CHAPTER SIX

TECHNICAL VIRTUOSITY

We must, of course, have something of our own -- something distinctive and homogeneous...  

William Faulkner, Eudora Welty and Robert Penn Warren are original and versatile geniuses of the South. The success of their work largely depends on the narrative structure, techniques and style adopted by them. Their fictions are remarkable for their richness and variety. They present a wide range of techniques and themes to give shape and form to their achievements. Their power of language is tremendous and the style drifts in a natural and direct way providing grandeur in their works. The technique of point of view is one of the modern technical innovations introduced by the writers of the South:

The technique of point of view has proved useful in the complex realities of human life. Through counterpoint, parallelism and contrast, ironic juxtaposition etc., the modern author is able to represent dramatically complex human dilemmas without committing himself to any one view. This method imparts credibility to the portrayal and helps in maintaining objectivity in presentation. The technique has thus contributed to an artistic presentation of the myriad human situations and responses... 

220 S.B. Mathur, American Fiction : The Technique of Point of View, p.115
The technical pattern adopted by the three individual fictionalists helps the reader to comprehend and evaluate the work of the artists. William Faulkner, Eudora Welty and Robert Penn Warren display their skill and technical virtuosity in a number of ways. With their powerful and effective tools they were able to present a life like picture of the South and its inhabitants, in their own trend, showing similarities and dissimilarities in their techniques.

William Faulkner is best known as the artist painter and inventor of techniques. He reached his artistic summit early in his career mainly due to his unique mode of narrative structure and technique. He links the techniques of twentieth century realism with the techniques of nineteenth century American novelists like Hawthorne and Melville. His novels are fusions of short stories. This mode of grouping stories enable the writer to achieve thematic unity along with social, moral and historical significances. The Sound and the Fury began as a short story, Light in August is a combination of three separate tales. The Unvanquished and Go Down Moses were originally published as separate stories.

William Faulkner, though not a man of great learning is a self styled writer. What is unique about his style:

... is its persistent lyrical embroidery and coloring, in extended passages, of the narrative theme. In this sense Faulkner is one of the most subjective of writers, his brooding temperament constantly probing and interpreting
his subject matter. Thus his full style is comprehensive in its intention...\(^{221}\)

His style includes high rhetoric and folk language. His fictions are a treasure house of imagery and symbolism. This rich variety amazes and delights every reader. Warren Beck with great admiration speaks of the picturesqueness of William Faulkner's style thus:

> There is no absolute, no eternal pure white radiance in such presentations, but rather the stain of many colors, refracted and shifting in kaleidoscopic suspension, about the center of man's enigmatic behavior and fate within the drastic orbit of mortality. Such being Faulkner's view of life, such is his style...\(^{222}\)

It is quite obvious that William Faulkner's technique demands a credible range of style and vocabulary. His fanciful lyricism marks him as a reputed individual, who,

> Explored the problem of language, both from the point of view of technique and as an index to human behaviours. The latter involves the examination of the verbal patterns that dominate the South and subtly mold the individual, his society and his tradition. Since languages is at once the foundation and product of social intercourse, it cannot be

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\(^{222}\) *Ibid.*, p. 63
separated from the matrix of personal and communal experience. . . .

William Faulkner has great fascination for the simple, colloquial language. His gift for dialogue proves that his talent in this field is beyond comparison. His work abounds in realistic colloquialism and lively dialogue. In As I Lay Dying and Soldier's Pay the vocabulary he uses is limited and repetitive. The idiomatic language he introduces serve to heighten the horror of Addie's funeral journey. William Faulkner argues that colloquialism throws light on the characters he depicts and repetition essential for thematic composition. He therefore makes a careful reproduction of the dialect of his home town Mississippi. His creations, especially the Negroes, farmers and the towns people speak in their own tongues. In The Sound and the Fury the Negro priest's sermon deserves to be mentioned.

- Oh, I tell you breddren, when de long cold - I sees de light en I sees de word, po sinner. Dey passed away in Egypt, the swing in chariots : de generations passed away. . . .

Elaborate sentences with clauses, parenthesis and dashes have an impact on William Faulkner. They make his sentences long and intricate. One understands that through this medium of style, the author indicates the depth of his stories. With the good intention of conveying everything to his readers, he

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forgets pauses and stops. Examples can be traced in his master piece *The Sound and the Fury* and *Go Down, Moses*.

