CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

William Faulkner, the most celebrated American novelist of international fame, was awarded the much coveted Nobel Prize for Literature in 1949. The phenomenal Faulkner has been appreciated for his technical virtuosity, philosophical attitude, humanistic approach, and moral vision. His fiction attracts and fascinates the readers from various countries as he writes about the dilemma, deprivations, complexes, compulsions, faith, pity, and love of a common man. Faulkner believed that mental sickness among the masses started from the moment in history when people discarded moral values. According to him a man differs from an animal only because he possesses the qualities like “gratitude for kindness, fidelity to friendship, chivalry toward women and the capacity to love” (Meriwether 71). He opined that this world can be protected by involving the humanitarians in science and scientists in humanity. Moreover, he was of the view that man will survive because he is tough, and can face calamities, grief, and despair. He also insisted upon man’s responsibility to have an awakened conscience which can differentiate between right and wrong because Man’s immortality depends upon his courage to choose the right path. His concept of truth means all the things that touch heart.

Faulkner believed that a real artist always tries to create something new. He communicates heart to heart with his audience, and suggests the ways to survive in this chaotic world. His creations work like a beckon light and uplift man’s heart. In his Nobel Prize Acceptance Address also Faulkner declared that man will survive eventually “because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and pity and sacrifice and endurance.”

The uniqueness of Faulkner lies in the creation of the unparalleled chronicle of Yoknapatawpha with “imaginative density and…intensity of realization” (Howe 297). This fictional world, modeled upon Lafayette Mississippi, presents the micro view of modern world as his themes, and situations transcend "locality to speak of kinds of people who might be found anywhere, and of motives and tensions which
are shared by all” (Tuck viii). To convey the truth of heart, the devastation of ancient culture, dehumanization of man, and the hollowness of a commercial world, he adopted a wide range of themes. He also did many experiments in narrative technique which made him immortal in the history of literature.

Faulkner belonged to that era of the twentieth century which witnessed the maximum disturbance. Each decade appeared with new spirit and trouble. The first decade had the essence of the old world and the second decade brought the great storm of World War I. The third decade saw the emergence of a new world and the fourth decade brought the World War II which resulted in decay, disintegration, rootlessness, and alienation. The fifth decade was again an effort to create a new world. These turbulent historical events influenced the sensibility of the writers also as most of them participated in wars. Faulkner himself tried to enlist himself in Army Air Corps. Due to these traumatic experiences, the element of romance at once disappeared from the creations of the writers. The other influencing factor of this period was the literature on psychoanalysis. Freud gave a systematic account of mind, and explained the concept of the repression of instincts. He also talked about the balance between pleasure principle and reality principle. Simultaneously, he acquainted the people with the fact, that “most of the individual’s mental processes are unconscious” (Guerin 128). It is interesting to note that in Faulkner's fictional world the presence of the past in the present is emphasized. In addition to it his novels have Biblical references and parallels in abundance which serve as symbols and convey the imbibed meaning. In this connection Richard P. Adams reports that Faulkner was a voracious reader since his teenage, and the effect of the King James Bible and Shakespeare on Faulkner can be seen in his creations. Faulkner was also influenced by Henry James who introduced point of view technique to present objectively “the complexities and ambiguities of life through the exploration of the life of the mind ...” (Mathur 26). Another model before Faulkner was the fiction of James Joyce and he adopted the method in which the events, characterizations, and dialogues of the surface story resemble an underlying myth.

Every creative writer is the product of his circumstances, family atmosphere, society, and cultural inheritance. So a peep in the family background is
required to comprehend the writer's personality. Faulkner was born on September 25, 1897. In his childhood he heard many stories about his great grandfather, William C. Falkner, who came to Mississippi at the young age of fourteen in search of work to help his widowed mother. He started his career as a clerk and after reading law he became a famous Lawyer. During the Civil War (1860) he became the Colonel of the Second Mississippi Regiment. After war he made a sixty mile narrow gauge railroad from Oxford to Tennessee border. He was a writer also. However, in the end he was shot dead by his business partner in 1889. His son, John Falkner, was also a prominent political figure. Murry Falkner (Faulkner’s father) initially earned his livelihood from a livery stable and a hardware store but later he became the manager of the University of Mississippi. Fictional family history of Compsons in The Sound and the Fury resembles Faulkner’s family. He left his school without completing graduation, and remained busy in reading romantic poetry and making paintings which he said “completely satisfied me and filled my inner life” (Howe 13). He was a mystery for the people of Oxford. Phil Stone, an attorney, mentored the young Faulkner by acquainting him with contemporary literary personalities like Conrad Aiken, Robert Frost, Ezra Pound, and Sherwood Anderson” (Connor 5).

After the advent of World War I, like other crazy young men, he also joined the Royal Flying Corps in Toronto though he was rejected by United States Army due to short height of five feet. After the end of war he became an honorary second lieutenant. Then he spent a year at State University and did some courses. He also did some petty jobs to earn his livelihood. Then for a short while he worked as a postmaster at University, but resigned with the words: "I will be damned if I propose to be at the beck and call of every itinerant scoundrel who has two cents to invest in a postage stamp" (Coughlan 47). His friendship with Phil Stone also paved the way for his first published book, Marble Faun. Due to poor response to the book, and boredom in Oxford, Faulkner shifted to New Orleans in 1924. There Sherwood Anderson proved a boon for him as he advised him to utilize his knowledge about the region. So Faulkner “decided to center his attention on the unpleasant truths which most writers ignored” (Witham 322). During his stay at that place his sixteen sketches and several stories were published in the Sunday feature of The Times Picayune. In collaboration with William Spratling he wrote the book, Sherwood Anderson and
Other Creoles (1926). He married his beloved, Estelle Oldham, in 1929. She took divorce from her first husband to marry Faulkner. The couple lost their first child but then they were blessed with a daughter whom they named, Jill.

