UNIVERSIDAD COMPLUTENSE DE MADRID
FACULTAD DE FILOLOGÍA

TESIS DOCTORAL

Time and memory in Faulkner: a critique of modern identity

Tiempo y memoria en Faulkner : crítica de la indentidad moderna

MEMORIA PARA OPTAR AL GRADO DE DOCTOR

PRESENTADA POR

Raquel González Martín

Director

Eduardo Valls Oyarzun

Madrid

© Raquel González Martín, 2021

UNIVERSIDAD COMPLUTENSE DE MADRID

FACULTAD DE FILOLOGÍA

TESIS DOCTORAL

TIME AND MEMORY IN FAULKNER:
A CRITIQUE OF MODERN IDENTITY

TIEMPO Y MEMORIA EN FAULKNER:
CRÍTICA DE LA IDENTIDAD MODERNA

MEMORIA PARA OPTAR AL GRADO DE DOCTOR

PRESENTADA POR

RAQUEL GONZÁLEZ MARTÍN

DIRECTOR

EDUARDO VALLS OYARZUN

Universidad Complutense de Madrid
Facultad de Filología

Tesis doctoral

Time and Memory in Faulkner: A Critique of Modern Identity

Tiempo y memoria en Faulkner: Crítica de la identidad moderna

Memoria para optar al grado de Doctor
presentada por

Raquel González Martín

Dirigida por el Doctor

Eduardo Valls Oyarzun

Septiembre 2020

AGRADECIMIENTOS

Cuando pienso en mi tesis, se me revuelve el estómago. Mi marido puede confirmar que es de las peores sensaciones que pueden sobrevenirme. Esta tesis se ha llevado demasiado de mí, dejando cicatrices y desgarros a su paso. O quizá sea yo quien le haya dado tanto. Sea como fuere, hay muchas personas que, directa o indirectamente, contribuyeron a matar al dragón. Por ello, les estaré eternamente agradecida.

Le agradezco a Eduardo Valls, mi tutor y director, que me introdujera a la obra de William Faulkner. No soy capaz de concebir quién o qué sería yo hoy de no haber escogido esa asignatura en la carrera. Gracias, Eduardo, por tu consejo y supervisión durante este proceso.

A mi segunda familia, Jose, Carmen, Elena y Diego, por apoyarme incondicionalmente durante todos estos años. Sois la mejor familia de repuesto que alguien podría desear. Gracias por acogerme y hacerme merecedora de ser una más. El peso de este manuscrito es en parte vuestro.

A Carlos, cómo no, por irradiar tiempos lejanos. Siempre has sabido ser la constancia en el vaivén. Eres las paredes con baldosas de colores, las persianas derruidas y el eco chocando por los pasillos. Eres la luz de la vidriera en el vestíbulo. Gracias por iluminar, aun brevemente, parte de mi oscuridad.

A Joaquín, *my brother from another mother*. Por tanto, y con tan poco esfuerzo. Pocos pilares tengo en mi vida que sostengan tanto peso. Tú eres uno de ellos, uno de los gordos. Muro de carga, sótano acabado, cimientos de hormigón. Aguantas la calma y la tempestad sin resquebrajarte ni un poquito. Gracias por ser impertérrito.

Muchas personas en y de diferentes continentes han contribuido a que esta tesis esté hoy terminada, tanto animándome a continuar como distrayéndome de ella. Sabéis quiénes sois, aunque no os nombre. A todos vosotros, gracias.

En particular, gracias a mi tía Ana, quien más que ser mi madrina es mi hada madrina. Gracias por ser un ejemplo de firmeza y dedicación.

Gracias a mi padre y a mi madre, por no dudar nunca de mí. No es sino por vuestra insistencia en empujarme más allá que esta tesis puede guardarse hoy en una estantería. Gracias por enseñarme que las cosas hay que hacerlas bien o no hacerlas. Es por ello que me he vaciado durante años en este manuscrito en vez de entregar un manuscrito vacío. Podría decir que nadie me ha regalado nunca nada y que casi todo es fruto de mi esfuerzo y sacrificio, pero no sería verdad. No recuerdo todo lo que os debo, pero cada deuda me ha convertido en lo que soy.

Gracias a mi hermano, la deuda más grande que tengo con mis padres. Gracias por ser tan diferente a mí y que, a la vez, seamos la misma persona. Siempre serás mi reflejo en el espejo, mi otra mitad.

A Jazz y a Blues, quienes han supervisado la concepción y escritura de esta tesis desde sus orígenes. Sois la prueba viviente de qeu el legnuaje no s enitas ral hyem gotbraf pejdsa

A Álvaro, quien cada día estuvo a cargo de ponerme la armadura y afilar mi espada. Esta tesis sólo la han sufrido dos personas, y tú eres una de ellas. Nunca podré recompensártelo. Me has enseñado que las cosas han de hacerse con dedicación, pero también con furia. Eres mi cargamento de rabia, mi fuego que todo lo purifica. Eres quien me fuerza a recoger las cenizas cuando ya lo he quemado todo. Me siento tremendamente afortunada de tenerte a mi lado, siempre despertándome del letargo. En un mundo justo, tu firma iría junto a la mía. Nunca habría podido terminarla sin ti. Gracias por ser mi puerta roja.

Esta tesis empezó a escribirse en Boston, Massachusetts, y se terminó en Santiago de Chile, habiendo descansado a ratos en Madrid, Moralzarzal y Salamanca. Es en especial a la ciudad de Boston a la que más le debo, en cuyo río todavía se intuye el infortunio de Quentin Compson.

Drowned in the odour of honeysuckle.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!"

He took his vorpal sword in hand:
Long time the manxome foe he sought—
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
And stood awhile in thought.

And as in uffish thought he stood,
The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,
And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through and through
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
He went galumphing back.

"And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!"
He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

Lewis Carroll, "Jabberwocky"

a mis padres y mi hermano

a Álvaro, por matar dragones

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS …………………………………………………. iii

ABSTRACT ………………………………………………………………... v
RESUMEN …………………………………………………………..…... ix

INTRODUCTION ………………………………………………………….. 1
CHAPTERS:

1/ A PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH
TO TIME AND SPACE …………………………………………… 11

2/ PSYCHIC LIFE AND
THE REPRESENTATION OF IDENTITY ………………………... 57

3/ THE ARISING OF MEMORY
THROUGH TEMPORALITY ………………………………………. 77

4/ THE LANGUAGE OF CONSCIOUSNESS ………………………. 125

5/ YOKNAPATAWPHA,
A COUNTY OF SPEAKING GHOSTS …………………………… 145

6/ VOICES OF THE SELF:
LANGUAGE DISORDER AND DISTRESS ……………………… 169

7/ THE AGONY OF TIME;
OR, THE FRAGMENTATION OF MEMORY ……………………. 209

8/ INHERITED DOOM AND
THE ANCESTRY OF IDENTITY ………………………………... 259

CONCLUSIONS ……………………………………………………………… 285

WORKS CITED ……………………………………………………………... 297
LIST OF FIGURES ………………………………………………………….. 305
APPENDIX: THE MAPS OF YOKNAPATAWPHA ……………………..…... 307

List of Abbreviations

Where appropriate, the abbreviations listed below substitute the name of the author and the title of the work in the references for the in-text citations. All citations appear in their original format unless otherwise stated.

Works by William Faulkner:

AA	*Absalom, Absalom!*
AILD	*As I Lay Dying*
GDM	*Go Down, Moses*
LIA	*Light in August*
SF	*The Sound and the Fury*

Works by Henri Bergson:

MM	*Matter and Memory*
TFW	*Time and Free Will, an Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*

ABSTRACT

The present text—titled “Time and Memory in Faulkner: A Critique of Modern Identity” in English, and “Tiempo y memoria en Faulkner: Crítica de la identidad moderna” in Spanish—explores the manifestation of consciousness and identity in a sample of Modernist works by William Faulkner. These texts—*The Sound and the Fury*, *As I Lay Dying*, *Light in August*, *Absalom, Absalom!* and *Go Down, Moses*—are eminently preoccupied with the notion of consciousness and the multiple ways in which it can be arrested and exhibited in literature.

In order to arrest the consciousness of the individual throughout words, the Modernist corpus of texts makes use of a varied set of mechanisms which highly interests the present study. The different manifestations of language, together with the persistent temporal digressions that shape these novels, are taken into account as the foundation from which memory arises in the literary medium. However, to analyse these terms and its joining, this study must first establish a philosophical framework regarding the notions of time, temporality, space, and consciousness.

To that end, the works of Henri Bergson and Martin Heidegger are examined as the fundamental rationales that establish a complex structure through which time, space, and the individual’s self are (dis)arranged. Similarly, Jean-Jacques Lecercle’s elemental analysis on the intertwining of language and identity in literature, and the many conflicts he observes between the community and the

individual, introduce some necessary notions that will later be applied to the Faulknerian corpus.

The main objective of the study is to explore the emergence of the individual's identity and to establish the basic components upon which its final shape relies. Accordingly, the present text will focus on the abundant and frequent demonstrations of the stream of consciousness which Faulkner introduces in his works. Being prominently concerned with the examination of the inner conflicts of the subject, the mentioned works by Faulkner present multiple portrayals of the struggles inherent to the consciousness of the individual.

Memory is conceived as the primary component that, together with the particular use of language of a given subject, envisages consciousness as such. Consequently, consciousness is observed as a product, but, especially, as something being relentlessly produced. There is no possibility to halt or interrupt the becoming of the self; but, paradoxically, there is no actual continuity regarding consciousness either. Thus, the identity of the individual reveals itself as being exceedingly interwoven with the uneven and mutating nature of time.

The temporal—or spatial—arrangement of the psyche of the individual is regarded as determining the mutability—or, in contrast, stability—concerning the memory of the subject. Faulknerian characters represent a widely varied collection of patterns regarding the joining and dissociation of these terms. While some are clearly trapped by and in time and unable to partake of the present, others despise language, or, simply, struggle with the agony of acknowledging their lack of control over the constitution of their identity.

To a greater or lesser extent, identity is found to depend on, and arise in, the association of all of the previously mentioned features. However, although some patterns are clearly observed regarding the arrangement of these terms, consciousness is concluded to be, above all, unstable and whimsical. The only certainty when it comes to identity refers to the fact that it originates outside of the individual. The subject cannot be conceived as a balanced and permanent product, as something that will remain unchanged for a longer or shorter period of time. On the contrary, the individual illustrates a convulsion of agitations, a quite never-ending turbulence. Faulkner's characters depict these disturbances and show that, in order to

comprehend one’s present, one must forcibly—even painfully—look towards the past.

RESUMEN

El presente estudio—titulado "Time and Memory in Faulkner: A Critique of Modern Identity" en inglés, "Tiempo y memoria en Faulkner: Crítica de la identidad moderna" en español—explora las manifestaciones de la consciencia y la identidad en una muestra de textos modernistas, pertenecientes a la obra de William Faulkner. Estos textos—*The Sound and the Fury*, *As I Lay Dying*, *Light in August*, *Absalom, Absalom!* y *Go Down, Moses*—muestran una preocupación principal con la noción de consciencia y las múltiples formas en las que ésta se delimita y exhibe en la literatura.

Para traducir la consciencia al ámbito de las palabras, el corpus de textos modernistas hace uso de una variada colección de mecanismos que interesan particularmente al presente estudio. Las diferentes manifestaciones del lenguaje, junto con las persistentes digresiones temporales que dan forma a estas novelas, se erigen como los cimientos a partir de los cuales surge la memoria en el medio literario. Sin embargo, para analizar estos conceptos y su organización, este estudio debe establecer inicialmente un marco filosófico que introduzca las nociones de tiempo, temporalidad, espacio y consciencia.

Con ese propósito, se examinan las obras de Henri Bergson y Martin Heidegger como la base teórica a partir de la cual se establece una estructura compleja que organice—y desorganice—el tiempo, el espacio y la identidad del

individuo. De manera similar, el análisis fundamental sobre la interconexión del lenguaje y la identidad de Jean-Jacques Lecercle, así como los múltiples conflictos que éste observa entre la comunidad y el individuo, introducen algunas nociones elementales que se aplicarán posteriormente al corpus faulkneriano.

El objetivo principal del estudio explora la aparición de la identidad del individuo y establece los componentes primarios que determinan la forma final que ésta adopta. Por consiguiente, la presente memoria presta especial atención a las muy abundantes y frecuentes inserciones de la corriente de la consciencia—*stream of consciousness*—que Faulkner introduce en sus obras. Al estar prominentemente preocupadas en examinar los conflictos internos del sujeto, en estos textos abundan las representaciones del conflicto y la disputa inherentes a la consciencia del individuo.

La memoria se convierte en el componente principal, junto con el uso particular del lenguaje de un sujeto en específico, que origina la consciencia como tal. Consecuentemente, la consciencia se observa tanto como producto como, especialmente, aquello que está siendo perpetuamente producido. No existe la posibilidad de parar o interrumpir el devenir del yo, pero, paradójicamente, tampoco parece encontrarse una continuidad real en relación con la consciencia. Por ello, la identidad del individuo se muestra como intrínsecamente entrelazada con la naturaleza irregular y mutable del tiempo.

La constitución temporal—o espacial—de la psique del individuo es determinante a la hora de establecer la mutabilidad—o, por contra, la estabilidad—concernientes a la memoria del sujeto. Los personajes faulknerianos representan una extensa colección de patrones diversos en cuanto a la unión y disociación de estos términos. Mientras algunos se encuentran claramente atrapados por y en el tiempo y, por lo tanto, son incapaces de participar en el momento presente, otros reniegan del lenguaje o, simplemente, se enfrentan a la agonía derivada de descubrir la falta de control que supone la constitución de su identidad.

En mayor o menor medida, la identidad depende y emerge de la asociación de los conceptos mencionados anteriormente. Sin embargo, y aunque se observan claramente algunos patrones en relación con el proceso que conecta estas nociones, se concluye que la consciencia es, ante todo, inestable y voluble. La única certeza en

lo concerniente a la identidad hace alusión al hecho de que ésta se origina externamente al individuo. No se debe contemplar al sujeto como un producto equilibrado y permanente, como aquello que permanecerá inmutable por un período mayor o menor de tiempo. Al contrario, el individuo encarna una convulsión agitada, una turbulencia que nunca termina de definirse. Los personajes de Faulkner ilustran estas perturbaciones y demuestran que, para comprender el presente, se debe forzosamente e, incluso, dolorosamente mirar hacia el pasado.

INTRODUCTION

The corpus of Modernist literature shows a primary preoccupation regarding the notion of identity and the many forms in which it can emerge within the individual. The quest of literary experimentation and the overturning of pre-established values spring from the horrors and sentiments of the early 20th century. The impact of World War I demanded the emergence of a new assortment of collective premises that encompass the arising economic and social structures and that break with traditional representations of the community and the individual. The literary medium, by forcing a rupture with canonical ways of writing so as to decentralise any sense of authoritative value, inevitably accentuates the transitioning to a new (dis)order. Most of this transitioning, nonetheless, derives from technological advances and a revision of former knowledge taking place in the late 19th century.

As a consequence of this general re-examination, new approaches emerged regarding the individual and their identity. Concretely, the subject and their perception of the external world embody the central issue to be interrogated. The drives of the individual dissolve the boundaries imposed by the community up to that moment, and questions regarding the unconscious create a broader separation among subjects. Likewise, the reconsiderations of the physical medium precipitate new conceptions on time and physics that will result in the impregnation of the literary

field with time and space. Eventually, Modernist literature from the 1920’s and the 1930’s would incorporate these newly emerging preoccupations to explore the subjective layers of the self.

Consequently, in order to translate these notions, Modernist fiction depicts an array of mechanisms that try and arrest within words the agitation of the self. Among Modernist authors, William Faulkner transforms the so-called preoccupation regarding identity into the literary manifestation of consciousness and the materialisation of its many fragmentations. His works derive from a world in convulsion and they incorporate the commotion of war and the self in isolation, as well as the painstakingly intrusion of technology into the world.

Faulkner’s preoccupation regards the consciousness of the individual both as a product and as something being produced; in motion. As such, his is a preoccupation with time and the temporal arrangement of the psyche of the subject. This concern is prominently observed, in particular, in five works by the Mississippian author: *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), *As I Lay Dying* (1930), *Light in August* (1932), *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936), and *Go Down, Moses* (1942).

These five works intrinsically exhibit the major motifs that primarily haunt Faulknerian literature: the becoming of the self, the ungraspable quality of time, and the influence of the collective compound on the individual’s memory. Furthermore, the structures and literary techniques displayed in each of them represent the renowned Faulknerian way of sketching and (dis)organising sections within a piece of work.

Nevertheless, these motifs and disarray regarding the composition of the texts are present even in the works that Faulkner did not set in Yoknapatawpha. Certainly, the latter distance themselves from the Yoknapatawpha preoccupations to some extent, for they either usually focus mainly on the themes of World War I, aviation—of which Faulkner was an enthusiast—, or are simply too detached from Mississippi. They do present, however, structures that are reminiscent of those found among his Yoknapatawpha centered works. Such is the case of *Mosquitoes* (1927), that presents a prologue, an epilogue, and four sections, each displaying a day told by the hour. This organisation represents a latent tendency to experiment with narrative

structure that would be developed in the following years. Similarly, *The Wild Palms* (1939) introduces an interplay of narrative plots in which two stories are interwoven.

However, the outbreak of what is now considered classic Faulknerian elements—both in motif and in style—would have to wait till 1929, with the publication of *The Sound and the Fury*. The latter, being conceived and executed under the certainty that it would never be published, would initiate the non-linear patterns that succeeding novels would borrow. Temporal digressions finally define the narrative, and the abundant streams of consciousness, at the same time, guide and deviate the fragmented story. Such is the case of *Intruder in the Dust* (1948), where the stream of consciousness style is likewise present. The narrative structures of *Requiem for a Nun* (1951) and "The Snopes Trilogy" (1940-1959) also follow the same non-linear patterns that can be observed in the works covered by the present text. *Requiem*'s narration is unique within the Faulknerian corpus, for it is presented in narrative and dramatic form. The Snopes' novels, in their turn, show the already familiar tendency to associate each chapter to a specific narrator, as *The Sound and the Fury* or *As I Lay Dying* demonstrate. Furthermore, *The Unvanquished* (1938) introduces four years in advance the same configuration of interrelated stories that is present in *Go Down, Moses*. Faulkner would, in following years, frequently insist on not conceiving these as collections of stories, but as novels.

While themes and structures are usually shared among Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha novels and beyond, there is a distinguished sense of universality regarding the five novels with which the present study is concerned. Certainly, there is a part of the Faulknerian corpus that mainly preoccupies itself with the topic of war—especially the American Civil War from the perspective of the South. This topic impregnates, even slightly, the whole of Faulknerian literature. However, the novels that are only transversely touched by it do, in contrast, tend to centre around the psyche of the characters. Although characters and events taking place among these books are literally inseparable—for they appear, disappear, and reappear again —, it could be said that some of these works present a conflict while others, indeed, become the conflict.

The five novels chosen by the present text concentrate on representing the motion—or the arrest—of time not only in a more individualistic way, but also

jointly in a greater scale. As such, time is observed regarding the distinctive aspect of a character's psyche and also concerning the world that contains them. In this respect, the fictional setting of Yoknapatawpha County emerges as the place where stories, characters, and events are intertwined beyond the physical pages of the books. These works cannot, appropriately, be taken as separate elements. They cannot even be conceived as finished pieces of work, for Faulknerian literature relentlessly expands each of their individual realms by promoting their timelessness throughout interconnections between one another.

By focusing on the temporal aspect surrounding the individual and their environment, these texts enhance—and depend on—the presence of the spatial medium. Thus, Yoknapatawpha strengthens its *where* as much as its *when* so as to approach the resulting product of the merging of these forces: the subject's memory. However, in order to address the management of these components within Faulknerian literature, the present study must first establish some prior relations regarding the philosophical framework on the theories of time. To that end, the works of Henri Bergson on time, space, and memory are initially evaluated as the originators of the modern concern of time and the individual.

Bergson's rationale will prove to be essential for the present text not only with regard to the nature of the matters considered hereafter, but also on account of Faulkner's familiarity with the French philosopher's theories. Additionally, following interpretations of the topics of temporality and space are likewise incorporated in the present study in order to create a wider background from which to explore these matters. Concretely, Martin Heidegger's philosophical approach to time and space re-enacts these notions as inherently interrelated, especially from the point of view of the individual's self. Heidegger's rationale also proves to be a fair counterpoint to some of Bergson's initial intricacies.

Bergson's approach to the temporal and the spatial components seems to be, as the present study explores, an antagonistic one. The opposition of terms which he endorses, nonetheless, provides the individual's psyche with two major distributions regarding their orientation to either time or space. Similarly, Heidegger advocates for a more than resembling distribution of these notions, which promotes the same two elemental understandings of the individual as either spatially or temporally oriented.

The German philosopher, however, encourages a far more organic assimilation of terms. Instead of focusing on their opposition—regarding their nature—, he advocates for a more natural incorporation of these concepts. These two dispositions —the more antagonistic view and the more inclusive one—embody the early foundation of the temporal and the spatial mediums upon which the Faulknerian playground would later be assembled.

The question of time and space, nonetheless, only mirrors the more fundamental question of identity. The mental states which a consciousness displays are profoundly grounded on the relations maintained by these two components and, ultimately, this becomes a discussion more easily and frequently examined in the literary field. As Faulknerian texts will later prove, literature embodies a suitable medium in which to explore these notions in relation to the individual's self. The nature of identity can only be interpreted by taking into account all the various shapes which the time of consciousness can manifest. This task proves to be unattainable unless displayed in the literary field, where the unsurmountable gaps between consciousnesses are abolished. Ultimately, questioning temporality and its continuity regarding the identity of a given subject implies challenging the integrity of one's consciousness.