I hit him my open hand beat the impulse to shut it to his face his hand moved as fast as mine the cigarette went over the rail I swung with the other hand he caught it too before the cigarette reached the water he held both my wrists in the same hand his other flicked to his arm pit under his coat behind him the sun slanted and a bird singing somewhere . . .  \(225\)

Moreover, he does not hesitate to coin new words when language seems inadequate. He frankly expresses,

... but since words are my talents I must try to express clumsily in words what pure music would have done better and simpler, but I prefer to use words . . .  \(226\)

It is interesting to note that William Faulkner has great command over symbols, images and myths. He establishes the view, that symbols and images promote precise diction and fluency. He restricts himself to two types of symbols: the narrative symbols and thematic symbols. The former serves to develop the story and the latter shapes the theme of the story. Throughout his fictions "images and visions flow into one another, the fantastic mingles with the real,


\(226\) Frederick J. Haffman and Olga W. Vickery, eds., *William Faulkner: Three Decades of Criticism*, p.79
the abstract feed on the blood of things, the senses fraternize in their joint sovereignty over the world, and objects assume personality.227

William Faulkner, therefore loads his novels and short stories with images and symbols. Symbolism is a device used by the author to illuminate and understand the story as a whole. His title The Sound and the Fury is taken from Shakespeare's Macbeth. It gives a deep meaning that the life of the modern man is full of sound and fury signifying emptiness. In The Old People blood is used as a symbol to signify that the boy has become a man. In the most important story The Bear, the bear itself stands for wilderness, freedom and courage. The Sound and the Fury and As I Lay Dying are enriched with innumerable striking symbols. Caddy's muddy drawers suggests her loss of virginity. Honey suckle "the saddest order of all" is a sex symbol inclined to reveal Quentin's complex relationship with his sister. Benjy holding the flower narcissus is a superb example of the modern man deprived of love and moral values. His playing with Jimson weed a stinking herb, is an effective and ironic symbol inserted to represent Benjy's loss of sexuality.

Quentin "the educated mad man " is obsessed by his own shadow and time. He breaks his watch to put a stop to the passage of time. He deters the clinking of bell and the whistle of the factory for they are reminders of reality. Water and death images are lavishly strewn in his work. Quentin associates death by water with womb images and this leads him to a watery grave.

In As I Lay Dying, the funeral journey is a quest for identity, love and salvation. It is a journey of life where the buzzards are symbols of prevailing death. The

buzzards suggest the Greek Furies whose task is to punish. Darl sees the buzzards in the sky.

Motionless the tall buzzards hang in soaring circle, the clouds giving them an illusion of retrograde. . . .

Yet again, the rough and raging river represents the river Styx. Salvation lives on the other side of the river. The Bundrens have to overcome all the obstacles if they need to reach the holy city. Jewel expresses his love for his mother through images of violence -- saving his mother from water and fire. Vardaman associates his mother with the fish. His confused mind is revealed by his recollection of animals and their breathing. Darl often depicts Jewel as having a wooden appearance. He is described as "wooden-backed" and "wodden faced". His horse becomes the symbol of the replacement of his mother. William Faulkner's attractive images and symbols induced Cleanth Brooks to call him "a symbolist poet."

The most fundamental aspects of his novels are the use of mythological and Biblical allusions. O'Donnell justly calls him a "myth maker". Quentin is presented as a classical Oedipal figure. Like Poe, William Faulkner holds the reader spell bound, like Eliot he works symbolically through allusions, and like Joyce he knows the art of utilizing the insights of deep psychology of his characters. John Irwin contends that his novels can be read as " Literary analogues of Freud's psychology and Nietzsche's philosophy". His major characters are personifications of Id, ego and super ego.

228 William Faulkner, As I Lay Dying, p.75.
229 Brian Lec, American Fiction 1865-1940, p.228
William Faulkner's imagination is stirred and inspired by the religious sources:

What makes Faulkner's work superior to that of his American contemporaries is the complexity of his subject matter, the suspension of his intellectual magnetic field between Manichanism, stoicism and Christianity. . . .

The spirit of Old Testament illuminates *Go Down Moses*. The title is from Exodus, the command given by God to Moses. The Biblical Isaac is one of William Faulkner's favourite characters.

Significantly the Biblical Isaac, One of Faulkner's favourite characters does not emigrate as did his parents but remains in Palestine to endure the inauthenticity which victimizes him and his fellow citizens. The novelist's choice of names for his hero utilizes these facts . . .