Faulkner’s first novel, The Soldiers’ Pay (1926), rose from his deepest feelings during war, and presents the postwar destruction, bitterness, and disillusionment. It mirrors the bitter reality that patriotic sacrifice does not count much in materialistic and selfish world. The novelist here uses the multiple-point of view technique which shows different reactions of people clustered around the badly wounded and dying soldier. His second novel, Mosquitoes (1927), is a satire on the intellectuals of New Orleans. This novel concentrates on the theme of the futility of talk: "Talk, talk, the utter heart breaking stupidity of words" (186). This novel shows the seeds of greatness which bloomed fully in The Sound and the Fury (1929). After the publication of these two novels Faulkner realized his failure in earning his livelihood through writing. He went back to Oxford, and joined a power plant where he produced his major novels which made him a world famous novelist. He invented his imaginary Yoknapatawpha while he was writing his third novel, Sartoris (1929). Through the stream of consciousness technique the characters in the novel tell the eighty years family history of Sartoris. Particularly this novel is based on young Bayard’s obsession to die Sartoris’ death. While writing this novel the novelist recognized his artistic talent with the realization “that writing is a mighty fine thing; it enables you to make men stand on their hind legs and cast a long shadow” (Conner 10). Many characters, themes, and situations of various later novels originated from this first county novel. In the same year, the novelist produced a difficult and experimental novel, The Sound and the Fury, which was germinating in his mind since the very beginning of his literary career. This novel is considered a modern novel as it is written in the impressionistic tradition of James, Conrad, Crane, and Joyce. The tradition explains that life does not narrate but makes impressions on man’s brain. In this most famous novel, innovative Faulkner conveys the complete history of Compson family from 1899 to 1945 while proper novel is limited to June 2, 1910 to April 8, 1928. Noel Polk has called it “the quintessential American high modernist text” (1). Here the novelist uses multiple-point of view, stream of consciousness technique, two dimensional characters, disordered chronology,
complex structure, juxtaposition, and variety in register. His fifth novel, *As I Lay Dying* (1930), is a simple novel, but it reflects the writer's surprising virtuosity and unique capability in the handling of multiple-point of view of fifteen characters in fifty nine sections. In this regard Donald Davidson commented that Faulkner’s sensibility is “alive to all the dimensions and possibilities” (Herold 16). This novel also shows selfishness, aggrandizement, obsessions, and stupidity of human beings. The outer journey for the burial of Addie's body is paralleled with the inner journey of their minds which reveals that the tensions among the children are caused by the unsuccessful married life of their parents. Then Faulkner wrote a remarkable and a modern book, *Sanctuary* (1931). This novel presents horrifying situations which show extreme violence, collapse of order, loss of morals, individual futility, and despair in mechanical and inhuman society of the modern wasteland. Here in the place of interior monologues the novelist has used the objective narration “while symbolic language carries the burden of establishing atmosphere and theme” (Swiggart 75). In reality, this novel was written for earning money. With the help of metallic and mechanical images the novelist here presents a decaying society “for whom sex is only lust and human relationships merely amoral engagement” (Conner 18). His next novel, *Light in August* (1932), is circular in content because it opens and closes with Lena Grove's search for her lover. Simultaneously Joe Christmas, a tortured consciousness, is in quest of his identity. In the end, Joe Christmas is killed, and castrated for the murder of Joanna Burden. This novel like *The Sound and the Fury* moves on two levels: the present and the past. The sections dealing with the present, command greater vividness and authority than those which deal with the past. Faulkner's later novels demonstrate decline in his energy. *The Pylon* (1935) is a weak and ineffectual novel. It is a commentary on modern mechanized wasteland of the cities. This novel shows his intimate knowledge of the rootless life of the adventure loving fliers. However, Faulkner's return to Yoknapatawpha County produced another masterpiece, *Absalom, Absalom!* (1935). This novel shows the extreme point of his creative and innovative skill. With continuous forward and backward movement in time the novel appears like a vortex.

Faulkner’s later novels are based on the collection of stories published earlier. *The Unvanquished* (1938) is based on six stories, “Ambuscade” (1862),
“Retreat” (1863), “Raid” (1863), “Riposte in Tertio” (1864), “Vendee” (1864), and “Skirmish at Sartoris” (1865). Earlier these stories were published in Saturday Evening Post and Scribner's Magazine, between 1934 and 1964. The last story, “An Odor of Verbena,” was written specially for this novel. Later novels: The Wild Palms and the Old Man (1939), Go Down Moses (1942), and Knight's Gambit (1949) are also based on earlier published stories. These collections show the degeneration in Faulkner's creative art. After the extinction of aristocratic families, Faulkner started to write about Snopeses, who due to extraordinary shrewdness, immorality, and corruption dominated the South. The Snopes trilogy includes: The Hamlet (1940), The Town (1957), and The Mansion (1959). The Hamlet is based on previously written stories and episodes. The Town is less episodic, and The Mansion is in the form of multiple-narration and omniscient narration by the author. The Hamlet is comic in tone while the tone of other books is serious. After Go Down Moses (1942), Faulkner wrote Intruder in the Dust (1948) which has link with the former novel as Lucas Beauchamp becomes the main character in it. This novel is centered on the white and black relationship. Dorothy Tuck opines that this novel is "Part detective story and part apologia for the South's resistance to any non-southern intervention on behalf of Negro-rights and equality…" (108-109). After a long gap the novelist produced another experimental novel, A Fable, in 1954. This novel is based on the idea of fraternization among the soldiers which was propagated during the World War I by anti-war men like Karl Liebnecht. In the novel the leader of the mutiny is Corporal whom Faulkner presents as twentieth century Christ to convey the bitter reality that if the Messiah will come now to offer, peace, brotherhood, and freedom to this immoral and selfish world, he will be crucified again. This novel was awarded Pulitzer Prize in 1955. The Reivers also won the Pulitzer Prize which was awarded posthumously in 1963. He also got two National Book Awards for his Collected Stories in 1951 and for A Fable in 1955. On August 3, 1987, the United States Postal Service issued a 22 cent postage stamp in his honour.

Faulkner's whole literary career can be divided into three phases. First phase, from 1926 to 1929, is the period of his quest and apprenticeship. Second phase, from 1929 to 1936, is the period of his unique achievement in which his experimental novels: The Sound and the Fury, As I Lay Dying, Absalom, Absalom!, and Light in
August, were published and made him a world famous novelist. In the third phase from 1938 to 1959, he wrote continuously, but he could not touch the pinnacle of his perfection shown in the second phase.