Furthermore, the continuity of consciousness is interrogated with regard to the actual existence of a supposedly consecutiveness of mental states. Thus, the consciousness of the individual is equally observed from a sequential perspective or, rather, as a conglomerate that accepts no chronological dissection and, consequently, cannot be severed into separate components. That is, consciousness either represents the *place* where the self of the subject is arranged as if in a linear accumulation throughout time or an amalgamation from which no prior, current, or later states can be extracted; a compound that accepts no order. Paradoxically, the consciousness of the individual usually lingers somewhere in between these two states, never reaching any of them completely and, likewise, never getting rid of the influence which each of them upholds upon it.

This, however, proves to be a problematic issue not only regarding the extent to which the continuity of the self should be taken for granted, but also in relation to the ordering of recollections and events within memory. The absence or

presence of a more or less continuous process within the individual's consciousness does determine the more or less difficulty with which some remembrances are grasped and reincorporated into the present moment. Consequently, the emerging of consciousness must be unquestionably linked to the middle grounds between pure duration and objective time found in space so as to conclude to which extent does it exert a continuous performance.

The self, being eminently a product of spatially understood time and temporally understood space, is unable to draw a line marking where time ends and space begins. Likewise, the spatial element is observed as inseparable from the corpus of Faulknerian novels. Space not only helps to *locate* Yoknapatawpha within the narrative—or, perhaps, the narrative within Yoknapatawpha—, but it also enhances and accentuates the temporal interferences that shape this fictional county and its inhabitants.

Furthermore, the issue which preoccupies the present study—and the Faulknerian corpus—the most relates, on the one hand, to the process by which one's self is essentially brought to existence and, on the other, to what extent it is possible to fully acknowledge one's identity. The mechanisms through which consciousness arises will be proved to be far more uncomplicated and definitely less individualistic and self-interested than one might be glad to admit. The perception of one's consciousness will be discredited as being exclusively the resulting product of the personal arrangement of one*self*; that is, as arising solely, or even primarily, from within the individual. In other words, one's consciousness—and, thus, one's identity—originates primarily from without the subject's scope and embodies a set of features that are, usually, rather foreign and external to the individual.

In order to do so, nonetheless, the present study also establishes an initial discussion on the processes by which memory arises. Similarly, some similarities will be observed between the memory's temporal and spatial components and the opposing forces of the individual and the community. The memory of the subject and its primary organisation are explored as originating and being filtered outside of the individual to some extent, and only later being incorporated by the subject and associated with private notions. So as to depict memory, the study initially approaches the spatial component of the self and establishes that—in spite of

memory’s temporal nature—it is primarily through space and the phenomena of the physical world which memory appears.

The opposing forces—sometimes seen as working jointly, sometimes as antagonistic terms—of temporality and space dominate Faulknerian narratives with regard to memory in particular, and the self in general. And, indeed, they do so on such a number of levels and by taking so many forms that, ultimately, these texts are essentially inseparable from a temporally oriented reading. Such has been the case for some of the Faulknerian criticism that has arisen throughout the decades.

Nevertheless, early literary criticism on the works of Faulkner were usually rather judgmental. Having been granted the acceptance of Southern critics, his works were conceived from without the South as merely commemorating the past and not questioning it. Likewise, his depictions of black people and women were instantly associated to the values and customs of the South as a consequence of the region these works deal with. Studies on race and gender are certainly essential in relation to Faulknerian literature, for these articulate the complexity of the South which Faulkner imbued in his texts. If one is to take some distance from a religious, patriarchal, and male reading of these works, the ambiguity underlying this fiction is recovered.

While recent criticism tends to focus on racial identity or gender studies—Minrose C. Gwin’s research laid the ground for the feminine studies—, it leaves the temporal question somewhat aside. An approach regarding the identity of the individual is, nonetheless, inseparable from gender and racial issues. Although the present text does not address these problems in depth, for purposes of length and cohesion, they are still present within the temporal and, particularly, spatial readings of these works. The body of the individual—their race, their sex—and its transformations represent a fundamental component on the materialisation of consciousness, not only concerning the subject but the opposition of the community as well.

Faulkner’s fiction is undeniably divided between the modern and the traditional. His characters certainly show that this conflict has many deeper implications. Fortunately, the emerging criticism in the 1980s contributed to the creation of new theoretical frameworks from which to acknowledge the fragmented

nature of this fiction, leaving aside the judgmental positions regarding its background or setting. This results in a drastic change in the definition and interpretation of Faulkner's work; where trauma, shame, and irony are finally incorporated and, in contrast, the nostalgic and moral readings are left aside. Olga W. Vickery, John T. Irwin, André Bleikasten, and Donald M. Kartiganer—upon whose works the present text was originally conceived—introduced essential perspectives from which to address these works. They represent the most prominent figures regarding the study of time and Faulkner, whose standpoints accentuate the universal tendency of Faulknerian literature.

The present text would not, therefore, presume to place its originality on a pioneer ground, for some of these temporal readings date back to the mid 1970s. In contrast, its creativeness lingers more in the joining of time, space, and language to define the agony of memory and the irresolute quest for identity. These represent matters that, although generally researched independently, are hardly ever considered as an interwoven compendium in Faulknerian criticism, especially nowadays. Once these texts' reputation has shifted from one perspective to another, and the questions of race and gender have been thoroughly inspected, it seems all the more appropriate to re-examine the conflict of the self from a consolidating perspective.

In short, the present study explores the course of the subject's becoming as both a process and a result, for the tragedy of the individual is ultimately regarded as their impossibility to discern what they are and what they are not. Or, in other words, when the memory of the individual ends and the memory of the land—the community, its social values, and its boundaries—begins. Since the process of becoming denies the self to some extent—for it implies a relentless evolution and, thus, distances the present self from any past selves—, the present text must focus on the components which give rise to that process.

Aside from the temporal and the spatial aspects observed in the dissertation, the notion of language is also thoroughly taken into account as one of the basic pillars that shapes the consciousness of the individual. Although no clear division can be established between these elements, memory and language are considered as counterparts to one another, not in nature but in function. The insertion of memory within Faulknerian fiction helps to locate the character's mind in a more temporal

disposition, distancing themselves farther away from the realm of linguistic realities. Contrariwise, the presence of language pulls the subject towards a more socially oriented sphere, closer to the community and mainly partaking of the realm of physicalities.

Language, therefore, must be considered as an elementary component not only in Faulknerian literature, but for the corpus of Modernist fiction as a whole. Language is inevitably conceived as the reflection of the social construct that forcibly separates the individual from their deepest inner conscious states—their most authentic self, according to Bergson. This idea irremediably calls for the consideration of language as the contrived solidification of unstable realities. Therefore, the real self is understood as an ever growing being battling the permanent immobility and categorisation required by the efficiency and productivity to which the community aspires. Jean-Jacques Lecercle's *Philosophy of Nonsense* will be most suitable to the present text, for it arranges the basis that allows to the exploration of language as the entity which gives existence to realities by linguistically measuring them.

In fact, a linguistic analysis is all the more necessary regarding the arising of identity, for the set of Modernist works included in this dissertation are essentially built around the technique of the stream of consciousness. Accordingly, the fusion of the psyche's use of language and the performance of its memory requires a temporally driven analysis in order to establish *when* language dissolves into memory, if at all. In this respect, the interest of the present thesis is irremediably deviated towards the structure which the novels present, both as independent works and as small components of a bigger unity. Yoknapatawpha is seen as the place of memory *par excellence*, and, as such, its many components must be understood as inseparable from one another, endlessly influencing each other. The convulsion of memory arises within the interlaced conglomerate in which these towns, these houses, these families are assembled. They are united in and throughout the language and the memory of the land.

Essentially, the present study aims at creating a scenario from which a correlation among all of the previously mentioned components could be extracted. The definition of identity, as well as the process by which it comes into being, is a

major concern for Faulknerian literature and, indeed, the various elements around which this fiction circles suggest so. Temporality and language are inseparable from any attempt to comprehend the individual's identity and, thus, these concepts become not only the vessel through which to approach the emergence of consciousness, but they also embody the memory of the individual themselves. Being inseparable from the subject, language and time do become the subject; or, better, the subject—their consciousness, their memory—becomes language and time.

1/ A Philosophical Approach to Time and Space

Theories about time always seem to relate to spatiality to a greater or lesser extent. While this may be seen as a common point among them, it is usually their major discrepancy. Depending on the way time is understood and deployed, space can either be included or not in the process. The departure point is usually based on the degree to which consciousness is understood as attached to space. The two prominent theories used for this study show both paths as essentially presenting space as a necessary element—detached or not—for the organisation and hierarchisation of temporality.

While consciousness relates to space through the senses, Bergson regards every phenomenon in space (the extended world) as an extensity that cannot reach the mind. He first locates perceptions in the physical objects and then creates a second state relating to those very perceptions—usually called sensations or affections—that in their turn do belong to the unextended. According to this reasoning, it is not hard to discern that Bergson has not presented with a

consciousness, but has instead magically created a soul whose existence does not depend on the physical world:

> The fact is that there is no point of contact between the unextended and the extended, between quality and quantity. We can interpret the one by the other, set up the one as the equivalent of the other; but sooner or later, at the beginning or at the end, we shall have to recognize the conventional character of this assimilation. (*TFW* 70)

Bergson therefore distinguishes between two separate multiplicities, the qualitative and the quantitative, the unextended and the extended; or, in other words, between time and space. It is necessary here to clarify some of the concepts chosen by Bergson when dealing with time. In *Time and Free Will* (1889), several concepts are encountered, such as "duration," "pure duration," "homogeneous time," "heterogeneous time," "spatial time," or "simultaneity." For the sake of simplicity, and whenever the original terminology contradicts or puts at risk the intended meaning of this study, it will be from here distinguished between the more straightforward concepts of objective time and temporality. Objective time must be understood as the time displayed and observed in space, pretty much resembling a chronology. Temporality—or atemporality—refers, on the contrary, to the time consciousness deals with; that is, subjective time.

The most characteristic feature which Bergson introduces is not the multiplicity of temporal presentations, but the fact that he only considers one of them as "actual time." Every "temporal" reference regarding the spatial sphere is not technically thus considered. Objective time—Bergsonian homogeneous time—is nothing but the reflection in space of real duration or temporality:

> Now, let us notice that when we speak of *time*, we generally think of a homogeneous medium in which our conscious states are ranged alongside one another as in space, so as to form a discrete multiplicity. Would not time, thus understood, be to the multiplicity

> of our psychic states what intensity is to certain of them,—a sign, a symbol, absolutely distinct from true duration? (*TFW* 90)

Bergson does not only exclude time from space, but he also excludes space from time. The resource he adopts to make a clear-cut distinction among these two spheres consists in considering the (in)divisibility of each domain. His reasoning resolves, then, that pure duration—consciousness' subjective time—is not only indivisible, but its different temporal levels are interpenetrating each other in a continuum. Objective time, on the other hand, by being measurable is also divisible and is somehow located in a linear fashion. This marked distinction introduces the opposite terms of "intensity" and "magnitude" (*TFW* 2). Once again, to avoid the clear misdirection—since Bergson states that intensities do not admit of degrees—the term intensity will be replaced by quality, while quantity will refer to the less ambiguous concept of magnitude:

> The idea of intensity is thus situated at the junction of two streams, one of which brings us the idea of extensive magnitude from without, while the other [Bergsonian intensity] brings us from within, in fact from the very depths of consciousness, the image of an inner multiplicity. (*TFW* 73)

What is then presented is not only the clear opposition of real time and false time or the supremacy of real duration over objective time—although this false time is the one the subject paradoxically mostly dwells on—, but the measurability of these two areas. In other words, Bergson explores the extent to which these "times" can be ordered. And, since ordering demands a hierarchy—or a position—, references to spatiality are numerous:

> When we assert that one number is greater than another number or one body greater than another body, we know very well what we mean. For in both cases we allude to unequal spaces [...] and we call that space the greater which contains the other. But how can a more

> intense sensation contain one of less intensity? Shall we say that the first implies the second, that we reach the sensation of higher intensity only on condition of having first passed through the less intense stages of the same sensation, and that in a certain sense we are concerned, here also, with the relation of container to contained? (*TFW* 1-2)

Bergson states that the possibility—or the inability—of measuring these two dualities depends on the presence or absence of space. Since by measuring Bergson pretty much means counting, he makes use of numbers to explain the diverse natures of these domains: “[n]umber may be defined as a collection of units, or, speaking exactly, as the synthesis of the one and the many” (*TFW* 75). However, Bergson needs two more conditions to make the extended the only measurable medium. First, since he indeed needs to count, he forcibly has to equate those units and make them completely alike between one another: “we must add that these units are identical with one another, or at least that they are assumed to be identical when they are counted” (*TFW* 76). And second, in order to distinguish among several identical units, they must effectively be spatially located so that “they differ at least by the position they occupy in space” (*TFW* 77).

The logical reasoning that derives from these statements is that if units are identical except for their position, space is necessarily the only homogeneous medium there is: “[h]omogeneous time [...] is nothing but space, and pure duration is something different” (*TFW* 90). Time—real time, temporality—is, therefore, undoubtedly heterogeneous. Now, paradoxically, Bergson argues it is impossible to distinguish or separate terms within temporality, besides its heterogeneity. Whereas space can be easily disengaged into smaller pieces, time is seen as an indivisible whole.

Although the states of consciousness—consciousness itself—are by no means controlled by magnitude and, thus, do not increase or decrease—but rather change in nature—, these inner states should not be regarded as static. States of consciousness have no magnitude and are therefore in no space. They, in contrast, permeate one another as a whole and not as divisible phenomena: “[t]he fact is that,

the further we penetrate into de depths of consciousness, the less right we have to treat phenomena as things which are set side by side" (*TFW* 8-9). The impossibility of measuring these states creates a barrier between different consciousnesses that, paradoxically, can only be overcome through the representation of time; such as the temporal representations that are found in Faulknerian literature.

Temporality, though indivisible, does not refrain the whole of consciousness from changing and mutating. In other words, there is a "succession" of states in the unextended domain that, in turn, cannot be interpreted as conscious states *succeeding*[1] each other, but, rather, as enclosing one another:

> Pure duration is the form which the succession of our conscious states assumes when our ego lets itself *live*, when it refrains from separating its present state from its former states. For this purpose it need not be entirely absorbed in the passing sensation or idea; for then, on the contrary, it would no longer *endure*. Nor need it forget its former states: it is enough that, in recalling theses states, it does not set them alongside its actual state as one point alongside another, but forms both the past and the present states into an organic whole, as happens when we recall the notes of a tune, melting, so to speak, into one another. (*TFW* 100)

In contrast with pure succession as a mutual penetration of elements, the reversed notion of this concept can be found in the extended world: simultaneity.[2]

1 Strangely enough, this is another example for which Bergson adopts a rather obscure concept to refer to its somewhat opposite meaning. In simpler terms, by "succession," Bergson is literally designating any other array but a real succession of independently differentiated terms throughout time: something that is not followed and preceded, but that is displayed in its entirety at once. It will be used from now on the more solid concept of pure succession—more aptly used by Bergson sometimes—so as not to completely dissipate the tone of his discourse when relating to pure duration.

2 Pure succession differs from actual succession in that it does not present before or after—that is, a consecutive linear time or chronology—but only a continuum of temporality that permeates itself without any discernment of elements. In its turn, simultaneity employed by Bergson changes its most average meaning of two realities *at the same time* by the more extended notion of *at the same space*. This should not be misunderstood as two realities *occupying* the same space, but, on the contrary, as equally *present* in the same spatiality. Simultaneity in Bergson must thus be understood more as a *spatial* simultaneity instead of a temporal one, since the only possible time referring to simultaneity is the vulgar conception

Spatial simultaneity seems to represent the projection of pure succession into space. That is, the *location* of duration in extensity. Due to the controversial use Bergson makes of these two concepts—both separately, aiming at a quite ambiguous meaning, and, especially, in contraposition with each other—, the reader is provided with two notions that seem to point individually at their main opposite meaning. And yet, these ideas can also be quite easily conceived as two antagonistic concepts in themselves; the one meaning what the other should, instead of cancelling it. As a result of this double ambiguity, Bergson tries to dissipate the disorientation—though he will keep using such concepts:

> We can thus conceive of succession without distinction, and think of it as a mutual penetration, an interconnexion and organization of elements, each one of which represents the whole, and cannot be distinguished or isolated from it except by abstract thought. [...] But, familiar with the latter idea [space] and indeed beset by it, we introduce it unwittingly into our feeling of pure succession; we set our states of consciousness side by side in such a way as to perceive them simultaneously, no longer in one another, but alongside one another; in a word, we project time into space, we express duration in terms of extensity, and succession thus takes the form of a continuous line or a chain, the parts of which touch without penetrating one another. (*TFW* 101)

Bergsonian succession does not completely lose its linear-time connotation. On the one hand, the meaning extracted from its usage in *Time and Free Will* refers to the mutual interconnection of states of consciousness, and not to an actual succession. On the other hand, the reader is warned not to observe the *subsequent* interconnections of newer inner states with older ones as either an increase or an addition, since temporality should never be equated with chronology. However, even though the relation of container and contained is non-applicable to pure duration—that is, a consciousness is never larger or smaller than its past or future selves,

---

of temporality—an objective time.

independently of the *amount* of experiences it encompasses, since none of these selves occupy space—, it is undeniable that a consciousness registers an ever increasing amount of experiences throughout *time*.

The dispute lies in the fact that a consciousness—although Bergson clearly states that it is completely separated from the extended world—does mostly depend on spatiality, since the world the subject is in contact with is a spatial one. Due to the temporal nature of consciousness, a space not suggesting at least objective time—that is, chronology—is almost unconceivable to the intellect. In other words, Bergson understands that a consciousness—what he prefers to call the aggregate of states of consciousness—is indivisible from its temporal configuration. This results on the impossibility for a consciousness to disengage completely from temporality when dealing with spatiality. As a result, space is observed as governed by a temporal surrogate: objective time. Objective time, by being *located* within space, is both measurable and free of subjective considerations.

The real conflict, nonetheless, lies at the conclusion drawn from the previous argument. As well as consciousness introduces temporality into the medium it mostly dwells on—space—, the actual pure region this same consciousness belongs to—temporality—gets equally corrupted with spatiality. This mutual invasion of elements seems to have its origin in the consolidated need for order:

> [W]e could not introduce *order* among terms without first distinguishing them and then comparing the places which they occupy; hence we must perceive them as multiple, simultaneous and distinct; in a word, we set them side by side, and if we introduce an order in what is successive, the reason is that succession is converted into simultaneity and is projected into space. (*TFW* 102)

Bergson illustrates the fact that space constantly invades temporality through two major examples: motion and sensations. In order to explain motion as Bergson understands it, though, it is decisive to analyse Bergson's apprehension of the physical world. According to the extreme rupture he imposes on the relationship between temporality and space, spatiality—the world, the physical, the universe—

enjoys no real continuity. That is, since there is no such thing as objective time, but the consciousness' "temporal" misunderstanding of space, there is no actual before or after in a linear sequence as such in space. The physical world to Bergson, then, differs from the world of true duration in that space does not endure as consciousness does. It cannot be said that the physical world is made out of all the *successive* simultaneities—the entire universe, as it is, at a given *time*[3]—that take place within space, since any possible sense of continuity is exclusively bestowed by the nature of consciousness.

According to *Time and Free Will*, objective time—scientific time—does not strictly exist as such in the physical world and is solely the influence of the constitution of consciousness on a timeless domain. Bergson states that "[t]ime, as dealt with by the astronomer and the physicist, does indeed *seem* to be measurable and therefore homogeneous" (*TFW* 107), but promptly resolves that "what we call measuring time is nothing but counting simultaneities" (*TFW* 108). This study has no interest in arguing on the physical existence of the dimensions of phenomena. However, it is sensible for the comprehension of this text to bear in mind, even remotely, the actual divergence of inner time—pure duration—and what Bergson believed to be the illusory echo of temporality. Measurable, and hence divisible, time, in antithesis with duration, is best explained by Bergson's illustration of the clock:

> When I follow with my eyes on the dial of a clock the movement of the hand which corresponds to the oscillations of the pendulum, I do not measure duration, as seems to be thought; I merely count simultaneities, which is very different. Outside of me, in space, there is never more than a single position of the hand and the pendulum,

3 Whether or not Bergson's observations regarding time and space—both as separate elements and as working in relation to each other—may at times look factitious or contrived, the reader may have already noticed the many difficulties this text is encountering trying to dissociate temporal from spatial connotations, and vice versa. It seems impractical to conceive a very simultaneity of the physical world without bearing in mind the previous and the next ones; just as it seems problematic to assume consciousness as a whole without possibility to disengage and separate in *smaller* constituents to some extent. This all amounts to saying that temporality and spatiality are quite indissoluble, even though Bergson insists on their not being integrated.

> for nothing is left of the past positions. Within myself a process of organization or interpenetration of conscious states is going on, which constitutes true duration. It is because I *endure* in this way that I picture to myself what I call the past oscillations of the pendulum at the same time as I perceive the present oscillation. (*TFW* 107-108)

Now, spatially understood time and temporally interpreted space, and the interweaving relations of these two elements, create the basic scenario consciousness usually lingers on. This means consciousness is rarely—if ever—entirely within its temporal dimension or, on the contrary, does ever witness space as a completely timeless sphere. What results from this is a consciousness that is mostly unable to discern the limits of time and space, as can be shown in Bergson's portrayal of motion.