In *A Fable*, he narrates the story of Christ as a modern attempt to bring peace on earth. Many Biblical allusions can be quoted from *The Hamlet*. His characters are mostly thirty three years old like Jesus Christ. Benjy is thirty three years old and Cash, like Christ, a carpenter remarkable for his selfless sacrifice. Dilsey is portrayed as a patient and selfless character noted for her endurance. With a tinge of satire John C. Sheerwood remarks,

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230 Frederick J. Waffman and Olga W. Vickery, eds., *William Faulkner: Three Decades of Critism*, p. 41

When Faulkner writes a novel,
    He Crowds the symbols in,
There is a hidden meaning
    In every glass of gin.
In every maiden ravished
    In every colt that's foaled,
And specially in characters
    That are thirty three years old. . . 232

William Faulkner was painfully aware of the original sin committed by the Whites and the burden carried on by the Negroes. In *The Sound and the Fury* Dilsey's section happens during Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday. He preached that Christian code of behaviour which is necessary to make man a better person in a modern society.

Being a regional conscious writer he was devoted to the luxuriant landscape of the South. He celebrates the beauty of wilderness in elaborate descriptive language. The natural background can never be ignored for it is one of the impressive features of his technical skill. Nature is very minutely and accurately observed as in Thoreau. There is a romantic temperament in his treatment of nature. Fine images and symbols are drawn from nature. The language he used for his descriptive passages is poetic and lyrical,

    The lyricism integral to his style swells to a crescendo when flowers or trees, sky or earth, are his subject. . . 233
This artistic gift inspires him to paint nature in all its glory. This excerpt is from *The Sound and The Fury*:

The grass was ankle deep, myriad, The shadows on the road were as still as if they had been put there with a stencil with slanting pencils of sunlight. . . .

Again in *As I Lay Dying*

The breeze was setting up from the barn, so we put her under the apple tree, where the moonlight can dapple the apple tree upon the long slumbering flanks within which now and then she talks in little trickling bursts of secret and murmurous bubble. . . .

Other than these technical devices the list includes humour, violence and folklore. He is a humorist like Mark Twain. His humour is ironical and satirical. *The Spotted Horse* is a funny humorous story. *As I Lay Dying* is a perfect blend of humour and pathos. Anse and Dewey Dell are comic figures. It is humorous to see Anse planning to marry the "duck-shaped woman". The small town fellow taking advantage of the country girl is a humorous as well as a pathetic situation. Talking of violence in his fictions William Faulkner says,

. . .that's like saying the carpenter is obsessed with his hammer. Violence is simply one of the carpenter's tools. . . .

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236 Frederick J. Hoffman and Olga W. Vickery, eds., *William Faulkner: Three Decades of Criticism*, p. 16.
Apart from these technical skills there are several other effective characteristic technical excellences which compel the reader to join in the writer's search for truth. He was greatly interested in the interior monologue technique. He applies this device to explore and expose the psychological struggles of his characters. The reader is forced to involve in the thoughts and experiences of his characters. He adopts this technique in three sections of his fiction, *The Sound and the Fury*. He gives a clear picture of the three different minds of Benjy, Quentin and Jason. In *As I Lay Dying*, the same technique is handled with a slight variation. The story is given to the reader in the form of monologue of fourteen characters. It is a simple anecdote draped "with a dazzling apparatus of techniques". 237 William Faulkner claims to have given extension to the stream-of-consciousness technique popularized by James Joyce and Virginia Woolf. The narrator is able to probe deep into the inner thoughts of man. This makes William Faulkner an outstanding novelist who with great ease captures the mind of each character. In his discussion on techniques:

> Sometimes technique charges in and takes command of the dream before the writer himself can get his hands on it. That is *tour de force* and the finished work is simply a matter of fitting bricks neatly together, since the writer knows probably every single word right to the end before he puts the first one down. . . . 238

The multiple point of view promotes variety and strength to his fictions. He tends to evoke, define and illuminate "human nature in all its complexity and

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237 Dean Horgan Schmitter, ed. *William Faulkner*, p. 97
variety". Multiple narration gives a touch of objectivity to his creations. The points of view of the three brothers reflect the decline of the Compson family. It informs the reader that Benjy's world is a simple and static one. For him the past and the present are one. The intellectual mind of Quentin is in a state of confusion and Jason's mind is cramped with materialistic self interest. In *As I Lay Dying* it is the point of view of the dead person. Thus, this technique becomes "the sustaining medium of action and the chief vehicle of meaning".