In the very beginning, the Marxists ignored his works. The New critics mainly centered their attentions on poetry while other critics blamed him for obscurity and morbidity because his novels were difficult to understand like “the modernistic works of Joyce, Eliot, Pound, Proust and Woolf…” (Basset 1). American reviewers: Conrad Aiken, Donald Davidson, Lillian Hellman, and Henry Nash Smith viewed that Soldiers’Pay, Mosquitoes, and Sartoris present post-war America, but lack discipline due to experiments. Arnold Bennett in his review in the paper, *Evening Standard*, on 26th June 1930, praised his inexhaustible inventive power, creative imagination, wonderful style of characterization, and skill in dialogue writing. The critic also commented that Faulkner “writes, generally, like an angel. None of the arrived American stars can surpass him in style when he is at his best” (7). Till the publication of *As I Lay Dying* (Oct. 1930), Faulkner had become a well known name in literary world but still he was getting a mixed response. Edith H. Walton in *New York Sun* (November 7, 1931) blamed that the novelist had used his talents on grotesque and insignificant material. On the other hand F. C. Beckwith praised Faulkner for originality and Richard Hughes in “Preface” to the British edition of *The Sound and the Fury*, called him “a novelist to his finger tips.” Thus, his British reception in the mid 1930s opened the doors of recognition and appreciation. Due to his mature style in the novel, *Light in August* (1932), Joseph Warren Beach announced him "one of the greatest literary talents of the day" (84). In the mid 1930s due to his subject matter and moral vision, Faulkner had to face hostile criticism. Harry Hartwick in *The Foreground of Modern Fiction* (1934) commented that Faulkner's fiction and poetry are void of philosophy and reflect the hollowness of neurotic age. After the advent of Freudian criticism, a New York neurologist, Dr. Lawrence Kubie, took examples from the novel, *Sanctuary*, to show relationship between art and neurosis, and the function of impotence and horror in modern fiction. This recognition started the chain of favourable views. Malcolm Cowley called Faulkner an ideal model to follow saying, “He simply was what we vaguely thought of becoming” (157). Ernest Hemingway accepted him as a better writer. John Crowe Ransom called him the most
exciting novelist as he has successfully created atmosphere and characters with new techniques in concise manner. Due to Faulkner's extremely fertile, imaginative, and inventive literary spirit, Thomas Wolfe wrote in Press Time, "He has extensive knowledge of all types of humanity"(248). In 1939 Faulkner got the membership of the National Institute of Arts and Letters. He got recognition in France also when in 1931 Maurice Coridrean opened the new vistas of French translations of Faulkner's novels and stories. French critics were fascinated by his situations and characters. In 1939 Jean-Paul Sartre reviewed his novel, The Sound and the Fury, and called him a "despairing existentialist using his remarkable ability to dramatize man's suffocation in a decaying world." German critics also praised Faulkner although German translations of his novels appeared after 1950. In addition to it the articles of O' Donnell, Aiken, Warren Beck, and Joseph Warren Beach established him as an accomplished American novelist. A young poet, Delmore Schwartz, compared Faulkner's inventive imagination with Shakespeare's. By 1940 Faulkner's stories started to appear in academic courses. Then for two years from 1942 to 1944 interest in his work started to decline due to negative remarks of critics. In 1945 Malcolm Cowley started a series of articles and wrote an introduction for Portable Faulkner to remove the misunderstanding and misconceptions of the readers. He acquainted the readers with Faulkner’s mental condition saying that in 1918 when the novelist came back from war he was not ready to accept the post-war world, and he was depressed to see the decline of the South.

Malcolm Cowley in his “Introduction” in The Portable Faulkner (1946) has claimed that the pattern of his fiction is based on stories heard in his childhood, but he transformed the material by adding emotions, passions, thoughts, feelings, ideologies, and conceptions. Consequently, his characters look like real human beings. The aged characters represent the old South while the young ones are shown affected by the loss of moral values in post-war world, and increasing commercialization. He also opined that in second reading a reader realizes that his many characters and incidents have a double meaning and serve as symbols. His novels possess the quality of “being lived, absorbed, remembered rather than merely observed” (xxv). Moreover, his legend of Southern history mirrors the universal dilemma and man’s frantic steeplechase towards nothing. In the book Malcolm
Cowley’s “Editorial Note” before every story acquaints the readers with the main incidents, and guides a reader in understanding the complicated and complex narration due to disrupted chronology, gaps, and over lapping of past over present. Thus, Malcolm Cowley contributed a lot in bringing Faulkner back in 1946 and Random House again printed his many novels.

With the end of the war a new generation of critics, reared during depression, appeared with different standards, attitudes, and ways to observe the history, art, and culture of the world. These critics accepted modern literature and recognized Faulkner's works as a single entity though there was a common feeling that Faulkner's difficult style shadows the virtues of his imagination. Robert Penn Warren published an article on Faulkner and praised his “books which for range of effect, philosophical weight, originality of style, variety of characterization, humor, and tragic intensity are without equal in our time and country” (Basset 29). He accepted that sometimes the tragic intensity in his works seems emotionalism, and his philosophical statements show his confusion while the technical experiments increase complications. But still these defects are the proofs of his innovations in different narrative techniques.

George Shell in The Shapers of American Fiction (1947) has opined, that Faulkner was a very talented novelist but he had opted for a difficult style. Vincent Hopper, in “Faulkner's Paradise Lost” published in Virginia Quarterly Review (1947), called him “a bitter but romantic puritan, rebelling against man's animal nature.” In 1948 Intruder in the Dust was welcomed by the readers and was made into a movie next year. On November 23, 1949 he was made the member of American Academy of Arts and Letters. Nobel Prize in 1950 was an acclaim of his international fame. Since then hundreds of articles, several doctoral dissertations, and books have been published on his works.