Motion can clearly be regarded as the junction of time and space. On the one hand, in order to have motion it is necessary not only to generally locate that motion into space, but, more specifically, to provide that motion with a certain definite space traversed. On the other hand, as obvious as it might look, motion requires of the very act by which that determined space is traversed. By following these two principles, Bergson now introduces the key feature to analyse motion as temporality and spatiality invading one another: he understands the act as a quality.

> In a word, there are two elements to be distinguished in motion, the space traversed and the act by which we traverse it, the successive positions and the synthesis of these positions. The first of these elements is a homogeneous quantity: the second has no reality except in a consciousness: it is a quality or an intensity, whichever you prefer. (*TFW* 112)

By means of this invasion of opposite terms, the act is in itself observed as divisible—when it actually should be examined as an inseparable whole—and space is, in its turn, seen as a continuum—when it should be understood as a single spatial

simultaneity. Bergson describes this phenomenon as “a case of endosmosis, an intermingling of the purely intensive sensation of mobility with the extensive representation of the space traversed” (*TFW* 112). The spatial intrusion is the consequence of the nature of consciousness, which, by dealing with space most of the time, associates the divisibility proper of spatiality to the unextended qualities. In contrast, the temporal imposition transfers the pure temporal continuity of the act to the extended world. This continuity of the act—which conforms a temporal whole in pure duration—is translated as the “erroneously” differentiated *before*, *now* and *after* within the space traversed.

> On the one hand we attribute to the motion the divisibility of the space which it traverses, forgetting that it is quite possible to divide an *object*, but not an *act*: and on the other hand we accustom ourselves to projecting this act itself into space, to applying it to the whole of the line which the moving body traverses, in a word, to solidifying it: as if this localizing of a *progress* in space did not amount to asserting that, even outside consciousness, the past co-exists along with the present! (*TFW* 112)

Once again, it could be said that there is actually no misinterpretation in this process, since consciousness does indeed perceive phenomena as the merging of time and space. According to Bergson, there should not be either judgement or amendment regarding the merging of spheres; but, nonetheless, the attentive realisation that perceptions are mostly based on this misguided association. The fact that consciousness equates the continuity of the act with the different positions the motion takes throughout space reflects the capability of the conscious mind to extract a succession even from simultaneities that are no longer. Interestingly enough, this ability—which in its entirety reveals the capacity to order—is mainly projected not towards past simultaneities, but the ones yet to come: *future* events.

Another area in which interpretation has to deal with the convoluted relationships of time and space is sensations. While they usually originate in the world of the extended, sensations undeniably belong to the world of the unextended.

Bergson devotes part of his reasoning to expose the biological or anatomical process by which a stimulus gives rise to a sensation. This study will take no part in such an exposition. Instead, the main focus will be to analyse the procedure by which sensations and their external causes incorporate pure duration and space.

The main obstacle Bergson encounters when dealing with the process that originates and makes sensations evolve refers to the same impossibility of integration of the temporal and the spatial dualities. Or, in other words, as well as motion, sensations also reflect the impracticability to consolidate the qualitative and the quantitative multiplicities. On the one hand, the mechanism by which sensations are produced seems as simple and as undisturbed by the already mentioned confrontations between domains as the biological explanation Bergson discloses. An extremely brief overview of this biological circumstance would result in the senses of the body responding to a stimulus generated in the external physical world, which, in its turn, originates a sensation.[4] Nevertheless, the conflict among spheres comes forward when Bergson introduces the idea of sensations as changing in *magnitude*.

Although there are indeed clearly perceptible variations among two different sensations of the same sort—namely, a greater joy, a stronger desire, etc.—, is it sensible to assume one of them is just *bigger* or *smaller* than the other one? Is it possible to apply the already remarked relations of container and contained to sensations that, as outlined previously, belong to a whole where no differentiation can be grasped at all? In other words, are sensations beyond the hold of measure or do they in contrast belong to the realm of the divisible and distinguishable phenomena? Bergson’s inferences on this matter show the noticeable similarities between the manner in which consciousness interprets motion as a mutual invasion of time and space. Consciousness’ discernment of sensations is the result of the same

4 Besides the actual anatomical procedure the nervous system depicts in order to give rise to sensations—that, incontestably, are located with*in* the brain and, therefore, belong to the physical world as much as the stimuli that originated them—, Bergson assumes a much more obscure approach to sensations. First of all, Bergson does not seem at any point of his argumentation to be ignoring or denying the connotation of the physical sensation as such—a plain physical response of the brain that can either be continued or not as an (un)voluntary movement. Ultimately, he merely decides not to include it as a notable component of his argument, since it actually does not have any use for it. That is, Bergson refers to sensations not as the physical reactions that emanate from the brain, but as the specific state formulated within consciousness by an extended stimulus; and, consequently, by a physical cerebral response. In other words, a sensation here must be understood as a state of consciousness that is integrated and swallowed within the whole of consciousness.

confusion between quality and quantity. Bergson solves the dilemma of how a consciousness can distinguish different degrees within the same kind of sensation—when sensations actually reside in the inseparable aggregate of pure duration—by examining in contrast the way sensations and their external causes influence each other. “The intensity of sensations varies with the external cause of which they are said to be the conscious equivalent: how shall we explain the presence of quantity in an effect which is inextensive, and in this case indivisible?” (*TFW* 32).

In order to illustrate his understanding of sensations and their causes, Bergson makes use of the notion of effort—which could be understood as a derivative of sensations—as a state of consciousness.[5] The *feeling* or the *sensation* of what apparently seems to be a change of degree from a specific effort to a weaker or a greater one is always accompanied by the change of degree of its physical cause that, in turn, precipitates the supposedly existence of magnitude into the unextended. The change of degree—change of magnitude—of the extended cause that is located in space offers no objection at all. Take, as Bergson suggests, a specific weight as the extended cause of an effort. By being objectively measurable in space, it is undeniable that the physical cause in the shape of a weight can either be intensified —*increased*—or attenuated—*decreased*. On the contrary, there is a lot of room for uncertainty when it comes to analyse the same change of *intensity*—not Bergsonian intensity that should here be understood as quality, but actual intensity as a change in measurement—of the conscious effort.

The main difference between sensation and motion is that, while in motion the major conflict regarded the pretended continuity of the traversed space as the reflection of the real continuity of the act in temporality, sensation refers more to the artificial divisibility of an inseparable state within consciousness. In other words, motion is predominantly an intrusion of temporality into space, whereas sensation fundamentally reflects the incursion of spatial quantifications into the qualitative multiplicity. It can be stated, therefore, that efforts can by no means be increased or decreased within consciousness, but that this apparent change in magnitude is in fact a change in *nature*. This exact meaning of nature is the one Bergson refers to when

5 An effort in *Time and Free Will* is understood as the state of consciousness which a physical stimulus—and, consequently, its physical reaction of the extended body—triggers in the whole of consciousness.

addressing to his so-called *intensities*—which for purposes of clarity were in this text replaced by *qualities*—of the unextended domain. Bergson's exemplification of weight recapitulates the relevant points of this explanation:

> Examine carefully somebody who is lifting heavier and heavier weight: the muscular contraction gradually spreads over his whole body. As for the special sensation which he experiences in the arm which is at work, it remains constant for a very long time and hardly changes except in quality, the weight becoming at a certain moment fatigue, and the fatigue pain. (*TFW* 25-26)

According to this, Bergson indeed introduces the decisive idea that consciousness is, to a great extent, governed by inertia in the sense that consciousness certainly prefers to keep denominating a specific effort that has already changed in nature what it used to call its predecessor. That is to say, consciousness favours a more elementary adjustment in the degree of a certain state over the more elaborate switch of the state's constitution to another type. Measure, so it seems, prevails over type. This singular occurrence is also regarded in the chapter committed to language and the creation of realities.

The perception of an effort as mistakenly increasing or decreasing within a consciousness is, according to Bergson, "reducible to the twofold perception of a greater number of peripheral sensations, and of a qualitative change occurring in some of them" (*TFW* 26). In other words, Bergson regards the relation by which the qualitative and the quantitative realms get mutually corrupted as the consequence of the perception of an increasing number of physical stimuli and consciousness' miscalculated interpretation of their subsequent sensations as a change in degree instead of in nature:

> But consciousness, accustomed to think in terms of space and to translate its thoughts into words, will denote the feeling by a single word and will localize the effort at the exact point where it yields a useful result: it will then become aware of an effort which is always

> of the same nature and increases at the spot assigned to it, and a feeling which, retaining the same name, grows without changing its nature. (*TFW* 26)

Thus, what the alteration of the magnitude of a stimulus really promotes is the perception of a sensation that changes in nature and not in degree. However, as self-evident as it might seem, this last remark implies that consciousness has to deal with a certain number of sensations that are in themselves diverse and peculiar, and not simply different gradations of the same sensation. Still, consciousness has to keep associating this whole series of different sensations to the same stimulus in space. Whereas this might seem as a self-sufficient argument when applied to the relation between a sensation and an external cause in which the cause refers to an embodied manifestation—as in the case of a weight—, it might not look equally obvious whenever the physical stimulus is not that straightforwardly directed. For instance, "[t]he increasing intensity of pity thus consists in a qualitative progress, in a transition from repugnance to fear, from fear to sympathy, and from sympathy itself to humility" (*TFW* 19).

This constant conflict among the unextended and the extended dualities is not only encouraged by the fact that consciousness—independently of belonging to the realm of pure duration—*inhabits* space for the most part of its aware existence. This postulate was already mentioned previously and is quite self-explanatory: since consciousness is almost continuously in contact with space, it will be found both that time occupies space and that space shapes temporality. The main problem does not dwell in the mutual invasion of these dualities—that is, in their opposition—, but in the fact that consciousness pretty much equates both domains and forcibly places them at the same level. Moreover, consciousness mainly adopts space as its primary domain and, therefore, spatiality serves to establish the criteria according to which the levelling of quality and quantity is formed. This is the reason, according to Bergson, why qualities are constantly perceived as magnitudes:

> Now, this cause [an external object] is extensive and therefore measurable: a constant experience, which began with the first

> glimmerings of consciousness and which continues throughout the whole of our life, shows us a definite shade of sensation corresponding to a definite amount of stimulation. We thus associate the idea of a certain quantity of cause with a certain quality of effect; and finally, as happens in the case of every acquired perception, we transfer the idea into the sensation, the quantity of the cause into the quality of the effect. At this very moment the intensity, which was nothing but a certain shade or quality of the sensation, becomes a magnitude. (*TFW* 42)

The reciprocal influence between dualities, besides being applied to either tangible or more abstract stimuli, does also allude to the most immediate senses. The sensations triggered by taste, smell, colour, touch or sound are accepted as magnitudes by consciousness. Thus, consciousness discerns, for instance, among gradual levels of bitterness or sweetness, when in truth the subsequent sensations—which Bergson prefers this time to call affections since they originate within the direct exercise of the senses—engendered by this stimulus must be taken as of different in kind: "[b]etween flavours which are more or less bitter you will hardly distinguish anything but differences of quality; they are like different shades of one and the same colour" (*TFW* 39).

Nevertheless, there is a factor that might have been overlooked until now in Bergson's approach. *Time and Free Will* initially conceives two antagonistic procedures regarding consciousness and the physical world: consciousness either interprets sensations inaccurately as differing in magnitude or, more precisely, as diverging in nature. It is indeed true that sensations—and the assorted states of consciousness they ascribe to—do differ from one another in their nature, their quality. However, it must be stated that, according to Bergson, whenever it is possible for consciousness to make a distinction among the terms that constitute its very whole, the subject has already abandoned the realm of temporality and has projected itself, and the aggregate of its elements, into space. Thus, every time it is discussed whether consciousness creates a fictitious gradation between two or more sensations that ascribe to different states of consciousness or if, on the contrary,

consciousness really grasps the variation in nature of these inner states, the subject is not partaking of temporality anymore, but of spatiality.

> It is true that, when we make time a homogeneous medium in which conscious states unfold themselves, we take it to be given all at once, which amounts to saying that we abstract it from duration. This simple consideration ought to warn us that we are thus unwittingly falling back upon space, and really giving up time. (*TFW* 98)

In other words, there is no possible way in which consciousness, operating as *pure* consciousness—that is, exclusively within temporality—, could identify its inner states individually, since that would mean that consciousness is to some extent *locating* those inner states in a space that should not exist as a component of pure duration. "For it is scarcely possible to give any other definition of space: space is what enables us to distinguish a number of identical and simultaneous sensations from one another" (*TFW* 95). However, the impossibility to identify the various inner states separately, without introducing spatiality, should not substitute or endanger the primary notion that those states of consciousness—Bergsonian sensations—are indeed distinct from each other. Instead, the plurality of natures regarding these inner states ought to be concluded precisely as unobservable from the perspective of pure duration. By being in an utterly constant connection to extensity, consciousness is unable to completely disengage from spatiality. That is to say, consciousness cannot ever grasp itself without somewhat partaking of its modified spatial *self*; without altering its indivisible wholeness. Pure duration is, hence, incapable of *externalisation* and, consciousness, in its turn, inasmuch as it is constantly somewhat externalised, is unable to authentically recognise itself in its pure state. This is definitely a major issue in Faulknerian texts.

> In a word, pure duration might well be nothing but a succession of qualitative changes, which melt into and permeate one another, without precise outlines, without any tendency to externalize

> themselves in relation to one another, without any affiliation with number: it would be pure heterogeneity. (*TFW* 104)

Consequently, pure duration cannot be either measured or ordered because of two main principles. The first one, as it has formerly been observed, is the irreconcilable disengagement among pure duration and spatiality: "[p]ure duration is wholly qualitative. It cannot be measured unless symbolically represented in space" (*TFW* 104). The second reason is that pure duration is built in its entirety by all the consecutive inner states that *succeed* each other relentlessly within consciousness. Now, it should not be inferred by this last remark that this very *succession* of conscious states ought to be understood as that by which one could distinguish between previous, actual and forthcoming *times* within temporality. This distinction of times can only be accomplished when referring to the distorted objective time which consciousness, according to Bergson, designs to envelop space with. On the contrary, this notion of succession must be only applied to the *subsequent* states of consciousness—that are somehow *added* to the whole of pure duration—when alluding to their increasing multiplicity, and not, as it is usually wrongly applied, to the comprehension of temporality as a succeeding chronology of separate elements. In simpler terms, there is no succession as such among the states of consciousness that belong to pure duration; instead, succession relates to the consecutiveness of the addition of these states to the whole of temporality.

Moreover, it is sensible, and even necessary at this point, to bring back Bergson's illustration of the clock. By analysing the consecutiveness which Bergson attributes to the distinct simultaneities—or, preferably, spatial simultaneities—of phenomena in the extended world, it is also implied that consciousness creates a parallelism between this ordered sequence of spaces and the *pure* succession of inner states in the organic whole of temporality. That is to say, an objective time is created as the result of placing the different positions of the pendulum—the series of spatial simultaneities—alongside in the shape of a linear arrangement. Bergson is now replacing the temporally indissoluble organisation of the conscious states by the consecutiveness that only alludes to the chronological progression of spaces; that is,

of lived experiences. Consciousness, then, conceives itself as necessarily homogeneous instead of heterogeneously unconquerable:

> As the successive phases of our conscious life, although interpenetrating, correspond individually to an oscillation of the pendulum which occurs at the same time, and as, moreover, these oscillations are sharply distinguished from one another, we get into the habit of setting up the same distinction between the successive moments of our conscious life: the oscillations of the pendulum break it up, so to speak, into parts external to one another: hence the mistaken idea of a homogeneous inner duration, similar to space, the moments of which are identical and follow, without penetrating, one another. (*TFW* 109)

While there is no possible way to conceive succession within the indissoluble arrangement of experiences in consciousness without abandoning the realm of temporality, it is indeed possible to observe an actual succession of states of consciousness occurring in space. That is to say, there seems to be a synchronicity[6] between the whole of a given state of consciousness within pure duration and the spatial reflection of that same state of consciousness within a specific simultaneity. In other words, Bergson is already dealing with his most illustrious problem of correspondence between the material and the spiritual, which will later on be reformulated as the problem of the free will.

This synchronicity emerges from the impossibility of a consciousness to disengage from a spatial conception of the world. Moreover, it is quite clearly discerned that what is actually synchronised is not the realm of temporality and that of spatiality. This one result is only achieved afterwards by means of associating and

---

6 This concept should not be mistaken for Jung's idea of synchronicity. In the present text, this notion should be observed as a parallelism between an indivisible whole of consciousness and its respective succession of states of consciousness in space. Needless to say, this parallelism is by all means necessary and, thus, not a casualty that could have never taken place. Whereas Jung studies the meaningfulness of a set of coincidences, the present study advocates the unavoidability of a constant connection between the two forms of a consciousness; for a consciousness is always contained in a space and hence partakes of homogeneous time.

intermingling, once again, pure duration and its spatial surrogate. However, the spatial alternative of a consciousness should not be mistaken with pure space. In simpler words, the spatial reflection of a given state of consciousness—the only sort of consciousness which is possible to realise for a spatial being—is the one being synchronised with the succession of simultaneities in the material world because that specific kind of consciousness does indeed retain a linear progression. Thus, it is found that an individual who observes that actual linear succession—present both in the physical world and in the spatial variant of a consciousness—does associate such progression not only with time, but also with temporality. That is, temporality becomes time, and, since the graspable consciousness partakes of time—space—, the spatial consciousness becomes the only possible consciousness. Temporality, together with the ever-merging states of consciousness, is annihilated.

Although Bergson is very keen on stating the clear opposition between the homogeneous and the heterogeneous, the fact that these two spheres might be working collectively and inseparably is only an illusion to him. He only approves their opposition without allowing that very opposition to become a junction. Accordingly, Bergson argues there is no real point of contact between the two and that, therefore, the only way they can be brought together is by means of the already mentioned synchronicity, a sort of fictitious experience of the mind. Any other relation of correspondence between those two fields must necessarily be a delusion:

> There is a real space, without duration, in which phenomena appear and disappear simultaneously with our states of consciousness. There is a real duration, the heterogeneous moments of which permeate one another; each moment, however, can be brought into relation with a state of the external world which is contemporaneous with it, and can be separated from the other moments in consequence of this very process. The comparison of these two realities gives rise to a symbolical representation of duration, derived from space. (*TFW* 110)

This theory reiterates Bergson's previous argument, which emphasises the impossibility to comprehend the aggregate of heterogeneous elements of the qualitative domain. Once one or multiple elements have been severed from the total, the aggregate of moments has already changed in nature—has become homogeneous—or has been demolished. Strictly speaking, for a heterogeneous moment—that is, any state of consciousness—to be contemplated as contemporaneous with a state of the material world, it needs to have altered its nature to a more homogeneous one. Bergson declares that by this process "[d]uration thus assumes the illusory form of a homogeneous medium, and the connecting link between these two terms, space and duration, is simultaneity, which might be defined as the intersection of time and space" (*TFW* 110).[7]

Since synchronicity can only be actually applied to spatially contemporaneous elements and only afterwards—by association—does it invade the qualitative realm, Bergson is left to face a more complex problem that originates from his sharp antithesis between the spiritual and the material. On the one hand, it has been stated that the asserted synchronicity does connect the times when specific physical phenomena—a specific simultaneity of the universe—and the spatial representation of a concrete state of consciousness take place. On the other hand, Bergson defines that such synchronicity does indeed belong to the homogeneous domain and that, nonetheless, the subject associates such coexistence of spatial notions to a non-existent relation of space and duration. That is to say, by means of this assertion, Bergson has to deal not just with the breach between temporality and space, which are to him clearly divided, but with two equally separate kinds of consciousness, which, irrefutably, belong to the same individual.

In order to solve this inconsistency, Bergson creates an infinity of levels of consciousness that will serve to connect the temporal consciousness and its spatial reflection. As a result, he depicts his renowned cone-shaped figure that will later appear on *Matter and Memory* (1896). He does not only portray an infinity of

---

7 The terms used by Bergson in this last remark should not go unnoticed. Unsurprisingly, he chooses "time" and "space," in contrast to "space" and "duration," to designate *where* the actual intersection—by means of simultaneity—is grounded. Precisely, he can do so because, in Bergsonian terms, time—unlike temporality—and space refer to the very same reality. Whereas space can be regarded as just one single isolated simultaneity, time pertains to the linear succession of multiple simultaneities.

possible divisions between the two extremes of consciousness, but, by means of this very process, he also establishes the consciousness of the subject as the only possible via of conveyance through which space and temporality connect.