William Faulkner's art can be associated with the style and techniques of international modernism. Benjy's section is said to be the finest in flash back technique. One of Faulkner's techniques is to introduce the same characters in many of his novels. His virtuosity is seen best in the way he shifts his style. The tribute that Synge has paid to the rich language of the Irish peasantry can be applied to William Faulkner's fictions:

> The matter, I think, is of importance for in countries where imagination of the people, and the language they use, is rich and living, it is possible for a writer to be rich and copious in his words, and at the same time to give the reality which is the rod of all poetry, in a comprehensive and natural form. . .

William Faulkner is no doubt the greatest experimenter in technique. The traditional material of Southern life provided him ample scope for technical development. In his *oeuvres* there is thematic relevance, technical excellences

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and a fine fusion of form and content. Albert Camis is full of praise for William Faulkner:

He [Faulkner] is, in my opinion, your greatest writer, the only one, it seems to me, whose place is in your great literary tradition of the nineteenth century, and one of the rare creators of the West. . . . 242

Robert Penn Warren applauds him as a great technical artist whose work bears,

Philosophical insight, originality of style, variety of characterization humour and basic intensity, one without equal in our times and country. . . . 243

Eudora Welty is one of the eminent women writers of the South. Along with William Faulkner and Robert Penn Warren she occupies a significant place in American fiction. She is a gifted artist with extraordinary skill and incomparable talent. The most important aspects of her technique are marked by clarity, appropriate images, minute and fresh insights into the human nature. Her speech pattern is realistic like that of William Faulkner, but as a technique artist her work has always remained unique.

A writer's style depends on how the materials are treated and presented to the readers. Variation of language spoken by her characters is Eudora Welty's speciality. She has a lust for the colloquial Southern speech pattern. She brings alive the colourful, Southern folk dialect. As she in not interested in the

243 A. Walton Litz ed. Modern American Fiction, p. 150
problems of her age, she concentrates on a style that is lyrical and impressionistic. Cleanth Brooks establishes her votary for dialect thus.

She means to bring Southern folk speech alive on the page in all of its color, vigor and raciness. . . .  

Instances of Southern folk speech can be found in The Ponder Heart, Losing Battles and The Optimist's Daughter. She deserves to be compared with W.B Yeats for her delicate and powerful grasp of Southern speech. Her Wide Net is remarkable for its colloquial style.

Her stylistic devices are marked by amusing and interesting images and comparisons. She crowds her fictions with homely figures of speech, cliches and symbols which are never tiresome to the reader. Oral tradition, myth and fantasy heighten the charm of her fictions. John Edward Hardy eulogises her Delta Wedding in an interesting way,

The order of the novel is a poetic order of recurrent themes, symbols, motifs of symbolic metaphor. And it must be close read as a poem. . . .  

Her style is dreamy and mysterious. Her prose is commendable for its appropriate imagery, spicy dialogue and country humour. Despite all these technical features there is a perfect blend of matter and manner in her fictions. Her attractive comparisons are part of her artistic skill.

\[244\] Daniel G. Marowski, Roger Matuz, eds., Contemporary Literary Criticism, Vol. 33, p. 415.
\[245\] Southern Literary Journal, Vol. XXII, No.1 (Fall 1989), p.53
Her comparisons are not merely homely but derive from the scene at hand, giving it a preternatural importance and thus establishing an indefinite connection between the action of the story and the meaning of the art. 246

Eudora Welty’s comparisons are arresting and striking. For example, Bonnie Dee’s way of eating is described thus, “she just sat and picked at the Beulah food like a canary bird”. 247 Old Peacock is referred to as having “a face as red as Tom Turkey”, 248 and Big John is said to have “a little voice like a whistle the air won’t come through just right”. 249 Mr. Daniel Ponder is compared to “Othello of old, Narciss, he entered yonder and went to his lady’s couch and he suffocated to death that beautiful, young, innocent ninety eight pound bride of his, out of a fit of pure - D jealousy from the well springs of his aging heart”. 250

In Delta Wedding “the scene on the trestle appeared in Shelley’s head again and again, like a painting in a school room, with colors vivid and thunderclouded”. 251 Furthermore the coming of the engine with two wings of smoke above it, ”soft as a big bird was upon them, coming as it would”. 252 A lovely comparison is put forth to explain a long flight of ducks up in the sky like a long and thin “ribbon drawn by a finger through the air”. 253

Eudora Welty’s figurative language is worth recording. Her use of proper words cliches and metaphors are intended to promote intensity to her fictions. Her

