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"THE TRIUMPH OF THE MEAN: FAULKNER'S AS I LAY
DYING"

It is probably a good idea to begin with a brief review, even if only on a superficial level, of the panorama of critical opinion which this novel has given rise to, and which, as with any great author, offers all kinds of disparate, and even contradictory opinions. Moreover, one need only review the specialized critical bibliographies with a bit of attention to see that among all the numerous studies on Faulkner, many can soon be dispensed with. Faulkner students would do well to limit themselves to those few critics overwhelmingly considered of sound judgement by those bibliographies, especially when looking for general works which can serve as an introduction for the interested reader. Before arriving at any conclusions, however, many inadequate, unjust and even erroneous articles must be ruled out. In a book of essays on the works of Faulkner published in 1982, Warren Beck includes one entitled "Faulkner's Point of View"¹ where the author reviews a wide range of derogatory and even insulting studies on the works of Faulkner, "and such," he says, "is almost always the tone toward him in those volumes on contemporary fiction which American professors write for their students and for one another."² It is a question of a grave lack of appreciation and critical sensibility, which in his opinion seems based on two false premises: "first, that Faulkner has no ideas, no point of view, and, second, that consequently he is melodramatic, a mere sensationalist."³ The critics who have come to this attitude, he goes on to say, are "Those who lack Faulkner's knowledge of good and evil, or lack his courage in facing

knowledge."⁴ On the other hand, "a virile critical approach will first recognize the coherent rationality and humanity of Faulkner's point of view, and might then profitably go on to its particular source, in Faulkner's own experience and in his contemplation of his native South, past and present, and so might finally come to a reappraisal of his narrative techniques, so brilliantly adapted to his profound artistic visions."⁵

Many of the early critics of Faulkner, however, did not share this attitude. Those few, then, who go against the majority, stand out sharply. Robert Penn Warren, for example, in a commentary entitled "William Faulkner," published in two issues of The New Republic ⁶ points out the large dosis of "sympathy and poetry" that emerges from the heroism of the Bundrens and after a general analysis (motivated by the publication of The Portable Faulkner, edited by Malcolm Cowley in 1946) concludes that the world of Yoknapatawpha is perfectly defined by its creator, or "sole owner and proprietor," so that As I Lay Dying demonstrates without ambiguities that not all poor whites are like the Snopes. On the whole, Warren feels that "Here is a novelist who, in mass of work, in scope of material, in range of effect, in reportorial accuracy and symbolic subtlety, in philosophical weight can be put beside the masters of our own past literature."⁷ All of this in the midst of the misunderstanding and scorn of specialized criticism, as Warren Beck had already pointed out in his 1941 essay, quoted above.

Among the works of a general nature on Faulkner, two are particularly outstanding: Cleanth Brooks' The Yoknapatawpha Country (1963), which deals only with the novels of Yoknapatawpha, thus excluding Soldier's Pay, Mosquitoes, Pylon, The Wild Palms and A Fable, and Michael Millgate's The Achievement of William Faulkner (1966). Both

authors coincide in pointing out that one of the keys to the novelist's depth of vision lies within his "provincialism." It is through this provincialism that Faulkner unveils the values and characteristics of humankind that are truly universal. If regarding As I Lay Dying, Brooks prefers to center on the heroism of the Bundrens and the epic nature of their journey, ("Odyssey of the Bundrens" is the title of the chapter dedicated to this novel), Millgate, on the other hand, focuses more on the external aspects; the history of its composition, the process of revision from manuscript to printed text and the study of sources form the central themes of his study. Milgate does not overlook, however, other more intrinsic problems involved in the appreciation of the work and his analysis of how the multiple point of view functions in the narrative makes his study one of the best general introductions that has been written on this novel.

