CHAPTER 2

THE MATRIARCHAL FORCE

William Faulkner’s novels reverberate with the matriarchal force of good mothers who represent all the positive aspects of the mother Earth, “associated with life principle, birth, warmth, nourishment, protection, fertility, growth, abundance…” (Guerrin 164). These great mothers are brave, courageous, wise, resourceful, daring, dominating, and assertive. These dynamic women have endurance, adaptability, vitality, morality, and physical strength. They become the cohesive forces in their families, and support them on physical, mental, and spiritual levels. In fact, mother has been worshiped in every religion and culture like Demeter in Eleusinian mysteries, Egyptian Isis, Baby Lonian Ishtar, Buddhist Kwanyin, Christian Mother Mary, Indian Ma Durga, Ma Saraswati, and Ma Annpurna. Faulkner shows unswerving faith in mother’s ability to absorb tragedy and solve problems. They unflinchingly suffer pain, and face hardships. The novelist presents them as the models of endurance, unyielding forces, and unshakeable strength. He appreciates their better ability to cope with the difficult situations in comparison to their disheartened and depressed male counterparts. Such women provide leadership in crisis and motivate the entire family. The novelist has shown that indomitable women of South America are not formally educated, but they are well versed in the education of life and become the epitome of wisdom. They have pragmatic approach and do not yield before adversary forces.

Aunt Jenny is the centrifugal force in Sartoris’ family in Sartoris (1929). She is a symbol of the grandeur of past as she possesses the qualities of practical wisdom, patience, dignity, courage, leadership, and a fighting spirit. She becomes the natural leader of the family whose counsel is sought in every matter. Her position as the citadel of the family is recognized by all. In certain crucial moments it is Aunt Jenny who takes the vital decisions and guides the whole family. As a tower of strength she maintains her dignity even in the hours of conflict and difficult situations. John Sartoris also acknowledged her self sufficiency, and ability to protect herself. During Civil War when Yankees entered Sartoris’ House, John Sartoris ran away
from the house thinking that it was good that girls were not at home and said, that Aunt Jenny was a full blood Sartoris, and “she was a match for any jest a dozen Yankees” (22). This youngest sister of John Sartoris was born in 1840, and at the age of thirty she came to Sartoris’ house “after being two years a wife and seven years a widow...” (8). She is shown as a thin woman who has a typical Sartoris nose and wrinkled hands. She always wears black silk dress in parties. She has cold affability in her social dealings and behaviour. She is the first one who told the story of Bayard Sartoris’ death on Christmas in 1869. Now at the age of eighty, she still tells the story on inopportune time, and “as she grew older the tale itself grew richer and richer, taking on a mellow splendor like wine...” (9). Due to her stories she is in great demand and people get stunned at the virtuosity, variety, and vividness of her stories. Moreover, Miss Jenny’s stories serve as the main apparatus for the novelist to reconstruct the past in the present. Through her the novelist projects his favourite theme of “the pressure of past affecting the psychology, and morality of individual’s actions…” (Gelashvili 1). Miss Jenny is well acquainted with the notorious, adventurous, and violent nature of Sartorises. She tells Narcissa Benhow that the war just gave John a good excuse to get himself killed as he wanted to get a violent death to perpetuate Sartoris’ tradition. She adds, that she has lived with “bullheaded Sartorises for eighty years, and she will never give a single ghost of 'em the satisfaction of shedding a tear over him” (31). When Simon reports to her about young Bayard’s arrival in adventurous manner by jumping from the train, and his assumption that perhaps he has gone to the graveyard, Miss Jenny rebukes him and tells, “No Sartoris ever goes to the cemetery but once” (33).

Old Bayard, Jenny’s ten years younger nephew, suffers from memory loss and deafness while Miss Jenny is alert and takes care of Sartoris House efficiently. She is very conscious about the wellbeing of Bayard. When she finds that Bayard is wearing wet shoes, she calls Simon to bring his slippers, and personally checks the wetness of his feet by running her hand over them. When Bayard sits in veranda she gives him his hat, and asks him not to sit for long in the open as summer season has gone. For Bayard’s welfare she keeps him busy by talking, and by “immersing herself and her nephew in a wealth of trivialities – petty doings and sayings and gossip” (39).
though it is not in her nature to waste time in gossip. Being a unique individual she has her own opinions, and presents them in a humorous way. She rebukes Bayard for believing in the information given by Simon. She repeatedly warns the servants that if they overhear anything concerned with Colonel they have to tell her first, and then she will decide whether that should be told to him or not. Thus, she has a tight control and full command over the servants. Simultaneously, it shows that she is very protective for her nephew, and wants to keep him away from unnecessary worries.

Miss Jenny daily reads Memphis newspaper and enjoys humanity in various colours. She prefers thrilling romantic news to dull facts. She also takes care of the tortured and tormented grandson of her nephew, young Bayard, who has returned home after the death of his brother in war. While old Bayard shows his anger, Miss Jenny welcomes young Bayard in an affectionate manner. She consoles him and orders him to eat his supper. Old Bayard suggests whisky for him, but Jenny vetoes this immediately saying, “Milk’s what he wants. I reckon he had to drink enough whisky during that war to lost him for a while” (46). She is aware of the antagonism between Bayard and his grandson, so she orders old Bayard to go to his bed and let young Bayard alone for a while. When young Bayard cries in his sleep due to the tormenting memories of his dead brother and wife, Miss Jenny soothes his tortured feelings and gives him milk to drink. She lays her hand on his brow and asks him to sleep. It is really surprising that this indomitable Southern woman at the age of eighty is taking care of seventy years old Bayard and his grandson. Like a caring mother “she compels young Bayard to drink plenty of milk and superintends his diets and hours in her martinetish way” (204). Many times she enters his room at night and sits for a while besides his bed. So Cleanth Brooks writes, “Literally Miss Jenny has no children, for her motherless nephew, Bayard Sartoris, she fulfils this essential maternal role” (Page xiii).

She is very authoritative and willful. She does not listen to the opinion of the Colonel or Simon, and says, “I do not give two whoops in the bad place where you or Colonel, either, thinks a flower ought to be planted. I plant my flowers just exactly where I want ‘em to be planted” (50). She takes keen interest in the maintenance of the lawn and flower beds. She rebukes servants for their negligence,
and declares that she can raise flowers without their help. Miss Jenny always has strict control on herself and a fine command on language, but when her ire is aroused she roars without effort to sublime heights. Thus, “Miss Jenny is very much the grand old lady of the South, possessed of a crisp mind, a sharp tongue, and the wisdom bred of an indomitable strength…” (Williams 41).

Narcissa views that due to her spirit, strict discipline, command, and control over servants she looks so much more like a solider than poor Isom who wears uniform. Through the use of the multiple-point of view technique, the novelist throws light on all the positive and negative aspects of Miss Jenny’s personality because in this technique “there are two brains behind that eye…” (Lubbock 235). Miss Jenny is too much tired of Sartorises that she declares, “at times I believe these Sartorises and all their possessions just set out to plague and worry. Thank the Lord, I know where they’ll be, but no Sartoris is going to stay in heaven any longer than he can help” (67).

