CONCLUSION

Faulkner’s novels are considered as modern texts in terms of their theme, narrative style and subject matter. He breaks away from the traditional and conventional trend through experimentation with new literary forms, devices and styles. They reflect the persistent sense of loss, disappointment, despair with the emphasis on historical discontinuity and isolation of humanity. In both the novels chosen for the study, we come across the theme of alienation which is the essence of modern and post modern literature.

Both the novels are exciting in their contrasting nature. In *The Sound and the Fury*, the novelist condemns the aristocracy of the South where as in *As I Lay Dying*, he criticizes the back wood people who go through their ignorance, denied any value of life. Hence, the readers can come to the conclusion that both the novels are companion pieces. Both focus on women in the image of mother and sister. They have a very prominent role to play in the development of the novels. A mother who affects the destiny of her children, levels of awareness presented through startling techniques, and characters who advocate a nihilistic philosophy, all these are seen in both the novels.

*The Sound and the Fury* and *As I Lay Dying* reflect the Cubist vision of reality. It is expressed through various techniques of Faulkner that resemble those of Cubist painters. “The experiments with perspectives in early Cubist paintings show less complexly faceted objects than later cubist paintings in which even identification of objects is hard to discern, owing to the highly fragmented composition” (Shu-mei Shih 37). *The Sound and the Fury* is one year senior to *As I Lay Dying* in publication,
involves fewer narrators than the later one. The following representation may show the difference;

The canvas of *The Sound and the Fury* is less crowded and presented through only four perspectives. Therefore each perspective is given much more time and space to develop a more detailed account of the events, both of the exterior and interior worlds.

In *The Sound and the Fury*, the sequence of time is almost totally disjointed and non chronological, whereas in *As I Lay Dying* it is more or less in chronological order because of its insertion of one section of Addie in the middle of the novel which makes it non chronological. Faulkner has tried his best to present it in chronological order. Addie makes all the difference. The language employed by the novelist is simple, direct in both the novels.
Another representation shows the name of the narrators from both the novels and their match and similarities between the narrators.

### Parallelism

**The Sound and the Fury**
- Mrs. Compson
- Mr. Compson
- Quentin (first son)
- Benjamin (Benjy) (Youngest)
- Jason (second)
- Canduce (Caddy)

**As I Lay Dying**
- Addie Bundren
- Anse Bundren
- Darl (second son)
- Vardaman (youngest son)
- Jewel (next to Darl)
- Dewey Dell (only daughter)
- Cash (first son)

Fig-9

Cash from *As I Lay Dying* is a unique narrator with antics and attitudes which are very peculiar to his character.
There are a lot of similarities between *The Sound and the Fury* and *As I Lay Dying* in both characterization and the handling of symbolic details. In these novels, Faulkner employs interior monologues as a means of contrasting the behavior of a family with the obsessive thoughts of individual members. Anse Bundren and his oldest son Cash are unique creations, but the rest of the Bundrens correspond in age and personality to the Compsons. The psychopathic Darl and the child like Vardaman are close parallels to Quentin Compson and his idiot brother Benjy. The two girls Dewey Dell and Canduce (Caddy) are lone daughters with immoral habits and both are closely watched by introvert brothers. Jewel Bundren and Jason Compson are spoiled by their mothers and alienate themselves from others. “The similarity between Mrs. Compson and Addie Bundren is less obvious, yet both are complaining figures whose selfish natures are partially responsible for the destructive obsessions of their children. Even Anse and Mr. Compson are comparable in their unhappy marriages and relative isolation from the world’s affairs” (Swiggart 108).

In *The Sound and the Fury*, the time of the narration is indicated by placing a date at the beginning of each section and telling the story in the past tense. As the mode of narration is in past tense, action and narration do not coincide. This narrative form gives an author certain obvious advantages. “He can create an illusion of present time while remaining free to telescope events by skipping over unimportant time periods in a phrase. He can also anticipate the future without breaking his illusion, moreover, the separation of narrator from event allows the narrator to comment on events, even in first person narration, from the vantage of later time” (Cox 3). Although Faulkner often uses past tense narration in *As I Lay Dying*, he departs daringly from the traditional procedure by mixing his narrative mode. The book begins, in fact, with the present tense narration which continues for a significant
portion of the novel. The remaining portion, we witness is in the past tense form of narration.