Excellent as well, and highly influential on later critics, is Olga Vickery's The Novels of William Faulkner: A Critical Interpretation (1959). She offers a critical reading of each one of the novels published up until The Town (1957) and ends with a chapter that summarizes Faulkner's techniques, themes, and philosophy of man and the world. The chapter on As I Lay Dying is a revised version of an article published in 1950 in which she considers that the central theme is not the fulfillment of a promise, but rather Addie herself and her relationship with each of the members of her family. This article has been the source of a series of interpretations, which have become quite popular, in the sense that Cash develops, evolves and grows through his suffering.

One final work of interest among the general studies, although perhaps of lesser importance, is Irving Howe's William Faulkner: A Critical Study

(1952) which continues to be a good introduction to the work of Faulkner. Howe emphasizes the moral vision of the novelist, his use of Southern history and its social organization in clans, rather than in the conventional system of classes. He situates As I Lay Dying within the historical and legendary context of Yoknapatawpha, and considers it the warmest and most agreeable of Faulkner's works, although for him it is not one of the major novels.

In the realm of non-Anglo-Saxon criticism, French criticism is, in my opinion, the most outstanding. Perhaps most important is the work of Michel Gresset, whose Faulkner ou la Fascination, I: Poétique du regard (1982)⁸ constitutes a perspective analysis of the poetic vision of the world in Faulkner's works. His short section on As I Lay Dying contrasts Jewel, who only uses his eyes, who is "all eyes" and who ends up blind to his identity as Oedipus, with the visionary nature of Darl, "all glance," who ends up in the schizophrenia of his last monologue when he becomes the object of his own obsession with himself. Gresset deals also with the theme of scandal, which produces horror and amazement and shock and outrage derived from the simple observation and external vision of the feat of the Bundrens and of the different personalities and circumstances.⁹

Another work of importance is the only book-length study dedicated entirely to As I Lay Dying: Faulkner's As I Lay Dying, by André Bleikasten (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1973). It is the perfect book for beginning a study of this novel, being an excellent synthesis of previous criticism and also penetrating deeper into the implicit world of the characters and the action with new perceptions.

As to the negative critical attitude, I would only like to mention, as an example of one of the

most damaging pieces towards Faulkner, the article by R. W. Franklin, "Narrative Management in As I Lay Dying," published in Modern Fiction Studies in 1967, which had an unfortunate influence on later critics. Franklin accuses Faulkner of inconsistencies in his narrative method, of anachronisms and of using unlikely facts and incidents. Almost all of his allegations have been rendered false by later critics, as for example Stephen Ross¹⁰. Another illustrative example of this kind of critical aberration can be found, relating to the purported miscalculation of dates in the pregnancy and future delivery of Dewey Dell in Richard Reed's "The Role of Chronology in Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha Fiction,"¹¹ whereas a careful reading of the text shows that this is not the case. Actually, derogatory critical allegations of this kind are based on misinterpretation and misreading; more than anything else they reveal a lack of attention, caused perhaps by prejudice of one kind or another which, as in the case of Franklin, impedes understanding of the novelist's narrative technique.

In As I Lay Dying, to begin at the beginning, William Faulkner uses, once again successfully, one of his symbolic and allusive titles based on prior texts. Up to this moment (the work in question first saw the light of day in 1930) he had published four novels: Soldier's Pay in 1926; Mosquitoes in 1927; and, two years later, first Sartoris, and then The Sound and the Fury. In the latter novel we already have an example of the same type of auspicious title where Faulkner resorts to a classic source of English literature, which, according to the information gathered by Joseph Blotner in his massive biography, Faulkner must have known well. He does not use Shakespeare for his titles after The Sound and the Fury, but he does use Biblical references, such as in Absalom,