Miss Jenny is young at heart and takes joy in life. Old Bayard refuses to ride in the car of young Bayard on the first day, but Miss Jenny goes for a ride and when they come back her eyes are shining with happiness. She proudly tells Simon that they have been to town which is four miles away. While talking her voice has clarity and enthusiasm of a young girl. In addition to it she sustains her individuality, and lives her life according to her own wishes. When her nephew wants her to accompany young Bayard she flatly refuses and asserts her right to spend her time in her own way saying, “you want me to let my house keeping go to the dogs and spend all my time in that car, that’s what you want. Well, I’m not going to do it” (89). In this connection Malcolm Cowley observes that Faulkner has presented affectionately “old ladies like Miss Jenny Du Pre, with their sharp tongued benevolence…” (xxvii).

Even merchants and other people in the market place speak to her as if she is a queen. She forcibly takes old Bayard to Dr Alfred for the treatment of wen on his face. There also she orders the receptionist in an authoritative manner to inform the doctor that Colonel wants to see the doctor. She repeats, “Tell him. I’ve got some shopping to do this morning and I haven’t got time to wait” (95). She feels irritation when Old Bayard behaves childishly by refusing to accept doctor’s treatment. He
wants his wen to be cured by old Will Falls. In a rage she says, “Old people just fret me to death” (101). This incident shows modernity in Miss Jenny. She tries to control young Bayard while he goes on serenading. She telephones and requests to the city officers to keep him in jail. Narcissa feels that Miss Jenny has penetrating eyes which can see everything hidden in the mind. She does not like crying even at the time of crisis. She asks Narcissa to stop crying, and says that she admires only strong characters. Simultaneously, she is well acquainted with the helpless condition of women in her society, so she suggests Narcissa to marry saying, “I wouldn’t advise anybody to marry. You won’t be happy, but then, women haven’t got civilized enough yet to be happy unmarried, so you might as well try it” (259).

Thus, Miss Jenny’s character presents an ideal of great mothers. In Faulkner’s fiction she is a symbol of the matriarchal-force. Obstinate and reckless young Bayard also submits before her when she is furious. This indomitable old woman blushes like a young girl when Dr. Peabody in Thanks Giving Dinner exposes the truth that once he proposed to her in the first spring after her return in Sartoris family (295). Adams observes that “when she [Jenny] remembers dancing with Stuart in Baltimore, she falls as victim to the charms of the past as anyone else” (51). She takes care of Narcissa and her unborn child also. She orders Narcissa not to ride in Bayard’s car as she is pregnant. She is convinced that Narcissa’s presence in the car will not slow down young Bayard’s fast driving as all Sartorises are aggressive, violent, and wish to die an adventurous death. She comments, “It’s in the blood. Savages everyone of ‘em. No earthly use to anybody” (298). Her piercing old eyes get the message of Young Bayard’s death without a word from Dr. Peabody’s mouth when he stops her from sending message to young Bayard. Then he offers her the newspaper containing the news of young Bayard’s death, but she returns the paper immediately saying, “I don’t have to read it…They never get into the papers but one way” (360). Even during this crisis she does not accept any help saying that she is not a cripple. She behaves bravely in this tragic situation. She wipes her fingers with her handkerchief and says, “well…Thank God that’s the last one for a while, anyway” (369). In this concern Kirk comments, “she is one of Faulkner’s indomitable Southern women… she lives to see all of her beloved Sartoris men die by violence, yet remains
unbroken” (18). Ultimately the news of Simon’s death breaks her, and she says that she will be sick for a while, and lies in bed. It is surprising for the family members because she has never fallen sick during her stay of forty years in Satoris family. After her recovery she goes to the graveyard where all the Sartories were buried and asks Isom and Elnora to clean graves.

Miss Jenny reappears in the novel, Sanctuary, as the great aunt of Horace Benhow’s sister, Narcissa, who is the young widow of young Bayard and mother of a boy of ten years. She is shown living with Miss Jenny, “the great aunt of her husband; a woman of ninety, who lived in a wheel chair, who was known as Miss Jenny” (21). In this novel also Miss Jenny is presented as an intelligent, active, and wise lady. She possesses a knack for solving problems with practical solutions. When Horace and his sister, Narcissa, quarrel over the issue of Ruby’s stay in their house, Miss Jenny asks Horace to keep the woman in a hotel. She vehemently opposes Benhow’s elopement, and marriage with a married woman, Belle, but she supports him in his fight for justice for innocent Goodwin Lee. Simultaneously, she condemns Narcissa for her ruthless behaviour towards Ruby La Marr.

Miss Jenny for the third times appears in the novel, The Unvanquished, which narrates the saga of John Sartoris. In the novel she has been shown as a thirty years old war widow and Old Bayard as a boy of twelve. The boy observes the features of John Sartoris and Aunt Jenny. He concludes, “the same hair, the same high nose, the same eyes as Father’s except that they were intent and very wise instead of intolerant” (271). He also observes that Drusilla and Aunt Jenny have identical experiences as Aunt Jenny lost her husband and Drusilla her fiancé in war. However, their reactions and styles of living are entirely different. Aunt Jenny has a passion for flowers so she brought two Jasmine cuttings when she came to live with Sartoris in 1869. She is the only wise person who supports Bayard in his resolution to stop killing by saying, “You’re not going to try to kill him. All right” (276). This incident throws light on the peace loving soul of Miss Jenny.

Miss Jenny for the fourth time appears in a short story, “There was a Queen”. Queen word is used for the first John Sartoris’ sister, Virginia who is now
ninety years old, and lives “in a wheel chair beside a window above the flower
garden…” (211). The narrator tells that Virginia Du Pre came to Mississippi in 1869. She is the last one of the Carolina family. She brought a basket which contained some pieces of coloured window panes, two Jasmine cuttings, and two bottles of port. In her long life “She had seen her brother die and then her nephew and then her great-
nephew and then her two great-great-nephews and now she lived in the unmanned house with her great-great-nephew’s wife and his son…” (211). Thus, she has survived four generations of Sartoris. At the age of ninety she is tended by Elnora’s daughter, Saddie, as if she is a baby. Surprisingly, even in this extreme old age she sits erect in her wheel chair. She is thin and has a delicate nose. Her hair looks like a white washed wall. She is very alert, and observes every movement of the people in the house. This brave woman has faced many disasters in her life, but Narcissa’s immoral conduct is such a great shock that she dies. In this regard O’Donnell comments, “The consciousness of Narcissa’s deed kills the embodiment of the virile tradition, Old Miss Jenny Sartoris [Mrs. Du Pre]” (85). The gap between the moralities of Jenny and Narcissa represents the difference between dignified old generation and corrupted modern generation. Miss Jenny is the representative of old world with its traditional values. In this concern Kerns quotes Michael E. Lahey’s comments, “Aunt Jenny’s fatal stroke at story’s end signals the passing of the old Southern order to the new…” (4). Narcissa’s immoral behaviour and her hollow conception of honour are also condemned by the novelist as Elnora comments, “[Narcissa] won’t ever be a Sartoris woman” (214). Narcissa also breaks the family tradition of naming the first son after his grandfather and calls him, Benhow Sartoris. She wishes that traits of Sartoris should not dominate in her son’s nature. To show the contrast between the glorious past and the degenerating present, Faulkner has juxtaposed the characters of Jenny, Narcissa, and Belle. The use of multiple-point of view fuses life in the character of Miss Jenny, and she becomes a round character. Through the repeated references to her sitting erectly in chair, the novelist establishes that Miss Jenny is active even at the age of ninety. Through the stream of consciousness technique and multiple-narration the novelist projects family history of eighty years in two years. Miller has called Jenny a “woman- lady-ghost” (1). Thus, Miss Jenny appears in three novels and one short story. Her name is also referred to in
the novels: *The Town* and *The Mansion*. Due to this technique of the reappearance of a character in many novels, Adams compares Faulkner with Conrad.

