud, "That bastard, Lord! I feel! I feel the teeth and the fangs of evil!" and God said, "It's that bastard. Your work is not done yet. He's a pollution and a abomination on My earth".

Joe, like Christ, dies at the age of thirty three. There is a faint echo of the suffering of Christ on the cross in the scene of his death:

When they approached to see what he was about, they saw that the man was not dead yet, and when they saw what Grimm was doing one of the men gave a choked cry and stumbled back into the wall and began to vomit.

16 Light in August, p. 286.  
17 Ibid., p. 290.  
18 Ibid., p. 349.
After Christ's crucifixion, people did not feel relieved of the evil but were over-burdened with guilt and became conscious of the evil. Likewise Joe's crucifixion also burdens their memory with guilt and shame.

It seemed to rush out of his pale body like the rush of sparks from a rising rocket; upon that black blast the man seemed to rise soaring into their memories forever and ever. They are not to lose it, in whatever peaceful valleys, beside whatever placid and reassuring streams of old age, in the mirroring faces of whatever children they will contemplate old disasters and newer hopes. It will be there, musing, quiet, steadfast, not fading and not particularly threatful, but of itself alone serene, of itself alone triumphant.¹⁹

Olga W. Vickery commenting upon Joe Christmas says that "... Mrs. Hines account of his birth becomes significant, for it reveals that Joe is born into a myth created for him by others. Since Millie's pregnancy is considered an unforgivable sin by Hines, he looks for a scapegoat who will bear the guilt and punishment. By calling her lover a "nigger", he can transform a commonplace seduction into the horror of miscegenation. This is his justification, moral and religious, .... but his actions and statements help to formulate that confused and violent myth which is Joe's particular agony".²⁰

¹⁹Light in August, p. 349.

The myth of the scapegoat, in conjunction with the Madonna and Christ figures, is also used in *Sanctuary*, whose theme, essentially, is the theme of miscarriage of justice in a society warped by prejudices. The scapegoat is Goodwin, who becomes a victim of a purblind society which cannot see beyond its prejudices and unrealistic notions of idealized womanhood. The touch of the Madonna and Christ is provided by Ruby and her child.

The plight of Ruby and her child throws into relief the cruelty that sprouts from the pharisaical and hypocritical attitudes of the Jefferson society, representing a typical Southern situation.

In contrast to the above mentioned myths is the myth of earth-mother which suggests regeneration and continuity of life. This myth is partially associated with all those female characters of Faulkner who are either fecund or protective and display a positive attitude towards life. It has been most vividly applied to Lena Grove in *Light in August*. The novel opens and closes with Lena Grove on the move. Lena's wandering is in contrast with Joe's wandering. While Joe's movement is circular, starting from Jefferson and ending in
Jefferson, Lena's movement is linear, with Jefferson being merely a momentary stop in her onward progression. Joe comes back to Jefferson to die, Lena stops to give birth. Her regenerative impact enables not only Hightower to regain his self-respect by feeling involved in human existence, but also brings to an end Byron Bunch's alienation. There is also a suggestion of resurrection in Joe's grandmother calling Lena's baby "Joey". The close of the book even presents "Faulkner's version of the Holy Family" with Lena, her baby and Byron going along the road to an unknown destination.

New life, hope and continuous movement thus are the associations which Faulkner builds around Lena. She thus becomes a symbol of change and negates the Southern obsession with the past which turns human beings like Joe Christmas into abstractions and alienates persons like Hightower from the present. Lena's earthy simplicity, naturalness and fecundity seem much superior to the South's abstract morality and puritanical and racial fanaticism.

Besides exploiting Greek and Biblical myths, Faulkner has also explored the pet Southern myths about the correctness of the Southern way of life. Among them is

the myth of the nobility of the planter class. Faulkner created a typical planter in the character of Sutpen. His energy and obsession with his design cast a spell on those around him and the succeeding generation. To an outsider like Shreve his story may make the South look "better than the theatre", but to a Southerner like Quentin it is a sacred myth enshrining the vision of the grand past. To the reader the myth, when deconstructed, reveals the real nature of the planter class.

Sutpen can claim neither descent from a noble family nor a sophisticated upbringing. He is, like a good number of planters, a man of humble origins who possesses a tremendous energy, a strong determination and an insatiable ambition to become rich. In creating Sutpen's Hundred he reveals the creativity of his class at a time when plantation economy based on slave labour had a relevance. But his inability to change when his way of life becomes anachronistic leads to deterioration and destruction. His attitude towards women and Negroes also belies the Southern claim that in the ante-bellum period women were respected and Negroes were treated benevolently.

The Southern myths about the Negro and women are
exploded also by Faulkner's women and Negro characters with mythical dimensions. The attitude of the Southerner towards women was schismatic:

A schism, a kind of unconscious hypocrisy, embedded itself deeply into the soul of the South. For the whiteman the Negress was the female animalized and the white woman was the female spiritualized.\(^\text{22}\)

Mr. Compson reveals the effect of this spiritualization when he remarks:

`Years ago we in the South made our women into ladies. Then the War came and made the ladies into ghosts. So what else can we do, being gentlemen, but listen to them being ghosts?\(^\text{23}\)`

He also thinks that women are cut off from reality:

`Yes. They lead beautiful lives --- women. Lives not only divorced from, but irrevocably excommunicated from, all reality.\(^\text{24}\)`

But many of Faulkner's female characters are not pale lilies. They have a mind of their own and behave much more in accordance with their nature than men. Their role is more positive. Judith in Absalom, Absalom! takes charge of the things after catastrophe

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\(^{22}\)Marvin Backman, quoted by Patricia Dreschel Tobin in Time and the Novel; the Genealogical Imperative, p. 123.

\(^{23}\)Absalom, Absalom! p. 9.

\(^{24}\)Ibid., p. 158.
overtakes the Sutpen household. She invites Charles Bon's mistress to visit his grave and, after her death, tries to rear her son.

In giving expression to their sexual drives also, Faulkner's female characters register a kind of protest against the imposition of an unnatural role upon them. Addie in *As I Lay Dying* has an affair with Whitefield because she is disgusted with Anse Bundren's villainous nature. Caddie's provocative behaviour is partly responsible for her rape. Caddy acts much more naturally than Quentin in giving expression to her natural instincts and Caddy's daughter is able to outwit a cunning scoundrel like Jason.

As regards Faulkner's Negroes, they show a better understanding of life than the whites. Dilsey in *The Sound and the Fury* and Clytie in *Absalom, Absalom!* are figures of endurance. They can stand the pressure of change much better than others. They have a simple but sound moral approach and can survive because of their ability to face the challenges of the changing world on account of inner strength. Faulkner thinks that whiteman's dislike of the Negro is based on selfish considerations:
There's a class of whitemen that hates the Negro simply because he's afraid that the Negro will beat him at his own job, his own economic level, and he would feel the same toward anything that he believed would beat him at his economic level.  

Mr. Coldfield echoes, Faulkner's sentiments when he remarks that the South's economy was based "not on the rock of stern morality but on the shifting sands of opportunism."  

Faulkner's myths thus enable us to understand the Southern situation in terms of human experience. If we place Faulkner's novels in historical time, he indeed appears to be concerned, as Sartre has maintained, only with a strong past and weak present with no future." While his contemporaries were concerned about the future mankind after the cataclysm of the 1st World War he seemed to be concerned only with the romantic past of the South. But a consideration of his material would show that the constraints of Faulkner are actually the constraints of his subject matter. The impact of the 1st World War on the South instead creating a sense of civilizational crisis intensified the sense of the incompleteness of change that the Civil War should have.

26Absalom, Absalom! p. 214.
brought about. Faulkner's story of the soldier returning home - *Sartoris* - becomes more a story of obsession with an idealized heroic past than of the restlessness of a war-weary soldier. With a material which deals with a past which has not become present fully it is naturally not possible to depict future. It, however, does not mean denial of change. By discussing what impedes the translation of the past into present and by focussing on the problems to which the impediment gives rise, Faulkner reveals his concern with the change, and since a linear historical presentation would have trivialized his novels as dated and regional, he adopts the mythical approach to consider the problem of to change or not to change in the context of human existence. "The mythical", as Gunter Blocker maintains, claims no grasp of the future because it excludes it, just as it excludes the notion of past and present ... it deals with destiny."28

Faulkner presents his characters with a perfect understanding of their dilemma. His characters are caught between their concept of Dixie's noble behaviour and the real situation. It causes tensions leading to moral distortions. The ideal is found wanting and illusionary, needing re-adjustment. Since Faulkner is mostly concerned with what makes a society static and degenerate, he tries to present characters in a manner that shows the impact of their environment on their behaviour and reveals the traits of personality that make them resist change. They depict the violent explosion and perversion of instincts in a static society where individuals feel bound by an outdated, impractical idealized code and seek release in acts of cruelty and aggression, either by expressing prejudices against the negroes and women or in the name of piety.

The psychological realism with which Faulkner treats these characters, however, enables them to assume universal dimensions and we can easily categorize them into different types. The first group consists of those who are fanatically self-righteous and stick to
outmoded attitudes towards life. The second group is that of hypocrites who find the Southern code of conduct against natural instincts and urges, but make a public show of adhering to it while they are not averse to break it in privacy. The third section is made up of opportunists who know that the times have changed but are concerned only with their own material welfare and are ready to take advantage of the changed situation for their personal benefit. Then there are the victims of this stagnant society. They mainly consist of women and negroes, whose slightest effort to realize their self gives rise to tensions and violence. Finally, there is a small group which makes an effort to make people realize that times have changed and they too ought to change. But the efforts of this group mostly go waste as, inspite of being right, they cannot make people blinded by self-delusion, see the reality. They, however, perform the important function of presenting the norm against which the actions and behaviour of other characters are to be judged.

Thomas Compson in The Sound and the Fury is a cynical character. He has blind faith in the established traditions and conventions of the existing society. When his son Quentin is doubtful about the
validity of the set traditions and approaches him for better clarification, he advises him:

It was Grandfather's and when Father gave it to me he said, Quentin, I give you the mausoleum of all hope and desire; it's rather excruciating-ly apt that you will use it to gain the reducto absurdum of all human experience which can fit your individual needs no better than it fitted his or his father's.¹

It clearly indicates that he has himself accepted all the values of the past without any understanding and wants to impose them on the next generation so that it would follow them without understanding. He does not realize how confusing it can be for the coming generation. His insistence that it is "the reducto absurdum of all human experience" and cannot fit Quintin's "needs no better than it fitted his or his father's" shows the meaninglessness of his life and his inability to comprehend changes around him. Such an approach to life is pessimistic which leads to inactivity so he keeps himself busy by writing elegies in memory of his friends. Unluckily, Mrs. Compson is peevish by nature and fails to give any love and affection to her children. She fails to provide them proper guidance which leads to their abnormality. Now a serious threat is posed to the

¹The Sound and the Fury, p. 73.
family's honour. Caddy gives birth to a premature child and her husband gives her a divorce. On the one hand Thomas realizes that "... it was men invented virginity not women,"^2 that it is merely a biological process, on the other, he lets Caddy be driven out of home and treated her as an outcast. It indicates that inwardly he believes in superficial traditions so he doesn't check his family members from driving her out of the house.

When Quentin approaches Thomas and asks, "I said I have committed incest, Father, I said." He neither punishes him nor advises him in any way. He only says:

> If we could have just done something so dreadful and Father said That's sad too, people cannot do anything that dreadful they cannot do anything very dreadful at all they cannot even remember tomorrow what seemed dreadful today.  

"they cannot even remember tomorrow what seemed dreadful today" is a good philosophical idea but Thomas fails to clarify it to his son, Quentin effectively. Mere theoretical ideas without clarification confuse Quentin and finally result in his suicide.

Thomas Compson is a self-centred person who

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^2The Sound and the Fury, p. 75.

^3Ibid., p. 76.
fails to understand the problems of his children and solve them. Inspite of a dim realization of what things ought to be, he unreflectingly allows himself to follow the tradition, and, thus, spreads confusion all around and creates problem for his children.

While Caddy is busy in love-making with Charlie, Benjy starts bellowing. She immediately becomes conscious of her social responsibilities as a girl, because she is well aware of the social tradition and the social norms, prescribed for a girl. If any girl violates the social norms, there would be a social scandal which could mar her future prospects.

Caddy and I ran. We ran up the kitchen steps, onto the porch, and Caddy knelt down in the dark and held me. I could hear her and feel her chest. 'I won't'. she said. 'I won't any more, ever. Benjy, Benjy'. Then she was crying, and I cried, and we held each other. 'Hush! she said. 'Hush. I won't any more.' So I hushed and Caddy got up and we went into the kitchen and turned the light on and Caddy took the kitchen soap and washed her mouth at the sink, hard. Caddy smelled like trees.

Caddy feels guilt-ridden. Her desire to clean her soul finds expression in her washing her mouth with soap and water. This time she is full of repentance for the offence she has committed and promises not to

4 The Sound and the Fury, p. 49.
repeat such an offence in future. But she is an ordinary woman who succumbs to her sexual compulsion and conceives from Dalton Amis. After being jilted by him, she marries Herbert Head. But he throws her out of house when she gives birth to an illegitimate child.

As she believes in the traditions of the dominant section of society, she accepts the punishment for her self. However, she does not want to destroy the future of her daughter. She knows that if the child lives with her, people would taunt the girl.

She would be called the daughter of an outcaste, which would be intolerable. So she leaves the child with her parents and sends money to her mother every month for the upkeep of the girl. It doesn't mean that she has no attachment for the child. She requests Jason to let her see her child who allows Caddy to see her for a minute:

Then I took the rain coat off of her and held her to the window and Caddy saw her and sort of jumped forward.5

Thus, we find Caddy the life-force enduring time without a single word of remorse though she is destroying herself physically and mentally both yet she

5 *The Sound and the Fury*, p. 184.
believes in all the traditional values. In short, she is crucified at the altar of respectability.

Jason Compson, the last representative of the Compson family is uncertain whether Herbert Heads owns any bank, "He may not have even had a bank." but still holds Caddy responsible for the loss of his employment in the bank and in order to compensate his imaginary loss, he tries to blackmail her and tortures her daughter till she runs away with a man with a red tie, who has already been charged with bigamy. He is a money-minded person and devoid of any sense of human relationship. He is a shrewd businessman so as per the contract he allows Caddy to see her daughter for a minute in a most literal sense:

Then I took the raincoat off of her and held her to the window and Caddy saw her and sort of jumped forward.

He fails to give any love and affection to Miss Quentin. She is kept in the family as a mere hostage. He doesn't allow Caddy to take her away because in that case the constant flow of money would stop. His meanness is revealed in the offer Caddy makes.

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6 *The Sound and the Fury*, pp. 198-199.
You never had a drop of warm blood in you. Listen, she says "If you'll get Mother to let me have her back, I'll give you a thousand dollars."

He lacks any warmth of human feeling. Even about his sister he says:

The bitch that cost me a job, .... and made my name a laughing stock in the town.

When Caddy is thrown out by Herbert, Mr. Compson wants her to be admitted into the house. But Jason, concerned more with public opinion than respectability and uprightness, turns down Mr. Compson's request. Moreover, he thinks that her return to the house would be a monitory loss to him which he cannot bear. To gain money he even goes to the extent of committing the offence of forging his mother's signatures on the cheques received from Caddy. His crafty nature is also revealed in his dealings with Miss Quintin.

"Not after the way you've acted, I says. "You've got to learn one thing, and that is that when I tell you to do something, you've got it to do. You sign your name on that line."\(^9\)

Though Caddy sends fifty dollars to Miss Quintin

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\(^8\) The Sound and the Fury, p. 188.

\(^9\) Ibid., p. 269.

\(^10\) Ibid., p. 193.
he gives her only ten dollars and makes her sign a receipt for fifty dollars.

Jason burns the tickets of circus show but does not give a ticket to Luster as his business mentality does not permit him to be liberal enough to give away anything free of charge. He even grudges Dilsey's husband his keeping pigeons in the courtyard without paying any tax or rent for it.

His calculating nature makes him misfit in human society. Even his whore is not satisfied with his nature and behaviour. She tauntingly remarks that he cannot adjust with any woman. Her remarks throw light on his personality:

"You's too smart fer me. Ain't a man in dis town kin keep up wid you fer smart-ness. You fools a man what so smart he can't even keep up wid hisself', he says, getting in the wagon and unwrapping the reins."

He hardly feels any attachment to Miss Quentin, tortures her and he is least worried about her when she ran away. If at all he is worried, it is about the loss of money rather than Miss Quentin. He is more upset by the thought that a shrewed fellow like him has been cheated by an ordinary girl.

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11 The Sound and the Fury, p. 223.
But to have been robbed of that which was to have compensated him for the lost job, which he had acquired through so much effort and risk, by the very symbol of the lost job itself, and worst of all, by a bitch of a girl. 12

The amount lost is three thousand dollars but he cannot tell it to sheriff. It could be difficult for him to account for the money. So he insists upon the capture of the girl.

Since Jason cannot adjust with any woman, he remains a bachelor with no sense of humanity. He is selfish to the deepest dye. So it would be appropriate to call him a morally impotent person.

Dilsey, the faithful Negro servant in the household of Compson, a decaying family, exhibits characteristics of honour, pride and dignity. She is simple, strong, courageous, stoical and unlettered. She, in fact, transcends her limitation through a change in her consciousness. She endures without any hope of compensation, that is, she bears the burden of humanity and becomes a survivor.

From the description of one of her days which happens to be an Easter-day, we come to know that she has loyalties: one to Man and the other to God, and the second makes the first possible.

12 The Sound and the Fury, p. 272.
Before going to church on that day she has to look to the wants and frustrations of the family. One of the major calamities that the house faces is Miss Quentin's elopement. It implies loss of money as well as a blow to the family's prestige. Mrs. Compson and Jason both are thoroughly disturbed, but Dilsey calmly protects them from each other and tries to maintain the routine of the house. Her moral strength is seen in her dignity, her sense of order and her ability to remain happy and contented through all the troubles that befall the Compsons. Her reactions to all the daily happenings reveal the unity of her character. It is a proof of her strength that she retains her balance while all the other members of the family are unable to do so. And yet, though she remains unaffected, she fully understands what is happening. Olga W. Vickery appropriately remarks:

Dilsey, almost as inarticulate as Benjy, becomes through her actions alone the embodiment of the truth of the heart which is synonymous with morality. The acceptance of whatever time brings, the absence of questioning and petty protests, enables her to create order out of circumstances rather than in defiance of it and in so doing, she gains both dignity and significance for her life.  

\[13\] Olga W. Vickery, William Faulkner - A Critical Interpretation, p. 32.
Her Christian faith is the source of her strength. The visiting minister when at the beginning of his sermon he announces "I got the recollection and the blood of the lamb!"