Absalom! or in Go Down, Moses, although in the latter the original source is filtered through the popular music of the South. In Soldier's Pay, and again on other occasions, such in 1931 with Sanctuary, Faulkner plays with a kind of ironic title, taking advantage of the dominant culture of his time and region, which defines in a precise way his general attitude and his approach to the concrete world which these works describe. If the first one, Soldier's Pay, constitutes, together with Dos Passos' Three Soldiers (1921), E.E. Cummings' The Enormous Room (1922), Hemingway's A Farewell to Arms (1929), and in other literatures the regrettably forgotten In Parenthesis, by David Jones or The General, by the surprising C. S. Forester (author of novels on war at sea with Hornblower as protagonist), without overlooking the popular All Quiet in Western Front by Eric Maria Remarque; if together with all these, Soldier's Pay constitutes an excellent manifestation of the anti-war and anti-militarist spirit provoked by the First World War in certain sectors, the second, Sanctuary, satirizes in its very title one of the dearest popular beliefs of the South: the idea of woman as a vessel of all beauty and all virtue, who should be respected as one respects the temple of God. The "Sanctuary" of the title is indeed reinforced and cleared of any possible ambiguity when one looks at the name of the main character, "Temple": the spotted young woman corrupted to almost melodramatic extremes by the ambience of the new South, incarnated in the virtually stereotyped figure of the miserable and incomplete Popeye. Temple, one of Faulkner's most ambiguous and contradictory female characters, is in the beginning closely linked to the figure of the "flapper," so brilliantly described by F. Scott Fitzgerald. Her corruption, witnessed by the reader throughout her ordeal as narrated by Faulkner, stems in equal parts from active desire on the one hand, and from a passive sense of fatalism or

inevitability on the other. In a certain sense, and excepting obvious differences, it is a process not unlike that which leads to the seduction of the farmer's daughter, Dewey Dell, in As I Lay Dying. The monologue in which she describes this process becomes, excepting circumstances and environment, a precise conscious analogy to what happens to Temple during the course of her story, such as we know it, not only in Sanctuary, but also in its sequel, published twenty years later, Requiem for a Nun (1952).

We can then view in this light the Dewey Dell's "stream of consciousness" in the seventh monologue, the first (something which is indicative of the problem that obsesses her and which is her dominant preoccupation) of four in which she is protagonist: "We picked on down the row, the woods getting closer and closer and the secret shade, picking on into the secret shade with my sack and Lafe's sack. Because I said will I or wont I when the sack was half full because I said if the sack is full when we get to the woods, it wont be me. I said if it dont mean for me to do it the sack will not be full and I will turn up the next row but if the sack is full, I cannot help it. It will be that I had to do it all the time and I cannot help it. And we picked on toward the secret shade and our eyes would drown together touching on his hands and my hands and I didnt say anything. I said 'What are you doing?' and he said 'I am picking into your sack'. And so it was full when we came to the end of the row and I could not help it."¹²

What we have, then, is a non-desire that limits itself to passively leaving the initiative to the circumstances and which cannot even put up opposition when Lafe's hand actively fills her sack with cotton so that it will be full when they arrive at that "secret shade," which is simultaneously real and metaphorical. In this

splendid summary charged with suggestion and nuance, rich in the knowledge of a certain type of personality and demonstrative of an incredible intuitive capacity, we have the story of an entire process of degeneration, reflected, of course, in a very concrete ideology which influences the conduct of both young women, although in a different way for each of them. Temple comes to her own "secret shade" as the result of both her passivity and her sense of fascination for misery and evil; to use a worn-out simile, she is like a sad butterfly who finds itself fatally attracted to the brightness of the light that will destroy it.

There is one last observation to add to these preliminary remarks, aimed, on the one hand, at gaining a deeper insight into the question addressed here, and to contextualizing this examination of As I Lay Dying, on the other. The purely descriptive titles, which allude only to the atmosphere, theme, or characters of a novel, define the rest of Faulknerian production, as for example, the three accounts of the Snopes family or that of his last novel, The Reivers (1962), which the author saw published just before his death. But even these titles can mean more than what their creator perhaps meant to express. The most suggestive illustration of this point is probably that offered by his 1932 novel Light in August. When asked about his intentions concerning this title during one of his sojourns as writer-in-residence at the University of Virginia, Faulkner responded by saying that "in august in Mississippi there's a few days somewhere about the middle of the month when suddenly there's a foretaste of fall, it's cool, there's a lambency, a luminous quality to the light, as though it came not from just today but from back in the old classic times."¹³ Joseph Blotner has even identified the concrete origin of the phrase, firstly, with respect to its literal meaning, in the same work cited, Faulkner