Rosa Millard in the novel, *The Unvanquished*, is the mother-in-law of John Sartoris, and the maternal grandmother of Bayard. She is a brave, wise, daring, resourceful, courageous, and indomitable Southern woman. With her intelligence, prudence, efficiency, wisdom, and expert planning, she befools the whole army of Yankees. Clarke also observes, “Granny Millard intrudes into male-territory as she proves a greater threat to the Yankees than either Colonel Sartoris or General Forrest” (6). Rosa Milliard is a model of endurance, unyielding force, and unshakeable strength. She takes the charge of the protection of Sartoris family when John Sartoris has gone to Tennesse during war and there is no grown up male at home. In normal routine Granny remains busy in sewing and reading available cookery books. She strongly believes in almighty God's omnipotence and reads Bible in her free time. She is a strict disciplinarian hence she keeps Bayard and Ringo under close-observation. She punishes the motherless child, Bayard, along with Ringo whenever they do something wrong. She orders Louvinia, “Take these children up to bed, if you hear another sound out of them tonight, you have permission and my insistence, too, to whip them both” (26). Thus, very sincerely and earnestly she plays the role of a substitute parent. She acquaints the boys with the moral code, and corrects them by punishment. Granny has the capability, vitality, and high level of IQ to deal with any type of difficult situation. She faces every crisis in a peaceful manner and maintains her mental equilibrium. Due to adolescent enthusiasm for war, Bayard and Ringo steal a gun from their house and fire at the Yankees. Consequently, their mare is wounded, and they start searching for the boys. When Granny gets the dangerous news, she becomes tense and rigid as if she has died, but after a moment of shock she comes in action. She hides the children under her chair and spreads her skirt over them. While talking about women’s fecundity Miller comments, “Grandmother Milliard’s skirt is a place for small boys to hide…” (1). Sitting straight without any sign of fear and tension she confidently says to Yankees’ officer, “You are mistaken there are no children in this house nor on this place. There is no one here at all except my servant and myself and the people in the quarters” (32). Granny faces the troop of Yankees
fearlessly and courageously. She boldly asks them to search the house if they doubt her. When their Colonel comes there she directly looks in his eyes, and in a very convincing manner she repeats her answer that there are no children in the house. The Colonel gets satisfied with her answer, and says that doubtlessly she wants to live in peace. But after Colonel’s departure she lies down in her chair, and there is too much sweat on her face. Thus, very beautifully and vividly the novelist has described the struggle of a weaker sex in facing the violent and dangerous Yankees. Anne observes, “with the men gone, war has meant a chance for women to act with unwanted independence and authority and thus to reshape traditional womanhood” (135).

Granny with her wisdom saves the life of Bayard and Ringo. After recovery from this incident she reminds Bayard that he has used obscene language while cursing the Yankees. So with both the children she kneels and prays for almighty God’s forgiveness. She also orders the children to take bath to purify their bodies also. Dr. George Lamsa also views that salvation comes only with repentance. This incident shows Granny’s presence of mind in crisis, tactfulness, resourcefulness, bravery, wisdom, and unswerving faith in God. Daiches comments, “A character is not fully revealed until brought into the necessary testing circumstances” (352). Believing in herself and her intuition, Granny takes her own decisions. When in her dream she sees a nigger pointing towards the silver box, she at once orders to bring the box inside. She keeps valuable things and money in a box hidden in the floor under her bed.

People in Jefferson know the fact that John Sartoris respects his mother-in-law. So, Uncle Buck warns Bayard that they have to take good care of Grandma otherwise “John Sartoris will skin you alive” (61). During the war Granny goes to Memphis with her box full of silver, and two children: Bayard and Ringo. A cavalry officer gets astonished to see this daring act of Granny. He tells them that they cannot go further as roads are full of Yankees’ patrols, and instructs them to go back. During the halts in the journey at night, Granny sleeps in the cart for the safety of her hidden treasure in a big box. The news of Yankees’ patrols on the Memphis road does not diminish her courage and enthusiasm. Despite of cavalry officer’s warning about the danger that Yankees can imprison them and can compel John Sartoris to surrender, she decides to continue her journey. Granny very bravely replies to the cavalry.
officer, “My experience with Yankees has evidently been different from yours. I have no reason to believe that their officer- I suppose they still have officers among them-will bother a woman and two children” (64). Then Cavalry Officer suggests them to stay at the house back as war is going on, and he offers to bring John Sartoris there. Determined Granny replies that she does not want to bother even John Sartoris. When five wild men come to take away their mule forcibly from their cart, she beats them with her umbrella. Bayard and Ringo following those wild men, forget their way in the forest. Consequently, Granny is left alone on the road without any mule to drive her cart. But surprisingly keeping faith in Granny’s ability, resourcefulness, and wisdom everybody at home is confident that Granny will reach Memphis safely. Ringo says, “I told you they wasn’t to Yankees gonter stop Granny…” (71). When they reach home they see a wagon coming towards their house, and “Granny sitting thin and straight on the seat with Mrs. Compson’s rose cuttings wrapped in a new piece of paper in her hand and Joby yelling and lashing the strange horse…” (80).

In search of John Sartoris, Yankees attack Sartoris’ house. They burn the house and take away the box of silver with the help of Joby’s son, Loosh. Granny does not get depressed like other whites rather she starts preparation for the journey to meet Yankees’ Colonel, Nathaniel G. Dick, for the recovery of her mules, niggers, and silver. She refuses to take Joby with her, and drives the wagon herself because the mules are borrowed. Throughout the way Granny, Bayard, and Ringo witness destruction all around. They see burnt houses of whites, traumatized white women, and children hidden in empty cabins of niggers who have run away with Yankees. Granny is grieved to see the plight of niggers who are running after Yankees in a futile hope to get freedom. Granny has become penniless due to niggers, but even then she regrets that they don’t have enough to share with them. She says, “Poor folks… I wish we had enough to share with them” (94). Even in her adverse circumstances she helps a sick nigger woman with a small baby who is left behind by her husband. Granny advises her to go back, but when she remains silent, Granny gives her lift and a piece of bread and meat. This incident highlights Granny’s greatness, kindness, and benevolence even when she herself is penniless. She is cheated by a nigger, but still she is helping a helpless nigger-woman. Green Walt comments, “Granny Milliard
is a manifestation of the human spirit that adapts to her environment under very rigorous conditions [Civil War]” (24). Generally traumatic experience of war makes a man selfish, insecure, and self-centered, but Granny is exceptional as she has compassion for the grief-stricken people. She has an ability to absorb tragedy, and capability to find out the solutions even in hopeless situations.