Dilsey sat bolt upright, her hand on Ben's knee. Two tears slid down her fallen cheeks, in and out of the myriad coruscations of immolation and abnegation and time.\(^{14}\)

She cries because she too has recollection. Her faith is not separable from her duty. Benjy's presence in the church itself shows that her faith helps her in the performance of her duty. As people are after social respectability, they criticize her for taking Benjy to the Negro church. But she ignores the public criticism and says: "Tell um de good Lawd don't keer whether he smart er not. Don't nobody but white trash keer dat."\(^{15}\)

The nature of Dilsey's religious experience is determined by her loyalty to the Compsons. Her phrase "I've seed de first en de last", .... Never you mind me.\(^ {16}\) indicates the union of Dilsey's religious and temporal life, for she uses the language of the Book of Revelation to state her critical opinion of the Compson family. Her participation in the symbolic suffering of

\(^{14}\) The Sound and the Fury, p. 262.

\(^{15}\) Ibid., p. 258.

\(^{16}\) Ibid., p. 264.
Christ through the suggestive cadence and pattern of the minister's sermon gives her the courage to face adequately the truth about the Compson family, which she has made the purpose of her life. Lastly, we find pride, humility, honour, dignity, understanding, and faith in her character. She is able to rise above the mundane and trivial concerns of her surroundings because of an innate sense of what is right and what is wrong and a firm faith in human values.

Addie in *As I Lay Dying*, is a self-centred, possessive and vindictive character. She marries Anse with the intention of overcoming her loneliness. But after her marriage she fails to lead a harmonious married life. Anse wants to maintain his own identity. When she finds him to be a man of words alone, she drifts towards Whitefield. She considers him an earthly god but, later on, he too proves to be a hypocrite. In her private life, Addie declines to make the social gesture of love and acceptance of family's responsibilities, resulting in her alienation which is mirrored in the maladjustment of her children. She showers her favour on her illegitimate son Jewel from Whitefield. It makes the other children jealous of him and leads to
all the trouble. Having lost her faith in God, Addie puts her trust in Jewel. She says:

"He is my cross and he will be my salvation. He will save me from the water and from the fire. Even though I have laid down my life, he will save me." 17

Darl rightly thinks that her desire to be buried away from her children is a selfish act that repudiates symbolically her responsibility as a wife and a mother. Addie has a great lust for possession. She wants to possess all at a time. To keep up her possession even after death she asks Anse to promise that he would carry her body to Jefferson after her death. ... I asked Anse to promise to take me back to Jefferson when I died ....18 Addie being a practical woman does not believe in abstract words like God, Sin, punishment, confession etc. But out of the fear of social scandal she never confesses her relationship with Whitefield. This indicates that she is an obsessed woman.

Addie is also vindictive by nature. When she conceives Darl, she feels tricked by Anse and decides to take revenge upon Anse.

"Then I found that I had Darl. At first I would not believe it. Then I believed that I would kill Anse. It was as though

17 The Sound and the Fury & As I lay Dying, p. 460.
18 Ibid., p. 464.
he had tricked me, hidden within a word like within a paper screen and struck me in the back through it. But then I realized that I had been tricked by words older than Anse or love, and that the same word had tricked Anse too, and that my revenge would be that he would never know I was taking revenge.  

Darl having been born when his mother was in an abnormal state of mind gets somewhat abnormal. Moreover, Addie decides to reck vengeance on Anse. As Darl is a replica of his father, she gets resentful towards him. Dewy Dell, too, is not an outcome of love and fidelity but a compensation for the offence committed by Addie against her husband. Addie says, "I gave Anse Dewey Dell to negative Jewel". Addie is a woman in search of true companionship, but a male dominated society does not allow the fulfilment of her innerself. She therefore, tries to satisfy her ego by betraying her friend and by behaving in a manner which is against the Chivalric ideals of womanhood. She tries to dominate her family even after death.

Dewey Dell, unlike Caddy in The Sound and the Fury, lacks compassion for her brothers. She is self-centred. She reflects the selfish and possessive nature of her mother. Being a young replica of her mother, she does not believe in the value of abstract words such as

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19The Sound and the Fury & As I lay Dying, p. 460.
20Ibid., p. 467.
chastity, sin etc. She is sure of her pregnancy. "God gave woman a sign when something has happened bad" but she cannot confess it because then it would be known to all resulting in social scandal. "It's because I am alone. If I could just feel it, it would be different, because I would not be alone. But if I were not alone, everybody would know it." To avert social scandal she wishes to clear it off. She also wishes that Lafe would helped her to procure the medicine. "He could do everything for me. .... I don't see why he didn't stay in town." Her only problem is that it is before she actually wants it "It's not that I wouldn't and will not it's that it is too soon too soon too soon."

Like other members of the family she too has her personal motive for going to Jefferson. But she is confused when they reach the crossing 'New Hope'. The graveyard is not very far but she becomes apprehensive about the end of the journey. She is doubtful about her own future "That's what they mean by the womb of time: the agony and the despair of spreading bones, the hard girdle in which lie the outraged entrails of

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21 The Sound and the Fury & As I lay Dying, p. 379.
22 Ibid., p. 379.
23 Ibid., pp. 380-381.
24 Ibid., p. 422.
She says:

"I can persuade him to anything. You know I can. Suppose I say Turn here. That was when I died that time. Suppose I do. We'll go to New Hope. We won't have to go to town. I rose and took the knife from the streaming fish still hissing and I killed Darl."

She is practically on the horns of dilemma. She can persuade her father to drop the expedition but in that case she would never reach Jefferson and won't be able to get the medicine to clear off her pregnancy and if her pregnancy is not cleared off then, Darl would get a chance to despise her, because he is aware of her secret. To outwit Darl she does not persuade her father to turn back.

She is also vindictive by nature. It is she who incites Jewel against Darl. ".... she jumped on him like a wild cat so that one of the fellows had to quit and hold her and her scratching and clawing at him like a wild cat, .... "27. She reeks vengeance on Darl but does not know what is there in the womb of time.

Dewey Dell, like her mother, finds her environment cramping but, being more aggressive, becomes destructive.

25 The Sound and the Fury & As I lay Dying, p. 422.
26 Ibid., p. 423.
27 Ibid., p. 514.
Anse Bundren is a peculiar type of character. He represents those who believe more in the meaningless formulations than the true Christian values. He marries Addie Bundren not out of love but owing to instinctive compulsion and the existing social tradition. The word conjugal love has no meaning for him which leads to the disillusionment of his wife Addie, who drifts apart from him and feels lonely. After their marriage Anse is Anse while Addie is Addie. Anse wants to maintain his own identity and assert his superiority over Addie. It is not his love and devotion for his deceased wife which makes him carry her coffin to Jefferson but his own selfish motive. He is a great hypocrite:

And now I got to pay for it, me without a tooth in my head, hoping to get ahead enough so I could get my mouth fixed where I could eat God's own victuals as a man should, and her hale and well as ere a woman in the land until that day.  

His main motive for going to Jefferson is not to provide a burial to his wife but to get a pair of teeth and bring another Mrs. Bundren. His hasty marriage at the end of the novel clearly reflects that he was never loyal to his deceased wife and his relationship with her was only a social relationship devoid of any love.

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28 *The Sound and the Fury* & *As I lay Dying*, p. 364.
However, he pretends he was a devoted husband so he has to fulfil his promise at all costs.

As a matter of fact, love has no sanctity for him. It is a mere word to him. Addie appropriately remarks:

*He had a word, too, love, he called it.*

For him the words never convey any meaning. They are used simply to fill up the gaps. For him love is only lust, sheer sexual compulsion or animality.

He is predominantly a comic figure. He makes a farce of everything and almost does nothing during the whole of his life.

*He was sick once from working in the sun when he was twenty-two years old, and he tells people that if he ever sweats, he will die. I suppose he believes it.*

But though he does nothing himself during his lifetime yet he knows the art of getting his work done by others.

*A man'll always help a fellow in a tight, if he's got ere a drop of Christian blood in him.*

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29 *The Sound and the Fury & As I lay dying*, p. 464.
30 Ibid., p. 348.
31 Ibid., p. 473.
He never outstretches hands for help, instead of it he acts with such a tact that the other fellow would himself request him to use his bullocks and cart because he does not wish to be called a non-christian. Not with outsiders alone, but even with his children he deals most diplomatically. He tells Jewel that:

*I thought that if I could do without eating, my sons could do without riding.*

These words of Anse make the stubborn Jewel agree to exchange his loving horse for a pair of bullocks. He does not spare even Cash and takes away the money with which he wanted to buy a "talking machine".

Anse is not only polite, courteous and tactful in getting his work done but also knows the law of the state about the rights of individual and does not hesitate to assert his rights boldly. In reply to the Marshal who objects to their halt in a public place, he asserts:

"It's a public street", the man says. "I reckon we can stop to buy something same as airy other man. We got the money to pay for hit, and hit ain't airy law that says a man can't spend his money where he wants."

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32 The Sound and the Fury & As I lay Dying, p. 479.

33 Ibid., p. 489.
Out of his selfish motive, he goes to the extreme of meanness. He does not hesitate to take away the money which is given to Dewey Dell by Lafe for purchasing medicine to get her pregnancy terminated.

"It's just a loan. God knows, I hate for my blooden children to reproach me. But I give them what was mine without stint. Cheerful I give them, without stint. And how they deny me. Addie, it was lucky for you you died, Addie .... "I wouldn't take it. My own born daughter that has et my food for seventeen years, begrudges me the loan of ten dollars."

The character of Cash Bundren is unique. He is a practical person like his mother. He is very obedient, much attached to his mother and a man of few words. Still his heart is full of compassion for all the members of his family. He knows that Jewel is doing some part-time job to earn money to purchase a horse so he does some of the work assigned to him without telling anyone about it. Jewel though hostile to other members of the Bundren family holds him in high esteem.

He is very bold so he defends Jewel, asserting that he himself has watched Jewel doing extra job to earn money to purchase a horse so the horse belongs to him alone.

34 The Sound and the Fury & As I lay Dying, p. 529.
He is sober, quiet and thoughtful. When the family has to cross the flooded river, he appears to be very serious and thoughtful, thinking that it would have been better if he had found out about the situation before taking action. His devotion to his deceased mother, enables him to take a courageous lead and face the disaster. Even, when the coffin overturns he holds on to it.

He possesses not only physical courage but as revealed when his leg is broken, fortitude, also. The Bundrens apply only some cement to his broken leg, which troubles him a lot, but like a stoic he endures all suffering expressing satisfaction that it is the same leg which was broken earlier. It reveals his attitude towards life, that is, to endure life under all circumstances. He is not merely a mechanical person having perfection in his trade but also a man of insight:

... how it would be God's blessing if He did take her outen our hands and get shut of her in some clean way and it seemed to me that when Jewel worked so to get her outen the river, he was going against God in a way, and then when Darl seen that it looked like one of us would have to do something, I can almost believe he done right in a way.35

35 The Sound and the Fury & As I lay Dying, p. 510.
Thus, he justifies the action of Darl. He is also aware of the hatred and jealousy between Darl and Jewel. He feels that Darl has deliberately set fire to the barn not because he is opposed to the action of carrying Addie's dead body to Jefferson but because of his jealousy of Jewel who has sold his horse to continue the expedition:

Of course it was Jewel's horse was traded to get her that nigh to town, and in a sense it was the value of his horse Darl tried to burn up.  

He is a member of the Bundren family who has better understanding than rest of them. He realizes the futility of carrying the corpse of his mother to Jefferson. It is all against God's wishes, still he participates in the action because he is prepared to share the burden of humanity. He is a simple, honest person who believes in fulfilling his obligations to his family. He says, "And me being the oldest, and thinking already the very thing that he done: I don't know". He justifies Darl's act of trying to destroy Addie's dead body, at the same time, he shows his satisfaction over Darl being sent to a mental hospital, "It'll be better for you", I said. "Down there It'll quiet, with none of the

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36 *The Sound and the Fury & As I lay Dying*, p. 510.
37 Ibid., p. 511.
bothering and such. It'll be better for you, Darl", I said.\(^{38}\)

He realizes that Darl has been trying to go against the set traditions and conventions of society so he is sure to be destroyed by the society which never tries to know the truth and reality, but believes in formulative religion. In his last remark he says,

"I would think what a shame Darl couldn't to enjoy too. But it is better so for him. This world is not his world; this life his life."\(^{39}\)

Jewel, the son of Addie Bundren, is the object of his mother's love. Darl Bundren knows about the infidelity of his mother and is always jealous of him. As a reaction to it Jewel hates the other Bundrens except Cash Bundren. Addie feels:

"He is my cross and he will be my salvation. He will save me from the water and from the fire. Even though I have laid down my life, he will save me."\(^{40}\)

It clearly indicates that she laid her faith on that mortal boy instead of keeping faith in Him. Thus, it appears that she tries to absorb herself in the earthly values, that is, the negative values of life.

\(^{38}\)The Sound and the Fury & As I lay Dying, p. 514.

\(^{39}\)Ibid., p. 532.

\(^{40}\)Ibid., p. 460.
Darl taunts Jewel on his illegitimacy:

It takes two people to make you, and one people to die. That's how the world is going to end.  

Since Jewel loves his mother, he wants to stay near his dying mother, but Darl deliberately takes him away for another cart-load. When he returns, he finds his mother dead. He is well aware of the fact that his mother has taken a promise from his father to provide her a burial at Jefferson. He insists upon its fulfilment partly because he believes in commitment and fulfilment of promises given in a literal sense, and partly because he wants his mother to be separated from the Bundrens.

The expedition encounters a serious natural calamity. The river on the way is flooded and they have to cross it. The Bundrens make a bold venture and meet a serious disaster:

Then the downstream one vanishes, dragging the other with him; the wagon sheers crosswise, poised on the crest of the ford as the log strikes it, tilting it up and on. Cash is half turned, the reins running taut from his hand and disappearing into the water, the other hand reached back upon Addie, holding her jammed over against the high side of the wagon.

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41 The Sound and the Fury & As I lay Dying, p. 365.
42 Ibid., p. 445.
Jewel, with the help of Cash, gets the body out of water after a great deal of struggle.

Jewel has a horse which he loves very much. He had worked at night to raise the money to buy it. But he is so determined to fulfil his mother's last wish that he exchanges the horse for a pair of bullocks for continuing the expedition.

Darl sets fire to the barn but Jewel saves the corpse from the fire. Jewel has a sensitive soul, he tries to fulfil the wishes of his mother but his real motive is his dislike for his brothers, sister and legal father as he inherits his mothers dislike of them and wants his mother to be with him only. His attitude is shaped by the environment of disaffection in the Bundren household.

Popeye, in Sanctuary is a product of an unhealthy environment. He has some physical drawbacks:

"He had no hair at all until he was five years old, .... an undersized, weak child with a stomach so delicate that the slightest deviation from a strict regimen fixed for him by the doctor would throw him into convulsions. 'Alchohal would kill him like strychnine', the doctor said. 'And he will never be a man, properly speaking. With care, he will live sometime longer. But he will never be any older than he is now.'

\(^{43}\)Sanctuary, p. 246.
Along with his physical deformity, he also fails to get any love and affection from his parents. He was born in a slum. His mother was a chronic patient. His father died and the second husband of his mother cheated her of all her savings: "He never came back. He drew from the bank his wife's fourteen hundred dollar savings and account and disappeared." A child born and brought up in such circumstances is likely to be very cruel, reserved and vindictive towards the society which denies him any comfort of life.

In the very beginning of the novel, Faulkner presents him as an embodiment of evil.

His face had a queer, bloodless colour, as though seen by electric light; against the sunny silence, in his slanted straw hat and his slightly akimbo arms, he had that vicious depthless quality of stamped tin.

He appears to be a very sinister figure. He represents a threat to the tranquility of his environment.

Popeye's aversion to drinking and merry-making is a sign of his fear of emotions as it would reveal his impotency. He wants to keep a possessive hold over Temple Drake. Inspite of the fact that Red is his

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44Sanctuary, p. 242.
45Ibid., p. 5.
substitute for the sexual gratification of Temple Drake, he shoots down Red out of jealousy when Temple becomes fond of him.

For the murder committed by Popeye in his frustration, poor Lee-Goodwin has to die. However, Popeye is arrested for an offence which he has not committed. But he is so disgusted with his life that he never tries to defend himself and the weakness of the legal system as well as of the people in Jefferson is exposed.

It's them thugs like that that have made justice a laughing stock, until even when we get a conviction, everybody knows it won't hold.  

Popeye is a symbol of the insensate change that creeps into a society when it refuses to recognize the need for change. It becomes mechanical, impotent and a source of corruption.

Narcissa, the young widow of Bayard Sartoris feels attracted to much younger men. She flirts with Gowan Stevens:

Through the window Benbow and Miss Jenny watched the two people Narcissa still in White, Stevens in flannels and a blue coat, walking in the garden .... They watched the two people disappear beyond the house. 

46 Sanctuary, p. 249.
47 Ibid., p. 23.
However, she does not have the courage to openly acknowledge her feelings as she prefers respectability, and social status more than humanity and love for mankind. She is now a prominent citizen of Jefferson and an embodiment of respectability and a defender of established code of morality of the pharisaical society of Jefferson.

When she comes to know that her brother Horace Benbow is trying to defend Lee-Goodwin and provide shelter to his wife who is not legally wedded to him, she gets furious:

"When you took another man's wife and child away from him I thought it was dreadful, but I said, At least he will not have the face to ever come back here again .... and now to deliberately mix yourself up with a woman you said yourself was a street-walker, a murderer's woman'.

She also believes in class distinction. She says "These people are not your people. Why must you do such things." Narcissa is very assertive. When Horace insists on giving shelter to Ruby Lamar, in his house, at least for one night, she boldly asserts:

"The house where my father and mother and your father and mother the house where I - I won't have it. I won't have it'.

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48 Sanctuary, p. 93.
49 Ibid., p. 94.
Narcissa virtually compels Horace to shift Ruby from their parental house, since she is the co-owner of the house. She is totally averse to formation of any humanitarian attitude towards Ruby Lamar. She treats her only as pollution in Jefferson. She even goes to the extent of instigating the church ladies to drive Ruby out of the hotel where she was staying for a night. Her offence is that she has been living with a man out of wedlock and has borne him a child. Her self-righteousness has made her absolutely insensitive to the suffering of those whom she considers to be morally depraved. She even persuades the district Attorney to dispose off the case against Lee-Goodwin on the first hearing so that her brother would lose the case and, shamefaced, would return to Belle and little Belle. To quote:

"What day do you think it will be over with?" She said ... It will be the first case. Say.... two days. Or three at the most, with your kind assistance. 50

She is a typical representative of a class which refuses to see the truth simply because it goes against its interest. She wants the status quo to be maintained even at the cost of human values and feelings.

Dietitian, in *Light in August* is a hypocrite. When she finds that Christmas may have seen her in bed with Charley from behind the curtain and could betray her secret, she tries to corrupt him by giving him a dollar. She is afraid of the social scandal as well as the cruel society which never allows an individual to violate its established code. The fear of society causes such a psychological pressure that she cannot even sleep:

She did not sleep at night. She lay most of the night now tense, teeth and hands clenched, panting with fury and terror and worst of all, regret: that blind fury to turn back time just for an hour, a second .... she could not even say when she was asleep and when she was awake. Because always against her eyelids or upon her retinae was that still, grave, inescapable, parchmentcoloured face watching her. 