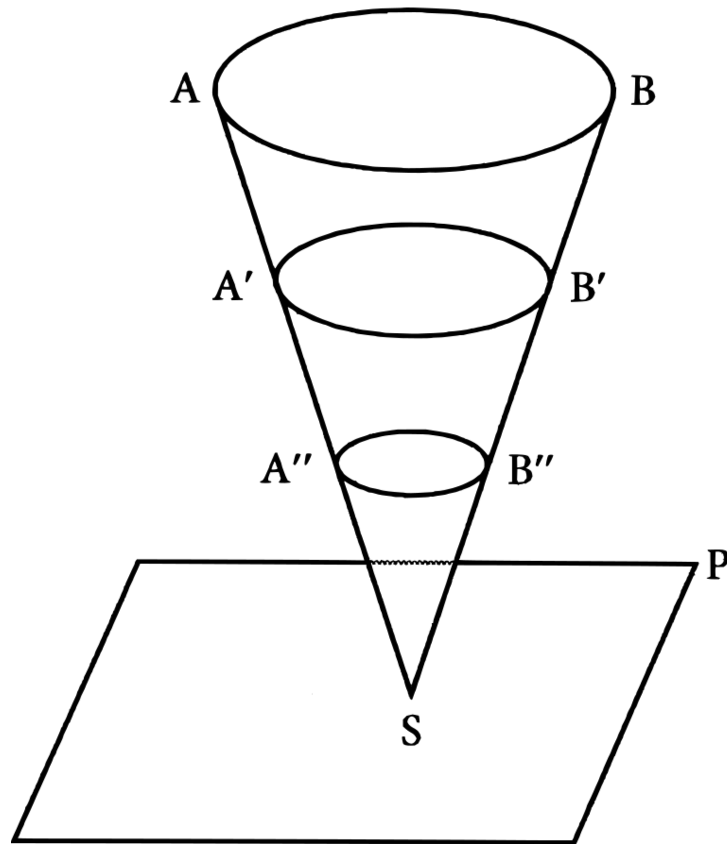


Fig.1 (*MM* 96)

Making use of this diagram, Bergson determines that the wider circumferences of the cone represent the extremity of consciousness which is grounded in the qualitative, whereas the narrower circumferences refer to a more spatially oriented consciousness. The present perception is always located in the summit of the cone, which, moreover, is the only point of it that is in contact with the spatial plane. It must be stated that, whereas Bergson for the most part uses this diagram to explain the different levels of memory, he also adopts this image in order to symbolise the unceasing mobility of what he addresses as “psychic life” (*TFW* 125). It will be further analysed in the chapter committed to memory whether or not Bergson entirely equates memory and consciousness. For the sake of cohesion, the present chapter will only focus on the apparent similarities that are found in their

structures and procedures so as to apply this mechanism to the distribution of the different types of times the subject has to encounter:

> At S is the present perception which I have of my body, that is to say, of a certain sensorimotor equilibrium. Over the surface of the base AB are spread, we may say, my recollections in their totality. Within the cone so determined the general idea oscillates continually between the summit S and the base AB. In S it would take the clearly defined form of a bodily attitude or of an uttered word; at AB it would wear the aspect, no less defined, of the thousand individual images into which its fragile unity would break up. (*MM* 95)

Placing this cone-shaped figure alongside his reasoning, it is clearly envisaged how Bergson pictured the manoeuvre of consciousness. The cone and the plane, though acting in concordance, are two separate parts which belong to different multiplicities. This clear division solidifies Bergson's corroboration of a soul whose insides act independently of the mechanisms of matter—it actually is inherited from Aristotle's disclosure of body and soul—, since it is not governed by or levelled to the laws of matter. Nevertheless, not being governed by matter does not inevitably result in not being corrupted by it. In this case, the *pure* soul—the widest circumference located in pure duration—is certainly emancipated and unspoiled by matter. The intermediate stages of the cone, notwithstanding, become less and less dissipated and detached from it as they reach the narrowest part.

The question now does not regard so much whether a consciousness distributed like this can really be considered a single unified reality, but, first, whether a consciousness revolves around changes in nature or changes in degree. On the one hand, the transition from a qualitative consciousness to a quantitative one is undoubtedly founded on the opposite nature of the two domains. The two extremes of the cone are, therefore, deprived of any relation of sameness whatsoever. In the contrary, all of the intermediate levels that consciousness can adopt seem to be relating to themselves by either an increase or a decrease in degree or intensity.[8] In

8 In this particular statement, *intensity* should be understood as a magnitude—in contrast to Bergsonian intensity, which applies directly to a switch in nature within the

other words, since both mechanisms are easily found in the representation of the cone, Bergson's depiction of psychic life presents the reader with one whole and two components alluding to the same consciousness at the same time. That is to say, consciousness displays quality and quantity within the same reality.

At this point, and after stating in multiple occasions such critical and inflexible premises, Bergson is now compelled to establish consciousness as the only point of communication between the qualitative and the quantitative multiplicities in two different ways—also visible in his diagram. He first has to elucidate how to approach the physical barrier. That is to say, consciousness and matter must *touch* each other somehow in order to influence one another—even though that relation be unidirectional, which, indeed, is not. Hence, he must locate the perceptions the subject experiences of their own body at the bottom—Summit—of the cone, which, in its turn, corresponds to a given point of the spatial plane. At point S, both the subject's body—which is in space—and the subject's perceptions of their body coincide. Secondly, he has to forcibly constitute a progression between S and pure duration—represented by the base AB—since the subject, though incapable of comprehending AB, constantly struggles with different levels of material awareness.

This progression is nothing more than the logical consequence of having endowed consciousness—and only partially—with spatiality. Whereas this might look like a meaningless assertion—that is, there must be a levelling that establishes the stages between two opposite ends—, it is of great interest in order to fully discern Bergson's rationale and to later apply these notions to Faulknerian characters.

While it could be argued whether consciousness is a whole or a dissected entity because it exhibits both quality and quantity, it should be first noticed that—according to Bergsonian principles—consciousness is, above all, *immaterial*. This amounts to saying that, strictly speaking, space does corrupt and invade temporality, but this does not actually happen in reverse. On the one hand, the intermediate levels of the cone do make explicit a consciousness more or less detached from space, since an ideal consciousness—the base AB—should be external to and completely uncontrolled by the physical world. On the other hand, although it has previously been stated that vulgar time—the consecutiveness of simultaneities—derives from

---

heterogeneous field and which, particularly in this study, was merely called quality.

the incursion of temporality into space, it must be realised that such invasion is ultimately, according to Bergson, non-existent.[9] To the French philosopher, such consecutiveness is only an illusion occurring within a consciousness which, in its primordial state, is pure temporality, but most of the time incapable of detaching itself from space. From this perspective, time is exclusively an interpretation of temporality having already been corrupted by spatiality:

> What he [the astronomer] does is nothing but establishing a series of relations of positions between this body and other given bodies, a series of simultaneities and coincidences, a series of numerical relations: as for duration properly so called, it remains outside the calculation and could only be perceived by a consciousness capable of living through the intervals and, in fact, living the intervals themselves, instead of merely perceiving their extremities. (*TFW* 194)

If time really is nothing more than a misconception inappropriately placed in space and pretty much equated to it, there is no wondering why Bergson cannot associate such infinitesimal intervals between simultaneities with space, but with duration: "[f]or the future of the material universe, although contemporaneous with the future of a conscious being, has no analogy to it" (*TFW* 193). Consciousness, in addition, turns out to be a device exploited by Bergson in order to shield the soul. He misuses the diagram of the cone so that the soul and the consciousness both give the impression of being the same reality. The truth is that, if the soul—represented by the base AB—embodies the whole of a consciousness in its purest state but is, at the same time, irrevocably unachievable, Bergson is somehow playing deception.

9 For the sake of simplicity, and since this argument hints at Bergson's most obscure standards—the physical nonexistence of what he calls "astronomical time" (*TFW* 194)—, this study will try to preserve, when possible, the original proposition disclosed above that sustains the premise of a bidirectional relation of influence between the two domains. Furthermore, this controversy, besides not being analysed throughout this text, does not interfere with the purposes here exposed. What interests the present study refers solely to Bergson's scrutiny of consciousness being subverted by space, and not the other way around. In other words, whether space is really intruded by temporality or that intrusion is in truth an illusion created by a consciousness *within* itself—within the cone—, has no direct effect in the study of the creation of identity.

On the one hand, Bergson is very keen on keeping the entirety of the cone under the same name—which, curiously enough, is usually addressed as consciousness unless he is exclusively referring to its base—; that is, under the same category. Unsurprisingly, Bergson prefers to reserve the connotations involved in the designation of soul for the one state of consciousness which, by being unattainable, is also impossible to (in)validate. The base of the cone represents the whole of a given consciousness without possibility to be decomposed—because of it only working as a convoluted aggregate—, or realised—because of its ever-changing nature. In all but in name, Bergson is reluctantly providing with two different entities: the one an ideal associate of pure duration, the other a corrupted version of it. The actual truth is that Bergson needs them to be a single reality—a cone *with* a base—so that he can afterwards discuss the actuality of free will in spite of the influence of physical matter in the intermediate levels of consciousness. If the base were a self-sufficient entity, there would be no deterministic physicality to which the unrestrained nature of one's own will could be opposed. In simpler words, if the cone lacked that incompatible base, free will would likewise result impossible to prove.

Regardless of Bergson's perseverance to demonstrate that free will truly exists, the rest of his reasoning on time and temporality would demonstrate better cohesion had he portrayed a cone that would lack a base. That is, if the original and exclusively immaterial consciousness within pure temporality is unachievable, that also means it is, to a great extent, beyond reason. That does not necessarily mean it is completely isolated and not being nurtured and maintained by an external input that, unquestionably, bursts from the material world. Indeed, the states of consciousness which are ever increasingly accumulating within consciousness—independently of their level of simplicity or abstraction—have their origin in physical experiences from the material universe. Nevertheless, due to the fact that such a primordial consciousness cannot but remain immaterial, all those experiences must unavoidably lose their materiality in order to approach it. Precisely, it is this loss of spatiality in the pure stage—the base of the cone—the one that generates the breach that the subject's reason, which is to a greater or lesser extent pretty much spatially-oriented, cannot access.

Now, since reason fairly depends both on temporal *and* spatial considerations, it is only obvious that it should not enter the realm of the immeasurable and the non-dimensional. Why, then, should these two consciousnesses—the one complete, the other distorted—remain two parts of the same oneness? To the present study, the potentiality of illustrating not only the mechanics but also the network of relations between duration, consciousness and space, by means of a diagram of a cone without a base, seems much more appropriate. In such a portrayal, the so-called base AB would not be attached to the cone anymore, but would constitute an independent entity on its own for two main reasons. The first reason summarises what has been stated above: if pure consciousness—sometimes called soul—is not feasibly within reach, then such a reality can, to some extent, be overlooked; regardless of it having or not any direct impact on the subject's material consciousness, and vice versa. That presumed impact would become invariably uncontrollable in every respect. That is to say, although there might be a bidirectional relation of influences among the temporal and the spatial consciousness—the one being provided with new states of consciousness, the other being influenced by the temporal cosmos where all states are interpenetrating one another—, such chain of influences should not endanger the divergent natures of these two realities. Least of all, try to enclose their disparity within a single totality.

The second reason, on the other hand, has to do with the problematic apparatus that the very structure of the cone with a base—that is, with an end—brings forward. Every depiction of the cone in which this one possesses a base, that, in its turn, symbolises a limit—as Bergson's depiction does—, is incarnating a material consciousness which is pre-eminently constrained. Bergson indeed points out that "[t]he essence of the general idea, in fact, is to be unceasingly going backwards and forwards between the plane of action and that of pure memory" (*MM* 95). These two planes—the point S and the base AB—function as the two edges of the only consciousness the subject can effectively make use of. In other words, the accessible consciousness is not infinite. Undoubtedly, there is an almost infinite number of planes among the two limits which, proportionally, correspond to a more or less temporal or spatial tendency. Now, Bergson's somehow idealist conception of

a pure consciousness—soul—demands not only the opposition of its nature in comparison with a corrupted consciousness' nature, but the contrariety of their *durabilities* as well:

> [T]he deep-seated self which ponders and decides, which heats and blazes up, is a self whose states and changes permeate one another and undergo a deep alteration as soon as we separate them from one another in order to set them out in space. But as this deeper self forms one and the same person with the superficial ego, the two seem to *endure* in the same way. (*TFW* 125-126)

In this last remark, Bergson is exposing two different assertions which make clear the reason why his illustration of the cone with a base is the only possible illustration within his reasoning; though not the most consistent one. He first formulates that this "deep-seated self" (*TFW* 125)—the temporal consciousness—, whose parts can be subjected to no possible dissection or real scrutiny at all because there should not be any discernible independent parts assembling it in the first place, can actually be known and performed. To that end, there needs to be a transition from the stages closer to the point S to the ones closer to the base AB—including the very base. This statement repudiates the gap that is formed between the two consciousnesses as a consequence of the dissimilarity of their nature. Correspondingly, now the two consciousnesses must form a single unity because they are indeed being observed as representing different *degrees* of the same reality. According to Bergsonian principles, only the world of the quantitative can experience a change in magnitude—degree—because only the spatial multiplicity is homogeneous and therefore divisible. The second assertion derives precisely from considering these two selves as only differing in degree. As a result of this, the deeper self and the superficial ego are equated in nature and the *gradation* that measures them becomes a solely indicative of their temporal or spatial tendency. In other words, the degree that establishes how temporal or how spatial a consciousness

is, depending on the level it inhabits, does additionally show in which terms its durability will be constituted.[10]

All these statements lead to an obvious paradox within Bergson's philosophy. The clear distinction he exposes between pure duration and pure space is the one leading him not only to inadequately relate them to one another, but also to alter the two separate individual mechanisms and incorrectly incorporate them into each other's. Unquestionably, this series of slight but constant contradictions has its origin in the pursuit, above all, of free will. Bergson's deception consists in creating the illusion throughout his exposition that, since to him there is an infinity of stages within the cone, the levels which are closer to the exclusively temporal consciousness must somehow be (almost) identical to it—the base AB. In fact, they (almost) are. The only difference, nonetheless, arises from the fact that those levels always retain an infinitesimal component from the spatial influence that the point S —despite its perpetual distance to the present levels—still bestows upon them. In a word, Bergson tries to conceal the fact that there is an insurmountable discontinuity between the widest possible level and the so-called base AB. He makes use of the fact that the base and the series of intermediate levels would, in theory, meet at infinity,[11] whereas he ignores the impracticality—which he himself introduced as the

10 The concept durability hints at the temporal constitutive of a given state of material consciousness. A consciousness installed in the narrower levels of the cone would very much depend on a spatial conception of the world and, therefore, would be based more on time than in duration. What this amounts to saying is that time, being the illusory consecutiveness of simultaneities, can only provide a consciousness with that very linear awareness. In contrast, a state of consciousness located in the wider circumferences—though still somewhat spatial—would be granted a more temporal awareness instead of a timely arrangement. Thus, spatially oriented selves tend to interpret the world and themselves in a continuous and irrecoverable manner that brings ephemerality and succinctness into their being. Contrariwise, temporally oriented selves would enjoy a perspective less conquered by space and, thus, would interpret themselves in terms of an interpenetrated temporality instead of simply in a horizontal sequence: they *endure*. In other words, durability refers to the disagreement a consciousness can undergo between perpetuation and transience.

11 From a mathematical perspective, they would, indeed, meet at infinity. The problem arises when Bergson tries to explain the conditions under which a soul would come into being by making use of a logic that does not belong in such a reasoning. What he disregards is that, even though such a meeting would actually occur, that argument has no use in validating either the prevalence or even the existence of that which he is trying to unite. The present text makes concessions to most of Bergson's propositions because they usually do not interfere with his temporal discourse. The role he attributes to consciousness, nonetheless, turns out to be more ambiguous than it might seem since Bergson oscillates between multiple representations—slightly different but not completely compatible—of consciousness throughout both *Time and Free Will* and *Matter and Memory*.

fundamentals of his logic—of maintaining such a gradation so that two realities that vary in nature would be forced to meet at some inapproachable point.

According to Bergson's delineation of the two multiplicities, the separation between pure duration and space would seem to be more coherently represented by a cone that lacked a base. In such a depiction, the cone would likewise be constructed by an infinity of layers that gradually lose spatial influence and, inversely, acquire a more temporal disposition. Needless to say, none of these stages could absolutely disentangle itself from space since all of them—the entirety of the cone—would impersonate the individual's material consciousness. Aside from the cone, the purely temporal consciousness would stand, by its own, as a stage which no subject could ever uncover as long as they remained a being influenced by the physical world.[12] Instead, what Bergson prefers to formulate is that—since the base AB and the "ultimate" levels are in truth so extremely similar that they "inevitably" must be inaccurately and clumsily considered identical to each other—the soul must, for this reason, be accessible to the subject just like the rest of the stages are. In consequence, Bergson's only choice is to establish a cone with a base in order to represent the movement of psychic life he believes possible to perform. To him, psychic life oscillates between the two extremes: complete freedom and absolute restrain. The only additional procedure left for Bergson to fully shield that connection between the entirely temporal stage in pure duration and the rest of the levels of consciousness is to organise the (in)frequency of the oscillations:

> It is because the transition is made by imperceptible steps from concrete duration, whose elements permeate one another, to symbolical duration, whose moments are set side by side, and consequently from free activity to conscious automatism. It is

12 That is to say, no being could ever access such exclusively temporal state unless there was no possibility of going backwards and enter again the realm of the material universe. In other words, the pure soul, in contrast to Bergson's description, would only be possibly conquered after death. Thus, any possible influences derived from or addressed to this stand-alone reality would result in complete uncontrollability and unruliness not worth trying to subdue. Moreover, in spite of the obvious spiritual denotation this terminology suggests, the reader should not introduce the religious discourse within the present exposition. However, it is scarcely unnoticeable the self-evident idealism inherent in Bergson's choice of naming "soul" the *purest* stage of all.

> because, although we are free whenever we are willing to get back into ourselves, it seldom happens that we are willing. It is because, finally, even in the cases where the action is freely performed, we cannot reason about it without setting out its conditions externally to one another, therefore in space and no longer in pure duration. (*TFW* 239-240).

In other words, Bergson cannot possibly escape the portrayal of a cone that has been circumscribed by limits because he needs the conscious subject to actually be able to reach every section of the cone, and, more or less regularly, make use of those limits. By means of this bidirectional transition among the whole set of temporal and spatial stages—including the exclusively temporal and the exclusively spatial—Bergson guarantees the survival of a superior and pure state of consciousness which is only sometimes accessible by entering a quite abstract and unfathomable depth of consciousness. Regarding the frequency of the levels operating within consciousness, and since the subject is primarily in contact with the quantitative realities, it is easily noticed that the subject partakes of space and homogeneous entities most of the time. That is, by definition, consciousness dwells in the more superficial levels and usually operates closer to the point S because the subject's most primitive way of being is necessarily engaged in sensory processes:

> In a word, our ego comes in contact with the external world at its surface; our successive sensations, although dissolving into one another, retain something of the mutual externality which belongs to their objective causes; and thus our superficial psychic life comes to be pictured without any great effort as set out in a homogeneous medium. But the symbolical character of such a picture becomes more striking as we advance further into the depths of consciousness [...]. (*TFW* 125)

Undeniably, the superficial ego prevails—in terms of recurrence—over the self that dominates the stages farthest from space. It is only through great difficulty

that the subject can distance themselves from both the sensory perceptions and the linear sequentiality within which the senses are arranged along the consecutiveness of time. And this, oppositely to Bergson's assumptions, only so that the individual is able to partially—and for a limited time only—separate from the exceedingly spatial embodiments. In this case, psychic life does not oscillate between absolute freedom and imprisonment, but, on the contrary, between two different methods to approach and interpret the world and oneself: the one a more individual and disorderly perspective, the other a more common and less confused view. Thus, the portrayal of an almost infinite cone that illustrates the dynamics of psychic life does result in the envisaging of consciousness as a vehicle that connects the most direct perceptions from the outer world to the deepest stages of the self—without ever abandoning the spatial influence. In short, whereas this text establishes that consciousness cannot escape space, Bergson, on the contrary, declares that only *aware* consciousness is perpetually attached to spatiality:

> And as the repeated picture of one identical objective phenomenon, ever recurring, cuts up our superficial psychic life into parts external to one another, the moments which are thus determined determine in their turn distinct segments in the dynamic and undivided progress of our more personal conscious states. Thus the mutual externality which material objects gain from their juxtaposition in homogeneous space reverberates and spreads into the depths of consciousness: little by little our sensations are distinguished from one another like the external causes which gave rise to them, and our feelings or ideas come to be separated like the sensations with which they are contemporaneous. (*TFW* 126)

Since Bergson cannot entirely eliminate the remnants of spatial influence from consciousness, he states that such materiality can only be applied to either "sensations," "feelings," or "ideas" (*TFW* 126). In other words, the upshot of the material world would be, in theory, only able to take hold of those levels at which aware consciousness is the one at work. Unsurprisingly, to Bergson, aware

consciousness only dwells for the most part in the superficial levels of the cone. On the other hand, the fact that physicality can only corrupt the aware consciousness is quite a sensible theory, but only if by aware consciousness what is being addressed is the entirety of the cone. Unfortunately, as it has been demonstrated above, this is not the situation in *Time and Free Will* since Bergson's cone, in the first place, does not meet the requirements needed. As long as he keeps allowing psychic life to enter the domain of pure duration, he is establishing a duality of consciousnesses; either by means of a distinction between the temporal and the spatial orientation, or by means of the contrast in its (un)awareness.