Aunt Louis tries to dissuade Granny from her project of the recovery of mules, niggers, and silver from Yankees, but determined and fearless Granny replies, “I’ve got to get the silver anyway” (105). When their wagon is struck up in the shouting crowd of niggers she fearlessly sits upright. A Yankees’ officer shrieks at her, and asks her to go back because they are going to blow the bridge. Granny shouts back at him, “I want my silver! I’m John Sartoris’ mother-in-law! Send Colonel Dick to me!” (120). Due to the pressure of the blowing up bridge, Granny’s wagon falls in the river. A Yankees’ patrol helps Ringo and Bayard in cutting the harness of the drowned-horse, and in dragging the wagon ashore. Granny becomes unconscious due to this shock of drowning. When one of the Yankees suggests that she should be taken to a hospital because her eyes are shut and face has turned white, she at once opens her eyes and tries to sit saying, “No… Just take me to Colonel Dick. I will be all right then” (124). Her miserable condition prompts Colonel Dick to curse the war, “Damn this war. Damn it. Damn it” (124). On the arrival of Colonel Dick, Granny at once opens her eyes, and tells him that Yankees have taken her silver, mules, and two Negroes. When Colonel asks about the details, Granny with her closed eyes dictates to their orderly, “The chest of silver tied with hemp rope. The rope was new. Two darkies, Loosh and Philadelphy. The mules, Old Hundred and Tinney” (125). This dictation shows Granny’s marvelous presence of mind even in her semi-conscious condition. Due to the misunderstanding of the orderly, she gets ten boxes of silver, sixty three mules, and two hundred ten Negroes according to the General’s written orders on August 14, 1863. Remaining forty seven mules are collected from another regiment. This achievement of Granny is really astonishing. Granny recovers her lost property from Yankees only due to her courage, determination, and resourcefulness. Moreover, she cleverly deals with the problem of two hundred ten Negroes. She prompts the niggers from Alabama to run after Yankees’ army, but when they don’t
give any reply she distributes food among them and orders them in a threatening manner to go back to their houses, “Now listen to me. Go Home. And if I ever hear of any of you struggling off like this again, I’ll see to it” (131). With the help of the General’s written orders she collects more mules from another troop which makes the aggregate one hundred twenty two while the letter says one hundred ten mules.

Rosa Millard is an ardent Christian believer. She knows that transgression of moral or social rules is a sin. So she kneels down, and prays to God for forgiveness as she has told a lie. Penniless Granny now becomes a rich woman, and after reaching Mississippi she contacts Ab Snopes for the sale of mules. Ringo brings Yankees’ army letter pad from somewhere, and they begin a new game. Granny makes the copies of General’s written order in her neat handwriting. On the basis of those copies they collect more and more mules from the different troops. For the safety measures she makes her own map, and very cleverly she guides Ab Snopes to sell the mules of one troop to the other. Another aspect of Granny’s personality comes to light when she does business deals with Ab Snopes. In her business deals she is proved an intelligent, cunning, clever, alert, and shrewd business woman. She does not believe Ab Snopes’ report rather she enquires about the rate from the purchasers. Even Ab Snopes is fascinated with Granny’s acumen and says:

you’re a good un,…Yessum. You got my respect. John Sartoris, himself, can’t tech you. He hells all over the country day and night with a hundred armed men, and it’s all he can do to keep them in crowbait to ride on. And you set here in this cabin, without nothing but a handful of durn printed letterheads, and you got to build a bigger pen to hold the stock you ain’t got no market yet to sell. How many head of mules have you sold back to the Yankees? (139)

Granny sells one hundred and five mules back to the Yankees and collects six thousand, seven hundred twenty two dollars and sixty five cents only in one year. In this manner, she is more successful than John Sartoris or any other educated lawyer. Granny is a great psychologist also. She chooses the supper time for collection because that time due to hunger and exhaustion, Yankees do not have the
stamina to think properly. Moreover, she is very cautious that every letter should be addressed to a different officer with a different name of the claimant. She collects the names of the officers of different regiments through her own resources. Thus, she befools the whole army for four years with the help of a twelve years old boy and fifteen years old nigger. In this way, she recovers two hundred forty eight mules from them. In the end when Granny’s fraud is exposed, and a lieutenant comes to Sartoris’ house with all the forged letters, he gets shocked to see that a defenseless Southern woman, a boy, and a nigger can rob the property of United States. In extreme agony he cries, “Defenseless!... Defenseless! God help the North if Davis and Lee had ever thought of the idea of forming a brigade of grandmothers and niggers or plans invading us with it!” (163-164).

With the collected money Granny helps poor white farmers by giving them mules, and money for seeds. These mules are those branded mules which they are unable to sell back. In a big blank account book she keeps the record of those mules and money in a very systematic manner. When a mule is taken back from a farmer and is given to another farmer that time the old receipt is torn and a new one is prepared. In the end when her business with Yankees’ army stops without any warning she has only fifteen dollars in cash though she has “made independent and secure almost everyone in the county save herself and her own blood...” (172). Thus, Mrs. Rosa Milliard represents “fostering and sustaining forces” (Brook 132).

Granny is a true Christian who has complete faith in Christian values and norms. She tells lies to befool those Yankees who have burned their houses and taken their money. But even then before the public she admits her sins and says, “I have sinned. I want you all to pray for me” (156). After the departure of Yankees she brings Bayard and Ringo in the empty church, and very clearly she accepts her sins: “I have sinned. I have stolen, and I have borne false witness against my neighbour though he was an enemy of my country. And more than that, I have caused these children to sin. I hereby take their sins upon my conscience” (167). Dictionary also defines ‘Sin’ as “an offence against God or against a religious or moral law” (1423). Rosa Milliard’s admittance shows her guts to take the whole responsibility of sins on herself. She knows that “on being allured to follow the path of sin, they would be
dooming themselves to hell” (Singh 29). Simultaneously, Granny says that she has committed this sin neither for greed nor for revenge rather she has done it for justice, and “for children who had given their fathers, for wives who had given their husbands, for old people who had given their sons to a holy cause,…” 167). In this context Adams comments, “The influences of the King James Bible and of Shakespeare on Faulkner are even more obvious and pervasive than that of Keats…” (14). Granny recognizes that finally Ab Snopes has cheated her by becoming the informer of Yankees as he planned her death plot. He takes her to an abandoned cotton compress which is sixty miles away, to meet an army officer with a letter signed by Ringo for General Forrest. The strong smell of the poisoned powder in the room kills her. After death her body looks as if it is a bundle of “little thin dry light sticks notched together and braced with cord” (174). Thus, Granny’s life is sacrificed on the altar of the welfare of her family members and county men. Granny fights the war of life bravely, gets extraordinary success, and dies as a martyr. Here the novelist has used “point of view of a single first person narrator” (Millgate 180) while generally he preferred multiple-point of view. This point of view is of a dominant character, Bayard, who is a twelve years old boy. Moreover, Faulkner has used the method of direct narration and simple diction according to the child’s age.