The silence of the boy terrifies the dietitian to a greater extent. She fails to realize the feelings of the innocent boy, who needs love and understanding from others, and plots to ruin him to save her own position. She tries to find fault with the boy just to drive him out of the boarding house -- the only shelter he has. She makes inquiries about his heritage and when she

51 *Light in August*, p. 94.
comes to know from Doc Hines, the janitor, about his negro blood, she feels relieved:

... he would not only be removed; he would be punished for having given her terror and worry. "They'll send him to the nigger orphange', she thought. "Of course. They will have to'.

She is not sure about the identity of the boy, but her compulsions persuade her to drive him at all costs, so she gives indirectly a hint to the matron that the boy is a nigger.

... She was watching him now, her eyes still a little fearful but secret too, calculating.53

Instead of sharing the burden of humanity, she manipulates to drive Joe out of the boarding house and thus save her own skin. She is an example of how in a prejudice-ridden society, fear of exposure, forces people to act hypocritically and exploit the prejudices to their advantage. The behaviour of such people helps in perpetuating the status quo.

Doc Hines is a fanatic having immense hatred for the negroes without any understanding of the root cause of the distinction between the Negro and the whiteman. He murders the fiancee of his daughter presuming him

52 Light in August, p. 99.
to be nigger and kills his daughter obstructing any medical aid to her during the labour pains. He leaves Joe on the steps of an orphanage on a Christmas evening. He gets appointment as a janitor at the same institute. Then, he waits to see how the pollution develops on this earth. He encourages other boys to call him a nigger. He gives a hint to the dietitian about his heritage in order to drive him out of his only home on the earth. He doesn't realize that such experience can give rise to a conflict in the mind of the child during his formative period.

He is poor and depends on the charity of negroes. He often goes to the Negro church apparently to attend the congregation but inwardly with an intention to preach the superiority of the Whites over the blacks. The Negroes consider him mad:

... That he was crazy, touched by God, or having once touched Him. They probably did not listen to, could not understand much of, what he said. Perhaps they took him to be God Himself, since God to them was a white man too and His doings also a little inexplicable.  

He has formed a particular angle towards Negroes and women. Richard P. Adams appropriately comments upon the character of Doc Hines, ".... the intolerance of Doc

54 Light in August, p. 258.
Hines is not so much religious as it is racial and sexual."⁵⁵ Mrs. Doc Hines' remark reveals the cause of formation of conflict in the mind of Doc Hines:

*He said he had to fight because he is littler than most men and so folks would try to put on him. That was his vanity and pride. But I told him it was because the devil was in him .... That's what I told him, the next day after Milly was born and me still too weak to raise my head, and him just out of jail again. I told him so: how right then God had given him a sign and a warning: that him being locked up in jail on the very hour and minute of his daughter's birth was the Lord's own token that heaven never thought him fitten to raise a daughter.*⁵⁶

Thus, we find that the inferiority complex on account of the height is the reason why he wants to assert his superiority over others. Moreover, he bears a grudge owing to his being jailed at the very moment of his daughter's birth, which is considered to be a bad omen. The disgrace, that his beloved daughter brings to him by her elopement with her friend shatters him completely and he realizes that he and the object of his love have different identities. He wants to destroy that object, and when it is destroyed, he becomes emotionally dead. The only emotion left is the hatred for child of her who was the cause of the failure of his


⁵⁶*Light in August*, pp. 279-280.
He assumes himself to be the representative of God and thinks Joe to be a mere pollution on this earth:

... and old Doc Hines kept in touch with God and one night he wrestled and he strove and he cried aloud, "That bastard, Lord! I feel! I feel the teeth and the fangs of evil!" and God said, "It's that bastard. Your work is not done yet. He's a pollution and a abomination on My earth."  

He treats an ordinary common place seduction to be a great sin. He is not sure of the parentage of her daughter's lover, yet he instigates people at Mottstown and Jefferson to crucify Joe. In short, he is convulsive, possessed and full of hatred for the Negroes. He cannot tolerate miscegenation and for this reason he behaves most frantically.

Doc Hines is an example of a person identifying himself with the oppressor inspite of the fact that he depends on the oppressed. This makes him more tyrannical than the members of the ruling class. He justifies his action by believing that he has divine sanction for it.

Joanna Burden in *Light in August* is also a

57 *Light in August*, p. 290.
fanatic. She has unwavering faith in her abstract ideal of Calvinism. Though she works as a reformer interested in the uplift of Negroes yet in her subconscious she believes in racial distinction.

"She would be wild then, in the close, breathing halfdark without walls, with her wild hair, each strand of which would seem to come alive like octopus tentacles, and her wild hands and her breathing: Negro! Negro! Negro!" 58

Inspite of accepting Joe as her lover, she treats him as a Negro, an object of her desire, with whom she cannot pull on as he is not her equal. This reveals her double nature. During the day she looks after the welfare of the negroes and is saint like, but at night she acts like a racist. Her interest in the Negroes is a forced duty which is devoid of love and affection.

But in order to rise, you must raise the shadow with you. But you can never lift it to your level. 59

When she realizes that she can no more play a double role, she insists upon Joe to accept her design. She wished him to kneel down and pray and accept the role of a nigger pleader as suggested by her.

58 Light in August, p. 195.
59 Ibid., p. 191.
"You won't even need to speak to Him yourself. Just kneel. Just make the first move."

She considers herself to be a representative of God i.e., an avatar doing the duty of purification of all the degenerated souls, while for Joe to accept this is to deny all his thirty years.

"No. If I give in now, I will deny all the thirty years that I have lived to make me what I chose to be'. He said.

She is so possessed that when she finds a greater distance between her and the object of her desire, she resolves to destroy its identity, and in the ensuring struggle she sacrifices her life at the altar of her own design.

Percy Grimm, the young priest in Light in August has blind faith in the social ideology of the extreme right and safeguards the interests and the prestige of the same, at all costs.

... he seemed to be served by certitude, the blind and untroubled faith in the rightness and infallibility of his actions.

He is so obsessed that he tries to complete his design at all costs and does not tolerate any

60 Light in August, p. 211.
61 Ibid., p. 199.
62 Ibid., p. 345.
intervention, suggestion or advice. He is a fanatic so he thinks that his action is right. The singleness of mind and his ego is revealed in the following lines:

"Jesus Christ.' Grimm cried, his young voice clear and outraged like that of a young priest. 'Has every preacher and old maid in Jefferson taken their pants down to the yellowbellied son of a bitch?' He flung the old man aside and ran on. \(^{63}\)

His single track mind is revealed when on finding that though Joe has been shot yet he is not dead, he takes out his knife and performs the last ritual action as an act of his prowess.

Then Grimm too sprang back, flinging behind him the bloody butcher knife. 'Now you'll let white women alone, even in hell', he said. \(^{64}\)

He gets so blinded by his desire to show his strength and perfection as a leader that he carelessly gets into a vulnerable position:

He saw now that the cabin sat some two feet above the earth. He had not noticed it before, in his haste. He knew now that he had lost a point. That Christmas had been watching his legs all the time beneath the house. He said, 'Good man'. \(^{65}\)

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\(^{63}\) Light in August, p. 349.

\(^{64}\) Ibid., p. 349.

\(^{65}\) Ibid., pp. 347-348.
It means that he is not as perfect as he wants to be considered. If Christmas were not tired of his life and wanted self-crucifixion it would have been very easy for him to shoot Grimm. It is beyond Grimm's capacity to overpower Christmas. He becomes blind with rage when Joe challenges the basic structure of the society by killing a white woman and deals a blow to the set conventions and traditions. Grimm gets outraged when Hightower says:

"Men!" he cried. 'Listen to me. He was here that night. He was with me the night of the murder. I swear to God --."66

Such an obstruction in his way is intolerable for him and, in anger, he loses his mental balance.

... because with that unfailing certitude he ran straight to the kitchen and into the doorway, already firing, almost before he could have seen the table overturned .... Grimm emptied the automatic's magazine into the table; later someone covered all five shots with a folded handkerchief. 67

Grimm is blind to the reality and without any proper understanding tries to adhere to the old conventions and takes an action which he himself cannot justify. He also reveals the stuff of which fascists

66 Light in August, p. 349.
67 Ibid., p. 349.
His character is a kind of comment on contemporary politics. Fascism has its roots in blind certitude and refusal to see things from the other person's point of view.

In Absalom, Absalom! Thomas Sutpen's character in shows that the South's claim of the moral superiority of its traditional families is not justified. His past is not untainted. Moreover, his energy that helped in the creation of his estate becomes destructive when he gets rigid in his attitude.

Thomas Sutpen, through his sheer will-power, hardwork, courage and strong determination rises from a poor boy to become the owner of Sutpen's Hundred. He has a great appetite for wealth and power and is proestablishment. Though a poor, simple-minded, innocent fellow from a primitive society, he is forced to follow up a particular design. He is sent by his father to the house of a big planter on some errand in his poor garb and without any shoes. Being poor, he is denied admission through the main gate of the mansion.

I went up to that door for that nigger to tell me never to come to that front door again and I not only wasn't doing any good to him by telling it or any harm to him by not telling it, there aint any good or harm either in the living world
that I can do to him.\textsuperscript{68}

This incident proves to be a turning point in his life. Hitherto, he never realised that possession of a house or land is worthwhile in any way but now he is compelled to think seriously that money land and power are important possessions in this world. He feels that there is a distinction not only between the blacks and the whites but also between the poor white and the rich white. It has a greater impact on his mind resulting in the desire to be a great planter.

In Haiti, he succeeds to suppress the uprising, earns money, marries and gets a son but soon discards the two. Quentin rightly points out:

"Yes', Quentin said "The design. -Getting richer and richer.

Thomas Sutpen himself accepts before Quentin's grandfather:

"You see, I had a design in mind .... where did I make the mistake in it .... To accomplish it I should require money, a house, a plantation, slaves, a family - incidently of course, a wife.\textsuperscript{70}

Though he provides for his discarded wife yet

\textsuperscript{68}Absalom, Absalom! p. 195.
\textsuperscript{69}Ibid., p. 214.
\textsuperscript{70}Ibid., p. 217.
fails to give recognition to his first born son, Charles Bon, because his mother carried 1/8 negro blood, which made her inappropriate to the fulfillment of his abstract design of pure dynasty.

Instead of acknowledging his son, he takes his younger son into confidence and imposes the future course of action on him, being well aware of the fact that he is his young replica and would tolerate incest but not miscegenation. As a result, Henry, though he loves Bon, shoots him dead at the gate of Sutpen's Hundred.

Sutpen is a true representative of his cult. He has his own compulsive drive. He tries to preserve his design at all costs. This rigidity proves to be the cause of the ruin of his family. He wishes to be an earthly God maintaining his humanly figure intact. Though he is well-aware of the fact that it is impossible, he wishes to cherish his this hope through his posterity. To achieve it he needs a son.

... fix things right so that he would be able to look in the face not only the old dead ones but all the living ones that would come after him when he would be one of the dead.  

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71Absalom, Absalom! p. 181.
But this hope of his can only be fulfilled if he gets a male heir. So after Charles Bon is shot dead and Henry absconds, he thinks of marrying Rosa, his poor dependant:

... that he was now past sixty and that possibly he could get but one more son, had at best but one more son in his loins, ... \(^7_2\)

Therefore he asks Rosa to give him a child and promises to marry her if it turns out to be a boy. In Sutpen's view, it is all right since it is business like. Here his selfish nature does not allow him to take into consideration Rosa's feelings.

Etienne, like Joe Christmas, is in search of knowledge of himself, that is, his social and biological position. His aunts fail to make him understand his actual position which makes him more isolated and disillusioned. He is segregated both from the whites and the Negroes and he is closely watched by Clytie so that he would not know the secrets of the family. The ever changing position of his bed reflects his desire to understand the connotative value of the word Negro which obsesses him during his formative period:

... Clytie or Judith, found hidden beneath his mattress the shard of broken mirror: and who to know what hours of

\(^7_2\)Absalom, Absalom! pp. 229-230.
amazed and tearless grief he might have spent before it, examining himself in the
delicate and outgrown tatters in which he perhaps could not even remember himself, with quiet and incredulous incomprehen­sion.73

His disillusionment is the main cause of abnormality in his nature, which often reflected in his outward behaviour, and he tries to find out a violent pattern of his own. His complexion is white so it is possible for him to pass himself off as a whiteman but, like Joe, there is a conflict in his mind and its compulsive force never allows him to follow a safe course. Even judge Compson suggests to him: "Whatever you are, once you are among strangers, people who don't know you, you can be whatever you will."74 However, he returns to Jefferson with an ape like woman and an authentic marriage licence to continue his deliberate search for violent encounters: "rode up to the house and apparently flung the wedding license in Judith's face with something of that invincible despair ...."75 His act of marrying a negress is an act of retaliation against those who despised him for his mixed blood.

Clytie, the negro daughter of Sutpen also

73 Absalom, Absalom! p. 164.
74 Ibid., p. 168.
75 Ibid., p. 169.
represents a person who is able to overcome adversity because of her inner strength. She strives throughout her life to safeguard the interests of the Sutpen family. She stands in contrast to all the male members of the family and survives them all. Although she is simple minded, yet she is very strong, compassionate, courageous, stoical and untroubled by sex aberrations. She endures the burden of humanity without and hope or compensation.

At the instance of Judith, she brings Etinne from New Orleans but does not allow the child to mix up either with the Negroes or the whites, so that he would not sense his mysterious birth and his relationship to his aunt .... Clytie always nearby, then a youth learning to plow and Clytie somewhere nearby too ... 176 Her constant close watch over the child may have failed to produce good results, still in her effort to preserve the integrity of the house by concealing the secrets of the house from the young boy during his formative period is praiseworthy.

We remain unaware of her virtues until the destruction of her family starts and its doom becomes inevitable. In the absence of her father she takes upon

176 *Absalom, Absalom!* p. 166.
herself the responsibility of looking after the interests of the family. And though it is not possible for her to save the family from its doom yet, in her own way, she tries to safeguard the secrets of the family from public curiosity. She believes that the sins of parents visit on their children, and the children have to pay for them in order to expiate the souls of their parents through hard labour and constant suffering. Her last action to provide shelter to her fratricidal brother, though feeble, has got its own significance. She checks Quentin and Rosa from going upstairs, where Henry Sutpen hides himself, saying that "Whatever he done, me and Judith and him have paid it out. You go and get her".77 Here 'him' refers to Henry, but Charles H.Nilon says that the word may well be interpreted to mean Thomas himself, for his son was an instrument used to carry out a sin that he had planned. Clytie 'paid out' her father's sins through hardships and sufferings.

Rosa, though a white woman, both hates and fears Clytie, because Clytie is the true representative of the interests of the house of Sutpen. Clytie treats Rosa as an outsider and a threat to the interests of the house. When Rosa tries to intervene in the affairs of

77 Absalom, Absalom! p. 304.
the house by bringing an ambulance to carry Henry away, she sets fire to the house and ends Henry's and her life. Her last act "and then for a moment may be Clytie appeared in that window from which she must have been watching the gates constantly day and night for three months .... "\(^7\) reflects her stoic courage, determination and victory over Rosa's designs. In fact, Clytie is able to shape her own destiny. Her actions are very simple but her will is free. She act with a sense of moral duty towards the house. It is the taking of a moral attitude towards a situation and endurance of it which guides her in all her actions and makes her morally superior to all the other members of the family.

\(^7\)Absalom, Absalom! p.309.
SYMBOLISM

An important aspect of Faulkner's work is a current of sub-surface meaning. There may be a difference of opinion concerning the nature of symbolism in his work, but there is no dispute regarding the fact that his novels abound in symbols. As a matter of fact, his novels are conducted by means of rhythm and symbolism. Malcom Cowley commenting upon the novels of Faulkner says that "In his novels, most of the characters and incidents have double meaning that beside their places in the story, they also serve as symbols and metaphors with a general application."\(^1\)

About symbols in his works, Faulkner himself says that:

"But what symbolism is in the books is evidently instinct in man, not in man's knowledge but in his inheritance of his old dreams, in his blood, perhaps his bones, rather than in the storehouse of his memory, his intellect."\(^2\)

The main task of the novelist is to show how the destiny of his characters is affected by their heritage, surroundings and the contemporary social, political, religious and economic conditions of the region in which

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they are born and brought up. Besides it, we find his characters emmeshed in hope and despair and hopelessly entangled in the guilt of slavery, which appears to be an unresolvable problem and from which it is difficult for them to extricate themselves. They live in a society which is intolerant of what the words "nigger" and "miscegenation" mean. Faulkner gives hidden meanings to these words in his works. He dramatizes and individualizes words and a situation in such a way that the denotive meanings become superfluous while the connotative meanings gain importance.

"You must struggle, rise. But in order to rise, you must raise the shadow with you. But you can never lift it to your level. I see that now, which I did not see until I came down here. But escape it you cannot. The curse of the black race is God's curse. But the curse of the white race is the black man who will be forever God's chosen own because He once cursed Him."³

Here, every word is meaningful and carries some deeper hidden sense. A common racial and economic problem is given an artistic shape of guilt and shame with the help of symbolic images.

Generally, it is seen that even when the novelist doesn't use the mythological material, he still draws

³Light in August, p. 191.
upon the realm of religion and myth for images because it helps him to interpret his material through set beliefs or, at least, the memory of beliefs. The words 'Believe' in Requiem for a Nun and 'Resurrection' in The Sound and the Fury are examples of it.

Being primarily a poet, Faulkner maintained his analogical habit of creating parallel situations and using chiseled and well-minted words as a prose writer also, in order to draw symbolic sketches with hidden meaning. He, however, coated the traditional symbolic method with modern technical devices. He uses symbols to impregnate his narrative with a sub-surface meaning that gives it a universal significance. Among the symbols that Faulkner used, we find the following kinds of symbols:

(a) Symbols of stagnation
(b) Symbols showing degeneration
(c) Symbols of life and regeneration

These symbols may at times be considered in isolation, but most often they are inter-linked to create a metaphor for the degenerative hold of the past and the rebellious, though not always strong, effort of the present to free itself of it.
Stagnation caused by the obsession with the past is represented in many cases by the mental state of some of the characters. Benjy, in *The Sound and the Fury*, is a castrated imbecile, who can not comprehend the external world chronologically. He can respond to it only through images of feeling and sensations. Faulkner uses Benjy's frame of mind, at one level, to impart an analogical significance to events disparate in time, but at another level, Benjy represents the impotency of the South. He can neither comprehend the significance of the events beyond his grasp or articulate his feelings. He can only cry piteously:

> Her eyes flew at me, and away. I began to cry. It went loud and I got up. Caddy came and stood with her back to the wall, looking at me. I went towards her crying and she shrank against the wall and I saw her eyes and I cried louder and pulled at her dress. She put her hands out but I pulled at her dress. Her eyes ran.

Addie Bundren's funeral is also a symbol of the hold of the past. Her family is forced to fulfil her last wish that her body should be carried back to Jefferson, which is a kind of journey into the past. Each member of the family has a different attitude to her, and the

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*The Sound and the Fury*, p. 67.
effort to recapture the past brings out their tensions.