In addition, regarding the awareness and unawareness of consciousness, he does assert: "[e]liminate the superficial psychic states, and we no longer perceive a homogeneous time or measure duration, but feel it as a quality" (*TFW* 126). As a consequence of this, Bergson affirms that it should be supposedly possible to perceive duration as a quality throughout the deeper stages of the cone because the abstraction needed to reach those levels absorbs the subject and eventually displaces all external materiality. Strictly speaking, though, Bergson cannot do otherwise. Since he grants access to the subject to both the superficial consciousness and the deep-seated one, he indeed needs to mark that transition between spatiality and temporality as a conversion between consciousness' degrees of awareness and unawareness, respectively. In other words, instead of containing an infinity of layers which gradually lose their spatial orientation and, therefore, tend to constitute a consciousness which becomes less and less aware—without ever reaching complete unawareness—, the cone Bergson introduces makes it possible for consciousness to be totally deprived of the senses:

> That our ordinary conception of duration depends on a gradual incursion of space into the domain of pure consciousness is proved by the fact that, in order to deprive the ego of the faculty of perceiving a homogeneous time, it is enough to take away from it this outer circle of psychic states which it uses as a balance-wheel. (*TFW* 126)

One of the key examples Bergson provides in order to illustrate consciousness' loss of contact with the external world is the exemplification of dreams. By means of dreaming, he argues it is possible for consciousness to detach completely from space and, thus, to reach the state of pure duration. His reasoning here is based on the fact that, while dreaming, the subject's connections to the material world are temporarily ruptured—which is, to some extent, true. The main obstacle, however, keeps repeating itself along Bergson's interpretation: he carries on avoiding specifying that there is no possible way by which a subject can enter the pure qualitative multiplicity before death, if at all. For this particular case of dreams, there ought to be no disagreement at all with regard to the fact that the subject cannot be considered to have fully disentangled themselves from the physical world simply by not being plainly aware:

> These conditions are realized when we dream; for sleep, by relaxing the play of the organic functions, alters the communicating surface between the ego and external objects. Here we no longer measure duration, but we feel it; from quantity it returns to the state of quality; we no longer estimate past time mathematically: the mathematical estimate gives place to a confused instinct, capable, like all instincts, of committing gross errors, but also of acting at times with extraordinary skill. (*TFW* 126-127)

Bergson's confusion seems to arise from the fact that he erroneously associates a less aware state of a subject at a certain moment with a state of complete unawareness. That is to say, by simply observing that there are different states of awareness—and, inversely, different states of unawareness—, he solidifies all that mobility, which characterises the transition among stages that can never reach their absoluteness, to the idle notion of complete unawareness. In simpler words, awareness refers to the extent to which a given subject is interacting with the material universe. Since there is no possibility to achieve a point where the subject's interaction with the external world is non-existent, because consciousness cannot

escape spatiality, there is consequently no opportunity to enter a state of entire unawareness.

Another possible explanation for the former turmoil of notions would have to do with the fact that Bergson might be misunderstanding the concepts of unawareness and unconsciousness. While dreaming, one's senses are not wholly disengaged from the world—but simply not performing at their highest—, and thus, no stage of total unawareness invades the consciousness of the subject. This same situation takes place with more profound and complex circumstances as well, such as deep lethargies and comas. Whereas it is obvious that such individuals do not respond to stimuli in the same way a conscious subject would, or they indeed do not respond at all, they are still partaking of the physical world. The lack of observable response in relation to a perceived stimulus does not deprive the individual from having—either consciously or unconsciously—perceived it.

Nevertheless, it should be stated that the already mentioned transition or gradation between a more or less (un)aware stage of the individual should not be used to calibrate the fluctuation of (un)consciousness in the same manner. That is to say, awareness and unawareness both refer to the predisposition of a subject to incorporate objective time within their state of consciousness. Awareness and unawareness, therefore, symbolise the stages of the cone that, in their turn, represent either a tendency of the individual to delineated physicality or an inclination to diffused duration. Consciousness and unconsciousness, contrariwise, should not always be illustrated like so. On the one hand, these two categories coincide most of the times: whenever a subject remains on a level of deep unconsciousness, their awareness tends to be immensely diminished. Such is the actual case of dreams, when the subject remains eminently unconscious and, thus, shows no advanced assimilation of stimuli. In this case, both (un)awareness and (un)consciousness concur and share quite a similar gradation, the subject is not delineated by objective time and is not currently attentive to the physical world.

From a combination of these elements, two main ways of perceiving phenomena originate and coexist within the subject: the one by which experiences are hardly noticeable and the other by which events are catalogued and regulated. The rest of the circumstances and context surrounding a particular situation, along

with the individual's predisposition to one of the two perceptions, would in the end determine the final approach towards daily life experiences. Moreover, the subject does only seem to be conscious about this duality once the qualitative perception has already taken place and has been analysed under quantitative premises. Otherwise, everyday conventionality renders the subject's perceptions ordered.

Now, it is very true that such tendencies towards a qualitative or a quantitative approach regarding perceptions and impressions are also related to some extent to a more profound or a more superficial level of the self of the individual. Therefore, the proportions in which a subject perceives phenomena relies both on the individual's level of awareness as well as on the eagerness the subject reveals at a given situation. This argument brings back the example of dreams. While dreaming or simply sleeping, the subject is usually occupying a low level of awareness as well as a low level of conscientiousness—that is, the individual's consciousness as a whole is quite detached from space and external stimuli. Specifically, dreams can also be displayed as the exemplification *par excellence* of a subject's most accessible method to approach temporality. The time of dreams—somewhat temporality—does not correspond to the time of real phenomena—spatial, or vulgar, time. And by time is not only being addressed the duration[13] of dreams in contrast to that of physical phenomena, but the arrangement of the two temporal progressions as well. In other words, dreams and daily life experiences prominently differ in the way the individual interprets and arranges their consecutiveness.

The absence of linearity, nonetheless, is not exclusively inherent to the realm of the qualitative. Just like the echoes of chronology do invade dreams sometimes, the fully waking states partake as well of this apparent breach on the progression of temporality. Both arrangements are part of one single balance that permeates the individual in every possible situation. Bergson, however, states that:

> Even in the waking state, daily experience ought to teach us to distinguish between duration as quality, that which consciousness

13 Here duration is referring to the period of time contained between two temporal references—that is, an interval. It should not be understood under the same principles Bergsonian duration adheres to.

> reaches immediately [...], and time so to speak materialized, time that has become quantity by being set out in space. (*TFW* 127)

Nevertheless, Bergson keeps on considering the absence of linearity—the entirety of the domain of pure duration—as the one feature eminently inherent to consciousness and the individual. Undeniably, he thereafter develops and analyses a second multiplicity that opposes the first one, but only so that the qualitative domain is reinforced as the superior realm. In short, space, and all the components it entails, keeps forever stigmatised as the main source of corruption for the *pure* subject. Reasonably, the French philosopher is quite certain that, in the end, the individual is divided into the perception of real time—duration—and the measurement of such a reality. His unconditional favouring of temporality over space is, on the one hand, necessary for Bergson to delineate and establish his notion of soul and, on the other hand, the root of all of the contradictions found along his exposition. Nevertheless, aside from that unequal symmetry granted to each of the multiplicities, Bergson's work is still today of great relevance regarding both the identity of the subject and its construction:

> We should therefore distinguish two forms of multiplicity, two very different ways of regarding duration, two aspects of conscious life. Below homogeneous duration, which is the extensive symbol of true duration, a close psychological analysis distinguishes a duration whose heterogeneous moments permeate one another; below the numerical multiplicity of conscious states, a qualitative multiplicity; below the self with well-defined states, a self in which *succeeding each other* means *melting into one another* and forming an organic whole. But we are generally content with the first, i.e. with the shadow of the self projected into homogeneous space. (*TFW* 128)

This resultant shadow is the one that interests the present text the most. The shadow does not only symbolise the most common way in which an individual performs and interprets themselves and their surroundings, but is also the

personification of the dormant duality underlying every aspect of the subject's consciousness. In other words, the shadow is not only what could nonetheless be stated by Bergson as one of the two possible results—either a homogeneous perspective, as it is in this case, either a more heterogeneous one—arising from the reciprocity of the multiplicities. In fact, the shadow is the *only* possible result ever. Both in the intermingling of multiplicities as well as in the stages of the cone-shaped figure, there is nothing more than shadows. The individual can no longer be considered as a definite reality, even though they be surrounded by *definite* entities and *definite* methods used to *define* more realities. The two multiplicities, by being unattainable on their own, cannot but inevitably lead to a shadow of what Bergson would consider the real self:

> Consciousness, goaded by an insatiable desire to separate, substitutes the symbol for the reality, or perceives the reality only through the symbol. As the self thus refracted, and thereby broken to pieces, is much better adapted to the requirements of social life in general and language in particular, consciousness prefers it, and gradually loses sight of the fundamental self. (*TFW* 128)

It is at this convoluted point within the reasoning that a second view on the matter should be introduced. Whether these two domains should be considered simply opposites, or, in contrast, two mechanisms of the same engine, is answered by Martin Heidegger. The mentioned duality between what Bergson calls the world of the heterogeneous and the homogeneous, can be quite easily related to Heidegger's notions of authenticity and inauthenticity regarding Dasein. *Being and Time* (1927), provides with a view on identity and temporality rather parallel to that of Bergson. Among the many notions which Heidegger includes within his reasoning, it is found the concept of Dasein, which represents the central point of the philosopher's rationale. A rather aseptic definition of Dasein would be that of *being*:

> *The "essence"* [...] *of Dasein lies in its existence* [...]. The characteristics to be found in this being are thus not present

> "attributes" of an objectively present being which has such and such an "outward appearance," but rather possible ways for it to be, and only this. All being, one way or another, of this being is primarily being [Sein]. Thus the term "Dasein," which we use to designate this being, does not express its what—as in the case of table, house, three —but rather being [Sein]. (Heidegger 41-42)

Heidegger states that "[b]eings are a *who* (existence) or else a *what* (objective presence in the broadest sense)" (Heidegger 44). This extremely, yet self-explanatory, division of a being into two separate selves or ways of being strongly resembles Bergson's disengagement of quality and quantity. And, certainly, it could be argued that Bergson's depiction of the world of the heterogeneous and that of the homogeneous is mirrored by Heidegger's notions of authenticity and inauthenticity:

> The two kinds of being of *authenticity* and *inauthenticity*—these expressions are terminologically chosen in the strictest sense of the word—are based on the fact that Dasein is in general determined by always being-mine. But the inauthenticity of Dasein does not signify a "lesser" being or a "lower" degree of being. Rather, inauthenticity can determine Dasein even in its fullest concretion, when it is busy, excited, interested, and capable of pleasure. (Heidegger 42)

Pretty much alike Bergson, Heidegger follows the same discourse regarding the two sides of a being—what in this text has been referred as an individual's consciousness. However, he detaches his line of thought from the perspective of free will that permeates Bergson's argumentation. In contrast, Heidegger prefers to address the question of being from the point of view of the multiple modes in which Dasein can be found. In other words, in *Being and Time*, the existence of a being is approached regarding its (in)authenticity and rather ignoring the deterministic problem. "[E]ach Dasein, be it authentic or inauthentic, has to appropriate the socio-historical patterns of conduct, interpretation, and self-interpretation in order to be what it is. [...] That is, authenticity/freedom is not about *which* social possibilities one

appropriates in building its identity, but about *how* one appropriates them" (Karademir 379). Consequently, Heidegger is more interested in examining the moments during which Dasein remains as an individualistic notion and those during which it passes onto the shared world:

> Understanding *can* turn primarily to the disclosedness of the world, that is, Dasein can understand itself initially and for the most part in terms of the world. Or else understanding throws itself primarily into the for-the-sake-of-which, which means Dasein exists as itself.[...] Understanding is either authentic, originating from its own self as such, or else inauthentic. The "in" [*in*authentic] does not mean that Dasein cuts itself off from itself and understands "only" the world. (Heidegger 141)

The view which Heidegger provides turns out to be a much more integrated one in so far as joining the two extremes of Dasein is concerned. In contrast, Bergson contemplates these two sides as opposites. And, although every now and then he has but to agree to their working jointly, Bergson keeps insisting on their antagonism. In short, whereas the French philosopher forces the quantitatively—the external world —out of the *pure* consciousness, Heidegger incorporates both realms and urges not to contemplate them under a hierarchical order whatsoever.

However, the notions explained in the previous paragraphs only regard the preliminary scheming of Dasein, of being. As the title of his work suggests, Heidegger is far more interested in time and temporality, since he considers this a key component into understanding every feature and constituent of Dasein:

> It is all the more necessary that the time "in which" beings are encountered be given a *fundamental* analysis, since not only history but natural processes, too, are determined "by time." However, more elemental than the circumstance that the "time factor" occurs in the *sciences* of history and nature, is the fact that, before all thematic investigation, Dasein "reckons with time" and orients itself

> *according to it*. And here again *the* “reckoning” of Dasein “with its time” remains decisive, the reckoning that precedes any use of instruments that are geared to determining time. This reckoning is prior to such instruments, and first makes possible something like the use of clocks. (Heidegger 385)

It is, indeed, worth noting that Heidegger brings his arguments a step further, for he even suggests that “[f]actical Dasein takes account of time without existentially understanding temporality” (Heidegger 385). That is to say, he is somewhat considering vulgar time—the chronological sequence of events which can be encountered in the natural world—an independent reality that does not necessarily relate to temporality. In other words, where Bergson states that vulgar time is but the conceptualisation of a disguised space originating within a consciousness, Heidegger promotes its independence to some extent. A. E. Pilkington, in the introduction to Bergsonian concepts of his work *Bergson and His Influence: A Reassessment* (1976), suggests a perspective rather antagonistic to that of Heidegger. His interpretation of Bergsonian notions is pretty much literal with respect to the categorisations—and hierarchies—of time and temporality:

> The idea of succession is the result of a synthesis on the part of the conscious observer. Phenomena which one normally considers to be means of measuring time such as the movement of a hand on a clock, or of the earth around the sun, or of a shadow on a sun-dial, all have the effect of denying the existence of time as an autonomous dimension altogether and of reducing it to a form of space. This will become clear if one reflects that all statements about this sort of time — clock time — can be reduced to statements about the movement in space of two objects in relation to each other. At any moment all bodies in space are in themselves simultaneous with all others, since *in the world* there is no succession; objects are strung out in space in juxtaposition — they do not ‘last’. (Pilkington 2)

Although a superficial look to Heidegger' rationale may suggest that temporality creates our conception of a linear time within the world, the reader must note that the problem does not regard the *existence* of such a notion of time, but its *essence*. Therefore, Heidegger understands that everyday Dasein—a consciousness well-grounded in the external world—actually experiences time by encountering presences in space. The problem does not arise in experiencing time—in the existence of it—, but in trying to cope with its quality. Furthermore, the question of the essence of vulgar time derives from the synchronicity of temporality and consciousness. In short, unlike Bergson, Martin Heidegger rejects the vision of a pure temporality that anticipates and domesticates linear time, and he only agrees with the individual questioning the latter by being linked with the former:

> The fact that the structure of datability belongs essentially to what is interpreted with the "now," "then," and "on that former occasion" becomes the most elemental proof that what has been interpreted originates from temporality interpreting itself. Saying "now," we always already also understand a "now that..." without actually saying it. Why? Because the "now" interprets a *making present of* beings. (Heidegger 389)

In order to fully understand Heidegger's last remark, a couple of notions should be looked through in more detail. Firstly, Heidegger introduces the concept of datability: "[w]e shall call this seemingly self-evident relational structure of the 'now,' 'on that former occasion,' and 'then' *datability*" (Heidegger 388). He later establishes that such datability is always present in everyday Dasein, independently of Dasein referring to actual moments in time:

> We completely leave aside the question whether this datability is factically carried out with regard to a "date" on the calendar. Even without such "dates," the "now" and "then" and "on that former occasion" are more or less dated in a definite way. [...] Even in the

> most trivial, offhand kind of everyday talk (for example, “it is cold”) we also have in mind a “now that...”. (Heidegger 388)

Dasein addresses a moment in time—a moment in space according to Bergson—either consciously or unconsciously. More importantly, Dasein incorporates the dimension of time whenever it interprets the world. Heidegger understands this as some sort of temporal accountability of the phenomena literally surrounding the individual. Consequently, he observes that the incorporation of time is borrowed from the subject’s expectation regarding that which is present. Curiously enough, this argumentation coincides with Bergson’s measurement of the physical world in a spatially oriented way. That is to say, Bergson determines the individual’s relations with the physical world in terms of distances, since he does not accept the existence of time as such within the homogeneous. Correspondingly, the French philosopher measures the externalities in the only unit he has left; that is, space. According to him, vulgar time only corresponds to the intrusion of temporality in the quantitative. In contrast, Heidegger’s distinction between the two spheres does not result to be as sharp and perceptive as Bergson’s. In his turn, he incorporates the idea of “making present” in his explanation as to why Dasein keeps bringing back a temporal contextualisation:

> First, because in addressing itself to something interpretively, it expresses *itself* too; that is, it expresses its circumspect and understanding *being together with* things at hand that lets them be discovered and encountered. And secondly because this addressing and discussing that also interprets *itself* is grounded in a *making present*, and is possible only as this. (Heidegger 388)

In other words, the major difference between Bergson’s and Heidegger’s rationale is also the key component to understanding the German philosopher’s depiction of temporality regarding the individual. That is to say, for Bergson, the subject experiences a fabricated time in the world of the homogeneous. This fictitious time is the result of the world of the heterogeneous intruding into space. As

a result, it is inferred that there is no such thing as vulgar time, and that, therefore, any element referring to "time"—in any sense of the word—must be undoubtedly located out of the homogeneous.[14] On the contrary, Heidegger allows the individual to explore a two-fold temporal experience that obeys to no order at all. Moreover, in the case of adhering itself to some sort of hierarchical order—if any—, Heidegger's argumentation would very likely favour the idea of vulgar time as the origin of the temporal aspect of the subject's psyche.

According to Heidegger, the individual's temporal structure regarding their consciousness could very well be the result of that same "making present" which the subject encounters in the external world. In this sense, the last argument mirrors a much more natural—i.e. scientifically-oriented—perspective. The reason for that is no other than Heidegger's inference that the structure of a subject's consciousness is more likely to derive from the natural environment surrounding them than the opposite way. "The making present that interprets itself, that is, what has been interpreted and addressed in the 'now,' is what we call 'time'" (Heidegger 389). Bergson, on the other hand, prefers to defend his rationale through the less straightforward argument that nature does not enclose any succession whatsoever. Consequently, the French philosopher is forced to attribute any sense of succession to the individual's consciousness and, thus, to remove all features referring to this same consciousness from the realm of space. For Bergson, there is no question as to which —time or temporality—comes first, since he considers the problem to derive from a confusion of duration with extension:

> [T]hat is, of treating mental events and states as if they could be construed in *spatial* terms[...]. It is a confusion arising from the reduction of duration to extension, of succession to simultaneity. [...] Bergson argues that the elements constituting the spatial world are perpetually simultaneous one with another, whereas consciousness is

14 Michel Foucault, noticeably, decides to determine that space is rather heterogeneous, thus suggesting—resembling Heidegger's rationale—that there is an ultimate unity between time and space that cannot be erased: "The space in which we live, which draws us out of ourselves, in which the erosion of our lives, our time and our history occurs, the space that claws and knaws at us, is also, in itself, a heterogeneous space" (Foucault 23).

> pure duration and its states cannot be adequately represented as being extended in space. (Pilkington 1-2)

Heideggerian time, thus, relates to the present's becoming something other than present; or, better, to the dynamic interaction between the future and the past. "Making present," then, refers both to a convoluted present which is undistinguishable from what came before and what comes after, and to a conveniently isolated present. On the one hand, authentically understood "making present" results in a fusion of times—past and future—, whose interplay gives rise to an illusory present. This feeling of authentic present, ironically, reaches the individual by alluding to any other moment than the present one—since the latter does not correspond to an entity that exists by itself and that can be disengaged from the whole of continuity. On the other hand, inauthentically understood "making present" focuses more on the conveniently isolated presents which continuously give way to one another. Still, it could be argued that such a sequence of presents remains an illusion. However, the inauthentic aspect of these presents serves a practical utility: the individual, for the most part, lingers within a series of recent past and near future events which, usually, is very narrow.

With regard to Heidegger's identification of what is present and what is not, it should be highlighted that his theories, overall, resemble those of Bergson. Where the German philosopher understands that no present can be detached from the whole of temporality, Bergson establishes that the subject has entered a realm of temporal conglomerates that cannot be dissociated from one another. Where Heidegger shows that utility disregards the inability to select just one single present, the French philosopher brings forward his never-ending series of spatial simultaneities that have an independent existence of their own.

Interestingly enough, Heidegger masterfully exposes a paradox regarding the different structures which the whole of time—both vulgar time and temporality—endorses. Very much unlike Bergson, Heidegger interprets—and reinterprets—time and temporality in a much more flexible manner. This attitude towards his very own argumentation results in a richer set of possibilities concerning the individual's consciousness, and its relation to time itself. Thus, the German philosopher first

establishes that only inauthentically understood temporality—i.e. time in the external world—tends to be illustrated or imagined as a continuous series of fixed presents which follow one another. It is only afterwards that he introduces the idea that not even everyday Dasein recognises this structure:

> In the everyday "just passing through life" that takes care, Dasein never understands itself as running along in a continuously enduring succession of sheer "nows." On the basis of this covering over, the time that Dasein allows itself has gaps in it, so to speak. We often cannot reconstruct a "day" when we come back to the time that we have "used." Yet the time that has gaps in it does not go to pieces in this lack of togetherness; it is rather a mode of temporality that is always already disclosed and ecstatically *stretched along*. The mode in which time that is "allowed" "elapses," and the way in which taking care gives that time to itself more or less explicitly, can be phenomenally explicated appropriately only if, on the one hand, we avoid the theoretical "representation" of a continuous stream of nows, and if, on the other hand, the possible modes in which Dasein gives and allows itself time are to be conceived of as primarily determined in terms of *how it "has" its time in a manner corresponding to its actual existence*. (Heidegger 390)

This argumentation brings forward the already mentioned paradox concerning the individual's relation with time in the world of the homogeneous. As previously explained, spatial simultaneities represent a detached and fixed present to some extent. Certainly, Bergson's simultaneities relate to the world in a much more spatially oriented way than Heidegger's disengaged moments from vulgar time do. However, both theories contemplate a recollection of these entities; independently of what their nature may be considered to identify with. In other words, the external world seems to have a rhythm of its own, a fixed pace that demonstrates to be oblivious to any subject and on any of the latter's temporal aspects. The mentioned

paradox confronts this sort of independently prefixed externality to the individual's temporal capabilities, whichever they may be.