Rosa Coldfield is another image of the matriarchal force in Faulkner’s last major novel, *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936). Millgate opines that this novel is “Faulkner’s most impressive achievement” (52) with the dark atmosphere and “enigmatic glimpses into mysterious past” (53). This novel also sprouted from the inexhaustible source of American South with its disturbed present, and tormenting past. Through its complex and comprehensive pattern Faulkner emphasizes the presence of past i.e. 1866 present in 1909. He believed that the past contains the seeds of the present as well as the future. Past does not vanish with the passage of time as it remains present in the present but this past is not complete. It is in a non-existent position. It has to be built up by collective endeavour and imaginative skill as human reality is not objective and fixed rather it is subjective and invisible. Rosa Coldfield is such a woman to whom an incident which happened forty three years ago is still real and an authentic fact. She can not get rid of that past as she is psychologically imprisoned in that past.
In the opening paragraph of *Absalom, Absalom!* the novelist introduces Rosa Coldfield as a queer and unusual woman who has been wearing mourning clothes for forty three years whether for a sister or father nobody knows. Sixty years old Miss Coldfield invites twenty years old Quentin Compson to meet her. On arrival Quentin finds that her room is dark due to closed windows because in her adolescence Rosa Coldfield heard that light and air bring heat, and dark rooms remain cool. Faulkner gives a very lively description of her size, “In her office she sits so bolt upright in the straight hard chair that was so tall for her that her legs hung straight and rigid as if she had iron shinbones and ankles…” (4). Thus, sitting in a tall chair she looks like a crucified child. Her office has the smell of a coffin and “the rank smell of female old flesh long embattled in virginity” (4).

Rosa, even after a long span of forty three years after Sutpen’s death, feels his presence. She tells Quentin about the arrival of Sutpen in Jefferson in June 1833 with his half tamed Negroes and the architect. This invoked ghost of the man has assumed a quality of permanence now. She can neither forgive nor can take revenge as he is dead now. Sixty years old Rosa Coldfield wants to tell Sutpen’s story to twenty years old young man, Quentin, so that in future he may write a story on the basis of her narration for some monetary gain or to inform people about the reason why God let them lose war. Mr. Compson doubts her statement because a long time ago she herself was county’s poetess laureate. He observes that Rosa Coldfield has called Quentin because she wants someone to go with her or perhaps she chose Quentin to listen her story because she knows about the friendship of Sutpen and Quentin’s grandfather, and she wants to know something which is known only to their family.

Rosa’s father was a religious man who locked himself in the attic of his house, and starved to death though Rosa tried to feed him secretly at night. The bitter irony of her life is that when she reached marriageable age most of the young men were already killed in war. Before her birth, her sister, Ellen, was married to Sutpen who came in the town with his great dream of making Sutpen Hundred. He discarded his first wife because she was part Negro. According to Rosa’s point of view he was “a man who fled here and hid, concealed himself behind respectability behind that
hundred miles of land which he took from a tribe of ignorant Indians, nobody knew how…” (10). After making Sutpen-Hundred he wanted to acquire respectability by marrying a girl from a pure, taintless, and respected family. Rosa tells Quentin:

Then he needed respectability, the shield of a virtuous woman, to make his position impregnable even against the men who had given him protection on that inevitable day and hour when even they must rise against him in scorn and horror and out rage; and it was mine and Ellen’s father gave him that. (9)

Rosa’s angry narration shows her rage over the behaviour of her father who instead of rising against him in scorn helped him in getting respectability. While talking to Quentin, Rosa expresses her surprise and inability to understand the reason which compelled her father to marry Ellen with Sutpen. She speaks, “what crime committed that would leave our family cursed to be instruments not only for that man’s destruction but for our own” (14).

The tragedy of Rosa lies in the fact that she was born twenty two years late. At the age of three she saw the face of her sister who “had vanished into the strong hold of an ogre or dijinn…” (16). At the age of six Rosa had to do housekeeping because her mother died in giving birth to her and her aunt also had gone. Rosa Coldfield was four years younger to her sister’s daughter, Judith, and six years younger to her sister’s son, Henry. But circumstances took such a turn that dying Ellen requested Rosa to take care of Judith. Rosa still has a grudge in her heart, so she tells Quentin about it, “‘I, a child, a child mind you, four years younger than very niece I was asked to save for Ellen to turn to and say, ‘protect her, protect Judith at least’ ” (10). Rosa thought that Ellen was a romantic fool who due to her inexperience got ready to marry that man who had no past and ultimately, she had to pay for it.

The common thing between sixty years old Rosa Coldfield and twenty years old Quentin is that both of them are breathing the same air and sharing the same heritage. Quentin imagines that in her girlhood “she was a girl of young and
indomitable unregret, of indictment of blind circumstances and savage events” (9), and at present she is “only the lonely thwarted old female flesh embattled for forty three years in the old insult, the old unforgiving outraged and betrayed by the final and complete affront which was Sutpen’s death” (9). Irony in Rosa’s life was that after her father’s death she became an orphan without any resource and for food she had to turn to her dead sister’s family. She also accepted the marriage proposal from the most hateful man, Sutpen, because she wanted to justify her situation, and wanted “to vindicate the honor of a family the good name of whose woman has never been impugned…” (13). Thus, in those adverse and tragic circumstances she kept intact her integrity and self respect.

Ellen’s son, Henry, joined the university in 1859, and became a close friend of Sutpen’s first son, Charles Bon. Being ignorant about Sutpen and Bon’s relationship, Henry and Ellen assumed the engagement of Bon and Judith. Without any formal announcement they started preparations for their marriage. On Christmas when Henry came with Bon, they stopped at Rosa’s house, but she was not at home. Rosa’s own convulsions reveal Rosa’s imaginative love for Bon from that day:

it was as though that casual pause at my door has left, some seed, some minute virulence in this cellar earth of mine quick not for love perhaps (I did not love him; how could I? I had never even heard his voice, had only Ellen’s word for it that there was such a person)...became not mistress, not beloved, but more than even love; I became all polymath love’s an androgynous advocate. There must have been some seed he left, to cause a child’s vacant fairytale to come alive in that garden. (117)

Her dream of marriage was near realization when Sutpen came back from civil war to his ruined and deserted house. His wife had died, the daughter had been widowed by his son who had fled away due to the fear of police. Now Sutpen was in great hurry to rebuild his Sutpen Hundred and to get his inheritor. So he proposed to Rosa with a shameful condition and “suggested that they breed together for test and sample and if it was a boy they would marry” (146). Rosa considered it a great insult
and due to indignation she returned to her own house though she was penniless. In
this connection Miller comments, “Even Rosa Coldfield is a bid for because of a
possible remnant of fertility” (9). Rosa has been compared with Bathsheba who is a
mythic character from Old Testament. David was reprimanded by the prophet Nathan,
“Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own
house…” (Thompson 65). The novelist has added the element of realism by showing
Miss Rosa’s hatred for Clytie. When she tried to stop Rosa from entering in Judith’s
room at the time of Bon’s murder Rosa cried angrily, “Take your hand off me nigger”
(118). In fact, her aunt had taught her to avoid the touch of a Negro. Miss Rosa
expresses the effect of Clytie’s touch on herself: “Then she touched me, and then I did
stop dead. Because there is something in the touch of flesh with flesh(that) abrogates,
cuts sharp and straights across the devious intricate channels of decorous ordering…”
(115). In this environment of hatred in slave-master relationship, the love of Judith
and Clytie is very strange. Many times Rosa had found them sleeping together.
Because of their intimate relationship Rosa felt jealous, and she never played with the
things which were touched by Clytie. During war time three of them lived together
and grew their own food.