Intermingled with it is the fact of Jewel's illegitimacy. It is Addie's symbolic act of rebellion against an arid environment. Her love for Jewel and Jewel's devotion to her and Darl's anger and desire to destroy her corpse is a variation of the theme of incest and Oedipus Complex in Faulkner's works. Jewel's attachment to his mother is repudiation of his apparent hatred of father (symbolising past). Darl, the father substitute, hates Jewel and tries to destroy Addie's body in order to punish her body to purify her soul.

In addition to characters' attitude, there are places also that stand for stagnation. "Sutpen Hundred" is a reminder of the hold of the past on the present. Like the plantations in the South it was wrested out of wilderness to become a symbol of Sutpen's design for power. It retains its hold on the minds of people even after it ceases to exist.

The deserted house in the wilderness and Horace's house in Sanctuary, both belong to the past and both fail to provide shelter and security to those who come there in search of it. They can provide sanctuary only to outdated traditions. The deserted house is fit for
the traditional moonshining activity but it seems to be gradually choking life out of Ruby's child. Similarly, the house associated with the respectability of a society which sacrifices justice for the sake of its cherished prejudices cannot provide refuge to the child and his mother when they have no place to go.

Another kind of stagnation is reflected by Hightower in *Light in August*. He is a captive of the shadow of past.

"The phantoms were his father, his mother, and an old negro woman".

He also adores the qualities of his grandfather and wishes to get an opportunity to stay at Jefferson where he laid his life. Thus, he relies more on the heroic idealism of the past and tries to react to it, unmindful of the fact that the heroic age in which physical prowess counted for more has now been replaced by the modern age and the past can only be contemplated not revived.

As a preacher, instead of teaching love and pity, he preaches the hooping of the horses of the confederates so he is forced to leave the church. He is so much obsessed with illusive reality that he is unable to think about the changing perspective of life. Byron

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5 *Light in August*, p. 356.
tries to persuade Hightower to provide an alibi to Joe Christmas to save an innocent life but Hightower refuses to accede to his request:

... 'I wont! I wont! I have bought immunity. I have paid. I have paid.'

He nearly gets cut off from the rest of humanity and acts contrary to Christian virtues on account of his excessive obsession with the past.

The sense of the degenerative impact of the Southern rigidity is communicated through symbolic characters, episodes and situations:

In Light in August, the character of Joe Christmas, apart from having mythical dimensions, symbolises the confusion, chaos and impasse caused by the Southern penchant for abstraction. Joe's entire upbringing is unnatural. All those who should have provided him with security and certainty make his existence miserable and sow seeds of confusion in his mind.

His racially fanatic grandfather, instead of showering love and affection upon him, treats him as "Lord God's abomination" and wants to destroy him. Without having any real proof of the origins of Joe's father, he spreads the rumour that Joe has black blood in his

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6Light in August, p. 232.
veins. Thus one of his own progenitors becomes the source of Joe's ultimate destruction and cause of the confusion in his mind. The dietitian becomes Joe's enemy out of her fear of the discovery of her own escapade. Her perverse attitude is ironically underlined by the fact that the food that Joe enjoys in her room is toothpaste. Joe's religiously fanatic adoptive father treats him brutally and fills his child's mind with images of fear and retribution.

The result is that his mind becomes a seething ground of conflicting emotions. His white skin and upbringing makes him a misfit among the blacks, and the suspicion that he has black blood makes him unacceptable to whites. He thus becomes unsure of his own identity and becomes an abstraction representing the idea of what he is in other people's mind. His confusion is symbolically represented by the black and white clothes he habitually wears.

His confusion does not leave him upto the last. His actions are so impulsive and contradictory that it seems as if the Negro-white conflict makes him act in different ways. He escapes from the jail, but then runs back to Jefferson to meet his death. He snatches a pistol,
hits Hightower but refrains from shooting Percy Grimm even though Grimm offers a perfect target.

The state of Joe's mind is a kind of trap which entangles him the more, the more he tries. His circular movement - running away from Jefferson and coming back to it - is an indication of his inability to get out of it. His search for integrity and identity leads only to disintegration because his early Calvinist upbringing makes him a fatalist as well as a rebel. The self-denying anti-life Calvinist upbringing, instead of purifying his soul turns him into a pervert. He is afraid of women and distrusts them. It produces in him a trait of latent homosexuality which is partly responsible for his involvement with Joanna Burden. His first sexual encounter with her is devoid of any feminine sexual pleasure:

It was as if he struggled physically with another man for an object of no actual value to either, and for which they struggled on principle alone."

When masculine Joanna becomes a nymphomaniac, Joe becomes frightened and, finally, when she tries to make him accept that he has Negro blood and threatens him with hellfire his resentment breaks all bounds and he

7Light in August, p. 177.
murders her.

Thomas Sutpen in Absalom, Absalom! is another character who in addition to mythical dimensions tried to check life in order to maintain the design of his own cult and is finally destroyed.

Sutpen, an innocent man hailing from a primitive society becomes a big plantation owner by sheer determination and energy. He is, according to Rosa Coldfield, a symbol of demonic energy. His main trait is dogged determination to wipe out all opposition to his design. His immoderate energy and lack of ability to adapt to the changing circumstances results in his downfall.

During his childhood Sutpen comes across a plantation system based on slave labour. He finds it to be a system which, contrary to the norms of the community to which he belongs, differentiates between man and man. A person without property and slaves has no significance in it. His own humiliation urges him to become a planter himself; and he sets about it with single minded determination. He goes to Haiti as a soldier of fortune, makes money, buys some land, marries, and, when he finds that his wife has Negro blood, leaves all the property to her and deserts her. Coming back to
Jefferson, he tries to fulfill by establishing a hundred acre plantation, building a mansion and marrying into a well off, well known family. But his creative energy comes to a dead end when events overtake him. In Bon his own childhood revives, and in his rejection of Bon, a link between father and son, his maturity and childhood, is broken. It implies a symbolic rejection of himself and his past. He fails to adjust to the continuity of life and so he is defeated and destroyed. The main effect of his design is that it destroys his two sons and, thereby, his future.

Sutpen not only represents the Southern planter but also the South's resistance to change and the degeneration that it causes. His character tells us that in a symbolic way he tries to arrest time which becomes the cause of his destruction. His desire to maintain an aristocratic dynasty of pure blood is sterile and meaningless. He doesn't try to understand the changing circumstances and make the necessary adjustment in the formation of his design. On the contrary, he tries to complete his design even at the cost of human suffering which is the cause of his failure and defeat. The weapon with which he is killed - scythe - symbolically
suggests time. He fails to adjust to the changing times and is ruined due to this flaw in his nature.

In addition to symbolic characters, we also find in Faulkner's work episodes that have symbolic significance. Such episodes throw light on prevailing values and attitudes in the South.

In *Absalom, Absalom!* in two different episodes; Faulkner tries to convey that the Southern woman, who symbolically represents the Southern land, has been fully devastated. She is never treated at par with the man, her counterpart. She is not a human being but a thing with no feelings and emotions of her own. She is denied even the basic human rights.

Rosa, a puritanical, chaste lady, a symbol of Southern woman and the Southern land sings songs glorifying those brave Confederate soldiers who had gone to the battlefield to defend the integrity and solidarity of the pattern of life which they loved and which has been threatened by the people of the North. But she gives Quentin an impression that she believes that it were people like Sutpen, who brought the curse of Civil War and defeat upon the South through their evil designs:
[Future generations should know] why God let us lose the War: that only through the blood of our men and the tears of our women could he stay this demon and efface his name and lineage from the earth.8

Thomas Sutpen, the ambitious designer, after the death of Charles Bon and the escape of Henry proposes to Rosa, the helpless sister of his deceased wife, and outrages her modesty by saying that they would produce a test breed and if the child were a boy he would marry her. Charles H. Nilon's remark about the position of women in the South can be appropriately applied to this attitude:

"He treats the woman as if she were an animal to be hunted like any other game. He does not see the relationship as one involving sacred human responsibilities."9

Later on, Rosa's outrage proves to be the cause of Thomas Sutpen's degeneration, and, as Sutpen is not only an individual but also a symbol of the Southern male dominated society, it marks the degeneration of the whole Southern society. Rosa proves to be an instrument of retribution to Sutpen (the embodiment of evil and chaos) for freeing the South of such demons and restore

8Absalom, Absalom! p. 8.
9Charles H. Nilon, Faulkner and the Negro series in Language and Literature No. 8, p. 98.
the cosmic order in the South.

Another episode that indicates the real position of women as against the romantic notion of it is the birth of Milly's child. He had seduced her to get a son inspite of being the age of her grandfather. He did not show any regard for Wash's loyalty to him. On the day Milly delivers a child, he goes out to see her. It is also the day on which his mare foaled to a black stallion. When he finds that Milly has given birth to a girl, he shows absolute disregard to her feelings and treats her as if she were worse than a beast. The midwife's description brings out his demonic inhumanity:

he came in and stood ... in the stable" and turned out and went out.10

On realizing that his last hope is not fulfilled and the gap between him and the object of his desire has widened to the extent that both the things have now their independent identities he surrenders, taunts Wash Jones, and simply goes like a defeated hero to meet his own death.

The entire episode brings out the diabolic element in the South's attitude towards women. It shows that

10Absalom, Absalom! p. 235.
there was something evil and unnatural in the Southerner's preference for a male child and his maltreatment of women who failed to fulfil his design. Behind the sham facade of chivalry there was the reality of woman's status as a chattel. Milly's incident reminds us once again of Rosa's view that the likes of Sutpen were a curse on the South.

In *Light in August*, there are three episodes that show how different incidents during the formative period of Joe's life breed and nurture evil in him. As a result, Joe forms a repulsive attitude towards food, money and woman.

The dietitian episode is one of the everlasting impressions on the mind of Joe during the formative period. Since in the imagination of the child, she is a symbol of food, the ideas associated with her have a permanent effect on the development of his mind. Peter Swiggart says about the dietitian episode:

This episode symbolizes the main currents of Joe's adult life. His consciousness of expiated guilt becomes involved with the belief that he is a part negro and is in need of moral absolution. His experience with the dietitian, herself a food symbol confirms his revulsion against food, money and woman.
He remembered that the dietitian had given him a dollar as a bribe to conceal the sin committed by her. He remembered how Mrs. McEachern had encouraged him to commit a sin by stealing money. He remembered how she brought the food for him without the knowledge of her husband. Joe does not hate punishment or injustice but his heart is filled with immense hatred for woman.

It was the woman: that soft kindness which he believed himself doomed to be forever victim of and which he hated worse than he did the hard and ruthless justice of men.12

The dietitian episode makes him form a particular, rather destructive pattern of life. His hatred of food and woman continues as is clear from the following lines:

He went directly to the table where she set out his food. He did not need to see. His hands saw; the dishes were still a little warm, thinking Set out for the nigger. For the nigger ... "Ham", and watched his hand swing and hurl the dish crashing into the wall, the invisible wall, waiting for the crash to subside and silence to flow completely back before taking up another one.13

It is, indeed, the dietitian who inculcates the idea in his mind that he is a nigger and creates in him

12Light in August, p. 128.
13Ibid., p. 179.
a hatred for woman, food and money but it is Bobbie, who completes the task left incomplete by the dietitian. She acquaints him with all the vices of the corrupt society of city.

When Joe visits the hotel for the first time with his father he senses that the people are talking about something but he fails to understand them. He only tries to guess:

"I know that there is something about it beside food, eating. But I don't know what. And I never will know."

His innocence about sex is revealed in the lines:

All the time he was thinking, "Jesus, Jesus. So this is it." He lay naked too, beside her, touching her with his hand and talking about her .... It was as if with speech he were learning about women's bodies, with the curiosity of a child.

Such a simple boy is completely changed in a few days. He becomes addicted to drinking, smoking and whoring, and even takes delight in calling Bobbie his whore.

McEachern watches the behaviour of the boy and ultimately follows him and finds him with Bobbie. The

\[14\] Light in August, p. 133.
\[15\] Ibid., p. 148.
father fails to understand the feelings of the young boy. He forcibly tries to thrust his way of life upon him. He fails to realize that the boy is in love with Bobbie and in the scuffle, he is hit on his head by the chair that Joe swings at him and falls dead.

The same Bobbie for whom he had stolen money and murdered his father shouts at him:

`Bastard! Son of a bitch! Getting me into a jam, that always treated you like you were a white man. A white man!'... `He told me himiself he was a nigger! The son of a bitch! Me taking for nothing a nigger son of a bitch that would get me in a jam with clodhopper police."

Thus, she completes the unfinished work left by the dietitian. From here, `the street' is his salvation for the next twelve years.

Whereas the dietitian episode marks the beginning of Joe's disintegration and the Bobbie episode its confirmation, Miss Burden's episode is the culmination of the process. The period of association with Miss Burden is different from the period of street and it may be compared with Bobbie's episode. In Bobbie's company new revelations dawned upon him, Miss Burden carries all those experiences to their extremity and closes his way

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16 Light in August, p. 164.
further. Bobbie made Joe realize that he had unknowingly accepted the negative values of salvation and started search to discover himself and Miss Burden proves to be helpful in this search for self-identity. She understands Joe's problem and although she is unpredictable like the other women in his life, yet she differs from all those he had come across. She too has her own problems like Joe. She considers the Negro a burden which the whiteman must bear:

"You must struggle, rise. But in order to rise, you must raise the shadow with you. But you can never lift it to your level. I see that now, which I did not see until I came down here. But escape it you cannot."

She bears this burden willingly and boldly, considering it her duty, but Joe bears this burden reluctantly. Their problem is nearly the same. The Negroes treat her as an outsider looking after their interests, while Joe's attitude towards the possibility of having Negro blood makes him an outsider. But in a way both fail. Miss Burden believes in the value of an abstract principle and Joe refuses to recognize himself and accept the burden of humanity. She convinces him that he is wasting his life unnecessarily. She also

17 Light in August, p. 191.
suggests a way to remedy it, but Joe refuses to accept it. Ultimately, she tells him that since he has no courage to live he should accept death, the only solution to his problem. But his pattern of violence has already been fixed. There is a compulsive drive and he can not change the course of his life. He feels:

"No. If I give in now, I will deny all the thirty years that I have lived to make me what I chose to be."

And ultimately he murders her which leads to his own crucifixion.

Faulkner also makes individual events, situations, actions and acts symbolic. When Clytie brings Etienne from New Orleans to live in Jefferson, it means a change in his social environment. He is brought from the Catholic world of New Orleans, where people are not class conscious and do not believe in class distinctions to the puritan world of Jefferson, where a man is known by the class to which he belongs. Clytie may have covered him with the jumper to save him from catching cold but the act acquires a deeper symbolic meaning and has a strange effect on the mind of the boy. The jumper is the symbol of Negro, while his silken dress is the

18Light in August, p. 199.
symbol of his being white. Herefrom begins his existence as a Negro and it creates a deep effect on his mind.

It is his formative period and he, being ignorant of English language, has to sense the situations instead of knowing them which has a bad effect on his mind. The same silken clothes which are the symbol of his whiteness are outgrown as rags that hang in the closet and the child begins to realize that there is something about him that makes him different.

...into that gaunt and barren household where his very silken remaining clothes, his delicate shirt and stockings and shoes which still remained to remind him of what he had once been, vanished, fled from arms and body and legs as if they had been woven of chimeras or of smoke. 19

Clytie does not allow him to mix up with the negro boys so that he may not sense his ambiguous relationship with his two aunts: one white, the other negro.

The child, during his stay with his aunts sleeps between Judith's bed and Clytie's pallet. Later on, his bed is removed to the isolation of attic with a view to protect him from both sides till he is young, and when he is grown up he is allowed to sleep separately. The

19 Absalom, Absalom! pp. 162-163.
child feels secure but here, it implies that he is neither pure black nor pure white, so he is being segregated and just hangs in between. It leads the child to hide in his room a broken shard of the mirror to try to discern on his face the cause of his being treated a different person.

...Clytie or Judith, found hidden beneath his mattress the shard of broken mirror: and who to know what hours of amazed and tearless grief he might have spent before it, examining himself in the delicate and outgrown tatters in which he perhaps could not even remember himself, with quiet and incredulous incomprehension. 20

The shard of broken mirror is symbolic of the child's obsession with the discovery of his identity. It is this obsession which, when he grows up, forces him to get involved in deliberate encounters with the blacks and the whites both. He is advised by judge Compson on account of it to go away.

"What ever you are, once you are among strangers, people who dont know you, you can be whatever you will". 21

His resentment, however, takes form of a symbolic gesture of rebellion. He marries an ape like woman with whom he can never be united emotionally. She cannot get

20 Absalom, Absalom! p. 164.
21 Ibid., p. 168.
any emotional satisfaction from this marriage because she knows that he is a white man, while he on his side, marries her simply to tease others and take revenge. This abnormality in his nature is perhaps one of the causes of his premature death.

Thus, through the analogical relation between silken clothes --- linen jumper, white woman Judith's bed --- negro woman Clytie's pallet and the broken piece of mirror, the author paints the causes and development of obsession in the heart of Etienne.

In As I lay Dying, a signboard acquires a symbolic significance to Dewey Dell:

*New Hope three miles. New Hope three miles. That's what they mean by the womb of time: the agony and the despair of spreading bones, the hard girdle in which lie the outraged entrails of events.*

This ordinary common place situation, quite simple and realistic in appearance, conveys a deeper meaning.

The Bundren family is standing at a crossing where a board exhibits that the burial ground is at a distance of only three miles from that crossing. However, the mere surface meaning of the situation is deceptive as it carries deeper symbolic meaning which throws light on

\footnote{The Sound and the Fury & As I lay Dying, p. 424.}
the subconscious of the different characters. New Hope is symbolic of the aspirations of the Bundrens. As a matter of fact, it is not their devotion to the deceased member of the family that makes them carry her dead body to Jefferson but a concern with some selfish motives. Dewey Dell feels that in case Anse directs the cart towards the cemetery of the Bundren family, it will not be possible for her to go to Jefferson to purchase the pills for abortion which she needs badly. It is not only Dewey Dell whose personal motive is involved but Anse's interest is also involved. In fact, Anse wants to get a set of dentures:

... hoping to get ahead enough so I could get my mouth fixed where I could eat God's own victuals as a man should, ...\(^{23}\)

Cash wants to purchase a gramophone which he can buy in Jefferson only. Darl and Jewel are jealous of each other. Darl feels insecure on the death of his mother so he wants to delay the burial, whereas Jewel wants to carry the dead body away from the country of Bundren family and thus wants to segregate her from all other Bundrens. He has his own reasons to wish so. It is because he is teased by Darl, who considers him an

\(^{23}\)The Sound and the Fury & As I lay Dying, p. 364.
outsider and a person of illegitimate birth, that, in a kind of retaliation he wants to segregate her from the rest of the Bundrens:

It would just be me and her on a high hill and me rolling the rocks down the hill at their faces, picking them up and throwing them down the hill, ...24

Darl wants her body to be buried in Bundren's cemetery, because in that case, she would be nearer to the other members of the family. He also wants that his mother should share the burden of humanity, at least in her death and should be nearer to them all. He, therefore, wants Jewel to be unsuccessful in his mission. Thus, the motives of all the members of the family are concerned with New Hope.