Irving Howe's book, William Faulkner: A Critical Study (1952), presents the thematic analysis in two parts titled as “William Faulkner: His World and His Work”, and “An Achievement Considered”. Regarding the immortality of characters he says, that no novelist since Henry James has created such living characters who break the boundaries of novels and live in the memories of readers forever. The writer also praises Faulkner’s “dramatic conflict”, “persuasive
characterization”, “fluidity of narrative”, and “the inner logic of the work” (11). He comments that even those critics who have given negative remarks and condemned the violence in his fiction were astonished by “the amplitude, vitality, and high coloring of the figures that move across the Yoknapatawpha landscape” (4). He suggests that Yoknapatawpha tale should be read as a chronicle which narrating the rise and fall of clans becomes a moral fable. The history given in his book facilitates a reader in knowing Southern tradition, Faulkner’s obsession with irretrievable past, and his “own intolerable acute awareness” (27) of guilt. Another introductory book, The Novels of William Faulkner (1959), by Olga Vickery enhances readers’ comprehension as he has given the introduction of Faulkner’s prime themes and techniques in a very simple manner.

The book, Faulkner in the University, Class Conferences at the University of Virginia (1957-59), edited by Frederick L. Gwynn and Joseph, throws light on Faulkner’s motive behind his literary creations, authentic versions of some confusing statements, and interesting answers to various queries. By reading this book every reader can know the real artist hidden behind the bulk of his creations.

Peter Swiggart in his book, The Art of Faulkner’s Novels (1963), presents the study of Faulkner’s narrative techniques, stylized characterization, social mythology, contrast between rational and natural forces. Then he gives detailed analysis of four novels: The Sound and the Fury, As I Lay Dying, Absalom, Absalom!, and Light in August. Generally, Faulkner is recognized as a twentieth century novelist because of his innovations in technique, but Peter Swiggart calls him “a romancer” and associates him with Hawthorne and Melville because his stylized characterization expresses moral and social concerns. He also claims that in Faulkner’s fiction three aspects: “Southern History and Culture”, “Psychology of Characterization”, and “Technical Mastery” are of utmost importance. He concludes, “Faulkner’s private narrative is a vehicle for social and moral commentary” (9). Moreover, some stylized characters and minor characters seem to have a permanent place in his mythological world as they appear again and again. The critic also observes that the author has shown the moral corruption of Southern aristocracy, and the exploitation of poor Whites and Negroes. The inward degeneration led to their total destruction and extinction.
The critic also observes that the writer has necessary information indirectly by the content of character’s thoughts, physical details, and stylistic suggestion. He got success in involving readers, and creating psychological realism. Thus, Peter Swiggart’s keen observation provides an elementary knowledge of Faulkner’s complex technique.

Cleanth Brooks in his book, *William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country (1963)*, introduces the writer’s mythic world in a very simplified manner for which he has rejected the chronological order of the publication dates and years of his novels. To explore Faulkner’s imaginative country, Brooks developed his new order which is beneficial for the readers. In his first chapter he concentrates on the provincialism in Faulkner, and compares his world with Thomas Hardy’s Wessex, Robert Frost’s Northern New England, and William Butler Yeats’ Ireland. He also observes that Faulkner’s mystic world is based on Mississippi and South America, but his prime concern is human values. In spite of that his novels are works of art not ‘moral treatises.’ He also observes that Faulkner’s novels mostly project the lives of the “plain folk who were neither rich nor poor” (13). The writer calls him “a Nature Poet” also because natural sceneries are pervasive in his works particularly the sensual description of different seasons.

Lawrence Thompson in his book, *William Faulkner: An Introduction and Interpretation (1963)*, writes that Faulkner’s literary career from 1926 to 1962 produced fifty poems, ninety short stories, seventeen novels, and a three act drama in which his poetic genius got expression. Childhood memories and the tales heard from his Negro servants proved an infinite source of his creations. His works also encompassed post-war anguish, depression, ennui along with “the predatory injustices and inhumanities of Reconstruction era” (7). Thompson also finds that to expose the unconscious motives behind the abnormal behaviour, the novelist shifts from physical setting to interior life. These exposures of the inner recesses of character’s mind differ from traditional interior monologues as their intimate thoughts are neither spoken nor heard. In fact, the novelist himself encourages the reader to play “the collaborative game of possibilities” (20). Simultaneously, heavy use of analogies, myths, metaphors, and Christian symbols
in conventional narration enriches his language. The writer also gives the introduction and interpretation of eight novels, so that the readers should not get lost in the labyrinths of Faulknerian techniques. About the inclusion of Ben’s chapter in the beginning of *The Sound and the Fury*, the critic says that Ben’s version not only gives fragmentary impressionistic outline of the story, but it also justifies the first meaning of the title “tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury” (30). Regarding *Absalom, Absalom!* Thompson points out that four plots are interwoven “to make a unified whole” (53). In the study of *The Light in August*, the writer observes the structural antithesis between the tragic predicament of Reverend Gail Hightower, identity crisis of Joe Christmas, and Lena’s calm and quiet quest for the father of her unborn child. The critic attracts the attention of readers towards self sacrifice of Nancy Mannigoe in *The Reivers* which is similar to the self sacrifice of Jesus. This remarkable study also shows the synthesis between form and content in Faulkner’s famous novels.

Michael Millgate in her study, *The Achievement of William Faulkner* (1966), presents the critical review of his novels and short stories. In her discussion she has included the detailed account of the circumstances in which they were written. She observes that Mahon in *The Soldiers’Pay* represents the intolerable, fearful, and bitterness of war which are in contrast to the romantic fantasies of Jones. According to her the novel, *Mosquitoes*, is “Faulkner’s verdict on the literary life of New Orleans” (68) and *Sartoris* is a typical Southern novel which very explicitly shows the presence of the past and the palpability of the unseen. *The Sound and the Fury* looks like a series of the photographs of Caddy focused from different angles. The narrating style of the novel, *As I Lay Dying*, presents the “The problems of the elusiveness of truth, the subjectivity of what individuals call fact…” (106). Michael Millgate concludes her intellectual discussion by saying that the greatness of Faulkner can be estimated only if we study his novels in the context of the total western tradition because “The solidity of Faulkner’s provinciality provide the unshakable foundation for his immensely ambitious exploration of the fundamental human themes with which he is always primarily concerned,…” (292).