As a consequence, it is difficult to establish whether this series of events which permeate the spatial world does, indeed, take place somehow or if the individual is the creative agent who tries restoring order into it. In short, the problem relates not only to the existence of some sort of time within the homogeneous—especially from a Bergsonian perspective—, but also to the structure which this vulgar time apparently assumes. Heidegger's interpretation seems very keen on erasing the representation of a stream of nows. This, however, does not necessarily imply the absence of time within the world of the homogeneous.

Precisely, Heidegger's addressing a stream of simultaneities—which, unlike Bergson's rationale, remain quite temporal—as something that individuals use to shape the world's mechanisms is what makes this paradox a bewildering one. On the one hand, the individual is observed as the creative agent interpreting and modifying the world surrounding them, in a temporal sort of manner. On the other hand, however, that very same subject could be said to be ignoring their own premises when it comes to experiencing the world they just categorised. That is to say, Heidegger maintains that Dasein establishes a structure of the world, and only afterwards decides to ignore that same configuration in order to interact with it. In fact, it is unclear why Dasein insists on breaking the continuum of externalities—the stream of nows—into its smallest pieces when, in truth, it is more interested in its actual order, in the sense of concatenation.

It would seem that, for both philosophers—although it is more emphasised by Bergson than it is by Heidegger—, there is an underlying notion of the fragmentary nature of the individual. The Bergsonian perspective maintains that this is a battle of the pure self against its corrupted shadow. Heidegger, in contrast, prefers to unify both fragments and force them to meet at the same level. Independently of which approach seems the more disinterested, the subject must in any case face a fragmentary disarray of their consciousness which, indeed, answer to the convoluted merging of temporality and space.

2/ Psychic Life and the Representation of Identity

The constant battle between the fundamental—or the original—self against its corrupted representation in space does not simply disappear under the argument that, altogether, everything the individual has access to and is eventually conformed by is shadows and reflections. That is to say, none of the multiplicities has been able to impose itself—in terms of relevance or *purity*—over the other in the end. And this, in its turn, leads the individual to a disposition of uncertainty when it comes to analyse what consciousness is and how it is construed. In other words, temporality has now been discredited as a totality that happens to be more essential and constitutional of the pure consciousness than space is to this same consciousness. Since such a reality is in truth unachievable and, in the case of having any real influence over the self, uncontrollable, which of the two tendencies should be determined as reliable? In short, which is the authentic self? Notwithstanding, the fact that none of the two domains should, nor could, prevail over its opposite does not erase the pressure they inflict on one another. The individual, besides being the

result of the unfeasibility of both temporality and space, cannot be merely considered to be that which must forcibly rest between them both.

Shadows, therefore, in spite of being the *only* possible answer regarding the question of the identity of the self, do not reconcile a satisfying answer. For such shadows regarding the individual also mirror the duality between the personal and the social that is always present within the subject, similarly to the opposition which the two multiplicities promote within consciousness. Paradoxically, the more dynamic the individual becomes, the more shattered and divided their self is. This amounts to saying that the incompleteness of the subject does ultimately free the self from the immobility and the immutability that social standards usually tend to establish. Therefore, to answer that the individual is necessarily a shadow is a legitimate and a truthful statement, though an incomplete one. In contrast, it should be answered that the individual necessarily embodies the shadow of the limits that can never be grasped and that, in fact, the subject cannot escape the never-ending process of compensating the two antagonistic influences emerging from within and without. Thus, the subject is perpetually located in the middle of harmonising both themselves and the others—or, best, the personal and the impersonal.

Respectively, the opposition of the individual and the society reflects the battle between temporality and spatiality in terms of how much room for movement, progress and evolution the self of the subject is allowed to experience after all. Whereas the social organisation focuses on the establishment and the determination of definite entities—due to a mirroring of spatial phenomena—, the individual component is usually unwillingly forced to assimilate all of these foundations and artificial structures. Whenever the social compound creates a category, the individuality of the subject is repeatedly diminished and endangered. In addition, the alterations and the transformations the individual can eventually undergo, besides reshaping the entirety of the self as a whole, do likewise affect and influence the states of consciousness of a given subject when taken individually. In simpler words, the opposition of the individuality and the community is not only evident during moments of deep thought and pensiveness—when the consciousness of a subject is at a greater distance from the superficial levels of physic life, and, thus, at a moment

when its boundaries tend to dissolve—, but also during not so intellectual situations that constantly take place on a daily basis.

During deep reflection or abstract contemplation, it is easily realised that such alterations affect consciousness on its whole—since it is precisely that whole for which the individual aims during this process—and disturb the previously established nature of the self. In other words, the individual is very likely to realise the contrariness of themselves and the other[15] whenever such a profound and complex process of intellectual reflection takes place. This is indeed quite a discernible and logical conclusion that follows the mentioned process, since the two propositions that are set to be compared by the subject are, each in their turn, pretty close to their respectively limits of psychic life. Thus, the compound of individuality is associated to the agglomeration of the uncontrollable and the non-categorisable, whereas the explicitness of the otherness is extracted from the cosmos of formal classifications and distributions.

The transformations the subject is allowed to encounter, nonetheless, also occur during not so abstract daily situations, though to a lesser extent. During the latter, on the contrary, the consciousness of the subject is located on the more superficial levels of physic life and, thus, its different states are clearly discernible from one another. The sort of display the consciousness of the subject is revealing at these perfunctory moments greatly complicates the task of recognising the already mentioned antagonism among the actual sphere of individuality and the illusory dependence on impersonality. Therefore, at those moments, the subject is taking for granted that the clear delineations that separate their conscious states are not artificial, but, in contrast, originally a part of themselves as well. In fact, this supposition is the key feature for community to establish a concealed impersonality

15 The other, besides referring to any subject who is external to the present individual—in short, who is not the present individual—, also alludes to the *generic* other. That is to say, by other is here meant the totality of that which the individual is originally not from the start, but is, nonetheless, forced to embrace as their own. The other, therefore, relates to the generic compound of otherness. This otherness is as external to the present individual as to the rest of the subjects taken separately. No one constructs the otherness by themselves, but everyone is formulated within it at the same time. Consequently, the subject is required not only to forcibly accept all the premises and postulations of the otherness surrounding them, but also to identify it as a product that originated in their individuality.

without the individual noticing it. Bergson, for his part, does not ignore this contrariety at all:

> In other words, our perceptions, sensations, emotions and ideas occur under two aspects: the one clear and precise, but impersonal; the other confused, ever changing, and inexpressible, because language cannot get hold of it without arresting its mobility or fit it into its common-place forms without making it into public property. If we have been led to distinguish two forms of multiplicity, two forms of duration, we must expect each conscious state, taken by itself, to assume a different aspect according as we consider it within a discrete multiplicity or a confused multiplicity, in the time as quality, in which it is produced, or in the time as quantity, into which it is projected. (*TFW* 129)

Interestingly enough, the individual is thus able to acknowledge such impersonal characteristics imposed by the otherness among some of the conscious states that invade their most common daily events. This is not a usual situation, though, since those superficial levels of psychic life permeate the subject's consciousness with rigidness and immobility. Eventually, this same immobility is the one cause of the lack of evolution regarding the self of a subject that is predominantly suspended on everyday compliance and resignation. However, the individual is still left some license for some transformations of their well-defined conscious states.

The alterations that might take place within the realm of quantity bring along a greater sense of uneasiness and anxiety, since it is during these moments that the individual fully realises their incapacity to abandon the influence of the otherness successfully. In contrast to the moments when the subject somehow glimpses this same contradiction from the perspective of the organic whole of consciousness, they are now contemplating it from behind the inflexibility of fixed realities. Indeed, the individual tends to demonstrate a better assimilation—a less distressed one, at least—of this paradox when they observe it from the isolation which the remoteness of

the abstract thought provides with. Otherwise, it is only natural that the subject feels their self-threatened by the influence of adulterated and illusory structures. In fact, the described incapacity to renounce these impersonal premises is quickly identified by the subject as an imperishable necessity for the social compound. That is to say, the individual suddenly realises not only that they are unable to escape such rigid stability, but also that they dearly depend on it. In order to continue being a part of the community, the subject is required to perform in a functional and organised way within society. Once again, this accentuated anxiety which the subject experiences on the superficial levels of consciousness brings forward the duality of pure individuality and complete impersonality:

> We instinctively tend to solidify our impressions in order to express them in language. Hence we confuse the feeling itself, which is in a perpetual state of becoming, with its permanent external object, and especially with the word which expresses this object. In the same way as the fleeting duration of our ego is fixed by its projection in homogeneous space, our constantly changing impressions, wrapping themselves round the external object which is their cause, take on its definite outlines and its immobility. (*TFW* 130)

The utmost paradox here does not only refer to the fact that the subject experiences a greater threatening regarding their individuality when they observe such fixed and opposed notions from within the realm of quantity, but also to the fact that these moments of introspection are not likely to take place due to social requirements. At least, however, if they eventually occur, the majority of times they are promptly dissipated by the responsibilities and undertakings expected by the community from the subject. Therefore, the greatest paradox refers to the fact that the individual has to be located at a quite socially oriented level of psychic life, as well as to defy and elude the demands this system imposes on them, so as to realise their complete dependency on the community. In short, for the subject to recognise their impossibility to escape impersonality, they need to be consciously partaking of

that very impersonality; which, in its turn, is for the most part envisaged to annihilate any sort of mindfulness.

The ambiguity resides in the fact that a system that equates all the different particularities that may take place within it—by pretending to formulate all of the individuals as a single unit—is generally the only source the individual has to fully grasp their individuality during daily routine. Moreover, this is arguably the prominent way—or, better, the most useful one—of discerning a reality such as one's own individuality. In other words, processes that involve a deep abstraction of the intellect are indeed advantageous for the subject in order to comprehend or to move closer towards their individuality. But, still, they render the individual extremely isolated from the latter's most habitual whereabouts. In addition, such deep processes are usually surrounded by a sterile unprofitableness that is usually the only product of the ambiguity and abstraction they require. In contrast, daily life processes are endowed with all kind of forms of plain efficiency. Productivity, then, must be taken into account when dealing with the demanding question of how to approach one's own individuality.

In this sense, productivity does permeate the infrequent realisations of the lack of personal identity that the subject might embrace when lingering in the domain of social categorisations. The notion of productivity ought not to be understood as the main component that would grant a greater value to this specific approach towards consciousness—that a subject may undertake while wandering around social life—instead of through deep reflection. Hence, the approach the subject may carry out while being surrounded by social notions is not more *useful* simply because the individual lingered in an environment that enhances the overall—the shared—productivity. To observe these concepts like so would mean to validate every social construct and to locate productivity at the top of the individual's priorities, and not merely at the top of the community's concerns. Instead, unimaginably as it might sound, productivity should be here understood as *useful* exclusively for the individual.

Whereas the two extremes are easily conceivable—that is, accessing consciousness by means of abstract thought or, on the contrary, the almost complete annihilation of individuality by means of everyday routine—, what is found in this

case is productivity attending to the needs of the individual that is being diminished by the impersonal compound. In simpler words, the second approach towards one's individuality while enduring the community's priorities provides the subject with a more transparent view—which is not necessarily the most precise one, though—of their own true being. That is to say, since the subject, for the most part, lingers within the realm of fixed notions and communal productivity, the tools employed to realise the complete opposition of their individuality to this system cause that this approach be more graspable and unequivocal. Thus, by means of habit, the subject understands this process simply as a more useful way to comprehend oneself, in contrast to the more complex and intangible immersion in profound abstraction. Language, fixed meanings, clear definitions, and, overall, spatiality derive in a need for functionality which the subject cannot even escape during the process of recognising this very unavoidability.

Also, it should not be concluded from these arguments that the second and more superficial process, during which the subject rests within social structures, derives in an unclear or untruthful approach to one's own consciousness. The fact that the subject understands it as a somehow more valid approach or a more productive one—because it is reached by means of tools the individual is more than familiar with—should not follow the erroneous thought that it must be wrong to some extent. If some of the *purity* Bergson enhanced so much is recovered here, it could be stated that, undeniably, the discernment of the subject's individuality is more authentic or even more solid when the individual detaches themselves from spatiality and community. However, this reasoning would only bring back the dichotomy of the prevalence of either a pure soul—pretty much resembling the religious discourse—, either an inconceivable and impossible to prove state of consciousness within *absolute* duration. In any case, the same problem between the pure realm and the corrupted—meaning depraved or degenerated; that is, not original—version of the self would emerge once again.

In contrast, a more sensible view would stress the fact that these two different approaches originate two different perspectives when dealing with the consciousness of the individual. On the one hand, it could be argued that a great effort of abstract cogitation may, to some extent, assemble the never ending and

unrestrained interpenetration of states of consciousness so that the more ordered and disciplined intellect of the subject could make use of it. On the other hand, the individual is approaching a view of their own individuality that is usually diminished within the social construct, and that, moreover, cannot escape the organisation and the tendency to structure which the community imposes. It would be a great mistake to favour one perspective over the other, since the first one cannot escape the already mentioned categories, and, if possible, it can only do so momentarily. The second one, in spite of conforming the more structured view, helps the individual to realise their own inescapability by making use of tools that assure this so-called recognition will not dissipate as soon as the effort of abstraction is ended. In short, the individual is forced to choose between the two, while in truth none of them can achieve a complete and stable view of the identity of the self on their own.

Taken individually, either one of these dispositions would only create a single shattered representation of the entirety of the consciousness of the subject, respectively. The one—being an intricate process which, by originating within the individual, cannot completely escape the domain of impersonal premises—has to apply the tools that define the totality of social postulations to a whole of a completely different nature. The other is not even trying to camouflage the interference of the community when aspiring to reach a reality that is supposedly external to established definitions, because that very process is now located within orderly classification. These contrapositions amount to saying that the first approach lacks the utility which characterises the social sphere, since the glimpses that may be grasped do not endure the process of abstraction and, thus, the individual can only deal with its remnants afterwards. And, also, that the second resolution lacks the trustworthiness of having reached any remnants that would resemble the original self at all since, this time, the subject accesses this contrariety of terms without even distancing themselves from the physicality of the world.

The final question would then be to choose between the more *truthful* approach and the more *functional* view. If the different characteristics of each of them are really taken into account, the answer can only resolute that the question was absolute nonsense in the first place, since it was merely searching for one single legitimate option. In fact, the individual is nothing but the constant struggle between

truth and *functionality*. Not one of them can ever win, not ever lose. To understand this conflict as a contest instead of as an encounter is to already be settled in one of the two extremities, without any prospects to move. Bergson, for his part, highlights the fact that this confrontation is not only found in the process of recovering the individual's ideas or conscious states, but also in their incorporation to the whole of the self:

> Not all our ideas, however, are thus [consciously and voluntarily] incorporated in the fluid mass of our conscious states. Many float on the surface, like dead leaves on the water of a pond: the mind, when it thinks them over and over again, finds them ever the same, as if they were external to it. Among these are the ideas which we receive ready made, and which remain in us without ever being properly assimilated, or again the ideas which we have omitted to cherish and which have withered in neglect. If, in proportion as we get away from the deeper strata of the self, our conscious states tend more and more to assume the form of a numerical multiplicity, and to spread out in a homogeneous space, it is just because these conscious states tend to become more and more lifeless, more and more impersonal. Hence we need not be surprised if only those ideas which least belong to us can be adequately expressed in words [...]. (*TFW* 135-136)

By means of this illustrative exposition regarding the way in which ideas are first incorporated into the whole of consciousness and afterwards assimilated by the individual, Bergson is not only making a direct reference to his arrangement of psychic life, but also indirectly introducing here the notion of memory. Once again, the renowned cone-shaped figure which was used to divide the onwards and backwards transition between the absolute states of temporality and spatiality is likewise found here. Yet, that constant movement of psychic life is now being transformed into the more or less impersonality that a certain idea of the subject demonstrates. In simpler words, after having analysed the different oppositions these

two extremes of the cone can represent—temporality and space, duration and time, individual identity and social constructs—, Bergson has already prepared the ground to scrutinise the extent to which the individual partakes, say, of individuality.[16]

On the one hand, it is found that states of consciousness sort of summarise the condition of a given consciousness at a specific *time* in space. Hence, there is no possible argument in this respect, since it has already been seen that these states oscillate between a temporal disorganisation and, in reverse, a spatial distribution. However, independently of what the subject's preferences are, this tendency can always be either tamed by socially shared habits or subdued by the singularity of the individual psyche. Ideas, on the contrary, cannot be said to be actually the same. Although they somehow enjoy the whimsical acceptance of this or that domain, depending on what the current approach is, an idea would always constitute a *smaller* part of the totality of a state of consciousness, being granted that the individual is largely dwelling on spatiality.

This choice of terms that refer to sizes takes the discussion back to the obscure notions employed by Bergson. In this case, it could be both affirmed and denied that an idea constitutes a smaller part within the totality of consciousness—or within a state of consciousness, which, in Bergsonian terminology, stands for a synonym of the latter—than the mentioned totality does. On the one hand, Bergson would be more inclined to deny this argument, since he considers impossible to dissect a state of consciousness without extracting the *purity* out of the so-called state. Hence, there is no possible way to measure how big or how small these two realities are so as to make a comparison of them both. Bergson quickly removes any controversies regarding the supposedly impossibility to state that a container is somehow bigger or smaller than its content by granting ideas with the capacity to permeate the whole of consciousness. Consequently, the alteration of an idea which is already present within the whole of a state of consciousness would not merely affect some parts of this totality, but the absolute entirety of it. And, vice versa, the modification of the nature of the whole would alter every single idea currently permeating the aggregate:

16 Later in the text, the present study will observe this same duality regarding the individuality of the subject in major Faulknerian characters, in terms not only of opposition between the personal and the social, but also of the personal as having been borrowed from other selves.

> The fact is that each of them has the same kind of life as a cell in an organism: everything which affects the general state of the self affects it also. But while the cell occupies a definite point in the organism, an idea which is truly ours fills the whole of our self. (*TFW* 135)

Nevertheless, this denial is deliberately based on a configuration of priorities regarding the domains of duration and space that favours the former over the latter. Bergson would never approve the possibility of considering an idea as something smaller than the totality that encloses it—by positioning oneself under the influences of the realm of spatiality—without stating that such an approach could by no means be regarded as an equivalent to the previously mentioned process. Whereas this prejudice can be found in Bergson's work, the present text is trying not to favour any domain, nor to impose any nullity over either approach. Therefore, within the present rationale, it can absolutely be affirmed that an idea represents a smaller part than the totality that encloses it, as long as the individual is eminently invaded by the influence of spatiality and the social compound. Besides being the approach that the individual would unconsciously opt for, this organising and imagining of sizes is the one process the subject will forever depend upon.

The main difference, hence, refers to the ability of consciousness to locate itself on a more temporal or a more spatial level of psychic life, depending on the individual's current needs. Since a state of consciousness is always considered a totality—independently of the domain it is currently more focused on—, the subject does not ever lose the impression of dealing with a whole in any of the two cases. The fact that the mentioned whole can or cannot be considered to be partaking of size depends on which realm is governing at a specific moment. Thus, consciousness is an indissoluble temporal whole as well as a vessel containing smaller units which can be easily discerned. In both cases, the notion of totality permeates each configuration of consciousness. Ideas, on the contrary, are either indiscernible from the temporal whole or smaller units that assemble the spatial totality. Now, since the former cannot be even grasped, the stress must be focused on the latter.