The action of *As I Lay Dying* is chronological, and about half of the time, it is narrated in present tense. The death of Addie begins the action, which proceeds over the ten days of the family's journey to Jefferson. Significant events provide focal point to Addie to whom interior monologues are attached like spokes to the hub of a wheel: *the river crossing, the fire in the barn, and the arrival in Jefferson*. Thus, chronology and place anchor the monologues in *As I Lay Dying*, while in *The Sound and the Fury*, particularly in Quentin's narration, both chronology and place are difficult to determine. Some monologues in *As I Lay Dying* are exceptions to this structural feature: Darl's narrative describes Addie's death scene even though Darl and Jewel are miles away, or later, when Darl is still away, his narrative describes Cash's completion of Addie's coffin or Addie's own monologue which appears several days after her death. However, on the whole, chronology and place anchor the interior monologues.

In both the novels, each of the sections headed by the name of the narrators which alternates and reveals information about the characters, actions, and events of the novel. However the information provided is so meager and often conflicting that the reader experiences extreme difficulty in obtaining a clear picture of what is going on. The reader, for instance, is not able to understand what should be considered the crucial part of the story: Is it the motivation behind Addie’s last wish of being buried in her kinfolk’s graveyard at Jefferson forty miles away, or her complicated relationship with her husband and children.
The common thing which we find in both the novels is that the associated drama of Darl’s personal breakdown recalls that of Quentin Compson in *The Sound and the Fury*, and Darl’s vision, his perception of the world and of himself, undoubtedly has something in common with Quentin’s state of mind on the day of his suicide:

> *In a strange room you must empty yourself for sleep. And before you are emptied for sleep, what are you. And when you are emptied for sleep, you are not. And when you are filled with sleep, you never were. I don’t know what I am. I don’t know if I am or not. Jewel knows he is, because he does not know that he does not know whether he is or not. He cannot empty himself for sleep because he is not what he is and he is what he is not. Beyond the unlamped wall I can hear the rain shaping the wagon that is ours, the load that is no longer theirs that felled and sawed it nor yet theirs that bought it and which is not ours either, lie on our wagon though it does, since only the wind and the rain shape it only to jewel and me, that are not asleep. And since sleep is not and rain and wind are was, it is not. Yet the wagon is, because when the wagon is was Addie Bundren will not be. And Jewel is, so Addie Bundren must be. And then I must be, or I could not empty for sleep in a strange room. And so if I am not emptied yet, I am is. How often have I lain beneath rain on a strange roof, thinking of home? (As I Lay Dying 76).*

This expression of Darl’s uncertainty as to his personal identity, an uncertainty which leads eventually to a “total disassociation of his personality and to madness can
appropriately be set against the central statement of Quentin’s disordered perception” (Schmitter 93).

In *The Sound and the Fury*, all the Compson family siblings are alienated in their own way. The alienation begins with the dysfunctional nature of the heads of the household, Jason Compson III and Caroline Compson. Jason Compson III has grown up to be a bitter detached father. He speaks highly of the Compson family name, but takes no action to support that honor. He deliberately ignores his children in their times of greatest need. Caroline performs no better as a parent. She casts her children off, leaving her servant Dilsey to raise them. The Compson parents' inability to express their love and affection for their children, leads to a chain reaction of alienation. The source of Quentin's alienation, which eventually leads to his suicide, resides in his feeling of disloyalty towards his family members. His father's indifference towards him and his siblings and his mother's negligence leads Quentin on a path of depression which eventually leads to his suicide. Jason Compson is another alienated character; however, his alienation is due to his mean spirited conduct. Since Jason was a child, he had a tendency to treat others wickedly, preying on the weak, like his brother Benjy. These tendencies foreshadow the alienated life Jason will come to live.