Moreover, 'That's what they mean by the womb of time' is that Dewey Dell is pregnant and in her subconscious she feels that in due course, she would join the cycle of birth and death. The outcome of the womb would be carrying a 'New Hope'. She feels that in course of time all have to pass through certain phase of life and some of our hopes cherished by us are not fulfilled so there is always a great uncertainty at every footstep. 'The outraged entrails of events' here signifies life

being full of sound and fury, the story of some incidents of man's life of hope and bitterness. Here, Dewey Dell is hopeful that she would be getting a chance to go to Jefferson where she would get her pregnancy cleared. Thus she would kill Darl in a sense that she would not give others a chance to know, what is already known to Darl. In the mean time, she fearfully watches the signboard 'New Hope three miles' and cannot say definitely what is in the 'womb of time.'

Thus, outwardly all the family members seem to be fulfilling the promise to the deceased but inwardly they have their selfish motives.

Another symbolic situation in As I lay Dying is the sight of a log in swirling flood waters:

It surged up out of the water and stood for an instant upright upon that surging and heaving desolation like Christ.

With the help of this situation, the author wants to convey that the people in the South are concerned only with rituals and religious formulations otherwise they don't have faith in Him and the true religious values.

On the surface level, it appears to be a

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description of an ordinary scene of flood in a river. A log of wood is being washed away. Its movement is checked for a while, near the cart of Bundrens and it stands erect. Here, the log is a symbol of the Pagan god of sea with a "beard of an old man or a goat" challenging them not to avenge the laws of nature and give burial to the dead body. In Greek mythology, not to give earth to the dead, is to commit an offence against gods. The soul of the departed would never sleep peacefully and adversities are sure to fall on the breavers. So they are against God in delaying the burial to the corpse. They presume the log to be an instrument of punishment. They treat it as sheer bad luck. Within themselves they all realize that it is not necessary to carry the dead body to Jefferson but for their personal motives they persist with it. A passage in the last section of *As I lay Dying*, attributed to Addie is indicative of lack of love in her married life:

*I knew that it had been, not that my aloneness had to be violated over and over each day, but that it had never been violated until Cash came.*

For Anse, love is an abstract word, devoid of feeling. He fails to realize that love means the

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dissolution of one's identity - one's complete self. But Addie even after her marriage feels isolated. "... he was he and I was I." Anse can never understand that marriage is the communion of two bodies as well as two souls to gain harmony and peace. So Addie wants to violate herself to kill her isolation. Being dissatisfied with Anse, she drifts towards Whitefield but he was "...dressed in sin like a gallant garment ..." which means that he too believes in the abstract meaning of the words love, sin, salvation etc., and not in the true spirit. So Addie is disgusted with men and still lives out of a sense of duty:

I believed that the reason was the duty to the alive, to the terrible blood, the red bitter flood boiling through the land.  

She is obliged to live for the sake of her children no matter whether she was chaste or not. However, her soul remains solitary as she fails to get love she needs, and she accepts the negative value of love with the help of the word 'violation of self'.

The main symbol of regeneration that Faulkner has used is the symbol of child:

27 The Sound and the Fury & As I lay Dying, p. 466.  
28 Ibid., p. 467.  
29 Ibid., p. 466.
In *Light in August*, though there are many analogical relations between Christ and Joe Christmas but he is not associated with hope as a symbol of chaos and evil. It is Lena's's child who is the symbol of innocence, as child is always treated as a symbol of Christ-incarnate, our future our hope. Even Lena believes:

... when a man and a woman are going to have a child, that the Lord will see that they are all together when the right time comes.\(^{30}\)

The child is born on Monday morning, after the holy services. Byron Bunch who has hitherto accepted the holistic attitude towards life becomes the god father of the child. Hightower who is cut off from the world, willy-nilly conducts the ceremony and christens the baby. He even renders the services of a surgeon in the absence of a qualified doctor. The grand parents of Joe are also present. Joe's grand-mother treats Lena as her daughter and the child as her own grandson. Their involvement in birth regenerates their souls. Hightower feels that Joanna was unlucky to die a week earlier otherwise she would have experienced a new life in her very barren house:

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\(^{30}\) *Light in August*, p. 227.
'Poor woman', he thinks. 'Poor, barren woman. To have not lived only a week longer, until luck returned to this place. Until luck and life returned to these barren and ruined acres.'

From the literary point of view, the birth is very significant as it takes place one week after the murder of Miss Burden and soon after Joe's crucifixion. In a symbolic sense it implies that evil and chaos has been wiped out and a new light has dawned upon Jefferson in the form of a child.

In *Sanctuary*, child is used to emphasize the negative and anti-life attitudes of the Jefferson community. Ruby's child in the box by the hearth reminds us of Christ in the monger. His hands are spread out in the posture of the hands of a man on the cross. These resemblances are enough to arouse pity for the child and by contrast create abhorrence for the actions of those who are the cause of his suffering. In their self-righteousness, the ladies and the mob at Jefferson, fail to realize that his birth is a result of genuine love and attachment. To the horror of Benbow the priest plans a miserable life for the child, which could only produce the likes of Joe Christmas:

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*Light in August*, p. 306.
I gathered that his idea was that Goodwin and the woman should both be burned as a sole example to that child; the child to be reared and taught the English language for the sole end of being taught that it was begot in sin by two people who suffered by fire for having begot it. Good God, can a man, a civilized man, seriously ..."
"... The writer or the poet or the novelist should not be just a 'recorder' of man -- he should give man some reasons to believe that man can be better than he is."\(^1\)

William Faulkner adopts a very natural manner of communication, that is, he follows neither traditional nor modern artistic conventions scrupulously, but instead he blends both of them artistically, in a single superb way of communication. To achieve it, he presents most artistically the mental states of his characters in their natural form. He portrays life as it has actually been experienced. He renders into words human innervations and stimulus response interactions between the individual and his environment through dialogue between different persons or through interior monologues. Faulkner, in fact, draws the inside out enabling the reader to share all sorts of natural processes such as thinking, feeling, imagining and remembering.

Of course, he is not just a psychologist but an artist who evokes the invisible essence of mankind and also indicates some fundamental human relationship and associations. Out of the actual process of living or

the confused succession of impressions, thoughts or moods, the artist spotlights only those which strike him as peculiarly valuable to design his pattern. He gives an artistic form to the minds or selves he depicts; they are not just like dreams. It should be noted that as the mind itself selects or rejects so does the novelist; he chooses his data artfully and gives us the impression of actual life, the pattern of emotional response.

The novelist turns inward and discards the traditional way of telling a story, since it might not have proved helpful to his artistic design. He gives us no chain of events in time sequence. His narrative completely defies any arbitrary divisions of time. He gives us a chain of human states and moments. No doubt, he gives us plots, communicates the action but it is not done in the conventional sense, that is, no chain of events with logical connections. Mere surface reading of his characters may prove to be deceptive, because he lays more stress on the revelation of the minds of his characters. He tries to bring the reader into direct contact with the minds of the characters in his novels. He adopts his own method of characterization, that is, in his approach to characterization, we gain more than
surface knowledge of his characters. He seldom narrates, but on the contrary, he reveals his characters through their behaviour, thoughts or analysis. He explains that appearances are often deceptive. He introduces what may seem at first glance to be a stereotype or a type character and then brings out layer after layer of the character's thought and experience, he qualifies and defines what at first glance seemed to be a real character. He portrays in a way, all life without having any relation to it, beyond dispassionate observation. He often presents all stages of life in a single work, just as in The Sound and the Fury. Benjy represents childhood, Quentin adolescence, Jason is the head of the family while Dilsey represents the old age full of sobriety and complete awareness of human relationship.

Faulkner relates the same story and also uses the same material in all of his works, however, the mode of his presentation differs from work to work, that is, in the Sound and the Fury and in As I lay Dying he used the modern technique of 'Stream of Consciousness'. In Absalom, Absalom! he used the 'Siron' method, which helps him to reveal the different shades of the
mental states of his characters, through different angles. He throws the burden on his readers to weave the story themselves. In *Light in August* though the technique used appears to be traditional but, in fact, he paints the sub-conscious of his characters like a great psychologist. To achieve his object, he takes the help of sound and silence, mobility-immobility, turbulence-quiescence and tension etc., abundantly. The scape-goat is sacrificed ritualistically. In *Sanctuary*, he used the allegorical method, but here we find the traditional allegory in its modern form. In *Sanctuary*, we are face to face with the living characters. They are not mere abstractions as it generally happens in any traditional allegory. On the contrary, they all are earthly figures endowed with humanly feelings and emotions with manly limitations, too. In it, we constantly find the developing attitudes of characters though in a negative form. In the *Wild Palms* he has alternated two thematically inter-related stories. It is a brilliant experiment in the inter-weaving of two apparently separate stories. Both the stories convey a single theme of human freedom but while doing so they also convey the psychological problems involved in them.
In one of them Harry Wilbourne and Charlotte have to pay the penalty for their excesses while in the other the "tall convict" is not supposed to enjoy the fruit of his labour. One realizes that individual is chained, while the individual freedom is a mere mockery, in this world.

In Go down, Moses, especially in the story "The Bear" he has used symbolism abundantly to narrate some events of Christ story. In Pylon he used a grotesque parody of symbolism around which men and planes both revolve. Man is reduced to the level of machine devoid of humanly feelings and emotions. In Intruder in the Dust, he used declamatory rhetorics to weave an adventurous story to convey the meaning implied. In Requiem for a Nun he writes a play in three acts. He used the Christian metaphors abundantly, in a rather rhetorical fashion. He used the "history" of Jefferson to prepare a background for dramatic exchanges. A Fable is again written in an allegorical fashion, but this moral or religious allegory is not much important because in Christ story he has dramatized the greatness of man, however, it is remarkable for its rhetoric.
Thus, we know that the novelist does not adopt any particular technique or style but has innovated a technique of his own whereby he could communicate the mysterious complexity of experience. The frequent changes which he made in his readers and virtually compelled them to read the same story and same material which he has given in almost all of his works. He strove for the dimensions of human beings and concluded that one should be able to feel a wall made out of all the influences. He searched for a form to enclose everything including the human hearts and we realize that Faulkner's novels, as his work progressed, moved towards an attempt to convey the total aspect of man and his consciousness, walled in by the influence that controls it. Obviously, therefore, view of man, his mind and his emotions is with Faulkner the proper stuff of fiction. The novelist discards the existing conventions and concentrates upon the real life of the moment, the response of the individual to the myriad impressions which constantly assail him.

The essence of his technique lies in the depiction of inner recesses of mind, and when the words fail to communicate the individual consciousness, he takes the
aid of sound-silence, turbulence-quiescence, mobility-immobility or polarities-similarities and succeeds in painting the individual tension. We know that he penetrates into the inner world of his characters, the mystery of personality which for psychologist and novelist alike offers the ultimate challenge. This attitude lies at the heart of all of his novels. They pose the riddle of human personality, which Faulkner attempts to solve by uncovering each character's past and showing its relationship to the immediate present.

In his earlier works, that is, *Soldiers' Pay* and *Mosquitoes*, his handling of plot, characterization, setting, symbolism, structure and style appears to be fairly conventional, however, since 1929, that is, the publication of his work *Sartoris*, he gradually drifted away from the existing literary conventions of writing fiction and developed his interest in the artistic experiments. It is possible that he might have realized that the conventional form is inadequate to trace out the inner recesses of his characters and the relativity of mind, which he wanted to paint, so he preferred to make some innovations and extensions in the conventional form, to make it more suitable medium to convey his
vision of change effectively. His most experimental innovations are best understood as adoptions and extensions of certain modern artistic experiments and innovations such as the introduction of mythical and poetical element in prose, in which he resembles James Joyce in prose and T. S. Eliot in poetry.

It appears that though he did not follow all the implications of Freudian theories, still one can easily discern that Freud definitely refreshed the significance of his new associations in the technique of "Stream of Consciousness", he used in two of his major novels. The partial influence of the Freudian theories helped him to assign new meaning to the unconscious and subconscious motivations i.e., a struggle between flesh and soul and in its light he could assign new significance and importance to the working of the dreams of Jewel in his work As I Lay Dying. We know:

It would just be me and her on a high hill and me rolling the rocks down the hill at their faces, picking them up and throwing them down the hill, faces and teeth and all by God until she was quiet and not that goddamn adze going One lick less.²

... That he is having a sort of Freudian attachment for

his mother, but the author with the help of this dream throws light on Jewel's relationship with all the other Bundrens, who despise him. In 'me rolling the rocks down the hill at their faces', we know about the contempt and hatred he possess for Darl. The inward attachment for her leads him to save her coffin from flood and fire both. His sacrifice of his horse to pay for the bullocks to carry the coffin to Jefferson can safely be attributed to his attachment for his deceased mother. His hatred for Darl is revealed when after the burial he pounces upon him.

From the hallucination of Whitefield "Anse, I have sinned. Do with me as you will", we know about a struggle between his outer and innerself. Faulkner gave a new interpretation to the Oedipus Complex, hitherto, employed in literature, that is, he successfully creates greater tension in painting a conflict between father and son. The tension so created indicates the strangulating effect of the past on the present. It also suggest the limitations of the old and the new.

In The Sound and the Fury, Mr. Compson imparts knowledge to Quentin without assigning its value and
making him understand its importance:

It was Grandfather's and when Father gave it to me he said, Quentin, I give you the mausoleum of all hope and desire; it's rather excruciating-ly apt that you will use it to gain the reducto absurdum of all human experience which can fit your individual needs no better than it fitted his or his father's. 3

It clearly indicates that Mr. Compson acquired the traditional way of life without any proper understanding. Mr. Compson says "It was grandfathers .... father gave it to me ....", but he does not tell why he accepted the particular way of life. Now, the question arises whether it was thrusted upon him or did he accept it blindly? What was the justification for accepting a particular way of life? But his statement is quite silent. He simply says "..... I give you the mausoleum of all hope and desire;", which shows that he believes, that a particular hereditary way of life is good. As it is hereditary, it is good but why it is good that he is unable to clarify. He simply feels that in course of time Quentin would automatically or instinctively know that the hereditary beliefs, knowledge, rituals etc. all are good and useful. He is rather confident that the collective experiences of his father and forefathers

3 The Sound and the Fury, p. 73.
would definitely guide him to lead an easy life. He says "You will use it to gain the reducto-absurdum of all human experience ... can fit your individual needs no better than it fitted his or his father's."

It shows that older generation wants to pass its experiences and knowledge to the new generation blindly. It is also the case in the relationship between McEachern and Joe Christmas in Light in August. McEachern keeps faith in formulative religion instead of true Christian values. For him dogmas are more important. He simply wants to thrust his point of view upon the ensuing generation. The rigidity of the older generation is caused due to the existing false social customs and religious beliefs, which they themselves had to accept without any understanding. Indeed, the new generation does not revolt against the older generation, its resentment is against the way of life which is thrust upon it. The younger people want to avail of their individual rights to choose a more suitable way of life, which may prove to be better in accordance with the change in time. To achieve this they need clarity, which the older generation fails to provide. When the new generation fails to air the
doubts and apprehensions, lurking in their minds, which have hitherto tortured them, they get frustrated. In their frustration they come out in revolt against the existing institutions. Their frustration leads them to disillusionment and abnormality. The so-called inward abnormality of Joe Christmas, Quentin Compson etc. reflects upon their outward actions, which cause great tension. The tension so created sometimes acquires pathological dimensions.

It is presumed that in using the conventional method of plot and characterization, he might have realized that mere representation of the surface reality or to show with the help of outward evidence as to what a character might do or say becomes an inadequate form of characterization, as the characters are often not what they represent. They put on social masks and their selves are disguised, whereas the author is concerned with the reality, the real life the characters lead and not merely how they behave in the society, because one's behaviour in the society is generally hypocratic. So, with the help of dreams and hallucinations he tried to probe deep into the inner recesses of his characters and provide the deeper insights of their subconscious, which is not possible to be revealed with the help of
conventional method of characterization, just as if we go to the surface reality, we may treat Joe Christmas to be a mere vagabond or a debauch or a criminal and Mrs. Hightower to be an immoral woman or even a whore but this all is not meant by the author. The new method of tracing out the unconscious motivations attach more importance to the hidden reality, the happenings, the reactions or the revulsions etc., within the mind of a character which often play an important role in the formation of outward behaviour of a character, unknown to the character himself, just as Joe does not know why he repulses and hates women. It is obvious that his experience with the dietitian is the cause of his hatred for women but he does not know it. His hatred for women is revealed in the lines:

He was moving, because his foot touched her. Then it touched her again because he kicked her. He kicked her hard, kicking into and through a choked wail of surprise and fear. She began to scream, he jerking her up, clutching her by the arm, hitting at her with wide, wild blows, striking at the voice perhaps, feeling her flesh anyway, enclosed by the woman's negro and the haste.⁴

Now there is no justification for his kicking and

⁴Light in August, p. 119.
beating a girl engaged by them for sexual pleasures. He also beats Bobby and Joanna Burden but he is not aware of the real cause of his violent behaviour with women. He only knows:

'It was the woman: that soft kindness which he believed himself doomed to be forever victim of and which he hated worse than he did the hard and ruthless justice of men.'

'It was the woman .... doomed to be forever victim', reflects that his puritan training in the household of McEachern is also partly responsible for the formation of a particular attitude towards woman. His hatred for woman reaches its culmination in Joanna's episode:

She struck him, at once, with her flat hand, the rest of her body not moving at all. Her blow made a flat sound; his blow as close upon it as echo. He struck with his fist, then in that long blowing wind he jerked her up from the chair and held her, facing him, motionless, not a flicker upon her still face, while the long wind of knowing rushed down upon him.6

Joe Christmas beats Joanna but he does not know why he beats her but not that's all; the lines also help to communicate their inner selves. It is also revealed

5Light in August, p. 128.
6Ibid., pp. 208-209.
to the reader that both of them believe in abstract ideals. They are overpowered by the past, they have no future hope. They try to go against the flow of life. They are mere phantoms rehearsing their past. So they act according to their destructive drive. In "the long wind of knowing hushed down upon him", we not only know that he is overpowered by memory but we also know that like the mythical King Oedipus, he is proud of his knowing and there lies his doom. As a matter of fact, he tries to know his identity, which he can not know because "wind of knowing", that is, his false pride, his rigidity, his beliefs will never allow him to know. It is not the tragedy of Joe Christmas but of modern man, the product of change who has involved himself too much in knowing and thus fails to adjust with the motion of life.

In a way the reader comes across a better version of the character. Moreover, it helps to convey different shades of reality to different people. Olga Vickery comments that, "A single word conveys different things to different people as it reflects not reality, but their own particular angle of version."  

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And to achieve this object, he needed to make radical changes in the conventional setting. So the setting in time and space was transferred from physical to psychological and metaphysical setting for the dramatic action.