When dealing with a social context, ideas are indeed smaller units that constitute a bigger whole. When the subject is indirectly altered by the modification of the nature of an specific idea—and, hence, the entirety of consciousness is reshaped as well—, the individual must be located on the temporal side of psychic life so as to be able to perceive this very change in the nature of their consciousness as a whole. In contrast, when the subject inhabits the social sphere, a certain idea is identified as the one component which triggered the greater modification of the totality of consciousness. Indeed, in this second case, the mentioned alteration does not permeate every corner of consciousness, but only those parts which can be related by correlation or similarity to the component *where* the original modification took place. Therefore, change, as well as language, is subdued to the commodities and classifications of ordinary life. To argue whether a modification which appears within a rather spatial state of consciousness does indeed affect the whole of consciousness—or, in contrast, whether the individual inhibits the alteration of the components *farthest* from the original change—seems to be an ineffective task. In truth, none of these two options could be actually proved nor revoked. Instead, ideas —either as indiscernible from the whole of the self or as fixed independent units— should be regarded as bearers of impersonality that will eventually be transformed into individuality. Whether or not it is possible to analyse ideas in a manner that allows their ultimate allocation to the one or the other multiplicity—which, in fact, this text doubts greatly—, Bergson focuses on the fact that different individuals usually share a conglomerate of the *same* ideas:

> The beliefs to which we most strongly adhere are those of which we should find it most difficult to give an account, and the reasons by which we justify them are seldom those which have led us to adopt them. In a certain sense we have adopted them without any reason, for what makes them valuable in our eyes is that they match the colour of all our other ideas, and that from the very first we have seen in them something of ourselves. Hence they do not take in our minds that common looking form which they will assume as soon as we try to give expression to them in words; and, although they bear

> the same name in other minds, they are by no means the same thing. (*TFW* 135)

To Bergson, thus, ideas—anything that originates within the social construct, actually—can by no means be hosting a single denotation of individuality. And yet, different individuals are eventually able to extract from them different qualities that no one else is capable of finding. One of the reasons why these distinctive and exclusive features are only visible to a single subject refers to the fact that such individual notions do not even reside within the idea itself. Ideas first emerge from the absoluteness of the otherness and are afterwards entrusted to language—the only purpose of which is to finally communicate a corrupted meaning that, at least in this scenario, originated in no one. Hence, ideas as such are born within society and can host no more than language can; that is, a limited and stringent volume of meaning. In contrast, ideas that have been assimilated by the subject—or, moreover, that indeed originated in the subject and therefore would lose their true nature when relocated to the spatial sphere—are only named as such as a result of inertia and analogy. Quantitative ideas and qualitative ideas have in common nothing more than being fundamental opposites to one another. Whereas socially constructed ideas only show impersonality itself, individually *interpreted* ideas open up a cosmos of private notions.[17]

The second reason that clarifies why just one specific subject is able to grasp a concrete individual feature from the impersonality of social constructs both relies on and complements the first theory: the individual interprets. Not only so, since the key point refers to the fact that every individual interprets in an extraordinarily singular manner. Thus, interpretation acts like a filter—exclusive to every subject—which not only transforms the way the universe is observed, but also

---

17 Although language certainly performs a great deal with regard to the opposition of the community and the private domain, the present text is not only referring to the dualities which language entails. Undeniably, the two sides of language constitute an essential point when dealing with the perspectives of individuality and impersonality. However, by private *notions*, the reader should not simply adhere to private *meanings*. Instead, what is purported by these arguments alludes to every sort of possible dichotomy between the raw materials of well-established social life and their subsequent disorderly developed individualities. In short, what is being alluded is any privacy of consciousness and the self whatsoever.

establishes what is worth assimilating as one's and what is not. These three possibilities which interpretation provides with—the exclusive vision of the world, the assimilation of that which interests oneself and the exclusion of that which does not—shape the ego of the subject and ultimately places their consciousness at one of the endless stages between the one and the other multiplicities. In fact, the existence of somehow infinite stages between the temporal and the spatial realms is the main cause of adopting the same name for two realities that display such antagonistic natures. Consequently, in an attempt to perpetuate the inescapable influences of the community over themselves and prolong the alleged dominance of functionality, the subject names them both ideas.

All these arguments serve to expose that Bergson did not only introduce the suggestion of a self divided between the public and the personal domains. By means of exposing the way in which ideas are (un)organised—namely, the way consciousness is inwardly displayed and the procedure by which it is set to function —, he also established the instability inherent to the more disorderly and individualised ego as something which the spatial domain requires in order to be explained in a logical and objective manner:

> External to one another, they [ideas] keep up relations among themselves in which the inmost nature of each of them counts for nothing, relations which can therefore be classified. It may thus be said that they are associated by contiguity or for some logical reason. But if, digging below the surface of contact between the self and external objects, we penetrate into the depths of the organized and living intelligence, we shall witness the joining together or rather the blending of many ideas which, when once dissociated, seem to exclude one another as logically contradictory terms. The strangest dreams, in which two images overlie one another and show us at the same time two different persons, who yet make only one, will hardly give us an idea of the interweaving of concepts which goes on when we are awake. The imagination of the dreamer, cut off from the external world, imitates with mere images, and parodies in its own

> way, the process which constantly goes on with regard to ideas in the deeper regions of the intellectual life. (*TFW* 136-137)

Earlier on, it was stated that the task of analysing ideas in such a way so as to demonstrate that they essentially and originally belong either to temporality or to space is a problematic exercise. For Bergson asserts that "the intuition of a homogeneous space is already a step towards social life" (*TFW* 138) and that "conscious life displays two aspects according as we perceive it directly or by refraction through space" (*TFW* 137). In other words, if space leads to society and, at the same time, refracts—corrupts—the ideal perception a subject would have achieved otherwise, there can be no other conclusion but that society is viewed as inferior to individuality to some extent. None can exist without the other, though. And, even though the tone of inferiority regarding the social compound is explicitly present within Bergson's rationale, he himself recognises the impossibility for the subject to escape the homogeneous medium. In short, Bergson asserts and finally remarks the dependency of each realm to its counterpart, independently of the somewhat artificial hierarchical relations he attributes to them:

> If each of us lived a purely individual life, if there were neither society nor language, would our consciousness grasp the series of inner states in this unbroken form? Undoubtedly it would not quite succeed, because we should still retain the idea of a homogeneous space in which objects are sharply distinguished from one another, and because it is too convenient to set out in such a medium the somewhat cloudy states which first attract the attention of consciousness, in order to resolve them into simpler terms. (*TFW* 137-138)

Therefore, externality is not only impossible to be inhibited completely, but also extremely necessary for the individual in order to avoid entering an exclusively private consciousness; or, better, that which Bergson would identify as pure temporality. As long as the subject has any slight perception of space, extensity

permeates them and invades their individuality. Interestingly enough, this situation cannot ever be reversed. For even though the individual were withdrawn from any perception of the external world—that is, a complete isolation from space through an absolute repression of the senses—, they would still maintain previous perceptions of this very spatiality stored in their memory. Such remembrances, besides being present within the subject's pure recollections of their consciousness, inevitably dissolve and shape every *corner* of the individual's ego. Thus, once the subject has made contact with the extended, space is irrevocably assimilated by their consciousness.

On the other hand, a being that has never made actual contact with the external world cannot ever be considered as partaking of the extensity which Bergson himself regards as unavoidable. Moreover, it could be argued whether such a being's temporality—its only possible medium from a Bergsonian rationale, since the quantitative is non-existent in this case—could ever be compared to the pure temporality of a spatial subject. Leaving aside the already mentioned fact that *pure* temporality is ungraspable by an individual that has already been introduced to space, these two variants of pure duration hardly resemble one another. The one is acquainted with and withholds realities such as language or social constructs, which —although by means of losing their associated homogeneity—shape the domain of pure temporality. The other is completely oblivious to these entities:

> Our tendency to form a clear picture of this externality of things and the homogeneity of their medium is the same as the impulse which leads us to live in common and to speak. But, in proportion as the conditions of social life are more completely realized, the current which carries our conscious states from within outwards is strengthened; little by little these states are made into objects or things; they break off not only from one another, but from ourselves. Henceforth we no longer perceive them except in the homogeneous medium in which we have set their image, and through the word which lends them its commonplace colour. Thus a second self is formed which obscures the first, a self whose existence is made up

> of distinct moments, whose states are separated from one another and easily expressed in words. (*TFW* 138)

A being that ignores the existence of a quantitative medium would quite logically lack the second self that gets divided and scattered into space. In other words, pure quality does not completely identify with a much more exclusive domain of temporality proper to such an isolated being. This latter version of pure duration does not include spatial realities which lose their externality in the process of becoming quality; it simply is way beyond definition, ordering and labelling. The great conflict in this approach results in the incapability of asserting if the more inclusive pure duration—which still remembers spatial realities—ever stops remembering such quantitative notions. That is, it should be necessary to ascertain whether the domain of pure temporality which a spatial being exhibits maintains somehow that very spatial influence, for, in fact, such spatiality is supposed to dissolve throughout the *purity* of duration. The question is thus narrowed to the more straightforward inquiry of analysing when space, if ever, really becomes temporality.

In fact, a most interesting approach would be to reflect whether space becomes temporality or, inversely, whether it is temporality the one that becomes space. However, this is not quite accurate when it comes to analyse Bergson's reasoning, since he observes the intrusion of space into time—into temporality—as a corruption of the latter domain. In other words, to Bergson, there still seems to be a slight difference between the pure heterogeneous medium of a being that has always been isolated from space and that of a being that is—or has at least once been—in contact with an externality. These two forms of pure duration cannot ever be reconciled, for the pure domain that holds spatial realities—even by means of losing this very spatiality—presents itself either as of a quite distinct *quality*, either as enclosing further qualities which are not present within the isolated being. The analysis of whether the pure duration of an isolated subject should be regarded as the fundamental opposite to that of a spatial being—or, in contrast, as an additional step that culminates and finally ends the progression of the cone-shaped figure—is left aside by the present text.

Thus, regarding the analysis which Bergson exposed in one of his previous statements, it could be stated that if the subject were to live an individual life where no society nor language had invaded their psyche, they would still organise their consciousness in a manner very similar to that in which a social being would. It is a difficult task to picture exactly how such a consciousness would really divide and connect its branches, for communal beings cannot detach themselves from the social component not even for imagining the lack of it. However, sharing a *space*—in the sense of experiencing space—is the first step towards developing a social compound. Logically, an entirely individual being would not order the world under the influences which a shared language or a social structure grant. Nevertheless, they would still perceive shapes, colours, smells, sizes, sounds, movements, patterns and temperatures; not only independently of one another, but as a collision of all the elements which arise in the external world. In short, they would still partake of the same elements which originated the necessity to both alphabetise and systematise. A space without language is, still, space. It can be argued the means by which such an individual being's consciousness would be organised, but it cannot be denied it would enjoy some sort of order. To experience the spatial world without the presence of a community would result in an unfamiliar confusion in the eyes of a social subject. Not being able to grasp the regulation of a system—or encountering great difficulties in the process—does not imply that such a system remains unruled.

> And, in truth, for the sake of language, the self has everything to gain by not bringing back confusion where order reigns, and in not upsetting this ingenious arrangement of almost impersonal states by which it has ceased to form "a kingdom within a kingdom." An inner life with well distinguished moments and with clearly characterized states will answer better the requirements of social life. (*TFW* 139)

Such is, in fact, the case of Benjy Compson, who exhibits a largely private world—for most, if not all, ways of existence—that is merely unfamiliar to the ordering and labelling of the social compound. Space, consequently, proves to be

even more present to him than it is to any other average individual partaking of language and the community.

In short, the individual is forever tangled in satisfying a correlation between the personal and the impersonal views regarding their identity. The categorisation demanded by the social compound endangers the individuality of the self. And, yet, the individual depends on this rigidness imposed by the community. Realising the fragmented nature of consciousness with regard to the private and the shared notions of the self provides the subject with the agony and anxiety that will be later observed in Faulknerian texts.

The subject usually understands themselves from a spatially oriented perspective. That is, from within the social compound and the productivity and efficiency it demands. Thus, the individual tends to observe themselves as a finished product, as something that does not mutate and maintains unchanged throughout time. Otherwise, a more profound and dynamic process to understand the subject's consciousness—more temporally driven—should be taken into account. This deeper process, however, requires an abstract introspection of the self and represents a more foreign approach for a subject that is used to social efficiency.

In the end, choosing between the spatially oriented configuration of consciousness and the temporally oriented one is an absurd premise. The self of the individual lingers in between. Although a given subject does in fact show a tendency towards each of these approaches, their psyche never abandons either realm. Questions on the hierarchy or the integrity of any of these configurations do not make sense in the first place. The individual represents a constant struggle between truth and functionality.

In fact, once the individual has partaken of space, they cannot abolish the spatial interpretation of their self. The consciousness of the subject, then, not only engages in space, but literally arises from it.

3/ The Arising of Memory through Temporality

The three main forms of consciousness explored previously—the entirely isolated ego, the subject that excludes any form of community from their self and the individual which partakes both of the social and the individual—will be applied to some of Faulkner's characters. They certainly give an account on the relationships that emerge in the intermingling of space, language, and the social and private spheres. However, all of these notions depend on a much bigger and elementary reality upon which consciousness ultimately relies: memory. This chapter explores the arising and continuity of memory with regard to the consecutiveness of time in the external world. To this end, the rationale of Gilles Deleuze proves to be indispensable, especially in so far as the reconstitution of time within memory is concerned.

Memory is constantly present along Bergson's texts and constitutes the primordial component by means of which the subject interacts with time—both with objective time and solid temporality. Therefore, all of these primary forms of

consciousness—together with any variations that may derive from them—must be inevitably associated with some sort of reminiscent process.

Before starting to analyse in depth the arrangement which Bergson attributes to the double-sided relationship of memory and time, the reader must first be introduced to the procedures exposed by Bergson in order to disclose the basic scenario that surrounds memory and the self. For this purpose, Bergson pretty much recovers a notion that he already introduced in *Time and Free Will*, and that is movement. In the beginning of *Matter and Memory,* he associates motion with the two-way relationship which the body of the subject experiences when dealing with external objects. In other words, Bergson first identifies the concepts of *matter* and *perception,* although he usually substitutes those two for the more abstract notions of *image* and *action,* respectively: "*I call* matter *the aggregate of images, and* perception of matter *these same images referred to the eventual action of one particular image, my body*" (*MM* 4).

Bergson, quite logically, localises the image of an object at the very physical object itself, since he initially defines an image as matter. Moreover, he asserts that the existence of an image does not depend on the existence of its correspondent perception:

> It is true that an image may *be* without *being perceived*; it may be present without being represented; and the distance between these two terms, presence and representation, seems just to measure the interval between matter itself and our conscious perception of matter. (*MM* 12)

Thus, the French author is somehow relating the attention of the individual to the distance that separates the initial presence of matter and the subsequently perception of it. Whether by distance he means *space* or *time* is not further specified. In a sense, distance could quite easily stand for both, since later on Bergson will locate a given perception—that is, the representation of the image—at the very physical object to be perceived, just like the image itself. More precisely, he states that the subject is the point of reflection which makes images become

representations. In simpler terms, the image inhabits the object until a conscious being places themselves at a *distance* at which they can become interested in the object and, thus, the individual transforms the image into a representation:

> The reality of matter consists in the totality of its elements and of their actions of every kind. Our representation of matter is the measure of our possible action upon bodies: it results from the discarding of what has no interest for our needs, or more generally for our functions. In one sense we might say that the perception of any unconscious material point whatever, in its instantaneousness, is infinitely greater and more complete than ours, since this point gathers and transmits the influences of all the points of the material universe, whereas our consciousness only attains to certain parts and to certain aspects of those parts. Consciousness,—in regard to external perception,—lies in just this choice. But there is, in this necessary poverty of our conscious perception, something that is positive, that foretells spirit: it is, in the etymological sense of the word, discernment. (*MM* 14)

Bergson's allusions to a somewhat mystical or spiritual interpretation of consciousness is, as observed in the previous remark, also present in *Matter and Memory*. It should be reminded that the ultimate purpose of *Matter and Memory*—pretty much resembling that of *Time and Free Will*—, which Bergson visibly explores, is the refutation of both the realist and the idealist discourses when it comes to analyse the topic of human free will. In this sense, it is only logical that Bergson scrutinises the idea of the representation of images as a way of measuring the possible action of the subject's *body* upon those very images. In multiple occasions he establishes that such physical actions—the concatenation of simultaneities which erroneously leads the subject to observe movement as belonging to the spatial world—are indeed governed by the somewhat deterministic laws of nature. In other words, Bergson does concede that anything which takes place in space must adjust itself to the rules that govern the physical sphere. Nevertheless, although he localises a

perception at the very point where the image of the physical object is held, he does not entirely relinquishing perceptions to the realm of space and order. Take the following example:

> The truth is that the point P [a luminous point], the rays which it emits, the retina and the nervous elements affected, form a single whole; that the luminous point P is a part of this whole; and that it is really in P, and not elsewhere, that the image of P is formed and perceived. (*MM* 17)

However, Bergson does not include into that whole the representation of P. He simply localises it there, but the whole is still only constituted by the physical point—object—, the stimulus which emanates from it—that is, a light, a smell...—, and every bodily characteristic that may be involved in its perception. This eventually leads Bergson to create a fictitious plane which mirrors the actual plane of real space in which to obscurely *locate* a reality.

In other words, he is not completely relating the representation of an object to the realm of pure duration. But neither is he associating these two notions with the ordered plane of spatiality, for then the image and the representation would result in the exact same reality: "*[w]hat you have to explain, then, is not how perception arises, but how it is limited, since it should be the image of the whole, and is in fact reduced to the image of that which interests you*" (*MM* 15). Thus, it could be stated that, to Bergson, there are two kinds of images. On the one hand, there is the one that refers to the actual image of the spatial reality which does not depend on its being perceived—that is, the object's presence. On the other hand, the second image would appear as a secondary diminished image which, still alluding to the physical presence of the object, does in its turn include some of the subject's perception. In short, this second image is somehow the result of the combination of the independent presence of a point in space and its surrogate perception. Thus, it results to be an incomplete reality which relates to the physical presence of an object in space that is indeed complete. It is somehow a broken presence, since it has necessarily been filtered by

the subject's psyche, and has consequently lost part of its wholeness. Taking this into account, Bergson therefore asserts that perception is somewhat a ladder:

> If there were *more* in the second term than in the first, if, in order to pass from presence to representation, it were necessary to add something, the barrier would indeed be insuperable, and the passage from matter to perception would remain wrapt in impenetrable mystery. It would not be the same if it were possible to pass from the first term to the second by way of diminution, and if the representation of an image were *less* than its presence; for it would then suffice that the images present should be compelled to abandon something of themselves in order that their mere presence should convert them into representations. (*MM* 12)

To this argument, it could be even added that, in order to pass from presence to representation, the process does not only require that the subject be unable to *add*, but also that they be forced to *lessen*. What this amounts to saying is that there is no possible way by means of which the subject could perceive an image as it is, the whole unabridged presence of matter. Hence, a given image cannot ever agree with its representation—and such an argument still pertains to any possible representation which any subject may perceive at any moment in time. In this sense, the previously mentioned notion of distance is of great relevance in so far as it regards and measures the possible action of the subject's body upon spatial realities. The greater the distance, the more conscious the perception tends to be:

> In a word, the more immediate the reaction is compelled to be, the more must perception resemble a mere contact; and the complete process of perception and of reaction can then hardly be distinguished from a mechanical impulsion followed by a necessary movement. But in the measure that the reaction becomes more uncertain, and allows more room for suspense, does the distance

> increase at which the anima is sensible of the action of that which interests it. (*MM* 10)

Bergson's reasoning reaches a slippery slope, since he directly relates the distance of two bodies in space—one of them being a subject—to the degree of attention which the individual grants such a point. Two different perspectives originate from this reasoning. First, and given that distance is understood as space, the argument falls short in assuming the subject's interest can relate to their surroundings in a linear course of action that ignores any other relevant elements that may probably influence the individual. Second, and given now that that same distance is understood as time, Bergson again fails to conceive that the greater the distance, the more time the subject is able to enjoy in order to become interested in a concrete entity.

However—and taking into account the original display which Bergson chose for both the *real* image as well as the perception and the diminished image—, it is only logical that he makes use of the distance that separates the subject from the object in order to measure the interest of the former. That is, the consciousness of the individual is the one element that alters the unabridged presence of the object. Thus, and insofar as interest is observed as a filter that gives rise to the diminished image, Bergson is quite forced to *measure* the interest's action. In short, how consciously or unconsciously the subject interprets the object—how interested the individual is towards a point in matter—must refer to the only element relating these two entities: the distance that *separates* them. This argument is reinforced by the fact that Bergson uses the physicality of the subject—their body, or, better, their brain—as the point of reflection through which the diminished image of matter becomes the perception of matter. F. C. T. Moore, in his work *Bergson: Thinking Backwards* (1996), gives an account of the many influences derived from Bergsonian philosophical theories regarding time and memory. Moore's brief summary of Bergson's rationale states that:

> If *Time and Free Will* succeeds in destroying or weakening an old structure of thought, the task of *Matter and Memory* is to rebuild.

> And the keystone of this rebuilding is Bergson's notion of 'images'[...]. In place of the traditional dichotomy between objects or things, and ideas or representations of those things, we have *images,* but images which can exist without being perceived. (Moore 5)

Quite understandably, Bergson has some trouble locating the mentioned perceptions, for these are products of a consciousness, but, at the same time, they originally emerge in the external world. Indeed, throughout *Matter and Memory* he establishes that perceptions belong to the subject but reside, on the contrary, in the realm of homogeneous space. In truth, such dilemma is of very little or no importance at all, as long as the subject remains altering matter and perceiving it under these alterations. As for the concerns of the present text, it would suffice to assert that the manner in which Bergson conceives perceptions is legitimate so as to give rise to the multiple dimensions of memory, independently of perceptions being located within or without the individual. Nevertheless, the inconsistency of locating a perception *in* the physical object itself should not be ignored, for its only purpose is to allow Bergson to relate once again the motion of an action to the (un)*will*ingness of the individual. Moore gives a somewhat detailed explanation as to why the interests of the French philosopher always remain oriented towards the possibility of free will:

> In short, it is not useful and would be misleading to accept [...] [the] view that Bergson's entire philosophical *oeuvre* should be read as a form of concerted theism. However, it would be foolish to brush aside Bergson's intense interest in, and detailed treatment of, religion and mysticism in his later work, or to deny a connection between those interests and his earlier work. (Moore xvi)

Thus, locating a perception outside the subject gives Bergson the authority to establish a measuring in the distance between subject and object: the lesser the distance that separates them, the more the physicality of the subject—their body—

tends to dissolve into the physicality of the object. In other words, when the distance reaches a non-existent value—zero—, the perception of a stimulus will no longer come from outside the subject's body, but from within. The subject and the object have now become the same entity, and the individual is therefore constraining any possibility of showing interest towards an inner stimulus. This does not necessarily mean that the subject be oblivious of these stimuli, but that they do not have the time nor the space to *select* them as something that matches their own nature and interest, as they would do with the rest of the physical world.