Being an experimental craftsman Faulkner employs the technique of
“Suspension of incident, apparent mystification, calculated affronts to continuity”
(Howe 224). By giving the reasons of degenerating and decaying South from within,
and by creating confusion of contradictory statements the novelist has enhanced the
involvement of the readers. Absolam, Absolam! at the first reading appears to be a
jumbled up narration, but in reality this novel has structural perfection. Very
methodically the first fifteen pages of the novel present the novel in its miniature.
Then the circling movement and Quentin’s efforts show that no single version is
complete. The novel gradually moves “from Miss Rosa Coldfield’s demonizing vision
of Sutpen to elder Compson’s skeptical reminiscences and finally to the efforts of
Quentin Compson and his Canadian friend, Shreve Mc Cannon to piece together and
provide a meaning of the bits of information and surmise they have shared” (Howe
72). Compson’s views in the second and fourth chapters present objective versions.
Then the gaps are filled by Quentin and Shreve in the final chapters of the novel. In
the sixth and ninth chapters Quentin and Shreve try to assemble all the extra ordinary events and characters of the Sutpen story, and try to make sense out of them. To reason out many unexplained mysteries they identify themselves with Bon and Henry. Every aspect of Sutpen’s life has been illuminated in very expert manner. Rosa’s account concentrates on Sutpen’s personality and life while Mr. Compson’s account concentrates on Sutpen’s relations to the society of Jefferson and the South. Quentin and Shreve’s efforts throw light on the relationship of Sutpen, Charles, Henry, and Judith. Thus, structural complexity is a technique of the writer to present the nature of historical reality and man’s effort to grasp it. For the reconstruction of the past the writer has exploited multiple-point of view technique. This novel has no separate narrative divisions like The Sound and the Fury and her narrators are neither the participants nor the family members. Mostly narrators are the persons who never met Sutpen and novel’s action exists in “largely and interpretive act of the imagination” (Levins 35).

To show the difference between act and apprehension, Faulkner has chosen three main incidents: entrance of Sutpen in Jefferson, reasons of telling the story to Quentin, causes of Rosa’s staying at Sutpen-Hundred, and the ultimate failure of Sutpen. Rosa was not born when Sutpen came to Jefferson, but Rosa has made a picture in her mind which haunted her memory throughout her life: “Out of quiet thunder clap, he would abrupt (man- horse- demon) upon scene peaceful and decorous as a school prize water color, faint sulphur- reel still in hair clothes and beard… his band of niggers like beasts half tamed to walk upright like men,…” (4). Rosa states that she wants to tell the story to Quentin because he was going out of South, and he can send the story to some magazine for financial gain, but Mr. Compson contradicts her statement. Thus, by executing multiple-point of view the novelist supplies the readers a comprehensive and complete view of Rosa’s choosing Quentin as a listener. Rosa’s staying at Sutpen-Hundred is reasoned out by herself as the request of the dying sister who said, “Protect her, at least, At least save Judith” (17). But Mr. Compson contradicts the view and calls it her dire need:

Perhaps she saw in her father’s death the resulting necessity upon her as an orphan and pauper, to turn to her next of Kin for food and shelter
and protection and perhaps in this she saw fate itself supplying her with the opportunity to observe her sister’s dying request. Perhaps, she even saw herself as an instrument of retribution…(44-50)

Here, through the second point of view Faulkner confirms that Ellen really requested Rosa to take care of her daughter. Simultaneously, he reveals that it was a necessity of the penniless woman. Faulkner calls it the way of a Southern woman and writes, “So the natural thing would have been for her to go out and live with Judith, the natural thing for her or any Southern woman gentle woman. She would not have needed to be asked; no one would expect her to wait to be. Because that’s what a Southern lady is” (71). Through this comment the novelist enhances the scope of apprehension, and presents Miss Rosa as the image of a typical Southern woman. Here he is skillfully using the multiple-point of view technique, and each point of view “adds new facts as well as a new perspective and makes necessary a reinterpretation of the facts already known…and it supplies the organizing principle of the novel” (Wagner 155).

According to Rosa, Sutpen was not a gentleman as he came here with a horse and two pistols. After the completion of his house he wanted respectability and “it was mine and Ellen’s father who gave him that” (11). Rosa believes that the South lost war as it had to depend on “men with valor and strength but without pity or honor” (16). Rosa calls Sutpen ‘ogre’ and her narration in Ch. I and Ch. V. seems “an essay in demonology” (Millgate 55) where she tells Quentin, “There was an ogre of my childhood which before my birth removed my only sister to its grim ogre – bourne and produced two half phantom children …” (137). But Rosa is an unreliable narrator as her narrations are basically “hysterical and hallucinatory. It is the language of a mad person who has lost hold on reality” (Mathur 53). Faulkner highlights the reasons of this biased version. Rosa presents Sutpen as a demon because he proposed to Miss Rosa in a shameless manner. Through Rosa’s hysterical point of view the writer wants to show the moral flaw when a person refuses “to recognize even the simplest human need of its inferiors, the need to be recognized as human” (Millgate 57). Everyone who came in Sutpen’s contact was exploited to realize his design. He left his first wife, Eulalia Bon, because he realized that such a marriage would endanger his
design. Later on he married a Mississippian girl from a respectable family. Sutpen's refusal to recognize Bon as his own son led to his murder by Henry. In his effort to establish his dynasty again, he put a shameless condition on Rosa which humiliated her so much that the stunned Rosa decided to wear black mourning clothes throughout her life.

Mr. Compson attributes Sutpen’s failure to his ignorance because Sutpen thought that "the ingredients of morality were like the ingredients of pie or cake and once you had measured them and balanced them and mixed them and put them into the oven it was all finished and nothing but pie or cake could come out" (263). In this novel Faulkner stresses upon the difference between facts and their reconstruction depending upon the intensity of involvement of the narrator. Multiple-point of view not only lightens every aspect of the subject, but mirrors the narrator's own personality. It contradicts or confirms the previous view as Michael Millgate comments “the different versions constantly overlap, contradict, confirms and revalue each other…” (56). The novelist exhibits that even various versions leave some mysteries to be solved by creative imagination.