Michael H. Cowan, the editor of *Twentieth Century Interpretations of*
*The Sound and the Fury (1968)*, tells that this novel was published only two weeks before Wall Street stock market crash which was the beginning of the worst depression in American history. Jason Compson’s loses in cotton speculation are related to this unprecedented economic blow. Carvel Collins in his essay, “Christian and Freudian Structures,” presents the Christian and Freudian parallels in Faulkner’s most famous novel, *The Sound and the Fury*. He observes that three sections of the novel are based on Easter Sunday. Quentin’s monologue “contains the element of Christ’s experience on holy Thursday” (115). The novelist has presented the conversation of tortured Quentin with his father which reminds Christ’s calling upon His father. Like Christ he is captured by a mob and is taken before the magistrate. The writer also mentions that Jesus was called Jason by the Jews. Christ died at three o’clock and Jason in the novel is also finished commercially by his Jewish brokers in cotton speculation at three. The third brother, Benjy, is also compared with Christ in the fourth section. Miss Quentin’s empty room and her discarded clothes are compared with empty tomb of Christ and his grave clothes found on the Easter Sunday. Carvel Collins also finds out Freudian tones in the novel as Benjamin is like “Id,” Quentin “ego,” and Jason “super ego.”

Richard P. Adams in his book, *Faulkner: Myth and Motion* (1968), explains the aim and success of the writer by concentrating on selected novels and short stories in chronological order. In his first chapter, “Apprenticeship,” he talks about Faulkner’s various experiments in his first three novels. In the second chapter, “Tools: Structure,” he explains the myths which are used as structural devices in *Sanctuary, As I Lay Dying, Light in August*, and *Pylon*. The critic also talks about “style, rhetoric and imagery in relation to Faulkner’s intentions and structural techniques, chiefly in *The Wild Palms* and *The Hamlet*” (viii). He also comments upon the distinction between the moral purpose and the technical use of moral values. Faulkner believed that morality and positive attitudes are essential for existence, and “It is the moral duty of the writer to help man to prevail by compressing the energy of life in his work so that others can release and use it even after the writer’s personal life is done” (132).

*Interpretations of The Sound and the Fury (1968)*, edited by Michel M.
Cowen, is a collection of Faulkner’s interviews, discussions, and ideas. In his interviews in Japan, Faulkner accepted that he had motherly tenderness for this particular novel, and it caused him the most anguish during the re-working and re-writing period of five years. In his interviews with Jean Stein in 1956, Faulkner claimed that Dilsey was his favourite character because of her sincerity, honesty, generosity, motherly affection, and loving nature. Evelyn Scott opines that The Sound and the Fury is an important contribution to the literature of fiction and presents the story of the fall of a house, the collapse of a provincial aristocracy in a final debacle of insanity, recklessness, psychological perversion” (26). Maurice Coindreau views that the whole novel vibrates with sound and fury which signifies nothing. Perrin Lowrey in his essay, “Concepts of Time in The Sound and the Fury”, comments that this novel is the combination of two actions occurring in different time spans and covers thirty years family history of Compsons in three days. He also talks about the arrangement of the four sections, disrupted time sequence, and the cyclical progression.

Joan M. Serafin in his study, Faulkner’s Use of Classics (1969), says that by using classical material the writer has given his fictional world a universal dimension. To convey his vision he has incorporated classical imagery, quotations, rhetoric, symbols, myths, and structures. According to Faulkner the South’s condition was analogous to the disintegration of the ancient classical world. He also believed that White man’s exploitation of land and Negroes resulted in the doom of South. The critic observes that many of Faulkner’s characters have the knowledge of Classics, and he frequently uses the names like Virgil, Horace, Homer, and Jason. Moreover, some names appear with some changes as Cassius becomes Cash and Virgil becomes Versh. Jason Compson of The Sound and the Fury pursues money as mythic Jason sought Golden Fleece. Fairchild in Mosquitoes reads poetry aloud from “Sunlight” and the other poem is “Hermaphroditus.” The writer has used classic quotations also. For example Virgil’s Per ardua and astra (“through difficulties to the stars”) has been used twice in The Soldiers’ Pay. In The Sound and the Fury Mr. Compson uses a Latin phrase: ‘Et ego in Arcadia’ which means nostalgia for an ideal state totally removed from reality. Carvel Collins opines that the title As I Lay Dying is taken
from the book XI of *The Odyssey* and both the books are based on the lack of love in family which leads to destruction. Classical epithets appear in abundance in Faulkner’s work. Thus, Serafin has given a long list of classical names, myths, characters, phrases, quotation which have been used by Faulkner. This critical book enhances the knowledge and makes it easy for a reader to follow the writer’s difficult and chaotic style.

*William Faulkner: Four Decades of Criticism*, edited by Linda Welshimer Wagner, appeared in 1973. This anthology includes the essays based on thematic and technical analysis. In thematic criticism, essays are concentrated on Faulkner’s poetry, literary reading, humour, mythology, and perception of love. His vision of good and evil is also explained by taking examples from his famous novels. To view the technical virtuosity she has chosen the essays on Faulkner’s apprenticeship, style, point of view technique, and form of his novels. She acclaims that nowadays Faulkner is regarded as the most appreciated American novelist.

Joanne V. Creighton in his book, *William Faulkner’s Craft of Revision* (1977), presents his comments on his style of converting short stories in to novels. After comparing the earlier and latter versions he has recorded the textual changes and reasons behind them. The critic also comments upon the reappearance of many characters in different novels. For example Flem and Eula Varner appear in *The Hamlet, The Town, and The Mansion*. Du Pre, Mrs. Genevieve (Miss Jenny) appears in *Sartoris, Sanctuary, The Unvanquished, The Town, The Mansion*, and “There Was a Queen”.

*The Cambridge Companion to William Faulkner* (1995), edited by Weinstein, is a collection of many of the best Faulknerian writings in 1990s which highlight the significance of Faulkner’s work. The purpose of the book is to make the writer accessible to the readers by enhancing their intellectual enrichment. Richard C. Moreland calls Faulkner a ‘Modernist’ and writes that Faulkner’s works present realities indirectly, and through the medium of past his works convey solid message. Telling the difference between the realist literature and modernist literature, Moreland writes that the realist literature aims at the representation of reality, but Faulkner’s fiction presents the criticism of the contemporary society, rural sensibility, and the mentality of the people who adopt
deafness in their defense and ignore the apparent change. Moreland claims that Faulkner should be called a ‘Modernist’. To prove his statement he quotes the example of Joe Christmas whose abnormal behaviour is explained by a peep into his past. The novelist emphasizes that past belief may be dead, but it retains its haunting power. His technique involves reader’s concentration and keeps him engaged in the same context “in which characters’ narrators, readers, writers, teachers, and students are already inevitably and even movingly engaged…” (Weinstein 25).

