SYMBOLISM

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

About symbols in his works, Faulkner himself says that:

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

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

2Robert A. Jellife, ed., Faulkner at Nagano, p. 68.
they are born and brought up. Besides it, we find his characters emmeshed in hope and despair and hopelessly entangled in the guilt of slavery, which appears to be an unresolvable problem and from which it is difficult for them to extricate themselves. They live in a society which is intolerant of what the words "nigger" and "miscegenation" mean. Faulkner gives hidden meanings to these words in his works. He dramatizes and individualizes words and a situation in such a way that the denotative meanings become superfluous while the connotative meanings gain importance.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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4The Sound and the Fury, p. 67.
effort to recapture the past brings out their tensions.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

... "I wont! I wont! I have bought immunity. I have paid. I have paid." 6

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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8Absalom, Absalom! p. 8.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

> This episode symbolizes the main currents of Joe's adult life. His consciousness of expiated guilt becomes involved with the belief that he is a part negro and is in need of moral absolution. His experience with the dietitian, herself a food symbol confirms his revulsion against food, money and woman."

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He remembered that the dietitian had given him a dollar as a bribe to conceal the sin committed by her. He remembered how Mrs. McEachern had encouraged him to commit a sin by stealing money. He remembered how she brought the food for him without the knowledge of her husband. Joe does not hate punishment or injustice but his heart is filled with immense hatred for woman.

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

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

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

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

\(^{12}\)Light in August, p. 128.

\(^{13}\)Ibid., p. 179.
a hatred for woman, food and money but it is Bobbie, who completes the task left incomplete by the dietitian. She acquaints him with all the vices of the corrupt society of city.

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

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

His innocence about sex is revealed in the lines:

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

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

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

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

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

'Bastard! Son of a bitch! Getting me into a jam, that always treated you like you were a white man. A white man!'... 'He told me himiself he was a nigger! The son of a bitch! Me taking for nothing a nigger son of a bitch that would get me in a jam with clodhopper police.16

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

20 *Absalom, Absalom!* p. 164.

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

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

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

> New Hope three miles. New Hope three miles. That's what they mean by the womb of time: the agony and the despair of spreading bones, the hard girdle in which lie the outraged entrails of events.\(^{22}\)

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

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

\(^{22}\)The Sound and the Fury & *As I lay Dying*, p. 424.
the subconscious of the different characters. New Hope is symbolic of the aspirations of the Bundrens. As a matter of fact, it is not their devotion to the deceased member of the family that makes them carry her dead body to Jefferson but a concern with some selfish motives. Dewey Dell feels that in case Anse directs the cart towards the cemetery of the Bundren family, it will not be possible for her to go to Jefferson to purchase the pills for abortion which she needs badly. It is not only Dewey Dell whose personal motive is involved but Anse's interest is also involved. In fact, Anse wants to get a set of dentures:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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\(^{24}\)The Sound and the Fury & As I lay Dying, pp. 347-348.
being full of sound and fury, the story of some incidents of man's life of hope and bitterness. Here, Dewey Dell is hopeful that she would be getting a chance to go to Jefferson where she would get her pregnancy cleared. Thus she would kill Darl in a sense that she would not give others a chance to know, what is already known to Darl. In the mean time, she fearfully watches the signboard 'New Hope three miles' and cannot say definitely what is in the 'womb of time.'

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

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

> It surged up out of the water and stood for an instant upright upon that surging and heaving desolation like Christ.\(^25\)

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

On the surface level, it appears to be a

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

I knew that it had been, not that my aloneness had to be violated over and over each day, but that it had never been violated until Cash came.26

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

26The Sound and the Fury & As I lay Dying, p. 464.
dissolution of one's identity - one's complete self. But Addie even after her marriage feels isolated. "... he was he and I was I." Anse can never understand that marriage is the communion of two bodies as well as two souls to gain harmony and peace. So Addie wants to violate herself to kill her isolation. Being dissatisfied with Anse, she drifts towards Whitefield but he was "...dressed in sin like a gallant garment ..." which means that he too believes in the abstract meaning of the words love, sin, salvation etc., and not in the true spirit. So Addie is disgusted with men and still lives out of a sense of duty:

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I \text{ believed that the reason was the duty to the alive, to the terrible blood, the red bitter flood boiling through the land.}\]

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

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

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

... when a man and a woman are going to have a child, that the Lord will see that they are all together when the right time comes.  

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

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

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

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

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31 *Light in August*, p. 306.
I gathered that his idea was that Goodwin and the woman should both be burned as a sole example to that child; the child to be reared and taught the English language for the sole end of being taught that it was begot in sin by two people who suffered by fire for having begot it. Good God, can a man, a civilized man, seriously ..."