Caddy Compson is perhaps the most isolated of all, though it is hard to write about her since her narrative is never provided. As a female in the South, she already must contend with misogynist attitudes of family and society. Although well liked by her brothers Quentin and Benjy, she has a submissive role, and her only hope of gaining status come from marriage. She almost succeeds in doing this when she marries a rich banker Herbert Head, but he soon divorces her when he learns that she
is pregnant with someone else's child. This marks Caddy's downward spiral into alienation.

In *As I Lay Dying* most of the characters like Anse, Addie, Cash, Darl, Jewel, Dewey Dell, and Vardaman are alienated. Father of the family, Anse, is alienated because of his egoist, selfish and irresponsible behavior towards his children and his wife. Mother of the family Addie, is alienated because of her philosophy to life and disbelief toward love and motherhood. Even her unfaithfulness towards her husband shows that she is alienated from him too. The sense of alienation prevails in Cash because he is only concerned with his work. He is not bothered about other causes. Darl is alienated because of his innate knowledge or sensibility to know everything of his other family members and that makes other family members to be afraid of him. Mother is afraid because she had committed adultery, Dewey Dell is afraid because she is pregnant, Jewel is afraid because he knows that Darl is not his real brother, Vardaman is afraid because he feels alienated after his mother's death. ‘Fear’ and ‘alienation’ have been the main factors responsible for Faulkner’s artistic creations. This fact has been made very clear in Faulkner’s Nobel Prize acceptance speech “*man must teach himself that the basest of all things is to be afraid.*”

Another theme that makes Faulkner’s novels modern is religion. It is dealt with seriously, since the priest Whitefield commits adultery with Addie Bundren. This gives rise to a sense of spiritual loss on part of the priest. Death of Addie is not taken as glorification. For Christianity, death is just spiritual transformation from one birth to another. But here in *As I Lay Dying*, Addie’s death has been treated as terrifying in an ugly manner. These are the things which help to treat this novel as modern text too. In *The Sound and the Fury* three of the four sections take place on or around Easter,
1928. Faulkner’s placement of the novel’s climax on a weekend is significant as the weekend is associated with Christ’s crucifixion on Good Friday and resurrection on Easter Sunday. A number of symbolic events could be likened to the death of Christ. Some critics have said that Benjy is a Christ figure as he was born on Holy Saturday. Even Dilsey in herself is somewhat a Christ figure.

In literature, the theme of journey plays an important role and has provided material to the plot and thematic foundation. Like Homer’s *The Odyssey* and the *Gospels of the New Testament* to Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* and Kerouac’s *On the Road*, William Faulkner’s novel, *As I Lay Dying*, also centers around a journey. This “quixotic quest,” (Brooks, 79) is undertaken by the Bundren family from their home in South-east Yoknapatawpha County to Jefferson, in order to bury their mother, Addie. Along the way they face countless obstacles and problems. One of the reasons for the popularity of the journey as a literary motif is perhaps because it mirrors the act of storytelling itself, with a departure, journey and arrival to Jefferson which are the three phases of this novel. The journey can similarly act as a microcosm of life of Bundrens and the people of the American South. Most significantly, the journey as a plot device in a novel usually signifies the development of its characters. *As I Lay Dying* is no exception. In Irving Howe’s words:

*As I Lay Dying* is something more than a record of peregrine disaster, we soon discover. As it circles over a journey in space, the novel also plunges into the secret life of the journeyers. Each of them conducts the action a little way while reciting the burden of his mind... The outer action, never to be neglected and always fearsomely and absurdly spectacular, is a journey in a wagon; the inner action is the attempt of
the Bundrens to define themselves as members of a family at the moment the family is perishing (Howe 162).

Another role of the journey in *As I Lay Dying* is that it acts as both a catalyst and a parallel for the interior journeys of the major characters. This is not necessarily to say that the characters of *As I Lay Dying* ‘grow’ in the traditional sense quite the opposite. Chang Mira argues that;

...the necessary form in bildungsroman, a journey is supposed to promote the "moral growth" of characters who gain insights and can thereafter meet social requirements, being "mature" persons... Although the funeral journey to Jefferson indeed influences the Bundrens, the impacts on them don't necessarily guarantee the consequence of the "progressive" development of morality in them... far from getting more attuned to social norms than ever before, Darl is deemed mad and sent to an insane asylum at the end of the journey. What is the most ironic growth is Anse's facile turncoat. He learns not a flash of moral meaning from the journey, but only realizes his urgent need for a spouse (Brenton Priestley qtd from Chang Mira).