Daniel J. Singal in his critical study, William Faulkner: The Making of a Modernist (1997), observes that the earliest works of Faulkner show the Victorian and post Victorian culture. But the works belonging to the middle years of his career keeps him in the line of twentieth century Modernist. He was “a writer caught in the midst of a momentous transition between two major historical cultures…” (2) because he was born in Victorian culture and became a ‘Modernist’ by his extensive reading.

Michel Gresset in his study, Fascination: Faulkner’s Fiction 1919-1936(1989), has observed that Faulkner had to struggle hard to become a ‘Modernist’ because Victorian morals “had become a basic, ineradicable component of his being” (3). Andre Bleikasten in his essay, “Faulkner from a European Perspective”, states that Faulkner’s Southern spirit has always remained the central point of American Criticism like Joyce’s Irishness. His literary ancestors were Poe, Hawthorne, Melville, Twain, and Sherwood Anderson. He has followed and adapted the traditional Southern ways of narration. Some critics call him a ‘Provincialist’, but the excellence of his creations keep him in the line of great European novelists. His novels: The Sound and the Fury, As I Lay Dying, Sanctuary, Light in August, Absalom, Absalom!, and The Wild Palms are considered modern classics. Bleikasten also acclaims that after World War II, educated French Public knew that there were only five giants of American fiction: Faulkner, Dos Passos, Hemingway, Steinbeck, and Caldwell. Faulkner is also considered one of the twelve major novelists of the Western World. He also observes that all the major novelists of twentieth century were obsessed with tradition though they did many experiments in narrative technique. The Modernist
attitude is the common factor of these novelists as in order to make their characters real they have used stream of consciousness technique, actual duration, and present experience. The focus of attention shifts from the common ground of a shared concept of reality to manifold shades of experience. The critic opines that for Faulkner interior monologue was “a mimetic device meant to capture as truthfully as possible the uncontrolled flow of half articulate mental processes” (Weinstein 82).

Patrick O’ Donnell in his essay, “Faulkner and Postmodernism”, on the basis of Go Down Moses attaches Faulkner with Postmodernism. He cites the example of Sutpen who wants to possess the land eternally by having a successor from a wife belonging to a respected family, but in contrast to it Ike Mc Caslin in Go Down Moses leaves the legal possession of the land and his big house. He also gives freedom to his slaves. Donnell concludes his essay by stating that Postmodernism in this novel is the outcome of Faulkner’s revisionary capacities and his ability to scrutinize and question the basic elements of the modern world.

Myra Jehlen in her book, Class and Character in Faulkner’s Fiction (1976), points out that the reigning theme in Faulkner’s fiction is the conflict between “white agrarian society” and “working class peasantry”. Ramon Saldivar in his essay, “Looking for a Master Plan: Faulkner, Paredes, and the Colonial and Postcolonial Subject”, observes that in Absalom, Absalom! the novelist talks about its contemporary social ideologies which show his concern with the issues of colonialism and post colonialism that began to appear in American, Latin American, and European literature of the immediate pre-World War II years.

John Matthews in his essay, “Faulkner and the Culture Industry”, tells that due to his marriage with divorced Estelle Oldham, he gained two step children in 1929. His own daughter was born in 1933. His father died in 1932 and brother in 1935. Thus, Faulkner’s financial burden multiplied five times. In 1948 he sold film rights of Intruder in the Dust for $50,000 to MGM. Horkheimer and Adorno observed that technology itself is responsible for the deplorable changes in mass culture. Rationale of technology is the rationale of domination only. Culture industry snatches the art’s capacity to resist the social order due to economic pressure.
Cheryl Lester in his essay, “The Great Migration”, expresses his surprise at the vivid criticism of Capitalism’s myth of progress, and the exploitation of resources and human beings for monetary gain. The description of industrial and commercial ruins given in *The Light in August* is a reality in all the countries affected by Capitalism. In *The Sound and the Fury*, the dilapidating body of Dilsey symbolizes the deterioration of South which was shifting from agrarian to commercialization. Moreover, expansion of industry, shortage of labor, and hope of better life in North America initiated the migration of black Southerners in 1916 and continued up to 1960. This black migration to cities, urbanization of towns, and advent of proletarian culture changed the socio-economic scenario throughout the nation. Caddy’s illegitimate daughter, Miss Quentin, also runs away to the North with Jason’s black money like a black migrant. Thus, Faulkner has explored the Southern racialism and the opposition of white Southerners to rapidly coming changes.

P.A. Mathew opines that today man is running inexhaustibly in the blind race of earning more and more. The Christian virtues of faith, love, hope, charity, and endurance have become insignificant and irrelevant. But Faulkner was reared in the Southern Christian tradition, and wrote about man’s fall and concludes that man’s redemption is possible only through sacrifice like Christ. Mathew writes that his novels deal with the agonizing struggle of man to acquaint themselves with ultimate reality, and to get some vision of God. His themes are sin, suffering, love, and redemption which are primarily the themes of the Bible. His novels directly convey that there is still hope for redemption through love, compassion, and faith in God. The novelist realized that man was standing at the crossroads where the only alternative was either survival or annihilation. His fiction describes how the modern society, devoid of natural feelings and capacity to love, dehumanizes man. The researcher also draws the attention of his readers towards the similarity between Christ and Benjy. Christ was crucified at the age of thirty three and Benjy’s castration is also done at the same age. He also serves as a symbol of modern Christ who is impotent to save mankind. Dilsey is the symbol of the humanistic values like selfless service, sacrifice, and endurance. So the researcher concludes that through the Christian symbols Faulkner tells the world that the redeeming love of God, represented by Christ, is the need of the hour.
George Marion O’Donnell in his essay, “Faulkner’s Mythology”, calls Faulkner a ‘Moralist’ who was living in the South where modern culture was effacing the traditional values, principles, morals, and culture. The Sartoris in Faulkner’s fiction represent the morality and humanity while the Snopeses represent immorality and exploitation. In fact, the conflict between Sartoris and Snopes is due to the difference between human instincts and animal instincts in human beings. This difference is similar to the difference between morality of a traditional man and corruption of a modern man. The Snopes used Sartoris for their own advantage and weakened them internally. Bayard Sartoris tries to find out the meaning of his life in meaningless violence which leads to his destruction. In Soldiers’ Pay, old clergyman represents impotent tradition whereas Cecily Saunders represents new Jazz Era. In The Sound and the Fury, Quentin Compson, a symbol of tradition, seeks refuge in suicide while Mr. Compson takes the help of wine and his philosophy. Mrs. Compson keeps herself buried in a camphor soaked handkerchief. She believes in the mere show-off of her ethics and morality but in reality she ignores all her motherly obligations and duties. Jason Compson is a selfish, heartless, and immoral modern man who cheats everyone for money. Pylon presents the effect of machinery upon human beings.