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247 Eudora Welty, The Ponder Heart, p. 43
248 Ibid., p. 87.
249 Ibid., p. 91.
250 Ibid., p. 98.
251 Eudora Welty, Delta Wedding, p. 87.
252 Ibid., p. 87.
253 Ibid., p.172.
fondness for such speech pattern can be seen in *The Ponder Heart* and *Delta Wedding*: "She spoke in her little mosquito voice,"254 "She wasn’t any bigger than a minuet",255 "pretty as a doll", "dead as a door nail",256 "Uncle Daniel sat still as a mouse".257 Laura remembered aunt Studney as "coal black" and "old as the hills".258 The image of the whirlpool is repeated several times in the novel. The river symbolises the threatening and uncertain future of the Fairchild family. The circle image is a prominent one, important for the theme of the story. Dabney breaks away from the family circle to marry Flavin, an outsider. Laura, who comes to stay with her cousins try to enter the ring. Shelley darts in and out of the circle. Robbie maintains her distance outside the ring. Miss Welty's symbols and dazzling similes and metaphors represent the highest poetic achievement. Her fictions are lyrical in its setting, plot and language. The yellow Dog -- the train, making its appearance in Shellmound denotes the social change that is inevitable for the Fairchild family. The big horned beetle trying to get in represents the intruders -- Robbie and Troy. Dabney is presented a night lamp by her aunts. It is given to her as an object of family tradition a prime symbol of her independence. It is also a source of light and comfort. Not understanding the value of the lamp she carelessly breaks it. 'Star' is a favourite symbol of Eudora Welty. Laura captures "one great golden star that went through the night falling".259 It is a perfect symbol that makes Laura sense that she in finally admitted into the Fairchild circle, at the same time she has a sense of her own place. She is not prepared to remain forever with

254 Eudora Welty, *The Ponder Heart*, p. 123
255 Ibid., p. 133
256 Ibid., p. 141
257 Ibid., p. 142
her cousins. ‘Butterflies’ are symbols of daintiness and delicacy. The Fairchilds according to Laura are a cage full of tropical birds. The image of these rare birds is a hint at their captivity and extinction. Her free use of metaphors and abundant folk expression are necessary amenities for her fictions.

Eudora Welty lures her readers into a world of wonder where there is a harmony of myth and fantasy. Myths and folk tales were of great interest to her in her childhood days. Her artistic method is a combination of fantasy, romance and allegory. The Robber Bridegroom is from Grimm’s ‘Fairy Tales’ and the legend of “Cupid and Psyche”. A Worn Path shows her aptitude for mythical world of romance. Her myths remind the reader of the “Ovidian legends” and “Byzantine richness”. Her fictions are a rich texture of Biblical reference as, allusions and symbols. Her Losing Battles arises out of myths and Biblical allusions. She does not hesitate to introduce creatures like goblins, devils and elves. Daniel Ponder and Edna Earle “are Apollonian and Dionysiac ways of living locked in a loving struggle for supremacy”. Myth and fantasy get merged with her stories to intensify the meaning of the situation.

Miss Welty’s technical virtuosity would be incomplete without her hobbies like painting and photography. A close examination of her fictions proves that “her work is a “landscape with figures, a landscape which includes both native and the whole social scene, together with its deeper implications.” Her taste for painting gives her fictions pictorial and lyrical quality. Her descriptive passages are vivid and lengthy. They serve to explore the exterior and interior settings of her works. Giving things in a detailed manner is one of her stylistic features.

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260 Michael Kreylin, Eudora Welty’s Achievement of Order, p. 108.
261 Elizabeth Evans, Eudora Welty, p. 143.
Miss. Welty's fund of detail is wide, and her relation results in an object brought to life, a landscape graced with fruits and flowers, trees and birds a character individualised...  

The eye of the painter enabled her to become a natural observer and colourful writer. She decks her works with lovely landscape, flamboyant and pretty flowers of Mississippi, trees and birds. In Delta Wedding Eudora Welty gives a careful description of Dabney's emotions and feelings thus:

She got out of bed (her filmy dress like a sleeping moth clung to the chair) and the whole leafy structure of the outside seemed agitated and rustled the shadows darted like birds. The gigantic sky radiant as water ran over the earth and around it. The old moon in the west and the planets of morning streamed their light. .. The cotton like the rolling breath of sleep overflowed the fields. Out into it, if she were married, she would walk now her -- bare touch at the night's hour, firmy too, a woman's serious foot...  

Her experience as a painter and photographer gave her the gift of focusing the beauty and meaning of nature. Miss Welty defines the art of focus an "awareness, discernment order, clarity insight -- they are like attributes of love. Her stories are celebrations of physical nature endowed with beauty and charm.