Olga Vickery not only affirms Chang’s assertions about Anse and Darl, but neatly summarizes the way in which Cash outstrips the other two in his own interior journey:

Anse... is always the bystander, contemplating events and reducing the richness of experience to a few threadbare cliché. In contrast, Darl, the most complex of the characters, owes his complexity and his madness to the fact that he encompasses all possible modes of response and
awareness [of words, action and contemplation] without being able to effect their integration. Cash... ultimately achieves maturity and understanding by integrating these modes into one distinctively human response which fuses words and action, reason and intuition (Vickery 51).

The real journey a reader takes in Faulkner’s novels is not to Jefferson, but deep inside the complex, conflicting, and often frightening thoughts of the characters. Literary journeys place characters in unfamiliar environments, and the tensions of being away from home reveal the true nature of their personalities. Furthermore, the placing of a character in unfamiliar surroundings provides an objective view of them. Another role that the journey plays in *As I Lay Dying* is, then, in placing the family in counterpoint with others, outsiders form their normal circle of acquaintance.

In *The Sound and the Fury*, William Faulkner portrays the decay of the Compson family as a representation of the disintegration of the family in modern society as subject to external forces stronger than the family itself, and as bound to the past and the sins of the past. The Compson family was once a proud and aristocratic Southern land holding family which has deteriorated now into madness, moral decay, and greed. The Compsons have already decayed from what they once were. Jason, the second Compson brother personifies dishonor without being able to recognize it himself. He has his code of conduct, but it is based on the need to keep up appearances, it might seem as if Quentin had a similar idea, since he is concerned about how people would view Caddy's downfall, but Quentin is more concerned with the code of the Old South and with ideas of honor, while Jason is concerned with rules to protect his own position in town and not an idea of family.
None of the three Compson brothers sees the real world, free of their prejudices and inner fears. Jason, the modern man, is selfish and thinks of family only as it affects his ability to do business, while Quentin had a sense of an ideal that has been violated. Faulkner relates this disintegration more to the nature of life in the twentieth century and sees this as a come-down from the values that infused the Old South. Attempting to preserve the moral code of the Old South, in which the honor of a family was equated with the chastity of it’s women, Quentin makes Caddy the repository of the Compson family honor. His section exists in the past, having stopped on June 2, 1910 with his suicide. Quentin is the sensitive intellectual of the family and he is too sensitive and so commits suicide rather than face the reality of the world. For Faulkner, this decline is inextricably linked with the fact of slavery in the South and its aftermath.

In *As I Lay Dying* Darl’s threatening questions about identity and reality, Jewel’s unexpressed anger and desire for revenge, Cash’s obsession with neatness and order, Dewey Dell’s anxiety over her personal circumstance, Vardaman’s innocent confusion over death and grief, Anse’s inner struggle between inertia and honor, Addie’s frustrations, regrets and secrets, are the dark, and hidden places explored and exposed by Faulkner’s marvelous Stream of Consciousness prose.

The journey begins from very remote uncivilized state to the broad, civilized place of the country which is very symbolic in itself together with the events that occurs during the journey. Yoknapatawaha River separates the town from village, the world of humans from the world of dead. The novelist shows the conflicted voice between village and town by showing some of the characteristic of each narrator in the novel.
In the same way, solitariness of human life is another voice. We live in our own shells even while acting in union with others to achieve a common goal—a goal as simple as moving a body about forty miles to a cemetery. The fifty nine interior monologues that make up the novel are clear demonstrations of the shells in which individuals live. Man is free and he is responsible, terribly responsible. His tragedy is the impossibility or at least the tremendous difficulty of communication. But man keeps on trying endlessly to express himself and make contact with other human beings.