According to Robert Penn Warren, Faulkner gives us the land and the people along with their history. In the book, William Faulkner: Selected Essays (1958), he says that this legend of South presents the plight of a modern man who suffers due to the lack of discipline, empathy, and truth. Exploitation of human beings and violation of nature are original sins from which redemption can be achieved through love, and right attitude towards nature and man. Faulkner’s fiction shows, that “love is the opposite of the lust for power over nature or over other men . . . Mere exploitation without love is always avenged because the attitude which commits the crime in itself leads to its own punishment, so that man finally punishes himself” (Wagner 103).

Lawrence Edward Bowling in his essay, “William Faulkner: The Importance of Love” also states that Faulkner’s significant writings deal with the universal subject i.e. the importance of love. According to the romantic tradition, love means romantic courtship, but Faulkner’s definition of love means pity, compassion,
sacrifice, faith, patience, and endurance. He believed: “the greatest love is based not upon sensation but upon the spiritual affinity between man and nature, between man and his fellow man, and among the members of a family” (Wagner 110). He highlights the absolute necessity of love within the family group because disintegration leads to the destruction of individuals, families, and communities. *Absalom, Absalom!* and *The Sound and the Fury* are the exponents of this philosophy. Eula in *The Town* kills herself because of the lack of love. The novelist explicitly stresses upon the need of love, honour, pity, pride, compassion, and sacrifice in his Stockholm Address. Many critics and commentators deny the resemblance between his principles and literary practice, but Lawrence Edward Bowling asserts that Faulkner’s chief novels are the various expressions of a single idea: the need of love.

Richard C. Moreland in his essay, “Faulkner and Modernism”, views that Faulkner’s works represent some realities indirectly, and he uses history as a transparent medium to give a solid message. For that he narrates the story of the defeat, poverty, and disillusionment of white Southerners. The critic also points out that in the description of Yoknapatawpha county reality and myth are inextricably interwoven. Faulkner’s stunning imaginative capability has created immortal creations.

Faulkner’s boyhood friend, Cullen, asserts that Faulkner has created Yoknapatawpha county from “the cloth of Lafayette country” (69) and he can recognize many places and persons in his stories and novels. His novels reveal Southern history from the time of the Chickasaw Indians to the present Northern Mississippi, but still Van O’Conner in his essay, “Rhetoric in Southern Writing: Faulkner”, opines that Yoknapatawpha County and its people should be considered as a little self-contained world of imagination. G.T. Buckley in his essay, “Is Oxford the Original of Jefferson in William Faulkner’s Novels?” declares that “Jefferson is not Oxford” (Stone 448).

Calvin S. Brown in his essay, “Faulkner’s Geography and Topography,” mentions that Yoknapatawpha County is an “offhand version of Lafayette County of Faulkner’s boyhood”(Stone 653). In his imagination he thinks that his characters are moving in the same streets and places. In *The Sound and the Fury*, Dilsey goes to a
church to listen the Easter sermon. The description is similar to the church situated near the hilltop in Lafayette. In the novel *Light in August*, Joe runs down a street and jumps in a ditch which is similar to the ditch existing in Oxford. University Campus shown in the same novel and *Sanctuary* is the similar to the university in which the writer worked for some time. Robert Penn Warren also believes that the novelist exclusively deals with the Southern scene, but still Faulkner’s legend is not merely a legend of the South rather it is a record of the general plight of human beings, and presents the problems of the modern world. In fact, today “an individual has lost his relation to society, the world of the power state in which man is a cipher. It is a world in which man is the victim of abstraction and mechanism…” (Wagner 99).

Ralph Ellison has appreciated that Faulkner continuously raised the social issues like race and democracy while Hemingway evaded such issues and concentrated on experimentation and technique. Cleanth Brook in the “Introduction” of the book of Sally R. Page comments that Faulkner had a traditional outlook as he belonged to an old fashioned society. His fiction reflects his immense interest in women although he can appreciate only white haired matriarchs, and sympathetically portrays the girls below puberty age. He has shown that women are closer to Nature, so they are more realistic and practical than males. Faulkner dives deep in their conscious and background to reason out their abnormal behaviour. The critic also points out towards Faulkner’s respectful attitude towards women. Moreover, Faulkner projects that running after idealism results in isolation, death, and decay, but invincible acceptance of fate helps a man in surviving.