In the *Sound and the Fury*, there is no hero, as all the three brothers are obsessed and overshadowed by the memory of their sister Caddy. Through Mr. Compson, the author passes some cynical remarks on the action so it appears that the author follows the Flaubertian device of creating characters and then allowing them to act and react themselves. In *As I lay Dying*, the readers know the theme through 59 monologues of 15 characters. Darl to whom the greater number of monologues are allotted is an obsessed person who does not reap the fruit of the action so he cannot be called the hero of the novel. Addie is the only domineering character but she is already dead. Anse who reaps the fruit of the epical action in getting his mouth fixed and a duck-shaped new Mrs. Bundren is more or less a villain than a hero. The author passes some comments through Peabody but they are not related to the action. And so it would not be inappropriate if one says that in *The Sound and*
the _Fury_ and _As I lay Dying_ the author is completely removed from the traditional role of a narrator. His subjective self is submerged in the objective reality and the author and the hero both disappear.

William Faulkner started his career as a poet and though he later on, drifted towards prose, he maintained his analogical habit of a poet and introduced many poetical analogies and poetical scenes in his fictional world through which he tries to convey the deeper reality, just as in the crucifixion scene in _Light in August_, we see:

> When they approached to see what he was about, they saw that the man was not dead yet, and when they saw what Grimm was doing one of the men gave a choked cry and stumbled back into the wall and began to vomit. Then Grimm too sprang back, flinging behind him the bloody butcher knife. ... He just lay there, with his eyes open and empty of everything save consciousness, and with something, a shadow, about his mouth. For a long moment he looked up at them with peaceful and unfathomable and unbearable eyes .... They are not to lose it, in whatever peaceful valleys, beside whatever placid and reassuring streams of old age, in the mirroring faces of whatever children they will contemplate old disasters and newer hopes.  

The scene testifies his greater control over his

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8 _Light in August_, p. 349.
imagination飞行。它充满了怜悯和恐惧，甚至使观众和读者都着迷。奇怪的是，他的神来到了最低级的水平，即圣诞节，其"不可忍受的眼睛"提醒我们，是社会创造了邪恶，然后考虑到污染试图摧毁它。它警告我们，乔不是一个个体，而是一个普通人。他与人类的受害者联合在一起，他的痛苦超越了时间和地点。

历史证明，"它们不会在任何和平的山谷中失去它"。人类天生被残酷和野蛮所吸引，但理性头脑反对任何形式的残酷行为。它也让人想起了在早期黑暗时代的人类牺牲。

所以通过类比，作者成功地给他的读者留下了很多可咀嚼和深思的内容。

作者经常传达道德缺陷的原因和后果，这些道德缺陷使他的"南方"衰败，然后，他也建议了一些可能的修正，正如在《亚伯拉罕，亚伯拉罕！》中，他传达了他们可以容忍近亲，但不能容忍不道德的结合，"所以是不道德的结合，而不是近亲。"
you can't bear." So miscegenation is a moral sin, which is one of the important causes of the destruction of his "South" and Jim Bon is the very guilt of "South".

He combines comic, tragi-comic and mythical modes to illuminate his meaning, just as in Light in August the last scene in the truck of the furniture dealer is burlesque, crucifixion scene is tragic while Lena-Byron love affair is a comic scene. At the sametime Christmas versus Doc Hines, Joanna Burden, the dietitian, Bobbie, McEachern, Percy Grimm, Hightower etc., all are mythical figures relating a mythical theme. Thus, we know that tragi-comic and mythical scenes are woven in a single book in a superb manner to illuminate his meaning while at the same time, the author, with the help of comic element thus introduced, saves his works from becoming traditional gruesome tales. Moreover, life is neither a pure comedy nor a pure tragedy but a fine admixture of both, so a great artist like Faulkner who is true to life rightly presents tragic and comic scenes in a single book.

To communicate his meaningful ideas he abundantly uses analogies, antithesis, polarities and similarities in the situations and the characters as in The Sound and
the _Fury_, it is revealed to the readers that all the major events of the Compson family take place during four days, that is, Holy Saturday (Benjy), Thursday (Quentin), Good Friday (Jason) and Easterday (Dilsey). The moral significance to the self sacrifice, love, death, and Resurrection of Jesus are frequently brought to the notice of the readers through the analogical method of writing to show that the Compson family ignored the meaningful importance attached to all these days, ritualistically. Thus, through a common Christian belief, he succeeds in pointing out the negative beliefs, accepted by all the members of Compson family. In this book he presents threefold manipulation of mythical analogies, that is, Dilsey, the negro maid servant is an exception to all the other members of the Compson family. Her relations with all the other members of the Compson family are given. Benjamin is a primitive character. His relations with all the other characters in the book are given. Quentin, Jason and their parents come under third category. They utter only negations. Anyhow, though he has used threefold mythical patterns still he has dramatized all the
situations in such a way that *The Sound and the Fury* is a piece of art not a mere Biblical echo.

Sometimes, with the help of even some simple analogies he controls the meaning by merely hinting at analogies or antithesis between some of his characters. Analogies or antithesis within the pattern of the actions performed by the characters, just as in *Light in August* Joe Christmas appears to be the protagonist but he is surrounded by the dietitian, Bobbie, Miss Burden, Doc Hines and McEachern etc., with whom his actions are related. They all apparently have separate identities but, in fact, there are analogical relations amongst them. And, through such analogies the actions of Joe Christmas are determined so he cannot be called the protagonist or the hero of the novel, however, through his actions the meaning becomes clear. Thus Faulkner makes the implied meaning clear with the help of antithesis and polarities in his plot and characters. In fact, the antithetical situations and characters are like the musical counterpoints. For example such antithetical characters in pairs as Christmas-Lena, Christmas-Joanna, Christmas-Bobbie, Christmas-Brown act like point counter-point to each other. Faulkner has...
arranged such numerous pairs to dramatically heighten the awareness of his characters but all such characters appear as if they have been used by the author as mere foils to convey some hypothetical meaning. And if it is, then, his characters are comparable to those of Thomas Hardy especially Tess and William Henchard in his novels Tess and The Mayor of Casterbridge respectively.

In fact, Thomas Hardy used his characters as mere foils to advocate his fatalistic conception, while Faulkner is interested to reveal the inner subtleties of the minds of his characters. Faulkner does not appear to be satisfied in presenting only the symbolic actions but he wants to communicate the readers the reactions of the other selves. Thus the readers know the inner selves of all of them who are directly indirectly concerned with the particular action. Faulkner believes in the historical emergence of "Being" and as such a single action of an individual represents the whole sensibility of the community and Age in which he is born and brought up and as such he cannot simply be labelled as a traditionalist having a passive vision simply on the ground that he used the conceptional antithesis in his works. On a careful consideration it is revealed that he is neither a pure "Traditionalist" nor a pure "Modern" but has
given us a superb combination of old and new style of writing fiction. His use of antithesis or analogies or polarities is not far away from the traditional form of poetic or metaphorical statements. Even in our daily routine for non artistic purpose we make the use of one thing in terms of another or one thing having the opposite or metaphorical sense. So, we know that in a way he used the traditional technique, however, he introduced some experimental element in and made some radical changes which may fairly be called his technical innovation.

His another important innovation is that he uses the analogies to make a paradoxical combination of what Freud feels visible and invisible meaning and what Plato feels the heavenly idea of reality and refused to accept the power of invisible thing or the metaphysical things, which all clearly reflects that he is neither a pure Freudian nor a pure Platonic. On the contrary, in his fiction we find the paradoxical combination of psychological, metaphysical preoccupations. They all are blended in such a superb manner that they cannot be separated. They may be fairly called Freudian-Platonic myths. Thus it is clear that he neither belongs to one
block nor to the other and neither Plato nor Freud might have appreciated his innovations. With the help of this technical innovation, he could probe deep into the inner recesses of his characters and point out the conflict between flesh and soul, that is, conscious and subconscious motivations. This particular method of analoging have an almost compulsive way of invoking and adopting certain mirror principles which reconcile both the platonic and Freudian elements. We know that in his novels he has used actual mirrors in a way as in *Light in August*, in Joanna's episode, both Christmas and Joanna Burden look at each other's face as if they are mirrors:

> Yet neither surrendered; worse: they would not let one another alone; he would not even go away. And they would stand for a while longer in the quiet dusk peopled, as though from their loins, by a myriad ghosts of dead sins and delights, looking at one another's still and fading face, weary, spent, and indomitable.

In the above lines we know that Joe and Joanna both look at each other, so the object is visible but in "yet neither surrendered"; one may infer that the author is not only concerned with the visible reality; Joanna and Joe are not only two visible objects but two mythical

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figures, both occupied with their past. Yet one finds in "they would not let one another alone", that though both are possessed persons they are also tired of their loneliness and in order to get rid of their loneliness or tortured self they need the company of each other. It also reflects the relation of one man to another; one soul to another soul; and as well as, the relationship between the human and the divine. "he would not even go away", reflects the stubborn nature of Joanna and Joe. It also reflects the rigidity or abnormality, in human nature, which generally leads to compulsive destructive drive. They are no doubt "ghosts of dead", as their souls are obsessed and they futilely try to arrest the motion of life. They are "weary, spent", because they have lost the charm for natural beauty. They all are tired of the burden of their past but even then, they are still committed to their meaningless convictions. Thus in a few lines, the author presents a superb combination of visible and invisible reality.

In The Sound and the Fury, Caddy looks at Benjy, as if he is the mirror in which she could visualize her moral sins, as :
Caddy and I ran. We ran up the kitchen steps, onto the porch, and Caddy knelt down in the dark and held me. I could hear her and feel her chest. "I won't. She said. "I won't any more, ever. Benjy. Benjy." Then she was crying, and I cried, and we held each other. "Hush." She said. "Hush'. I won't any more.' So I hushed and Caddy got up and we went into the kitchen and turned the light on and Caddy took the kitchen soap and washed her mouth at the sink, hard. Caddy smelled like trees. 10

Caddy and Benjy are two visible objects, however, through their analogical relationship, we know that they are mythical figures. In the words, "... washed her mouth at the sink, hard." we know she feels a guilt and the desire to purify herself finds an expression in physical purification with soap and water. Caddy, however, has a positive aspect to her character also. She has natural mother instinct. In "Caddy smelled like trees", we know that as she is a symbol of fertility, so soon after she washes her face, she is again a chaste woman. We also know that mythically she is the symbol of life force enduring in time. She nurses her instinctive brother Benjy, who longs for motherly affection.

In a way in a simple mirror analogy, with the

10 The Sound and the Fury, p. 49.
support of several mythological references, he is successful to paint the human consciousness.

In *Absalom, Absalom!*, Bon looks at Henry, as if his face is a mirror in which he can read something:

*He has my brow my skull my jaw my hands and the other said wait. Wait. You can't know yet. You cannot know yet whether what you see is what you are looking at or what you are believing. Wait. Wait.*

Bon and Henry both are standing face to face. Two persons are visible having close relationship. Charles Bon in the words, "He has my brow my skull . . .", forms a communion with Henry Sutpen but in "wait. Wait. You can't know yet", we know that though there is a relationship between the two still they both have their separate identity and separate design because Henry has accepted the puritan way of life. He can, therefore, tolerate incest but not the miscegenation. The point lies in "what you are looking at or what you are believing", that even though we see two visible objects still those two are possessed with their own designs and as such no communion is possible between the two. They represent two blocks of the society, each struggling for its own existence. In these lines we also visualize the human and divine relationship. Man desires to be God.

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11 *Absalom, Absalom!* p. 258.
He wants complete realization of his possibilities without losing his own identity but it is the tragedy of man that he is unable to achieve the professed condition of total identification with God in itself. We also know that Bon desires to have what he cannot have. Thus, in this mirror analogy he presents successfully the admixture of visible and invisible reality.

The above three passages are so poetical that they provide the reader glimpses of the depth in the author's peculiar moral vision concerning his proper relationship.

Another innovation to be enjoyed in his narrative is the private, independent and poetical angle through which he assigns values:

I am trying to make myself into what I think he wants me to be; he can do anything he wants to with me; he has only to tell me what to do and I will do it; even though what he asked me to do looked to me like dishonor, I would still do it, ....

Even this private and independent narrative conveys not the feelings of Judith Sutpen alone but a woman's consciousness as well. Women recognize truth instinctively and react whole heartedly to their

12Absalom, Absalom! p. 272.
experiences. They never go in for abstractions. They are always above racial prejudices. In fact, they don't try to know what truth is. They seldom abide by any particular design or one may say that they have no code of honour to follow. The lines, "what he asked me to do looked me like dishonour, I will still do it", clearly shows that the women are the true replica of nature, and they know well how to adjust to the motion of life.

It is observed that Faulkner is in the habit of blending realism and symbolism. He can be called a realist in the sense that he paints the contemporary life in the South and also the socio-political, economical, ethical and sexual problems which arise in a hide bound society and make life unbearable. He especially tries to hit at the central issues of man and paint the hidden realities, he deliberately uses myth abundantly. He can be called a symbolist in a sense that he uses numerous poetical analogies in an allegorical fashion. He often introduces both realism and symbolism in one character or a situation, just as Joe Christmas is a scapegoat, who is sacrificed to condemn the racial prejudices. His analogical relations with Christ are also shown to develop a particular tone of the work.
It is generally presumed that in an allegory the characters are mere abstractions and as such their inner development cannot be painted, however, in *Sanctuary* which is written in an allegorical fashion, all the characters are full of life. One can trace their feelings and emotions. Thus we can infer that he has given a modified form to the traditional allegory.

Often, it appears to be surprising how the author can convey the thematic meaning through the technique which imply such an objective and seemingly indifferent attitude towards what they themselves do and say. It appears that he has followed the notion of Flaubert that the dramatic mode of writing is superior to lyric and epic, both, because once he creates the characters they go on acting out the meaning and the author disappears within or behind. His position is like God who creates mankind but never interferes in their lives. He also does not thrust any particular way of life upon them, but gives them free will to move in their own way, as in his novels, especially, *The Sound and the Fury* he has created certain characters but he never gives any comment on their behaviour. In *As I Lay Dying* in 59 monologues of 15 characters, apparently, a trivial action
is communicated, however, in fact, we know the story in study of the sub conscious of his characters.

In order to study the mode of his communication for better understanding, we shall read it under the following sub-heads:
1. Conceptual Antithesis and Polarities
2. Character Antitheses
3. Sound and Silence
4. Mobility and Immobility
5. Tone
6. Stream of Consciousness
7. Style

**Conceptual Antithesis and Polarities**: 

William Faulkner has used antithetical themes and situations to weave into his novels his concept of change. He tries to convey the sense of decay and tension caused by the hold of outmoded tradition and forced change. For this purpose he compares and contrasts Whites and Blacks, North and South, Christians and Pagans and good and evil, etc. In *Light in August* and *Absalom, Absalom!* the problem of whites and blacks
and miscegenation dominates the novel. The Southerner's obstinate refusal to accept the abolition of slavery on the ground of the equality of all people resulted in a strong colour prejudice, insistence upon the superiority of the whites and discrimination against the blacks. In account of it Sutpen sacrifices his first born, and Henry can tolerate incest but not miscegenation.

So it's the miscegenation, not the incest, which you can't bear.13

Sutpen, anxious to protect the purity of his race, is not prepared to give recognition to his deceased son Charles Bon simply because he suspects that Charles' mother carried 1/8th negro blood.

In *Light in August* the racial conflict has been internalized in Joe Christmas. Because of his upbringing and environment, he is not sure whether he is white or black. So he is confused and can not decide which value system he must adopt.

Doc Hines is also a product of traditional society. He treats Joe as "... a pollution and abomination on earth". Doc Hines fails to realize that he is a human child. His ingrained prejudices make it impossible for him to behave otherwise. He considers it to be his

13 *Absalom, Absalom!* p. 294.
moral duty to chastise Joe.

Even Gowan Stevens, a Harvard graduate has a strange theory about the whites and the negroes. He remarks on Joe Christmas

... it was the black blood which snatched up the pistol and the white blood which would not let him fire it.\textsuperscript{14}

Joanna Burden's father belongs to the North so in the South Burdens are treated as mere foreigners.

They hated us here. We were Yankees. Foreigners. Worse than foreigners: enemies. Carpetbaggers.\textsuperscript{15}

Inspite of the defeat in the Civil War the South continued to believe in the superiority of its attitude and continued to resist change. It resisted integration with the rest of the country.

Joe often puts on white and black clothes which symbolises the North-South and the black-white conflict. He tries to assert his identity but the society is not ready to accept him even as a human being. With other contrasts such as speed-no speed, time or no time, space or no space etc., he creates antithetical situations to show the distinction between the traditional society to weave the plots of his novels.

\textsuperscript{14}\textit{Light in August}, p. 337.
\textsuperscript{15}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 187.
She turned into the road at that slow and ponderous gallop, the two of them, man and beast, leaning a little stiffly forward as though in some Juggernautish of terrific speed though simulation the actual speed itself was absent ... speed were not necessary.  

We find the polarity between 'terrific speed' and 'no speed' and the resulting assertion that speed were not necessary. It reflects that inspite of the apparent changes brought by the passage of time, there was very little change in the Southern perceptions and the people refused to recognize the need for change.

The white-negro and the North-South are not antithesis in themselves but the situations in which they are used, make them so. They enable the writer to present the nature of the conflict to which the resistance to change gives rise.

The antitheses between the fecund and the sterile presented often in the novels of Faulkner is to suggest the difference between stagnation and continuation of life. The child often represents a further stage of life and any threat to its existence is an indication of denial of life.

The antithesis between words and actions is expressed in Addie Bundren's words:

The rigidity and pliability of belief or spirit; self-love and outgoing love, freedom and society; soul and body; good and evil; order and disorder; life and death; sin and redemption; man and destiny; oblivion and consciousness; timelessness and momentariness; immobility and change; reality and dream; mind and body etc., are the antithesis between them to represent the contradictions in human behaviour and the complexity of life. He perceives and presents life in polar terms. He shows that the opposite poles can neither be separated nor reconciled. They reveal the basic predicament of the South. It had invented for itself an illusory prebellum past which was considered to be perfect and preceded to practice its evils under the illusion that it was protecting itself from the corruption of the North. In the process it hampered the progress of life and accepted change as a normal aspect of life. In the absence of change in the outlook the mere mechanical changes introduced from outside only helped in giving

17The Sound and the Fury & As I lay Dying, p. 465.
rise to hypocrisy and corruption.

Thus the antithesis is used to depict the tension and suffering in the lives of individuals like Joe Christmas, Charles Bon, Clytie or in families like that of Sutpens. It is the irreconcilation between the white and the black that accounts for their tragic ends. The polar entities are often juxtaposed in his novels both dramatically and explicitly. In *As I lay Dying* Dr. Peabody thinks that:

\[\text{I can remember how when I was young I believed death to be a phenomenon of the body; now I know it to be merely a function of the mind} \ldots.\]

The same contrast is seen in the feelings of Dewey Dell.

**Character Antithesis**:

Faulkner has also used antithetical characters to weave the themes of his novels to communicate his concept of change. He tries to convey the sense of deterioration caused by the hold of meaningless rituals, superficial traditions, set conventions and forced change. To achieve his hypothesis he compares and

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contrasts his characters. Sometimes outwardly they seem to contrast with one another even when there is no direct opposition of characteristics or behaviour.