Minnie Saunders, mother of Cecily, is shown all the time worried about her children. For the welfare of her daughter she fights with her husband, Robert Sr., and asks him not to compel Cecily to marry a man who is half dead. She argues, “‘Well, an engagement in war time and an engagement in peace time are two different things. Really I don’t see how he can expect to hold her to it’” (93). Whenever Mr. Saunders becomes harsh on Cecily she is there to protect her. She has a keen eye and when she finds Cecily tired of talking to Mr. Jones, she asks him to leave. She says, “‘Cecily you had better lie down; you don’t look at all well. Cecily is not very strong, Mr. Jones’” (233). On her insistence Mr. Saunders conveys to Donald’s father that marriage cannot take place as Mrs. Saunders has some doubts. She is a practical lady, so when Cecily whimsically decides to marry seriously wounded Donald she stops her by saying, “‘Listen honey. If you marry him you are throwing yourself away, all your chances, all your youth and prettiness, all the men that like you: men who are good matches’” (262). Minnie Saunders is in the habit of eating too much and then feels difficulty in breathing. She is unable to open her shoe laces and she has to take
Cecily’s help. Thus, the novelist has created a complete family scene by including the moments of joy and sorrow, hot discussion of parents due to different opinions, and a mother’s love for her children.

Julia Benhow in *Sartoris* was the mother of Narcissa and Horace. She was a genteel wife of Will Benhow. She died young when Narcissa was only seven years old. Aunt Sally remarks, “Julia was a right sweet natured girl” (174).

Martha Habersham is the neighbourer of John Sartoris, and she is shown as a leader of all the women of Jefferson. Men and women of Jefferson become enemies to each other because the men have accepted their defeat and declared that they now belong to the United States, but the women are against their decision. Mrs. Habersham shows sympathy to Drusilla who has no mother to give training. She arranges for her marriage with John Sartoris so actively that it appears that Drusilla is her own daughter, but when they come back unmarried she takes them to the town again in her own carriage and arranges for the peace bond. Then she takes them to the Minister herself for marriage ceremony.

Mrs. Willy Varner appears in *The Hamlet* as “a plump cheering woman” (10) who has given birth to sixteen children though five died in infancy. Being the wife of the richest man in the county, Mr. Varner, she has a servant and lives in a double storey house. She is an expert cook who has won many “prizes for preserved fruits and vegetables at the annual County Fair” (1o). Throughout the day she remains busy in cooking and serving. This whole information is supplied through the point of view of Varner’s thirty years old son, Joddy. In the whole county Mrs. Willy Varner is considered one of the best housewives. She does not believe in the literacy of women because she herself is an illiterate, but still she is considered one of the best housewives. In the favour of her plea she says, “the proper combining of food ingredients lay not on any printed page but in the taste of the stirring spoon…” (97). She opines that schooling cannot help a girl in becoming a good housewife. Moreover, she is proud of the fact that she has raised her eight daughters without any school education. Now her youngest daughter has abnormal growth. In the age of thirteen years she has the growth of a grown up woman. In addition to it she is
extremely lazy. Again Mrs. Willy Varner appears in the novel, *The Town*. Her dedication and laborious nature comes to light when V.K Ratliff talks about her daily routine. She has to get up early at one or two O’clock in the morning to prepare breakfast for Uncle Billy who after taking breakfast, sleeps again while “‘only Miz Varner couldn’t never go back to sleep again, once he had done woke her up good’” (299). Mrs. Varner firstly appears in this novel when Flem comes to her house to give the threat of divorce to Eula because of her illicit relations with Major De Spain. V.K. Ratliff reports that Mrs. Varner used to hate him “like he was a Holy Roller or even a Baptist” (297). Mrs. Varner believed that he not only committed sin by marrying her pregnant daughter rather he cashed the sin in his favour, and rose to the rank of Vice President of a bank from a very humble position of a clerk. Now he wants to become the President of the bank so he blackmails Major de Spain by exposing his illicit relations with his wife which started eighteen years before. Due to her husband’s blackmailing Eula has to commit suicide and Major has to leave the town.

Faulkner had great respect and affection for his mammy, Caroline. For him she was a symbol of authority. In those days a white child used to open his eyes in the lap of ‘mammy,’ look at the world through her eyes, and learn to walk under her guidance and protection. With infinite love and constant affection Caroline not only provided physical security to Faulkner but she also taught him the lesson of good conduct asking him to speak truth, respect elders, and help the helpless. So Faulkner’s attitude towards his mammy was quite different from his contemporaries, and in his fiction they represent the matriarchal force.

Aunt Callie Nelson in *Soldiers’ Pay* was the ‘mammy’ of child Donald. She is quite an old woman, but still she comes to see seriously wounded Donald. Her impatience to meet him expresses her concern, affection, and love for the man whom she reared in his childhood. When Gillian stops her from going to Donald’s room she replies, “‘it’ll be a po’ day in de mawnin’ when my baby don’t wanter see his ole Cal’ line. Donald Mist’ Donald honey, here Callie come ter you, honey; here yo’ mammy come ter you’” (168). When Gillian tries to stop her by holding her withered arm she protests and requests him to free her arm. She also tells that she has prayed to
Jesus for the safe return of Donald. She asks Donald to recognize her but he is unable to do so. Then she asks her grandson, Loosh, to talk to Donald. When Mrs. Powers politely asks her to come again after some time when Donald’s condition will improve she says, “‘Yes ma’am! Dey ain’t enough water in de sevum seas to keep me from my baby. I’m coming back honey. I gwine to look after you’ ” (170). She asks Mrs. Powers to call her if there is any need. She also promises that she will come again to see Donald.

Aunt Callie again appears in The Reivers as a young mammy of Lucius, Maury, and Alexender. When every elder member of the family had gone to attend the funeral of the maternal grandfather of Young Priest Lucius, Aunt Callie was sent with the children to Aunt Louisa’s house with the baggage containing “the wicker basket of Alexander’s diapers and other personal odds and ends, the grips containing mine and Lessep’s and Maury’s cloths for four days, and Aunt Callie’s clothed wrapped bundle…” (56). The narrator, Young Priest Lucius, remembers that she reared the children like a very careful mother.

Dilsey in Faulkner’s magnum opus, The Sound and the Fury, is projected as an ideal of motherhood. This character is based on the author’s mammy, Caroline, whom he has paid rich tribute. She is the most appreciated and applauded human being in Faulkner’s fiction. This loving, affectionate, and caring mammy fulfills all the motherly obligations and duties while Mrs. Compson, a hypochondriac, believes only in complaining all the time. Benjy being an idiot boy is an intolerable burden for his own mother, but Dilsey takes care of him lovingly along with her kitchen work. In Benjy’s memory contains a picture of Dilsey who is singing all the time while working in kitchen. She has an unflinching faith in God’s justice, and without any complaint she accepts her lot whatever it is. Moreover, she believes in doing her duty. When her husband Roskus grumbles again and again, “‘Tain’t no luck on this place’” (21). Dilsey convinces him that Compsons’ bad luck is not going to affect him because everything is going on smoothly in their life as Versh is working and Frony is married. T. P. is becoming a big boy to work in his place as he is unable to do work due to his rheumatism. Thus, Dilsey while dutifully serving Compsons, keeps in view her limits and concerns. Roskus unnecessarily becomes worried due to the bad omens.
which declare death, but Dilsey has accepted the inevitability of death and says, "Show me the man what ain't going to die, bless Jesus'" (21). Even then, Roskus insists that there is no luck on that place as they have changed the name of Benjy. Through the juxtaposition of the dialogues of Roskus and Dilsey the novelist has presented the blind faith of Negroes. Dilsey believes in doing her own duty sincerely. She rears Quentin, Caddy, Jason, and Caddy's daughter, Miss Quentin. Caddy's name is banned in Compson family which is also a bad omen. Roskus again says, “‘They ain't no luck going be on no place where one of they own children's name ain’t never spoke’” (23). Simple minded Roskus also feels, that it is a big injustice that a kid reared in her maternal uncle’s house is not permitted to know her mother’s name. Thus, through the dialogues of Roskus, the novelist condemns the hypocrisy, hollowness, and false religiosity of so called higher society.