in the University: "I used it (the title) because in my country in August there's a peculiar quality to the light and that's what the title means. It has in a sense nothing to do with the book at all, the story at all,"¹⁴ and secondly, as to its origin, in the biography also mentioned already, where he reconstructs a scene in which Estelle, the novelist's wife, makes a casual comment to him which gives him the title. In August 1931, when Faulkner was writing this novel originally titled Dark House, one afternoon as they were relaxing together on the porch of Rowan Oak (the house Faulkner bought after the publication of Sanctuary), Estelle, who was contemplating the bushes in the garden in the light of dusk, felt "struck by some hard-to-define quality about the scene."

'Bill', she said, 'does it never seem to you that the light in August is different from any other time of the year?'

He rose from his chair. 'That's it,' he said, and walked into the house."¹⁵

There was no other intent in his explanation that seemed amusing to him and which he used to answer his editor Hal Smith and others. When a pregnant woman in his region of the South was anxiously awaiting the moment of giving birth, she would say: "I'll be Light in August," or in whichever month corresponded, thus using a verbal opposition to the common expression "to be heavy with child." This explanation of the title is not only just as poetic as the first one, but is also more closely related to the story, whose protagonist, Lena Grove, will actually give birth in August, thus passing from a "heavy" state to a "light" one.¹⁶

The title As I Lay Dying, finally, can be

classed among the first of the groups described. It is an expression with a certain symbolic content, originating in a classical text, which the critic Carbel Collins identified in a 1957 article, and to which Faulkner himself sometimes referred, quoting the paragraph in question from memory (Blotner, p. 635). In Book XI of the Odyssey, the shadow of Agamemnon, conjured up by Ulysses in his descent to the underworld, tells Ulysses how his wife Clytemnestra and her lover, Aegistus, plotted and carried out his assassination by running him through with a sword in the middle of his welcoming banquet. And not even in his agony did his cruel wife (whom his son Orestes would later kill in revenge for the death of his father) feel any compassion for him: "As I Lay Dying" says Agamemnon to Ulysses in the English translation which Faulkner was familiar with (others translate the phrase as "dying though I was"), "the woman with the dog's eyes would not close my eyes for me as I descended into Hades." Beyond this, however, it is difficult to maintain the analogy. There is not much connection between Clytemnestra, the woman who "on conceiving such a great evil, bathed herself in infamy and spilled it over all women to come, even those of good works," as she is characterized by Agamemnon in the above scene, and the tormented Addie Bundren, the woman whose goodness and capacity for sacrifice together with her sense of duty, fortified by the consciousness of her infidelity (the only aspect in which she coincides with Clytemnestra), acts as a nucleus around which the Bundren family maintains its cohesion and unity. Michel Gresset, in Fascination, gives us a more subtle explanation of his title. In his opinion, the analogy between this novel and the incident in the Odyssey from which Faulkner borrows his title, lies in the fact that both provoke or can provoke the same kind of shock and outrage in the reader. Thus both stories are joined together not only by words but also by feelings.

And Carvel Collins himself, apart from suggesting some generic links with Greek myths and literary themes, cannot take the analogy much further. The correspondance with the theme of the journey, for example, as in the Odyssey itself, is undeniable. But this theme is so classic and so frequent in all literatures, that it alone cannot be used to establish very precise parallels.

The novel centers around the Bundren family, an imaginative but surprising precise, balanced and complex illustration of the world of the "poor whites of the South in the twenties and thirties, a world described by James Agee in his magnificent study Let Us Now Praise Famous Men (1941), a book which should be required reading for any reader interested in Yoknapatawpha County.