262 Elizabeth Evans, Eudora Welty, p. 143.
263 Eudora Welty, Delta Wedding, p. 89-90.
Miss Welty’s prodigious talent lies in her comedy. She is deemed by her critics as a great writer of comedy. The murder trial in *The Ponder Heart* is a splendid comedy. Uncle Ponder’s experience as suitor, husband and widower are sparkling examples of comedy. In fine, she has a good comic spirit. Some of her episodes are in black humour where serious events cause laughter. Her character’s, want of manners becomes funny and humorous. In her *Ponder Heart* priests and clergymen are targets of ridicule.

They had one big rawboned country preacher on one side of Bonnie Dee, to get up and say look what gold and riches brought you to, and at such an early age -- and the big rawboned country preacher on the other side, to get started praying and not be able to stop. That one asked heavenly mercy for everybody he could think of from the Peacocks on up to the president of the United States. . .

Uncle Daniel turning the tables on Grandpa was a favourite tale which causes laughter. Instead of Uncle Ponder, Grandpa was taken into the asylum, and his walking stick was taken away from him. There is very little of horror, grotesque and brutality in her works. She stands detached from the problems of race resulting from slavery, the defeat and suffering caused by Civil War and finally the mode of life threatened by industrialization and commercialism. Her comic elements are allied with satire and pathos, Edna Earle and Eckhart are pathetic characters. The Southwest humour pervades in her fictions. She, like Southwest humorist, maintains a distance between herself and her stories. Such an attitude permits Miss Welty to treat serious events such as horrors of

\[^{264}\text{Eudora Welty, *The Ponder Heart*, p. 78.}\]
murder, death and rape as comic. This is best evident in The Robber Bridegroom. In The Ponder Heart, the death of Bonnie Dee is treated in a light hearted fashion.

Eudora Welty shares affinity with the writers of the South. Her literary art is often clubbed with Virginia Woolf, Catherine Mansfield and William Faulkner. The general view that Eudora Welty wholly a Southern fictionalist is obvious in this illuminating statement about her novels.

The sense of totality . . . appears in Faulkner's style; in the critical focusing on the organic whole; in the antinominalism which has been most explicitly formulated by Richard Weaver; in Tate's emphasis on mythic or non-scientific values; in the conjunction, in numerous pieces of fiction, of violence and spiritual awareness -- a conjunction disturbing readers who are used to taking one part of the whole at a time in the penumbra of mystery -- a mystery to be accepted, not solved - always bordering the clean light of Welty's characters and scenes, in the nostalgia so frequent in Porter, for the reality felt behind the stage of action; in the questioning of nostrum and panaceas which can exist only by treating a part of human truth as if it were the whole. . . .

Despite the Southern temper in Eudora Welty, she is an original artist whose products are unique. She does not employ the stream - of - consciousness

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technique, a technique deftly handled by William Faulkner. She adopts the first person narrative to aid the reader in analysing her characters' personality. The Ponder Heart is a long monologue where Edna Earle is the only speaker. Apart from this, there are other oral story tellers like the postmistress of China Grove. Miss Welty "employs a narrative style that allows the reader to see with the same vision as her characters, bringing character and reader into a sympathy alliance".\(^{266}\) As a master of narrative technique she has a matchless gift of the shifting of the point of view to bring out the complicated emotions of her characters. In Delta Wedding she uses a multiplicity of perspectives to reach mystery from several angles in due proportion.

The technique of Delta Wedding is to present the whole in each of the novel's delicate facet. To this end the lyrical structure of the novel is perfectly suited. . . .\(^{267}\)

She is a creative writer who retains a perfect balance between the objective and subjective to expose the mind of her characters. She is a distinguished artist and inventor of techniques who "usually begins her stories with expositions and the close description of an observer: then so much being already known from the outside, we scarcely notice when she 'slips' into the mind, or as quietly slips out again, in an easy and natural blend of scene and summary, interior monologue and dialogue, 'objective and subjective' description, fact and fantasy."\(^{268}\)

\(^{266}\) Southern Literature Journal, Vol XXII. No:1 Fall [1989] p. 35
\(^{267}\) Michael Kreyling, Eudora Welty's Achievements of Order, p. 78.
\(^{268}\) Eudora Welty, One Writer's Beginnings, p. 178.
To some extent Eudora Welty is indebted to William Faulkner as for as techniques are considered. Echoes of the senior artist can be seen in the projections of the inner life of her characters. This is because she too is a Southern literary artist who efficiently tried her hand in developing new methods to convey the inner atmosphere and feelings of human beings. Elizabeth Bowens proudly praises Eudora Welty as a creative genius, Ann Porter extends her tribute for the originality and variety of material in her fictions Maureen Howard, summing up the achievements of Eudora Welty says that her art of telling stories in straight forward and simple. There is in her stories.