Sally R. Page in her study, *The Faulkner’s Women: Characterization and Meaning*, appreciates the writer’s imaginative wealth due to which he has created many lifelike characters who have depth and intense emotions. She contradicts the views of Maxwell Geismar, Leslie, Fiedler, and Irving Howe that Faulkner has presented women merely as forces of evil and destruction. In the support of her plea she states that the novelist has created kind-hearted, co-operative, intelligent, and constructive women also. She also opposes the views of David Miller who categorize women characters in two or three types by saying that Faulkner’s women are “too original to be regarded as replicas of other characters or of some stereotyped view of women” (XXV). Uniqueness of his
women characters comes to light when they are viewed in the light of form and meaning. In his major novels his realistic characters have been raised to symbolic and mythic level for which he has done various adaptations in the traditional techniques. Faulkner’s novels reflect his deep knowledge of the complex human nature, and his expertly depiction is successful in arousing sympathy even for his abnormal characters, defaulters, and criminals. She also observes that in Snopes Trilogy, the novelist has presented a contrast between life nourishing principle and the life destructive male principle. The intelligent observations of Page highlights various aspects of Faulkner’s fictional feminine world along with their place in society, and their assigned role which is generally used as measuring rod for their success and capability. However, the critic has ignored the individual traits and individuality of female characters as she has put more emphasis on their given roles. She has drawn a clear demarcation between the roles of males and females. Addie has been called mixture of masculine and feminine traits. Linda Snopes, Judith Sutpen, and Drusilla Hawks are forced to play masculine role due to circumstances and she writes, “That their femininity is permanently injured is signified by their alienation from the feminine role” (179).

David Williams in “The Prologue” of his study, *Faulkner’s Women: The Myth and Muse*, quotes the view of Walter F. Otto that no human mind can become creative till it is touched by Divine. He claimed that a woman is “the living monument of the presence of deity…” (xiv). Delores E. Brien in *William Faulkner and Myth of Women*, observes that for some male characters in Faulkner’s fiction “women are not human beings like themselves, but avatars of ambiguous, supernatural forces” (133). Criticizing this view Williams opines that this myth of the feminine does not consider woman as a person and only perpetuates patriarchal system. He also talks about the bankruptcy of Christian civilization. His male victims themselves expose their roots of cruelty. The critic refers to Faulkner’s Christian background and Christianity which is a decisive force. He claims that Caddy resembles Arician Dianna and Egyptian Iris, whose lover, Osiris, was also her brother. Mrs. Compson is anti-Madonna while Dilsey is compared with Marry sitting with Benjy in her lap. The critic also observes that the myth of river Styx is used in *As I Lay Dying*. 
Since the dawn of Faulkner’s literary career his works have attracted the attention of many critics which multiplied by hundreds after the conferring of the Nobel Prize on him. Numerous modern critics and researchers have studied Faulkner’s fiction from different angles. Yearly conference on Faulkner’s works is a regular phenomenon. So Arthur F. Kinney claims, that “critical work on Faulkner has exceeded that of any other author in English save Shakespeare” (Singal 1). So looking at the space and scope of this project, limited works have been selected to project the existing criticism on Faulkner’s fiction. Introductory books written by Irving Howe, Olga Vickery, Lowerence Thompson, Michel M. Cowen, Joan M. Serafin, Philip M. Weinstein, Micheal Millgate, Edmund L. Volpe, S.B. Mathur, Carvel Collins, and Cleanth Brooks talk about Faulkner’s family background, themes, and innovations in technique. Cleanth Brooks tells the history of Yoknapatawpha county according to the sequence of events. Peter Swiggart calls Faulkner, ‘A Romancer’ and George Marrion O’ Donnell calls him ‘A Traditional Moralist’. Cleanth Brook for his love of nature considers him a ‘Nature Poet’. At the same time Andre Bleikasten, Richard C. Moorland, and Cheryl Lester keep him in the category of Modernists while Patrick O’ Donnell keeps him in the category of Post Modernists. A search for Christian themes has been conducted by P. A. Mathews in Punjab University. Richard P. Adams has commented upon the theme of sin in Faulkner’s fiction. Joan M. Serfin has concentrated his study on Faulkner’s use of classics in his fiction while Myra Jehlen talks about class conflict. Generally, Faulkner’s novels are considered male dominated and full of violence, but an attentive reading acquaints a reader with an astonishing reality that Faulkner’s female characters are more dominating, impressive, and lifelike. They come out of the leaves of the novels and live in the memory of readers forever.

However, no researcher has concentrated on the diversity, and individuality of Faulkner’s numerous female characters. After William Shakespeare perhaps only Faulkner has given such a wide range, eclectic variety, and exceptional originality in the portrayal of female characters in his fiction. He has tried to illuminate the remote, hidden, and darkest corners of female psyche. The present study, “Images of Woman in William Faulkner’s Fiction”, examines the astonishing variety, distinct individuality, and realistic creation of the images of woman in Faulkner’s fictional county.
Image word in the thirteenth century originated either from Anglo-French word ‘imagene’ or from Latin word ‘imago’. It was also similar to Latin word ‘imitari’. In the eleventh century it was used as ‘imaginem’ which meant copy, statue, picture, idea, and appearance. In fact, ‘imaginem’ also stemmed from the word ‘imitari’ which means to copy or to imitate. In the beginning of the fourteenth century it meant ‘reflection in mirror’, but in the late fourteenth century in Latin it was used in mental sense also, which meant public impression. Till Twentieth Century it was not in common use. From 1908 it appeared in isolated cases, but from 1958 it started to be used as the jargon of advertising and public relations. In Psychology John Messenger called it ‘imago’ which means a perception which can be changed due to later experiences. According to Wikipedia an image can be two dimensional or three dimensional. Images can be captured by cameras, mirrors, lenses, telescopes, and microscopes. Image can be formed in human eye or on water surfaces. Temporary images are called volatile images while a hard copy is called a fixed image. A mental image remains in the mind of an individual. A still image is called a static image whereas films are the example of moving images. Thus, Image can be a mental image, photograph, painting, any other type of work of art, or a reflection in a mirror. Mac Milan’s British online Dictionary explains that in literature an image means projection of ideas in an interesting manner. American Heritage Dictionary also gives the similar meaning. Fowler’s Modern English Usage also defines image as an impression about a particular person, product, or institution. M.H. Abrams says that an image is “a picture made out of words” (134). This version of ‘Image’ has been opted in this project.

The present study is divided into six chapters. The introductory chapter includes the bio-critical overview of the author and the statement of the thesis. The second chapter, “The Matriarchal Force” deals with those female characters which represent the epitome of motherhood. The third chapter, “The Struggling Survivors”, covers those women who are the victims of circumstances. The fourth chapter, “The Romantic Rebels”, presents the images of those women who in the pursuit of romantic love defy all the social taboos. The fifth chapter, “The Segregated and Banished Ones”, describes those women who are banished from society and lead segregated life.