In *The Sound and the Fury*, all the members of the Compson family are compared with the negro maid-servant Dilsey who proves morally superior to all other members of the family because she believes in human values and can endure the changes. For her, work and the service of humanity is the true worship of her Lord. Whereas all other members of the family hopelessly cling to the past glory of the Compson family which is now an illusion.

Benjy represents instinctive people, Quentin romantic and Jason commercial. In their behaviour and approach to life, they stand in contrast to each other yet the sense of past hovers over all three of them. Benjy cannot differentiate, Quentin keeps looking back and Jason is self-centred. But they are the victim of mental stagnation and cannot survive like Dilsey does.

In *Light in August*, the characters have no fixed relationship to one another such as we find in *The Sound and the Fury*. On the contrary, there is opposition in the individual or individual versus group or society. Byron
Bunch when compared to Joe Christmas, Hightower, Brown appears certainly superior to all others because he has formed a holistic attitude to life. Joe Christmas and Brown both are engaged in selling whiskey but in comparison we find Christmas better than Brown who runs away from sharing the burden of humanity. But when Joe is contrasted with Byron Bunch we find him arrogant and highly obsessed with his past. Hightower and Joanna Burden both appear to be generous but when they are seen in comparison with Joe Christmas, they appear highly obsessed with the romantic idealism of the past. When Lena Grove is seen in comparison with Mrs. Armstid one finds Lena superior to her, at least in innocence. Mrs. Armstid, though sympathetic to Lena, is worldly wise. But when Lena is compared to Joanna Burden one finds fertility contrasted with sterility.

The dietitian, Bobbie and Mrs. McEachern follow the abstract code of society without knowing its human significance. Percy Grimm is a sadist but when he is compared to Joe Christmas one finds Joe superior because he has a chance to kill Grimm but he doesn't avail of it, however, their clash creates a great tension.

Here, Faulkner wants to convey that though there
was a greater political and economic change in the South after the Civil War because of the South losing independent identity and becoming a part of the larger democratic set up, yet there was very little change in the sensibility of the people. A change in external circumstances without change in the human consciousness is only a forced change. As life is a motion and ever forges ahead, those who do not change with it are sure to decay and be destroyed.

In *Absalom, Absalom!* Charles Bon and Henry Sutpen both come in an open clash. Charles presses the delicate issue to gain recognition but a puritan-minded Henry can tolerate incest but not miscegenation. "So it's the miscegenation not the incest; which you can't bear."

Henry forgetting all about his filial relationship comradeship for four years shoots Charles dead simply to maintain his abstract design.

Sutpen and his faithful servant Jones also come into a clash. Sutpen seduces the fifteen years old grand-daughter of Jones in the hope of getting a son but when he is frustrated he realizes that he and the object of his desire have different identities and walks like a
hero to meet his death at the hands of Jones.

Rosa and Sutpen clash when he proposes to her that he would marry her if she begot him a son:

This be who could approach her in this unbidden April's compounded demonry and suggest that they breed together for test and sample and if it was a boy they would marry; ....

Rosa and Clytie also clash with each other. Rosa is a mere dangling spider while Clytie tries to maintain the integrity of Sutpen's Hundred even at the cost of her life.

In The Sound and the Fury, Mrs. Compson clashes with all the other members of the family, Quentin with Dalton Ames and Jason with Sheriff and the circus cook:

"You bastard", the other shrieked, scrabbling at the table. Jason tried to grasp him in both arms, trying to prison the puny fury of him.

Jason cuts Benjy's dolls and beats Caddy and Luster. Likewise, many other encounters are noticed in the book.

In his novels the relations between husband and wife or man and woman are generally full of mental frustration or conflict as is the case with Mr. and Mrs. McEachern, Joe and Joanna, Addie and Anse, Sutpen and

19 Absalom, Absalom! p. 146.

20 The Sound and the Fury, p. 274.
Ellen, and their frustration often leads to horrible consequences. Mrs. Hightower is emotionally forced to go to brothel and later on commits suicide while Addie Bundren in her frustration maintains physical relations with Whitefield. The couple suffer mental disintegration. The opposition or antitheses is sometimes in a single body as the conflict between black and white in Joe, and North and South in Joanna, or they are in the same family as Darl and Jewel. Anyhow, they are linked up in such a way that they can not be set apart.

**Sound and Silence**

Faulkner has used antithesis between sound and silence to heighten the effect of violence and outburst of suppressed feelings. It depicts the volcanic passions seething under the placid surface of a stagnant society.

It is also helpful to the writer to probe deep into the inner recesses of his characters and convey the hidden reality which the reader otherwise cannot possibly know.

In *Light in August* sounds of wagons and vehicles are heard, especially of those that carry Lena to
Jefferson and Joe to Mottstown. Joe while hiding behind the bushes hears the sound of wheels of a wagon:

This time he is alert and he hears the wagon before it comes into sight. He does not show himself until the wagon is abreast of him. Then he steps forth and says, 'Hey'. The wagon stops, jerked up. The negro driver's head jerks also; ..."

With the help of the sound of the wheels, Faulkner paints the inner feelings of Joe. He is tired of running and wants to be captured. The plight of seven days has enlightened him. His own design of false values which he accepted in 'street' is now shattered, and he heads toward self-crucifixion.

In the episode in which McEachern is killed the voice of McEachern is followed by intense silence.

'Away, Jezebel!' he said. His voice thundered, into the shocked silence the shocked surrounding faces beneath the kerosene lamps, into the ceased music, into the peaceful moonlit night of young summer. Away harlot!' ... Then to Joe it all rushed away, roaring, dying ....'22

Here the silence and the sound are used to heighten the situation and communicate the titanic emotions of McEachern.

Following the murder, Bobbie's feelings are

21 Light in August, p. 253.
22 Ibid., p. 154.
painted as given below:

"Goddamn bastard clodhopper. Bastard you! Son of a bitch you and him too. Putting him and me that never ever saw' .... Joe did not appear to be running at anyone in particular, and his face was quite calm beneath the uplifted chair."

Here, with the help of "quiet calm" and "thundering voice of Bobbie' he has heightened the situation. In "calm beneath' and "uplifted chair' lies the antithetical situation.

When Joe escapes the police custody, the screaming sound of the siren is heard thrice but after his crucifixion the sound of siren gets calm.

Again from the town, deadened a little by the walls, the scream of the siren mounted toward its unbelievable crescendo, passing out of the realm of hearing.

In The Sound and the Fury, the silence and bellowing of Benjy is meaningful. The italicized fragments of his consciousness reveal the loss of Caddy, the symbol of love, as in the lines:

I could hear the clock, and I could hear Caddy standing behind me, and I could hear the roof. It's still raining, Caddy said. I hate rain. I hate everything. And then her head came into my lap and she was crying, holding me, and I began to cry. Then I looked at the fire again and the bright, smooth shapes went again.

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23 Light in August, p. 155.
24 Ibid., p. 350.
25 The Sound and the Fury, p. 57.
Benjy's bellowing is always for some cause, for some protest. Through his bellowing sound and silence, the moral nature of all who come in his contact is revealed. Through him we know that his mother is peevish, Jason cruel, Caddy compassionate, Miss Quentin a bad replica of her mother and Dilsey a kind, benevolent lady. His silence in the Negro church offends 'the whites' and their moral degradation is revealed.

Thus we find that sound and silence help in intensifying the situations, to convey contradictory and symbolic meaning, and to express the invisible reality.

**Mobility and Immobility**

In the works which are primarily concerned with the physical movements such as journeys, pursuits, flights etc., Faulkner uses some words to show mobility or immobility or both to express the internal intensity of feelings, the struggle between the flesh and the soul, stagnant outlook of the people in the South and their resistance to change leading to decay. In *Light in August* we see:

He turned into the road at that slow and ponderous gallop, the two of them, man and beast, leaning a little stiffly
forward as though in some juggernautish simulation of terrific speed though the actual speed itself was absent, as if in that cold and implacable and undeviating conviction of both omnipotence and clairvoyance of which they both partook known destination and speed were not necessary. 26

'Terrific speed' and 'absence of speed' both are brought together to heighten the effect of the situation and communicate to us symbolically the pressing passions of McEachern.

From the conversation between Byron and Hightower we know that Hightower is immobile.

Again Byron looks at the other for a moment. But Hightower's face is merely grave and interested. 'Brown and Christmas', Byron says. Still Hightower's face does not change in expression. 27

Apparently, it looks that he is motionless but the underlying meaning is that Hightower is lost in himself, in his own obsession or he is deeply interested in the speech of Byron. So he does not move. Here, with the help of facial expressions of Hightower, the author tries to convey the inner feelings of Hightower.

In As I lay Dying we find Addie is on her death bed and Dewey Dell is fanning her.

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26 Light in August, pp. 152-153.
27 Ibid., p. 61.
Even the hair at her cheek does not move, even with that girl standing right over her, fanning her with the fan. While we watch she swaps the fan to the other hand without stopping it.

The contrast implies the difference between death and life. Dewey Dell's swift movements support vitality of youth. In *Absalom, Absalom!* The terrified midwife becomes immobile when she sees signs of displeasure on Sutpen's face on his learning that Milly had given birth to a female child. She remains immobile till Sutpen is murdered:

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'She didn't know if she heard the scythe or not because now she found out that she could move, get up, run out of the cabin and into the weeds, running ...'
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The sudden flurry of movement and its contrast with the earlier mobility has the effect of the crashing fall of stupendous figure that shatters the hushed silence.

In the scene in which Henry asks Bon not to think of Judith, his agitation contrasts with Bons:

Bon does not move beneath the gripping hands; he sits motionless, with his faint fixed grimace; his voice is gentler than that first breath in which the pine branches begin to move a little.

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29 *Absalom, Absalom!* p. 236.

30 Ibid., p. 295.
Bon's calmness indicates his determination. In case he fails in his design, he is prepared to meet his death at the hands of his brother.

These instances show that the contrast between mobility and immobility is a significant aspect of Faulkner's technique. Walter J. Slatoff says that, "his treatment of motion reveals other important aspects of his presentation: his tendency to describe things in rather simple, generalized and dramatic terms; his tendency to use sharp and tense antithesis; and his tendency to provide opposed and even contradictory suggestions".  

Tone:

Every writer tries to maintain a particular tone in his literary work which is generally coherent to the theme he picks up or the message he conveys. Faulkner maintains a tone which is very serious and morbid because of the nature of the content of his novels. The suffering and pain caused by human obduracy, lack of judgement, and vanity and selfishness makes him sad. He is aghast that man cannot look at his folly and correct himself. All one had to do is change his attitude and

not to resist the course of life and yet man persists in repeating the mistakes of the past generations out of pride or stubbornness.

Tone is a central device in establishing the quality of Joe's character in *Light in August*. The author has drawn some parallels between Joe Christmas and Jesus Christ. It helps in establishing a particular tone: by contributing to Joe a larger than life stature.

Here, although the author gives the realistic account of Joe's life and even minute possible details, that is, the photographic account of the important events of his life, still he appears to be above a common man, walking along an empty street; But instead of walking, he moves along it with great urgency, accepting the false values. His characteristics are of a possessed person, trying to get rid of his past but he can never be free from his past and cherish hope of any future.

This tone creates great interest in the mind of the reader and, realizing Joe's suffering, instead of treating him as a murderer, he treats him as a possessed person.

In *The Sound and the Fury*, the Holy Easter drama
is played. The major events take place on the Holy Saturday (Benjy), Thursday (Quentin), Good Friday (Jason) and Easter Sunday (Dilsey).

All the three Compson brothers are brought in contrast with Christ and the negative values they have accepted are exposed but through the variation in tone.

In *Absalom, Absalom!* there are a few words which are repeatedly used such as demon, outrage, grim, ruthless, fatality, fury, which help in forming the tone of the novel. Sutpen is a warhero who possesses will-power, courage and spirit but like the Greek mythical Atrius family, the whole family is doomed. However, Sutpen, Bon, Henry rise in the estimation of readers, as they are all possessed persons.

In *As I lay Dying*, Addie is the only character who realizes the cause of her isolation. Even when she punishes her students, her intention is to get rid of her isolation as:

> When the switch fell I could feel it upon my flesh; when it welted and ridged it was my blood that ran, and I would think with each blow of the switch: Now you are aware of me! Now I am something in your secret and selfish life, who have marked your blood with my own for ever and ever.\(^{32}\)

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\(^{32}\) *The Sound and the Fury* & *As I lay Dying*, pp. 461-462.
She has learnt the distinction between meaningful acts and meaningful words. Her isolation is the isolation of a person living in the world of abstractions who tries to overcome it through a concrete action. She arouses the reader's sympathy because of the tone in which her loneliness is described.

Through the variation in tone the author raises the stature of his characters, despite the extremity in their nature, which is generally the cause of their destruction. We love his characters because we identify our weakness with the weakness of those characters.

Stream of Consciousness

In The Sound and the Fury, Faulkner has used the technique of stream of consciousness to probe into the conscience of Benjy who is though thirty three in age yet his mind is developed to a boy of three only. Being in italics it is easily seen as:

I could hear the clock, and I could hear Caddy standing behind me, and I could hear the roof. It's still raining, Caddy said. I hate rain. I hate everything. And then her head came in to my lap and she was crying, holding me, and I began to cry. Then I looked at the fire again
and the bright, smooth shapes went again.
I could hear the clock and the roof and Caddy.\textsuperscript{33}

In the above lines we find that (a) it is a direct quotation from the mind (b) the author has not passed any comment (c) He has not tried to give analysis or summarise his feelings (d) the language of the character is not polished. The language has no punctuation marks. (e) The thoughts are not systematic or not chronologically arranged.

Thus it is a pure example of the modern method of stream of consciousness. In \textit{As I Lay Dying} he has used the same technique throughout the book. The book is divided in 59 chapters varying in size. There are about fifteen characters through whose monologues the action is revealed. However, these monologues differ with the traditional monologues of Dostoevsky and Balzac. Dostoevsky, like most of his predecessors and many modern writers presents only intermittent excerpts from a character's mind. Through these different shades of mind, he tries to paint the feelings of his characters, whereas Faulkner never tries to use these shades as a medium to approach the end, but for him, the speech of the character in a most zigzag manner itself is an end

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{33}The Sound and the Fury, p. 57.}
so he is modern in one respect because he used the modern techniques of writing, whereas on the other side, we find that in the novels in which the stream of consciousness technique is used, there is no action, no story, with no dramatization of any action but in *The Sound and the Fury* as well as *As I lay Dying* the monologues help to weave story and communicate the action. He also dramatizes the action and the situations and as such, he is more akin to the traditional novelists who lay more stress on the development of the story.

Faulkner doesn't appear to be much interested in mere interweaving past and present impressions meaningfully, through conscious and subconscious associations, like James Joyce who always gives complete hypothesis of mind. Most of his characters live past. They have no present so there is no future and as such it is presumed that when his characters live only past with no present, the question of interweaving past and present impressions meaningfully does not arise in his case. Moreover, unlike James Joyce and Virginia Woolf he is less concerned with relativity as a technique than relativity as a moral and intellectual foundation for values because it helped him to know the hidden reality in a better way. Faulkner is not so much interested in Art
as in the constant improvement of human psyche.

In short, he is not, as a matter of fact, interested in sticking to the conventional method of telling a story but in being true to life. His artistic pattern of communication is based upon Bergsonian view of knowing, feeling and willing and is interested in the drama of mind. The structure of his novels is made up of the psychological and metaphysical reality of human existence. He gives us a new artistic vision of change but this all is done as an artist and not as a recorder of events or as a psychologist.

Style

Faulkner, undoubtedly possesses an original and versatile style, despite his occasional carelessness in the construction of his sentences. In Light in August, in the last chapter he gives the humorous account of Lena and Byron, whereas in 19th chapter he has gone to a grim climax in the crucifixion of Joe Christmas, and in the 20th chapter the serious end of Hightower. Both the 19th and the 20th chapters are poetical, whereas the 21st chapter is mere prosaical. He also mixes up comedy and tragedy both, because life is neither a pure comedy
nor a pure tragedy thus he brings his art nearer to the reality and also saves the book from becoming merely a gruesome tale.

His style is very simple and descriptive, as the following lines indicate:

*He did it single-handed, working at night by lantern. I saw him. So I don't reckon that horse cost anybody anything except Jewel. I don't reckon we need worry*. 34

Warren Beck commenting upon his style says "there is nothing unique, however, in Faulkner's use of direct and forceful diction or fine figurative image. What is most individual in his style is its persistent lyrical embroidery and coloring, in extended passages, of the narrative themes". 35

Undoubtedly, he has aesthetic inclination in creating the characters but he has mainly used the colloquial language, with flavour of regionalism, controlled in such a way that it is saved from the dullness. At the same time, it helps him to bring his readers nearer to the reality as in the following lines:

`Den you send um to me', Dilsey said.
`Tell um de good Lawd don't keer whether

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34 The Sound and the Fury & As I Lay Dying, pp. 433-434.

He even uses abusive language and slang words to paint the inner subtleties of his characters, but though he uses colloquial language and often photographic minute details, still the passages carry a dramatic tension, which is superb. It is revealed in the following conversation between Henry Sutpen and Charles Bon:

- But now? You mean you?
- Yes. What else can I do now? I gave him the choice. I have been giving him the choice for four years.
- Think of her. Not of me: of her.
- I have. For four years. Of you and her. Now I am thinking of myself.
- No, Henry says. No. No.
- I Cannot?
- You shall not.
- Who will stop me, Henry?
- No, Henry says. No. No. No. 37

The rigidity and the intention of both is clear, even in such a simple, but most dramatic language.

He lays more stress on the gradual revelation of themes. For example, in Light in August we are told about Lena'a journey to Jefferson and the smoke rising from the house of Joanna Burden in the beginning and gradually we come across Joe and his self crucifixion, well coated with powerful imagination and forceful language. This shows that he prefers to dramatize the

36 The Sound and the Fury, p. 258.
37 Absalom, Absalom! p. 294.
objective reality.

Even though, he has used the technique of stream of consciousness in two of his novels still he does not appear to be much interested in mere hypotheses of mind. The monologues he has used help him to give substantial plots, while revealing the inner subtleties of his characters. He paints the tensions and velocity, like a literary psychologist in such a way that the subconscious of his characters is also revealed, along-with the surface reality and presents us with a good combination of traditional and modern style.

He has used the first person to narrate the story in *The Sound and the Fury*. In *As I lay Dying* there are fifteen characters and 59 monologues are attached to them. Every character gives his own view of the action; had he not given the dramatic touch to the objective reality, it might have appeared sheer anti-intellectual, study of his characters.

Like a dramatist he creates his characters and, then, allows them to act and react as in *Light in August*, where Joe, Joanna and Hightower all play out their own compulsive drive but at the same time conjointly help in the completion of a symbolic act, that is, the sacrifice of a scapegoat. The author remains
completely detached and he passes no comment on the action or reaction of any character.