The nucleus is the mother, Addie Bundren, who lies dying while her children and her husband await the moment of her death and prepare to comply with her wish to be buried in the cemetery of Jefferson, beside her ancestors. She made her husband promise this to her some time before: "And when Darl was born I asked Anse to promise to take me back to Jefferson when I died" (159). Since Frenchman's Bend is more than forty miles from Jefferson, the journey by mule wagon is no small undertaking. The family, however, apparently out of respect for her wish, is ready to comply. Actually, all members of the family have their own personal, hidden, selfish motives. Thus Addie, although dead, is still being utilized by her husband and children, just as they have always utilized her during her life. She is shrewdly aware of this, and this is what gives rise to her patient, conformist pessimism and desperation. In the only monologue (of the 59 which make up the novel) where her voice is the protagonist, she tells us: "I could just remember how my father used to say that the reason for living was to get ready to stay dead a long time"

(155.) She is a woman with a somewhat higher cultural level than those with whom she was to spend her life (she had been a schoolteacher) and she is conscious of the selfishness of those around her: "And when I would have to look at them day after day, each with his and her secret and selfish thought, and blood strange to each other's blood and strange to mine, and think that this seemed to be the only way I could get ready to stay dead, I would hate my father for having even planted me" (155.)

Nonetheless, in spite of this negative vision of her family, there coexists within her another, contradictory, force which keeps her alive and generates her generous and disinterested conduct: "I believed that the reason (for living) was the duty to the alive, to the terrible blood, the red bitter blood boiling through the land" (161.)

She comes to this conclusion through self-reflection. From her original environment she preserves an intense concern with words, which nonetheless she profoundly mistrusts: "I learned that words are no good; that words don't ever fit even what they are trying to say at" (157.) In a certain sense, this reflects the concern of the novelist himself, who must habitually struggle toward finding the right word at the right time. Faulkner's character Gavin Stevens, the lawyer, a significant figure in so many of his novels (Go Down, Moses, Intruder in the Dust, Light in August, The Mansion, Requiem for a Nun, The Town) and short stories, could be seen "now and then squatting among the overalls on the porches of country stores for a whole summer afternoon, talking to them in their own idiom about nothing at all."¹⁷ We can see how this description could be applied in all justice to Faulkner himself an intense and constant observer of people and scenes which later on, elaborated by his imagination, would populate

his personal microcosm of Yoknapatawpha County.

That this was something which concerned the novelist in the early years of his literary career can be witnessed in some of his previous works. In the first of them, Soldier's Pay, Joe Gilligan answers a question about "how he knows so much about people" with a meaningful thought: "'It ain't knowing, it's saying things. I think I've done it though practice. By talking so much, 'he replied with sardonic humor. I talk so much I got to say the right thing sooner or later' "18.

His second novel, Mosquitoes, contains a similar assertion: "Words are like acorns, you know. Every one of 'em, you're bound to get a tree sooner or later," says Fairchild. The Semitic man responds with another question: "If you just talk long enough, you're bound to say the right thing some day. Is that what you mean?"19

Naturally there is a certain discrepancy between this faith in the expressive potential of words and the skepticism that Addie's thought on the matter reveals. It is not necessary to prove that Faulkner, like any poet or novelist, was preoccupied with this question; this can be considered axiomatic. That this concern should be extrapolated to his characters is also logical. And the contradictory attitude that can be inferred from the different character's declarations testifies perhaps as much to the novelist's ambivalence regarding the problem as to the precision of his characterization. On the one hand we have Gilligan and Fairchild, members of privileged, cultured social stratum, accustomed to intellectual discussion. On the other, the world of the "poor whites," whose basic concern is mere survival and who have lacked the education and the spiritual cultivation that the former characters flourished under. Addie has enough education to be

aware of the value of words. Neither her husband, nor her children (not even Darl, her second son, who is also the most cultivated and reflexive, and who vies with Jewel for the position of being his mother's favorite) can do as much. But for her, words are nothing more than a concave mirror, inadequate and awkward, which deforms and corrupts her own hard experience. They are by no means the expressions of that experience. When her first child, Cash, is born, she realizes that "motherhood was invented by someone who had a word for it because the ones that had the children didn't care whether there was a word for it or not" (157); and even the word love is equal in her mind and sensibility to the personality of her husband, who is the one who uses it, while she has no need for it in order to attend to and love her child. In her mind both concepts are tantamount: "Let Anse use it, if he wants to. So that it was Anse or love; love or Anse: It didn't matter" (158).