Liveliness and felicity, tenderness and unexpectedness, grace and humour, praise of life, and the good backbone of succinctness that only the most highly imaginative stories possess. 

Robert Penn Warren's literary regime is a vast one, which covers every area of literature. His contribution to American literature is tremendous. His ceaseless efforts as a man of letters won him great laurels. His techniques bear witness that he is a creative writer who has mastery over five different literary genres. He succeeded in establishing himself as poet, fictionalist, dramatist, critic and biographer. He resorted to a variety of techniques to achieve grandeur and international reputation. With his technical virtuosity he was able to give shape and form to his fictions. In short his works are a fine integration of form and meaning.

Robert Penn Warren is a marvellous combination of a teacher and a literary figure. He is closely akin to T.S. Eliot as far as his literary merits are concerned. His experience in teaching and his ability in creative writing provide him with a style of his own. A detailed study of his poems and fictions reveals that he was greatly influenced by writers like Theodore Dreiser, William Faulkner and Ernest Hemingway.

He is a typical Southerner who takes great pride in presenting his Kentucky in rich variety. Since all his works are localised in Kentucky region, the language he chooses is purely realistic. He is a regional spokesman who makes his characters speak his native dialect. This language goes hand in hand with his narrative purpose. Henry Rago remarks on Robert Penn Warren's use of language thus.

The language does all the work. It does all the slowing down, and the speeding up; it controls all the tone and volume; and it controls the reader; you read the book not at your own pace but at Mr. Warren's . . . .

Robert Penn Warren's use of language has many characteristic features. His use of Southern dialect best suits his Southern characters. His colloquial dialect lends charm and realism to his characters. What distinguishes him from the other regional writers of the South is the many sidedness of his talent. His novels are marked by a variety of stylization. As a poet he fills his novels with rhetorical devices, images and symbols, myths and Biblical allusions. His artistic eye elaborates the pictorial quality of the locale, environment and the climate.

All the King's Men is a political novel remarkable for its sheer technical virtuosity. The success of this fiction hinges on its philosophical aspects and the language pattern he depends on. There is smoothness and elegance in his prose. His simple expression is comprised in an alternation of long and short sentences,

"There is one he has finished", the scholarly attorney said and pointed at another corner of the room where another piece of plywood was propped up. I went to examine it. At one end, the figure of an angel, with wings and flowing drapery, had been executed in bas-relief in what looked like putty. . . \(^{271}\)

Robert Penn Warren, like William Faulkner, is fond of certain words to be repeated often, and like Eudora Welty, he uses a string of adjectives, Commenting on conversation he says, it throws light on the characters and caries the story forward. Madison Jones is of opinion that,

The novel's great range, its subtlety and rhetorical brilliance, and above all its swarm of lining human beings must give is substantial place not only in Warren's cannon but in our recent literature. . . \(^{272}\)

The secret of Robert Penn Warren's greatness lies in the remarkable fact that he is a born story teller. He himself accepted that he is fond of telling tales. Hailing from the South he had great love for folk tales and folk-lores. Robert Penn Warren knew that folk tales are necessary for the creation of myths. He

\(^{271}\) Robert Penn Warren All the Kings Men, p. 271
being an imaginative writer is fascinated by myths. He finds them as effective instruments to project his thoughts and the hidden truths of his land. Myth thus occupies an important place in his poems and fictions. Marshal Walker remarks that a short story eventually becomes a myth in the hands of Robert Penn Warren. His major works are rich in symbols, images and metaphors which enable the writer to create a mythical atmosphere.

Robert Penn Warren always employs apt symbols and images while introducing his themes and characters. They also serve as important elements for the setting of his works. It is said that Robert Penn Warren in his first paragraphs or pages presents his themes and symbols that are to be developed throughout. The characters in All The King's Men are wholly symbolic. Willie Stark one of the chief characters stands for man's struggle towards integration,

His downfall is a symbol of disintegration brought about by modern man's attempt to control the external world through will guided by understanding.

Jack Burden as his name suggests carries on the burden of life, and Tom Stark stands for human incorrigibility.