In short, he makes use of both objective reality and abstract ideas. He has used the modern technique with a poetic vein, that is, he has combined realism and symbolism in each of his novels. His style is realistic in the sense that he has used the modern mythical method while symbolic in the sense that he has used poetical analogies, that is, he has given the visible and the invisible reality both at the same time in each of his novels, and, thus he has contributed a new reformed technique to the art of fiction. What is more significant in his style is that he has effected synthesis between subtleties of modern narrative techniques and the resources of the language employed in the traditional poetics. He has dynamically combined the old and the new, which is a new development in the method of writing fiction.
Conclusion

Critical opinion, especially when it is over-loaded with moral, social, philosophical or political consideration, often takes a writer's works as its starting point and then goes off spinning theories based more on the predilection of the critic than on the works of the writer. This happened to Faulkner also when his novels appeared in late twenties and early thirties. The literary climate of the time was dominated by neo-naturalist and "leftist" ideas. The economic boom, followed by the crash and the emergence of fascism and bolshevism made many a writer and critic focus his attention on the social and political relevance of literature. Any writer who did not pay attention to contemporary issues and indulge in prescriptive or expository writing was considered to be reactionary, retrogressive and even fascist. Faulkner's works appeared to be not only totally irrelevant to the context of those times but also opposed to it. He seemed to be interested in glorifying the planter dominated past of the South, in eulogizing submissiveness on the part of blacks and in depicting his times as degenerate and lack-luster. In short, he was considered to be opposed
Though the critical opinion has changed since then, and Faulkner has become entrenched in the annals of American literature as a significant writer, yet the impression persists that he is unconcerned with the process of change. He appears to be preoccupied with a kind of perennial religious and moral virtues, which were valued in the past but are ignored in modern times making life meaningless. The general opinion seems to agree with Sartre's that future does not seem to exist for Faulkner as he considers the present a dead end. An equally popular view is his novels are myths representing the struggle between the superior world of traditionalists - represented by Sartorises and the inferior world of antitraditionalists -- represented by Snopses.

However, when we apply these axioms to Faulkner's novels, we come across baffling results. For example, there is the perplexed statement by George Marion O'Donnell:

But in Light in August the proportionate dramatic content of the characters is the reverse of the norm set up by the other books, and there is a corollary confusion of the whole scheme of traditional values. The Sartoris characters, like Hightower, are vague or typical;
The last phrase 'although against his will' reveals very clearly that it is difficult to find a place for the theme and characters of *Light in August* within the framework of a theory of conflict between the traditionalists and anti-traditionalists without providing an unsubstantiated and subjective explanation for the novelists' attitude. Moreover, such an interpretation does not account for Faulkner's attitude towards slavery, racial discrimination, treatment of women and miscegenation. He may have felt that given time the South would have solved the problem of slavery and discrimination against the blacks on its own, but he does not in anyway share the Southern values regarding these issues. And if Faulkner were completely indifferent to contemporary issues, he could not have provided a portrait of a storm-trooper, albeit unconsciously, in the character of Percy Grimm or of a fascist in making

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in the character of Hightower. The study of his five major novels undertaken in depth for the purpose of investigating his attitude towards change shows that Faulkner is not at all averse to change nor is he too enamoured of the past. He as a matter of fact, feels that if a community becomes static, it is likely to develop a negative approach to life and decay; but he does not consider all change to be necessarily good. In a static society forced change can lead to further deterioration and corruption. To be effectively useful in the advancement of human civilization, change in material circumstances should be accompanied by change in attitudes and the social and individual values. If this message does not get through easily, it is because of the material out of which Faulkner's novels have been carved. Not with standing the universal appeal of his novels, Faulkner looked at change in the perspective of the South, and the Southern perspective was not only different from that of Europe after the First World War, but also from that of the rest of America.

The two events that had far reaching effects on the American society since the Revolution were the Civil War and the First World War. The Civil War made the American society more cohesive and confirmed the federal
nature of the United States of America once for all. The First World War shook the moral foundation of the Western civilization, of which America considered itself a part. In Europe and America both, the younger generation looked askance at the values it had taken for granted and looked around for a change. In America the problem became a little more complex. The period of war and its immediate aftermath in the twenties was of economic boom, which seemed to impart uncontrollable dynamicity to the entire society. Nearly 50 percent of American population became concentrated in cities giving rise to new social and political tensions. The subsequent depression in the thirties caused large scale frustration and misery and provided an impetus to more radical economic and political movements. It gave way to the New Deal providing a brand new American concept of capitalism with a human face. The main issues in America in the post-World War I era were those of finding solutions to its economic and social problems and its political footings in the changed international scenario. Added to it, in the cultural field, was the soul searching restlessness of repatriates and war veterans, and the impact of Marxian and Freudian ideas.
The South also experienced the shock of World War I, but it was manifested in a different way. As in the North, a great many changes had taken place since the Civil War, the acceleration of change was merely a matter of degree; in the South it brought about an intense shocking realization of the incompleteness of the change that should have taken place in the post-Civil War period. The problem in the South, therefore, was of complete transformation, and major issues were mostly the same as were in the aftermath of Civil War.

The Civil War had been fought on the issue of slavery; but the abolition of slavery was not the only issue behind it. It was indeed a clash of two opposed ways of life. The Southern economy was basically agrarian economy based on slave labour, and the Southern society, like any agrarian society, was smugly conservative and easy going. Life moved at a slow, elegant pace. The major cause of the Civil War was the Southerners' desire to maintain their separate identity and sense of the superiority of their way of life over the industrially and commercially inclined North with a hectic pace of life. As the issue hotted up, the South invented myths to make its way of life look better and more glamorous than the North's way of life. In its
own imagination it became populated with aristocratic, chivalrous and refined gentlemen and refined sensitive and virtuous ladies. The defeat in the Civil War accentuated the tendency for myth making as a kind of compensatory mechanism to overcome the sense of humiliation.

The past of the South was romanticized, it was conceived as an Eden of innocence, whose purity was destroyed by the Northern intruder. In their desire to maintain a semblance of their old life style, the Southerners resisted all change. The North, after the political aim of subduing resistance to the Federal authority was achieved, left the South very much to itself. If anything, the rapaciousness of carpet-baggers only strengthened the feeling of moral superiority in the Southerner and further alienated him from the North. Progress meant to him shameful capitulation to gross material instinct. As a result, the post-World War I era found the South economically backward, with decaying plantations, outmoded attitude towards women, and strong prejudices against the Negroes. The Negro became a scapegoat for all the ills of the South, and while white women were treated as spiritual beings, devoid of natural instincts and any volition of their own, black women were considered mere objects of lust. The insistence
upon keeping the things as they were and self righteousness often led to acts gross injustice and in-human violence on the one hand and hypocrisy on the other. For, inspite of resistance, changes were taking place in and around the South, but even those who recognized the change and took advantage of it for their personal gains chose to go along with the popular prejudice. As a matter of fact, in comparison to such opportunists those who really believed in the past appeared to be more dignified and morally upright. They at least had some principles albeit misconceived.

It is out of this world that Faulkner has drawn the material for his novels. Life in Yoknapatawpha is fairly representative of the pattern of life in northern Mississippi, the region to which Faulkner belonged. There are the old planter families in a state of disintegration, small farmers, poor whites, the small town people of Jefferson and the Negroes. The pace of life is slow and people are more concerned with the problems of their families and surroundings than with the events taking place beyond the boundaries of their country. When anything happens that is likely to affect the pattern of their life and their cherished views, they burst out into a spurt of violence. One thing which is
quite obvious is their preoccupation with the past. *Sartoris* is the only novel that makes a reference to the contemporary situation as it deals with the restlessness of a soldier returning from the war. But in it also, the compulsive drive that forces young *Sartoris* to embrace death knowingly is rooted in an obsession with the past.

Compelled by the nature of the material of his novels, Faulkner looks at change not from the standpoint of post-World War I world but from the standpoint of post-Civil War South. His concern is to find out why the South became stagnant and why changes there went awry. Such an approach involves looking from the past to the present not from the present to the future. And, since Faulkner finds the strangulating hold of the past to be mainly responsible for the ills of the South, his novels mostly deal either with the obsession with the past or its baneful effects.

The story of *The Sound and the Fury* revolves around a planter family unable to free itself of the hangover of the past. Mr. Compson and his wife unable to come to terms with the changes around them watch the disintegration of their family helplessly, one seeking
escape in the fumes of whiskey, the other in self-pity. Of their children, Caddy, the daughter tries to find satisfaction in sexual promiscuity, one of the sons, Quentin, is obsessed with the family honour and not being able to save it, has guilty delusions of incest, the other, Jason, in a kind of retaliationary anger, becomes sordidly materialistic and the third, Benjy, is a castrated imbecile who cannot comprehend the sequence of time. The inability of the family to meet the challenges of time leads to degeneration. Quentin, finding time the source of all trouble tries to stop it by committing suicide. Jason makes a compromise devoid of all moral responsibility because he does not realize that change in material circumstances also requires change in attitudes. His ill treatment of Caddy, who is forced to leave the house, and Caddy's daughter, who finally has to elope with his illgotten fortune, is an indicator that he is not ready to accept new ideas. To compensate himself for the lack of love in his family and sense of humiliation, he becomes villainously selfish, hard-hearted and attached to money.

As I Lay dying is a novel about the imposition of a dead person's (past's) will upon the living (present). The husband and the children of Addie carry her body to
bury at Jefferson, apparently with the intention of honouring her wish, but actually they all go to Jefferson on account of their selfish motives. Anse wants to have a set of dentures and a new wife; Jewel does not want her to be buried away close the Bundrens; Cash feels a kind of loyalty to Jewel and the rest of the family; Vardaman is incapable of understanding fully its import; and Dewey Dell is anxious to get medicine to terminate her pregnancy. The only person who realizes that it is wrong to carry about a stinking corpse is Darl, who failing to stop it, finally breaks down to be confined to a mental asylum by the rest of Bundrens.

Sanctuary is about the miscarriage of justice and lack of humanity in a tradition bound society. One of the central motifs in the novel is the desire for change. Benbow feels that either Jefferson should change or he should go to Europe for a change. He finds the Jefferson society so blinded by its prejudices that it does not hesitate to indulge in deliberate acts of cruelty, perjury and injustice. Benbow's efforts to secure justice for Goodwin and provide shelter to Ruby and her child are put to nought by Narcissa, his witch-hunting sister, Judge Drake, ignoring the requirements of justice to maintain the illusion of his daughter's
delicate temperament and innocence, and a jury predetermined about its decision. The combination of these traditionalist forces encourages the mob to light a human bonfire, which repulses and depresses Benbow so much that he gives up all hope of change either for himself or for Jefferson and slinks back to his old life from which he had tried to escape.

Light in August deals with the prejudices inherited from the past which dehumanize human soul and create a maze of emotions that makes it impossible to get out of the bondage of the past. Joe Christmas is a victim of a community which harbours religious and racial fanaticism, both. The impact of this fanaticism throughout his childhood, and cruelty at the hands of those who should have provided him security and love, leaves him confused about his identity and seething with anger. To assert his self, he commits two murders and is finally himself murdered in a most gruesome manner by a fanatical mob. Joe could have escaped but he is psychologically so trapped that he has to come back to Jefferson again and again because he wants to find a place in the community which had obliterated his identity. Faulkner makes his sympathies obvious by investing Joe with resemblances to Christ, so much so that his lynching
looks like crucifixion. Inspite of being violent, aggressive and individualistic, he is the prey not the predator. The traditional pharisaical morality and racial attitudes of Jefferson community are responsible for its brutalization and Joe's psychopathic behaviour.

The myth of South's chivalric past and innocence gets exploded in *Absalom, Absalom!* Sutpen, as a legendary planter fascinates Quentin. No matter how his story is reconstructed by the various characters certain facts about his life stand out. He, no doubt, possesses enormous energy which enables him to carve a plantation out of wilderness and makes him a dashing figure that dominates his surroundings in war and peace, but his actions and attitudes make him appear as more of the demon that Rosa Coldfield considers him to be than a cultured, morally upright, chivalrous and paternalistic planter. Jefferson society appears in this novel not as a nurturing ground of innocence but a source of corruption. Sutpen loses the innocence that he had acquired as a member of the simple, equitable mountainous community of Northern Virginia as soon as he comes in contact with the Jefferson community. He becomes fired with the desire to dominate others and acquisition of
appurtenances and symbols of this domination becomes his single aim in life. He adopts the Southern racial attitudes to the extent that he can allow incest but not accept miscegenation. His attitude towards women is extremely crude. He treats them as if they were merely breeding animals. His downfall is not so much the result of Civil War as of his own attitudes and refusal to accept the need of any adjustment according to changed circumstances. The fact that the story of Sutpen belongs to the ante-bellum and immediate post-bellum period indicates Faulkner's opinion about the past of the South. His prejudices and attitudes are those of his class and times not a result of the influence of modernity. If Faulkner has made him look so impressive, it is to heighten the tragic impact of his fall.

It is not only the main characters who show the disastrous consequences of the strangulating hold of the past on the present; a wide spectrum of various types shows how the conditioning by the social ambience influences people psychologically. There is Hightower, whose fantasies of past glory, bring him very close to being a typical fascist. Percy Grimm, inspite of being
a priest, overbrims with hate and violence because of racial fanaticism and acts like a Nazi storm-trooper. The dietitian has nothing personal against Joe, but she causes him previous harm because she is afraid of the prudish society in which she lives and fears that Joe might tell others about her sexual escapade. Narcissa, inspite of her affairs with younger men, persecutes Ruby as, for the sake of appearances, she does not want her brother to be associated with such people. There are also people whose characters have been warped because of change without any values. Popeye is a product of such change, while Jason and Snopeses are examples of opportunism.

In contrast to these characters are those characters who have a deep understanding of life and survive change. The reason for their ability to withstand the shock of times lies in their being aware that it is natural for the passage of time to bring about changes and that one should accept them without losing one's sense of values. In Sartoris and Sanctuary, having observed succeeding generations of Sartorises, Aunt Jenny, shows a deep understanding of Sartorises' compulsive drive and Narcissa's behaviour. She realizes very
well that the cause of their frustration is their unnatural attitude on account of their concern with the past values. Dilsey, in *The Sound and the Fury*, is able to bring about some semblance of order and love to the Compson household owing to her simple values and acceptance of change. Just as Quentin's act of destroying the clock is an indication of his rage against time, Dilsey's ability to make out time even with the help of a clock with one hand only is symbolic of her consciousness of the full sequence of time — past, present and future. Still another such positive character is Clytie in *Absalom, Absalom!*, who makes it her mission in life to take care of the succeeding Sutpen generations.

That a prominent place among positive characters is occupied by Negroes and women reveals that Faulkner does not share at all the ante-bellum ideas about Negroes and women. Indeed, the "nigger" to him is merely a figment of the whiteman's imagination, who to sustain his prejudices ascribes to the Negro all sorts of moral and intellectual deficiencies. In reality, the Negro may prove to be morally superior to the whiteman and capable of possessing a better outlook of life. The arbitrariness of the distinction between the whiteman
and the Negro is brought out very clearly in the case of Joe Christmas and Etienne, son of Charles Bon. Joe is considered a Negro because he is assigned the role of Negro by society without anybody being sure about. similarly, Etienne lives like a white boy in New Orleans, but Clytie covers his clothes with a denim jumper while bringing him to Jefferson, and he becomes a black boy. Not only does Faulkner emphasise the arbitrariness of racial discrimination and capability of the Negro to be morally superior, but also uses characters like Dilsey as yardsticks to measure the moral worth of other characters. It is obvious from his works that he feels the need for change not only in the white's attitude towards the blacks, but also in the social status of blacks.

As regards women, Faulkner is definitely against unnatural and artificial determination of their being. To him neither the black woman is an animalic receptacle of man's lust nor the white woman a delicate object of worship. Like men, they can be shrewd, hypocritical, cruel, scheming and loving. Their sex drives are natural expressions of their being, and suppression of these drives does not lead to moral superiority but to
psychological distortions. Ruby Goodwin and Lena Grove both are presented as naturally good women inspite of their having conceived out of wedlock, and Ruby's selling her body in order to find money for Goodwin's defence. The redeeming feature in their case is their love, with sex as a natural expression of it, and their motherhood. When this natural expression of sexual drive is repressed it leads either to provocative and deviant behaviour of Temple Drake, or to sexual hypocrisy as in the case of the dietition and Jessica, or to sudden maniacal sexual activity like that of Joanna Burden. There is hardly any hint of rarified, delicate asexual female, so celebrated in the South, about Faulkner's female character. The two women who seem to believe in the Southern code for ladies -- Mrs. Compson and Rosa Coldfield -- are incurable neurotics. Faulkner appears to be in agreement with Freud that suppression of sexual desire leads to a sense of guilt which can malform individual and social personality. In Caddy's case her washing her mouth with soap is a typical Freudian expression of guilt, however, since she is a naturally loving person not a nymphomaniac, she seems to be much better than rest of the Compsons. Other women who
cannot give expression to their sexual feelings openly for fear of social ridicule, behave socially in a sadistic manner.

In one case, Faulkner allows his character to use sex as a weapon against male dominance. Addie has a brief affair with the priest Whitefield as a kind of retaliation against her villainous husband Anse. The fruit of this affair is Jewel. Addie's fondness for Jewel is her compensation for her loveless life with Anse. Faulkner's heroic portrayal of Jewel and portrayal of Anse as an out and out scoundrel is an expression of sympathy with Addie's act of protest against a loveless marriage. It is obvious that Faulkner does not approve of loveless marriage. He also thinks that marriage becomes loveless because of the attitude of males to whom women, as exemplified by Sutpen's attitude, are not so much objects of adoration as breeders of children. Faulkner would obviously like a change in attitude towards women so that they would be treated as human beings and allowed to fulfil their destiny as women.

The characters' attitude to any of the problems mentioned above should not be confused with the attitudes of the writer. His attitude can be determined
on the basis of the totality of the viewpoint that emerges from his works. If his characters capture the imagination of the reader so much that the reader comes under their spell, it is because of his superb craftsmanship. His novels are not narratives of sequential history, they are works of art conceived in the manner of Greek epics and tragedies. The pivotal have to have dimensions of the protagonists and antagonists of epics and tragedies. Like the classical heroes they inexorably move towards their destiny which is predetermined by their attitude, and Faulkner’s exploitation of myths and symbols and the use of such devices as stream of consciousness and antithesis so involves the reader's thoughts and feelings that the characters' statements seem to be the writer's statement.

However, the point of view that emerges from the novels does not in anyway support the contention that he is a traditionalist in sympathy with the Southern romantic view of the past and opposed to any change. His novels are no doubt myths of the South but in no way Southern myths. They are statements about static societies and the consequences of stagnation. The message is loud and clear that if a society becomes too obsessed
with the past it turns it back to life sustaining processes and becomes degenerative. He considers life to be a forward movement and change an essential aspect of life. But it should not be a blind change, it must be in association with concomitant values. His attitude towards the Negroes, women, sex and religion (most of his priests are deficient in moral and human values) shows that the values he has in mind are not the traditional values, but the general human values which are a part of modern democratic and humanitarian ethos.
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