If "motherhood" and "love" are terms that try to express the most noble and positive feelings that human beings are capable of, then at the other extreme we have "sin." "Sin" for Addie describes and qualifies her richest, most valuable and most positive experience: her illegitimate love for the Reverend Whitfield, whose secret fruit is her third son, Jewel, in many ways almost the favourite son, the closest to his mother together with Darl. Addie discovers that if her love for Whitfield is synonymous with sin, then this word, too, lacks meaning: "people to whom sin is just a matter of words, to them salvation is just words too" (163.) For her, on the contrary, words are confusedly elevated above their usual hypocritical meaning and acquire new, firm significance even if this goes against her family's and neighbours' opinions: "One day I was talking to Cora. She prayed for me because she believed I was blind to sin" (163.) But not only is this not so: besides not being blind to

sin, Addie has reinterpreted it and has been able to neutralize it and compensate for it. "And so I have cleaned my house" (162.) The consequence of this inner cleansing is her return to Anse: "I gave Anse Dewell Dell to negative Jewel. Then I gave him Vardaman to replace the child I had robbed him off" (162.) With this, Addie Bundren considers herself at peace with the world, and what is more important, with herself.

Over this bitter, though rich and human world of Addie Bundren's experience, lies the complex matter of her family and the journey they undertake in order to comply with her wish. This is then, regarding the external action of the novel, essentially the account of a journey, with similarities which connect it to other great stories of the same theme throughout the history of world literature, beginning with the Book of Exodus through the great epic poems of the classical Greco-Latin period, The Odyssey and The Aeneid; or the English The Pilgrim's Progress; up to American Literature itself with Moby-Dick and Huckleberry Finn.

The journey of the Bundrens, however, naturally has individualizing characteristics which make it peculiar and unique. Huck Finn's journey, to take a close example, concludes with the promise of a new start: "I got to light out for the territory," says Huck, who faces the risk of being civilized if he does not. In a confused way he has intuited what T.S. Eliot will formulate with precision and expressive power in a propitious phrase from his Four Quartets: "The river is within us"²⁰. In another way, Huck receives also an adequate response in Hemingway: "going to another country doesn't make any difference.... You can't get away from yourself by moving from one place to another"²¹. Yet this obscure inner impulse is not what moves the Bundrens through multiple hardships

and accidents that have to do with the most elemental forces of Creation: the land they must cross; the water of the swelling river that almost cuts the journey in the bud; the fire in the barn that is set by Darl and from which Jewel rescues his mother's casket in spite of grave personal risk. Addie had already revealed this to her neighbour Cora Tull as a meaningful premonition: Jewel, says Addie, "is my cross and he will be my salvation. He will save me from the water and from the fire" (154.)

This struggle against the hostile forces of Nature and the triumph of the human spirit over them is what gives the odyssey of the Bundrens its value as universal epic. And it is even richer, in my opinion, in that the conquerors are not classical heroes but rather poor, humble and even selfish and mean human beings, who in their different personalities do not stand out above their readers; who are not pillars of generosity or strength, performers of heroic feats and, as such, unreachable paradigms of what is most noble and valuable in the spirit of men and women. They are just simple, modest farmers, whose hidden personal motives are in direct proportion to the modest level of their own lives' horizons.