In terms of perspective, the structure of *The Sound and the Fury* suggests a kind of development from Benjy’s section to Dilsey’s section. Benjy’s section is so wholly subjective that it yields to a kind of narratorless objectivity; Quentin’s section is subjective but intensely concerned with how that subjectivity can or cannot connect to a larger reality; Jason’s section, by contrast, is also wholly subjective but lacks any concern for the views of others, and finally, Dilsey’s section combines the objective view of third person narration with Dilsey’s special subjectivity and its sensitivity for the reality of others’ views and experiences seen in her care for the Compson household.

Faulkner’s chief unifying device in this short novel *As I Lay Dying* is something else. It is a unity of action which he employs. In other words, he uses a substantial plot, the thing that is lacking in all other Stream of Consciousness literature…. It is the thing that carries *As I Lay Dying* and ‘*The Sound and the Fury* away from the pure Stream of Consciousness type of novel to a point where the traditional novel and the Stream of Consciousness are combined. Because there is a coherent plot and the characters act in an external drama, which has a beginning,
complications, climax and ending, the absolute need for further unifying devices does not exist.

According to Harry M. Campbell, “In every respect *The Sound and the Fury* is superior to *As I Lay Dying*, in which the point of view shifts frequently and abruptly from one character to another. In *The Sound and the Fury* the point of view is changed only three times. The first part is the “psycho dramatic reverie” of the idiot Benjy to whom sights, sounds and smells recall childhood experiences which he confuses with present occurrences”(Campbell, 305-320). Faulkner has put more emphasis on tone than setting to unify the story, a story of “stark futility” (Emerson, 168). In the first section of the novel, Faulkner has attempted to present the psychology of the idiot Benjy and to give enough antecedent exposition for the rest of the story from his point of view.

*As I Lay Dying* has a more complex narrative structure than *The Sound and the Fury*. “With fifteen perspectives overlapping, compensating and at the same time contradicting one another, it is extremely fragmented canvas where objects are multifaceted and merged with the elements of the background and where the gradation of colors does not follow a specific pattern but is shaped into a bold, strange or abrupt juxtaposition”(Shu-mei Shih 37). Here, the reader is given a bigger role to play. To gain a certain level of understanding this complexity, he has to engage himself in the activity of the novel faithfully, and reliability of the expressions of different characters on the same event.

Thus, William Faulkner uses multiple voices and perspective in *As I Lay Dying* while giving the fictional quality to the novel with effective narrative technique, plot formation, characterization and other different fictional aspects.
Faulkner manipulates each of these key components of language in his novels *The Sound and the Fury* and *As I Lay Dying*. He combines normal narrative elements with unusual literary structures in order to represent internal thought. He does employ Standard English in his novels, along with repetition/repetitive phrases using it when he wants so that the post modern will be absorbed in the content rather than the style of writing.

In terms of style, Faulkner rendered the conflict between truth and fact most powerfully by combining the interior monologue form, which renders in full the truth of each speaker’s life, with the technique of multiple narrators, thereby subjecting each of these truths to uncomprehending and often hostile eye of external observers. “In *The Sound and the Fury* and *As I Lay Dying*, each character rolls from subject to object; from truth to fact; from being the centre of almost infinite horizons of consciousness within his own monologue” (Strandberg 43).

In the Yoknapatawpha novels, Faulkner placed himself in the forefront of the avant-garde with his intricate plot organization, his bold experiments in the dislocation of narrative time, and his use of Stream of Consciousness technique. His stylistic view of the times was affected by his sense that past events continue into the present. As he once said, “There is no such thing as was; if was existed, there would be no grief or sorrow” (Contemporary Literary Criticism 47). These stylistic characteristics were undergirded by the development of a complex social structure that enabled Faulkner to explore the inherited guilt of the Southern past, the incapacity of white aristocracy to cope with modern life, the relations between classes and the relations between races.
Both the novels have been analyzed through ‘Analytic Cubism’ where Faulkner not only analyzes the subject (pulling them apart into pieces) but also gets into the mode of ‘Synthetic Cubism,’ which is more of a pushing of several objects/parts together, to bring a complete picture before us. In today’s post modernistic world, such kind of Cubism is used in advertisements and photography, capturing all, thereby giving rise to multitude comprehension of life, art, and literature.
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