Robert Penn Warren makes use of striking metaphors to emphasise his symbolism. Jack Burden is awakened by his mother's scream in the middle of night. It signifies the scream of labour pain which perhaps gives him a new mother and father. It also indicates that Jack is reborn. His search for womb state of innocence is seen in his affair with Anne. When he discovers that Anne

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has become his Boss's mistress Jack flees to the west to drown himself. Thus
the protagonist journey to the west becomes symbolical. It is a search for self
and knowledge and for a better state of living.

Highway 58 is a symbol to reveal man's journey to political evil. Domestic
animals are chosen as symbols to associate Willie Stark with his brute nature,

Also in many of the images, there is an equating of Willie's
constituency with brute nature: "the gangs of people who
looked at me with the country man's slow, full, curious lack
of shame, and didn't make room for me to pass until I was
charging them down, the way a cow won't get out of your
way until your radiator damn near bats her in the
underslung slats"...

Robert Penn Warren being a Christian writer proclaims the sovereignty of God
and His omnipotence in his fictions. Christian symbols are lavishly strewn in his
poems and fictions. Man suffers because of the original sin committed by our
first parents. He says that in Adam's fall we sinned. In the first chapter of All
the King's Men it is said that "man is conceived in sin and born in corruption".
Robert Penn Warren is constantly aware that men are born into a world of
responsibility and guilt. Every Southerner exposes the truth that man should
seek redemption at any cost by retreating to the valuable past. His fiction All
the King's Men bears witness that he is a religious seeker whose style is Biblical.

274 Norton R. Girault, The Narrator's Mind as Symbol: An Analysis of All the King's Men.
p. 37-38.
to be separate from God is to be sinful. The creation of evil is therefore the index of God's glory and His power. That has to be so that the creation of good might be the index of man's glory and power. But by God's help. By His help and in His wisdom. . . .

The story of All the King's Men is narrated in first person. This narrative technique gives perfect unity and clarity to his fiction. There is irony, satire and humour in the voice of the narrator. The flash back technique permits the reader to juxtapose the past and the present. The reader is forced to get involved and share the experience of his characters. The reader gets identified with the fictional life of his characters.

He is vicariously living with the fictional life of that character. . . .

The superiority of his fiction All the King's Men is a technical one. Robert Penn Warren has mastery over the technique point of view,

The secret of the greatness of All the King's Men lies in the juxtaposition of Willie Stark's and Jack Burden's attitudes and responses . . .

Jack Burden's point of view provided the reader a clean understanding of Willie Stark's life and career,

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275 Robert Penn Warren, All the King's Men, p. 600.
277 S.B. Mathur, American Fiction: The Techniques of Point of View, p. 35
It is an act of discovery, Jack Burden's point of view is an act of discovery -- discovery of self -- which in turn lends perspective to the story of Willie Stark. . . .

Thus the twentieth century bears witness to a series of innovations and experimentation in art and literature. James Joyce's Ulysses and T.S. Eliot's The Waste Land brought a revolution in literature. The influence of James Joyce and T.S. Eliot can be traced in the novels of William Faulkner. He was sensitive to their new theories in psychology, ethnology and mythology. They accepted certain Freudian theories that suited their needs. The technique of stream-of-consciousness was brought to bring out the nervous energy behind human drives and to explore the unconscious and the subconscious mind of the characters. Another important aspect of Freud's theory was the relationship between parents and children called the Oedipus complex. William Faulkner also throws light on neurosis and madness discussed by Freud. These elements of Freud's psychology are found in The Sound and the Fury and in As I Lay Dying. The interior monologue technique provided the reader a direct introduction into the interior life of the character without the intrusion of the author. William Faulkner is no original innovator of this technique but the weaving of the past and present is William Faulkner's own technique. In The Sound and the Fury he does not play the role of a narrator. The characters through their soliloquies express their impression and memories. He uses the flash back technique to juxtapose the past and the present.

278 S.B. Mathur, American Fiction : The Techniques of Point of View, p. 40.
The use of analogies is another technical innovation derived from Freud. This is happily used by William Faulkner, Eudora Welty and Robert Penn Warren. William Faulkner and Robert Penn Warren being poets were in the habit of introducing metaphors, symbols and analogies in their prose narrative. All the three fictionalists were noted for their adoption of mythical methods. These modes were carefully introduced to illuminate their intended meanings. They set their fictions against the background of myths, the Christian myth, themes of love and sacrifice, death and resurrection. This is closely followed by William Faulkner in his *The Sound and the Fury*.

The technical innovations of William Faulkner, Eudora Welty and Robert Penn Warren exhibit a careful balance between realism and symbolism. Their originality and experimentation, their right medium and right artistic expression established a perfect fusion and harmony between form and theme.