Indeed, I have already stated that the motive of the trip is none other than to bury Addie in the same earth as her ancestors and this is the reasoning put forth by the Bundrens to their neighbours, who view the journey, given the circumstances, as a kind of absurd madness. But deep down each one has his her own unconfessed objectives for going to the big city. Anse manages to get his false teeth, and incidentally, a new wife who brings along the gramophone that everyone wanted. Dewey Dell looks for the miraculous product that will abort her child fathered by Lefe, with the few dollars that he managed to give her, along

with the instructions on how to achieve it, all of which makes for some of the most sadly comic scenes of the novel when the poor girl is deceived and cheated by the clerks at the pharmacy in town. Finally, for little Vardaman, the journey holds the excitement of visiting the big city, eating bananas and contemplating in the shop windows the toy train which his sister has described in full detail.

And thus, along with their smallness, these characters are motivated by small, petty things. The nobleness of their feat, paradoxically, rises above those limitations and in the end confers on them their dignity and their universal symbolic value while at the same time, without losing sight of the land they inhabit, both Faulkner and his characters demonstrate more than amply in As I Lay Dying what Robert Penn Warren pointed out in 1946: that not all "poor whites" are like the Snopes.

This is Faulkner's faith and belies the allegations that he is a fundamentally pessimistic, even nihilistic writer. Faulkner has formulated his credo in many different ways along his rich and complex career. From the very beginning to his very end, and in the middle, he has incessantly repeated it. The Bundrens are an excellent paradigm of two ideas which are at the center of the novelist's thought and conviction: two ideas that have enough weight in his consciousness and in his imaginative world to make them prominent in his brief but significant Nobel Prize acceptance speech: man, his efforts, his voice, may be and in fact often are puny. And even so, in spite of it, that puny man has something within himself that will make him "not merely endure: he will prevail."²²

This is finally Faulkner's faith and Faulkner's unrepeatable lesson.

Notes

1. Originally published in College English in 1941, reprinted in this same journal in 1960 and again reprinted in Leland H. Cox, editor, William Faulkner: A Critical Collection, Gale Research Co., Detroit 1982.
2. Leland H. Cox, editor, op. cit., p. 425.
3. Ibidem.
4. Ibidem. p. 439.
5. Ibidem.
6. Robert Penn Warren, "William Faulkner", The New Republic, August 12 and 26, 1946. Reprinted in Frederick Hoffman and Olga Vickery, editors, Three Decades of Criticism, Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich, New York and London 1960 (1963), pp. 109-124.
7. Frederick Hoffman and Olga Vickery, editors, op. cit., p. 124.
8. There is a very recent translation by Thomas West, entitled Fascination: Faulkner's Fiction, 1919-1936, Duke University Press, Durham and London 1989.
9. Ibidem. pp. 215-228.
10. Stephen Ross, " 'Voice' in Narrative Texts: The example of As I Lay Dying", PMLA, March 1979, pp. 300-310.
11. Richard Reed, "The Role of Chronology in Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha Fiction," Southern Literary Journal, Fall 1974, pp. 22-48.
12. William Faulkner, As I Lay Dying, "The

corrected text". edited by Noel Polk, notes by Joseph Blotner, Vintage Books, New York 1987, pp. 23-24.

13. Frederick L. Gwynn and Joseph Blotner, editors, Faulkner in the University, Vintage Books, New York 1965, p. 199.

14. Ibidem, p. 74.

15. Joseph Blotner, William Faulkner: A Biography, Random House, New York 1974, p. 702.

16. Ibidem.

17. William Faulkner, Light in August, Modern Library, New York 1968, p. 420.

18. William Faulkner, Soldiers' Pay, Liveright, New York 1954, p. 41.

19. William Faulkner, Mosquitoes, Liveright, New York 1955, p. 210.

20. T.S. Eliot, Four Quartets, 3, 1, line 15.

21. Ernest Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises, Scribner's, New York 1954, p. 11.

22. William Faulkner, "The Stockholm Address," in Frederick Hoffman and Olga Vickery, editors, op. cit., p. 348.