Dilsey is a very sincere, affectionate, and dedicated mammy. While Benjy is considered a burden and God’s judgment upon herself by his mother, Dilsey gives motherly protection and affection to this idiot boy. As Benjy is considered a useless burden nobody remembers his birthday. Only Dilsey buys a cake for him with her own money, and secretly celebrates his birthday in the presence of Luster. She asks them to eat the cake before Jason’s arrival because he counts every egg that comes in her kitchen and she is afraid that he will doubt her integrity. She even rebukes Luster for eating more cake pieces, and not giving to Benjy. She threatens him, “‘Reach it again, and I chop it right off with this here butcher knife’” (44). When Dilsey is unable to stop Luster who is irritating Benjy with a wire, she warns him, that she will report to his father and his father will lock him. By the technique of juxtaposition Faulkner highlights the difference in the attitude of a selfish mother and a devoted mammy. When Benjy’s hand is burnt only Dilsey feels concerned, and bandages his hand while his own mother objects at his howling. She blames Dilsey that she knowingly starts him to give her trouble as she is ill. Then she enquires about the cake and when Dilsey replies that she herself has bought the cake. Then she again blames her that she is going to poison him with that cheap cake. To stop Mrs. Compson’s grumbling, Dilsey asks her to go upstairs and promises that she will hush Benjy in a minute. Thus, Mrs. Compson is the biggest headache for Dilsey, and doubles her
 burden. Moreover, now Dilsey does not have the room in which she used to keep Benjy, and she cannot keep him in yard because neighbours will see him crying. Then Mrs. Compson starts emotional blackmailing. She begins to cry also. Dilsey asks her to stop crying and go upstairs as Luster will look after Benjy till she prepares supper.

Dilsey is the only one who works for the whole family and tries to give comfort to everybody. It seems that she is the only sane person in the crowd of abnormal Compsons. This laborious, hardworking, and aged Mammy is ready to rear small Quentin. She says, “And what else do she belong?”… ‘Who else gwine raise her cep me? Ain't I raised ev'y one of y'all?’ ” (153). This statement shows a sharp contrast between the thinking of Mrs. Compson and Dilsey. Even when Quentin becomes seventeen years old, Dilsey try to save her from Jason saying that he should not follow her and asks, “‘Whyn't you let her alone? Can't you live in de same house wid you own blood niece widout quoiln... well you tend to yo business and let her alone’” (194-95).

Dilsey is well acquainted with everybody's nature. She knows that Jason will not give anything to anybody. When Luster pleads for the ticket of show from Jason, Dilsey tells him that Jason does not give anything to anyone. In this way, Dilsey becomes a main literary tool in the hands of the novelist through which he throws light on all the characters. She exposes everyone’s habits and weaknesses. Continuously serving Compsons Dilsey gradually becomes weak and thin. In the IVth chapter entitled, “April Eight, 1928”, Faulkner paints the picture of Dilsey with affection and minute observation:

She had been a big, woman once but now her skeleton rose, draped loosely in unpadded skin that tightened again upon a paunch almost dropsical, as though muscle and tissue had been courage or fortitude which the days or the years had consumed until only the indomitable skeleton was left rising like a ruin or a landmarks above the somnolent: and impervious guts, and above that the collapsed face that gave the impression of the bones themselves being outside the flesh, lifted into
the driving day with an expression at once fatalistic and of a child's
astonished disappointment….(203)

Through the juxtaposition of Mrs. Compson's impatience and Dilley’s
patience Faulkner highlights Dilsey's qualities. On 8th April when Dilsey reaches
Compson House a little bit late, Mrs. Compson ignoring Dilsey's hard labour of all
days taunts her, “'I thought maybe you were waiting for me to come down and start
the fire” (205). Poor Dilsey, who has become aged, moves with painful steps and
breathes heavily. Dilsey patiently gives the reason of her coming late and suggests
Mrs. Compson to go to bed again so that she should not wake others. Herself Dilsey
takes the empty hot water bottle, and descends the stairs slowly as she has too much
pain.

Dilsey is shown a very wise and resourceful woman as she controls every
situation in a tactful manner. Her whole family line serves Compsons. Jason always
grumbles that half a dozen worthless Negroes are eating from his food barrel. Mrs.
Compson remains worried about her own comfort. It is only Dilsey who is fighting
for Compson family on all the fronts. Mrs. Compson continuously irritates Dilsey by
ordering for so many things at a time then Dilsey has to say that she can do one thing
at a time. She asks her to go back to bed, but Mrs. Compson in a rude manner says, “
'You owe nothing to them, to Mr. Compson's memory. I know you have never had
any tenderness for Jason. You've never tried to conceal it’ ” (208). Even after listening
so many blames poor Dilsey says nothing. She just starts the preparation for breakfast.
The novelist gives the lovely description of Dilsey while she is working in the
kitchen, “Dilsey put some more wood in the stove and returned to the bread board.
Presently she began to sing again. The room grew warmer. Soon Dilsey's skin had
taken on a rich, lustrous quality as compared with that of a faint dusting of wood
ashes...” (209-210).

Dilsey has complete faith in God's existence. She goes to Church with
Emmy, Luster, and Benjy. When she hears the speech of the priest she becomes
totally absorbed and tears fall from her eyes. In fact, Dilsey is a holy soul who
represents the spirit of compassion, love, affection, sincerity, sympathy, hard work,
sacrifice, endurance, and faith in almighty God. She has motherly affection for every child. As an incarnation of humanity she has the capacity to help the helpless. She possesses the disaster-management skill, warmth of love, and infinite peace. It is astonishing that she is successfully surviving in the selfish, materialistic, and depressive world of Compsons which is full of sound and fury signifies nothing. She represents all the positive aspects of motherhood.

Thus, these indomitable Southern women represent the feminine force in Faulkner’s fiction. They are immortal because they possess the feelings of love and compassion for all. They are the models of endurance, unyielding forces, and unshakable faith. They represent old values like love, compassion, pity, sincerity, and sacrifice. They are able to survive because they endure. Even in the worst circumstances they command their families wisely and fearlessly. They solve the riddles of life without losing their confidence. Even in crisis they maintain mental equilibrium. In the battle of life these soldiers fight bravely, courageously, and enthusiastically. Faulkner has created lifelike images of woman by the characteristic choice of words, sentence-structure, comparisons, contrasts, paradoxes, point of view, and stream of consciousness technique.