The level of conscious recognition which the individual manifests regarding these inner stimuli, nonetheless, has less to do with conscious awareness and more to do with habit. For instance, a chronic pain that hardly abandons a given subject would indeed *affect* the individual ceaselessly, though it would not always be *perceived*. Bergson is, in short, directly relating the distance between a consciousness—a subject—and a mere presence—an object—to the possible levels of interest which the individual can execute.

Paradoxically, Bergson keeps adopting a deterministic view of the natural world and its individuals, except for the ultimate question of free will. It should not be left aside, nonetheless, that Bergson's primary motivation is to debunk the idealist and the realist doctrines. Therefore, the present text argues that what he tries to bring to light as (un)conscious perception is in truth the subject's plain interpretation of the world. Certainly, the distance between a subject and a given object plays a role in determining how consciously the former will perceive the latter. However, this is an extremely plain and simplistic argument when it comes to analyse the different dimensions that build up to assemble the act of perception. Bergson is only focusing on the individualistic aspect of—mostly conscious—perception and decides, consequently, to ignore any contextual components whatsoever. He disregards any aspect of the action of perceiving that cannot be contemplated in a formulary procedure, as it were. Correspondingly, he can only approach distances, times, and points of either action or mere existence:

> Let us start, then, from this indetermination as from the true principle, and try whether we cannot deduce from it the possibility,

> and even the necessity, of conscious perception. In other words, let us posit that system of closely-linked images which we call the material world, and imagine here and there, within the system, *centres of real action*, represented by living matter: what we mean to prove is that *there must* be, ranged round each one of these centres, images that are subordinated to its position and variable with it; that conscious perception is *bound* to occur, and that, moreover, it is possible to understand how it arises. (*MM* 10)

In this fragment, Bergson does not try to conceal the numerous similarities between his reasonings and those of deterministic doctrines. He shows some sort of inclination towards learning how the subject consciously dissects reality. And, specifically, he tends to inspect when this thorough and instantaneous analysis is going to be deliberately carried out by the subject and when it is going to be left unobserved by their conscious ego. These premises do appear, although not under a philosophical context, in many of the works by William Faulkner analysed by the present study. Not only the notion of a deterministic existence, but also the instability of the subject when it comes to perceiving their surroundings, will be further explored in the chapters dedicated to such texts.

A rather different but much more appropriate approach examines whether perceptions can be left unobserved at all. That is to say, individuals can be easily related to a specific level of conscientiousness when the right sort of information and data is taken into account, and not only spatial dimensions and numerical approximations. In other words, a subject reveals quite a variety of different levels of conscience when it comes to perceiving the external world. However, there is no such certainty when it comes to the absence of conscious judgment. This observation takes the reasoning to observe the differences between conscious perception and the willingness to perceive.

In this latter case, the subject evidences what could be almost called a voluntariness to perceive—that is, an actual eagerness to perceive an existence in homogeneous space in order to fulfil additional purposes. During this process, some data is purposefully left aside so that virtually no additional information interferes

with the main task at hand. As for conscious—and unconscious—perception, on the other hand, the process is not as straightforward. Undoubtedly, one could easily examine how consciously a subject perceives the world surrounding them even though no willingness be present in the activity. Nevertheless, the data that is left aside in this second process and, thus, theoretically has not been assimilated by the subject cannot be said with certainty to not have been processed at all by the consciousness of the individual. It definitely cannot be said to have been left unobserved on purpose as in the previous case, since there was no intentionality in the overall action. And, since there is no active agent carrying out any differentiation among terms, it is virtually impossible to ascertain whether or not a somewhat unconscious consciousness encloses every aspect of the external world. Were this, indeed, true, the presence of a second agent establishing a categorisation of terms would then be necessary. Should the cone-shaped figure be recovered here once again, it could be established that habit would probably play the role of this second classifying agent. Habit would from this point on decide how deeply or shallowly some aspects of the spatial world should be placed within the cone of consciousness.

Whether it is indeed true that neither a conscious or a not so conscious subject can leave any discernible element outside of their perception filter, the latter process of categorisation explained above must necessarily take place. That is, whether the information assimilated is the whole of phenomena or simply a selection of data and events of a present situation, there must be a placement of terms alongside the cone of consciousness. Were this location of terms not bound to take place, memory would never arise, at least not in its conventional form. Individuals would either remember every aspect of every experience—at the same time as they generate new experiences in their continuous present all at once—, or they would not remember at all. Since neither of these two options relates to what could be designated as the prevailing condition of the vast majority of individuals, it must be hereupon inferred that events need to be scattered and distributed for memory to work the way it does.

In short, this reasoning eventually establishes that quite a few similarities can be found between the (dis)location of remembrances and the different levels of conscientiousness which the self discloses. An absolute correlation between these

two systems is not, however, necessary. The two systems could borrow Bergson's cone to display their respective arrays: the one to establish how deep or superficial the consciousness of the subject is at a given moment, the other to determine how accessible and immediate a specific memory is for the present individual. In truth, Bergson originally depicted the cone-shaped figure to establish the different levels at which memory operates. The key point to unite these readings—and the reason why the cone arrangement can be extended farther than memory's area of interest—has to do with the fact that memory and psychic life are rather similar as far as their performance and display goes. And, in fact, they seem to intertwine so as to give rise to the subject's consciousness.

The reason why the correlation of memory and psychic life does not always take the form of an aligned reciprocity is because their intertwining works in an entirely different way depending on the individual and the surrounding context. Thus, the connection between these two realities can take diverse and varied forms and is, therefore, oblivious of whether the levels at which memory and consciousness are established at a specific moment match. In other words, there is no necessary correspondence between the deep—or superficial—levels of consciousness and those of memory. This does not mean, however, that such a correlation is not given at all or, even, that it not be the usual engagement.

The example of dreaming should be left aside now—for it is the perfect illustration of a functional consciousness temporarily "not" at work—and, in its turn, the present text will focus on its counterpart: daydreaming. Daydreaming can be objectively placed at a more superficial level than ordinary dreaming, since the subject is definitely (more) awake during such a process. However, memory and the creation of mental images is located at a quite deep level. This deeply operating memory can still apply to an individual that is engaged in a more attentive assignment—that is, in a more socially oriented one—such as writing. Daydreaming can still take place even when absent-mindedness is not a component of a given situation. The subject is actively engaged in a spatial task, for which, moreover, language is needed so that the discourse adopts a socially functional dimension. That is, the subject is permeated by the realm of homogeneity and is presently being influenced by the functionality of social life. Yet, the plane at which their memory

operates does not resemble the stage of their psyche. Actually, the two of them are absolute opposites, for whereas memory is flowing free, consciousness is withheld.

Two more different examples suggest that memory and consciousness, in relation to one another, can adopt any sort of disposition whatsoever and not just the two extremes of absolute equality or pure antagonism. The most unequivocal illustration regards what could be called functional memory. That is, the search for a specific piece of information within the subject's realm of memory. Surely, this action takes place when the individual's consciousness is located at a mainly superficial level and the subject, usually, is consciously executing a specific job. It could be observed as situations in which problem solving is the task at hand. For this specific situation, all the divergent levels of memory in which information has been stored can be awaken and invited to participate.

For instance, a student may need to access some data that was assimilated only weeks or days prior to that moment. In this case, the piece of information has been so recently acquired that it still has a perfect unity of its own. Its presence is still untouched and very few interferences have been made between it and other remembrances. And it is so not only because of its freshness and novelty, but also due to the fact that a student—usually an individual of short age—has yet a very limited storage of experiences. The extremely reduced amount of remembrances, together with the great disparity of those very occurrences, makes the path of memory be uneven and full of gaps and inconsistencies. Correspondingly, the pieces of data that the student tries to recover have not had the opportunity to blend with the rest of their recollections and, given they have virtually not yet been altered by either time or events, they seem to be located at a quite shallow level of the memorial cone.

On the other hand, the exact opposite situation can reverse the action of memory. Functional memory can be called forward at any point of a subject's life, and not just at the early stages of it when the individual usually dedicates themselves to the acquiring of knowledge. Suppose an individual whose acquisition of knowledge—in the academic sense, and not in the vital one—is long ended. If the subject is to be assumed as someone of middle or advanced age, it could be also inferred that their memorial path is now full of recollections and of a great variety of different events that prevent the existence of gaps and create a vast web of

connections among them. That is, their memory is not as straightforward as the student’s was, for all the stored data is now woven and, indeed, has mutated uncountable times during the individual’s life.

Now, the many alterations which remembrances and memory as a whole experience throughout the different stages on a subject’s life present a problem regarding the continuity of the self; in the sense of the continuity of the individual’s memory. For memory to maintain some sort of coherence within the individual’s psyche, it must be provided that something of each memorial state—that is, each whole of memory at it was at a given *time* in space—endures. In short, generating alterations and switching the existing links among stored events do not entail the erasing of previous “states” of a subject’s memorial evolution. Thus, the state of the individual’s whole of memory does not only enclose the arrangement of recollections as they presently are at a specific moment in space, but all the consecutive displays which their memory has previously ever acquired—in the figurative sense, for it is impossible to establish when a certain distribution has ended and when the next one has come to be. Or, at least, it is impractical attempting to do so while avoiding at the same time to leave the world of the heterogeneous, since the individual’s memorial recollections are not concerned with artificial moments in “time.” They, on the contrary, portray no more than a whole of “previous” and “present” states altering one another all at once. Therefore, in the previous example, the subject’s memory cannot only be observed as their memory at the specific time when functional memory is called forth, but also as a quite indiscernible concoction that masquerades the piece of information that is required at the moment.

According to Moore, Bergson denied the existence of discreteness referring to memory and consciousness, in the sense that he considered it impossible to discern between discrete items when it comes to the aggregate of vital experiences. In other words, to Bergson, a consciousness can only get dissected—or so can the subject’s recollections—whenever the individual has been forced out of the heterogeneous realm and is, consequently, surrounded by social premises:

> Bergson’s main claim is that this discreteness is not real. It is not that we start from discrete items of experience spread out over time but

> somehow threaded together like beads on a string of consciousness. Rather we start from the experience of temporal flow. Temporal structure is not a matter of putting together given discrete items. On the contrary, so called discrete elements are only apparent when we have a need to pluck them from our *continuing* experience. (Moore 55)

In contrast, then, in the second example the subject could be required to remember an old address or phone number—anything which is deeply buried into their memory and, therefore, has not been recently risen to the superior levels of the cone. The piece of information needed is not as accessible as in the example of the student because both time and experience have mummified the original nature of the data. Thus, while consciousness engages itself on the superficial levels of psychic life that problem solving entails, memory can be triggered either on its more recent, simple and narrow stages, or at any profound level of its vast depository. Needless to say, the level at which memory can be said to operate in this latter circumstance does not limit itself to either utter superficial or distant deep stages, but can enclose any intermediate degree whatsoever.

The second, and last, example that illustrates how memory and psychic life adapt to one another has to do with deeply rooted levels of consciousness. Therefore, it might not portray as visual an example as the previous suppositions did, for in here the reader must picture a consciousness wandering through the deep levels of the cone. It must be supposed that no spatial action is taking place and, thus, the subject's consciousness is entirely and actively dedicated to occupying the abstract stages of psychic life. If it is assumed, for now, that memory accompanies consciousness at those same levels, the ego of the self would be navigating deep thought while recollecting—and altering at the same time—remembrances that are somewhat restricted to plain ordinary psychic life. However, since memory is deeply at work, so are the uncountable connections that guide from one piece of data to the next. And, since the subject alters those very remembrances through which they divagate, the whole of memory is mutated all at once. This often leads to new

connections that, unlikely as it might sound, tend to divert the individual into returning to the practicality and easiness of spatial life and spatial thought.

As a consequence of partaking of space, the subject's *pure* arrangement of memory and psychic life is unreachable to them, just as pure consciousness is. In their turn, the individual constructs, influenced by their own tendencies, some sort of path—say, a cone—that guides them when deep thought is required. That is to say, space has once again invaded psychic life, and it keeps doing so until the whole of memory is permeated as well. In fact, in Faulknerian literature, the notion and presence of memory is usually granted to sheer space. This may be a house—the Compson house or Sutpen's Hundred—, a town—Jefferson or Mottson—, or bigger spaces—Yoknapatawpha as a whole, the natural environment, Mississippi, or merely the South. It is always through space which memory, and, consequently, the temporality of the psyche, arises.

Therefore, if memory itself portrays the individual in relation to the spatiality of their psychic life, it is because memory does not escape homogeneity either. Consequently, the mentioned wandering subject is from time to time assaulted by more recent recollections that try to bring them back to the realm of well-defined realities. When one is on a profound introspective process, it is not unusual to find oneself surrounded by a great majority of old recollections that took place long ago while, at the same time, being pushed by quick calls from recent events that remind the subject of often trivial chores that are yet to be accomplished. For example, an individual's consciousness that is located at such levels of introspection would frequently be tempted to ascend towards less complex recollections by being self-reminded to do daily chores.

Nevertheless, the connection between the field of memory and that of psychic life cannot be left as simply a question of either perfect synchronicity or utterly random chaos. There must be a pattern that explains how memory adjusts to psychic life by other than just randomness. The answer to this is, certainly, perception. It is usually by perceiving the environment which the memorial process and the psychic life degrees are assigned a particular depth. Perception, whether active or not, should work as a filter to establish some hierarchy among that which is being perceived. However, it should only be regarded as the primary filter, as it were,

for its main discrimination is of a very basic nature. That is to say, perception tends to arrange the realities that the subject encounters in the external world into two simple categories: that which interests the individual at a precise moment, and that which does not.

> Conscious perception signifies choice, and consciousness mainly consists in this practical discernment. The diverse perceptions of the same object, given by my different senses, will not, then, when put together, reconstruct the *complete* image of the object; they will remain separated from each other by intervals which measure, so to speak, the gaps in my needs. It is to fill these intervals that an education of the senses is necessary. The aim of this education is to harmonize my senses with each other, to restore between their data a continuity which has been broken by the discontinuity of the needs of my body, in short to reconstruct, as nearly as may be, the whole of the material object. (*MM* 21)

The education of the senses which Bergson considers necessary so as to achieve a more faithful reconstruction of any object whatsoever can easily be observed as representing the second filter that would naturally follow the barrier of perception. On the one hand, perception diverts the subject into a primary point to decide whether or not that which is being perceived—or which parts of it—interests the individual at their present situation. When perception takes the form of a conscious or active barrier, the discernment is carried out in terms of whatever question the subject may have at hand at the moment. If, on the contrary, the perceptive discrimination is taking place unnoticeably, the choosing of elements answer to a more primitive and instinctive scope. That is, in the first case, the individual may be said to be deciding with which elements of an object or a situation be concerned in order to achieve a goal, whereas in the second example perception is simply directing the individual—in a very simplistic way—towards the path that grants the greatest probabilities of survival.

Bergson's premises regard this second filter as a key component in order to incorporate memory to the individual's process of perception. The education of the senses to which the philosopher alludes serves the individual to reconstruct a given perception—a given externality in space—and then to store it alongside similar recollections. The more *recollections* of *past* experiences a subject holds, the more accuracy the individual will achieve when determining both their present and their future.

> This choice is likely to be inspired by past experience, and the reaction does not take place without an appeal to the memories which analogous situations may have left behind them. The indetermination of acts to be accomplished requires then, if it is not to be confounded with pure caprice, the preservation of the images perceived. It may be said that we have no grasp of the future without an equal and corresponding outlook over the past, that the onrush of our activity makes a void behind it into which memories flow, and that memory is thus the reverberation, in the sphere of consciousness, of the indetermination of our will. (*MM* 31)

The "choice" (*MM* 31) to which Bergson refers is simply alluding to the understanding the philosopher shows of the relation between a subject and an object in the world of the homogeneous. Since the French philosopher needs to adhere, above all, to his primary task of demonstrating the existence of free will, in the previous relation he can only observe well-measured distances and reactions, for they occur in the external world, which is permeated by the physical laws. Therefore, whenever a subject consciously perceives a given object, the distance that separates them from it measures the virtual action of the subject upon the object and vice versa.

By "choice," then, Bergson is arduously referring to the action—or reaction—which a specific perception would potentially trigger in the subject. The preference of the word "choice" is but mirroring the convoluted topic of the individual's free will that the philosopher is determined to protect. According to Bergson, this notion

would not only establish the fact that the subject is free to decide which reaction is the most suitable, but also the possibility of *choosing* not to act at all.

Interestingly enough, F.C.T. Moore emphasizes one notion which is usually forgotten within the Bergsonian rationale. Taking into account the so-called actions —or reactions—that a subject may carry out upon a given perception, Moore explores the idea that the virtual actions that serve to measure the urgency between the perceiver and the perceived should not be only regarded in terms of the individuality which the subject possesses, but also in terms of the collectivity influencing that same subject:

> A perception of an object, then, is the very properties of the object as filtered by the virtual actions of the perceiver. But what are these 'virtual actions'? It is clear that, for Bergson, they are not simply actions which it is logically possible for an agent to perform. Rather they are actions which the agent has some tendency to perform. And this means that they can be of two kinds. They may spring from instinct, or they may spring from intelligence (and the creative learning which it makes possible). This means that the 'filtering' of real properties, which constitutes pure perception, is not only a biological, but also a social phenomenon. (Moore 27-28)

In this last remark, Moore is both alluding to the notions of habit and society as the two major restrictions within the perceptive process. Certainly, the biological specifications of an individual will establish the extent to which the external world is going to be perceived. Acquired habits, nonetheless, will greatly diminish that which one is capable of perceiving for no reason other than conventionality:

> [W]hat we *in fact* perceive is not determined solely by the physiological factors which determine what we are *capable of* discriminating. It is necessary in addition to take account of what we want or need to perceive, and of how we learn to perceive in one way rather than another[...]. Thus, Bergson's 'virtual actions', I

> think, are actions which we are capable of performing, or have a tendency to perform, given not only our physiology, but also our learning and training in a specific environment. Filtering, therefore, is achieved not only by the physiological constraints of our organs of perception and by inbuilt or instinctive action schemata, but also by the kinds of thing we are able to do because we have learned to do them, and need or want to do them. (Moore 28-29)

This amounts to saying that the subject cannot escape their memory at virtually any moment. Nevertheless, there is a double paradox regarding this argument. On the one hand, therefore, it is established that the subject is somewhat influencing their present situation whenever the perceptive process is triggered—which happens arguably all the time—, either consciously or unconsciously. The more this process takes place, the better educated the individual's senses will tend to be. That is to say, the more the individual asks their past about their present, the bigger their past becomes—the more experiences the subject acquires and will later use in future perceptions. It is at this point of the reasoning at which Bergson finally defines memory and, thus, determines its place and primary function. And so, the first paradox appears: for the present to ask the past, it must lose some quality of itself, it must be willing to be influenced:

> [I]f there be memory, that is, the survival of past images, these images must constantly mingle with our perception of the present, and may even take its place. For if they have survived it is with a view to utility; at every moment they complete our present experience, enriching it with experience already acquired; and, as the latter is ever increasing, it must end by covering up and submerging the former. (*MM* 31)

This first part of the double paradox, nonetheless, can be understood quite simply, for it merely alludes to the individual's impossibility to know their surroundings completely. That is, the subject's consciousness—and every thing that

adds up to it, such as their memories—is forever bound to oscillate between the realms of the homogeneous and the heterogeneous, without ever fully acquiring any. In other words, the individual is doomed to comprehend the world in temporally understood terms, as much as they are fated to understood themselves in spatial terms. This mingling of notions and spheres also reflects upon the subject's process of recollection and the very use of those recollection upon a given present situation. That is, the individual is not only limited, but interweaved, and so are their new and past experiences:

> It is indisputable that the basis of real, and so to speak instantaneous, intuition, on which our perception of the external world is developed, is a small matter compared with all that memory adds to it. Just because the recollection of earlier analogous intuitions is more useful than the intuition itself, being bound up in memory with the whole series of subsequent events, and capable thereby of throwing a better light on our decision, it supplants the real intuition of which the office is then merely [...] to call up the recollection, to give it a body, to render it active and thereby actual. (*MM* 31)

In short, any present situation that triggers a similar experience from the past—already stored within the subject's memory—will not only be considered in the present time taking into account the highlights of the past experience, it will also be merged and, to some extent, substituted by the past recollection. Although this is a valuable and convenient approach regarding both the development and survival of the subject, it also denies the possibility of accessing the *real* world as a whole. Moore, likewise, observes this same phenomenon of merging taking place, and states that the removal of past experiences from the scope of the present situation—that is, the categorisation of times—occurs due to the spatialisation of pure duration:

> To the extent that we can retreat from the instant demands of the pragmatic, we must resist the spatialization of time (by which it can be treated like another spatial dimension), and recognise a form of

> experience whose character is such that the distinction between what is present to us, because present in time, and absent from us because past in time, is no longer tenable. This is because our 'present' experience is an experience of unfolding. Humour places us on the unstable saddle-point between real durance and spatialized time. (Moore 91)

The second part of the paradox regarding the intertwining of past and present refers less to the fading of the actual facts of the present and more to what this process entails with respect to memory. If, during the process of recollection, the past influences the present, it could also be inferred that the memories which the present situation brings forward are by no means free of being likewise distorted. This distortion does not allude to long-stored memories slowly losing some of their original quality, their actual features. Instead, the distortion that past memories encounter should be understood as that which originates in the combination of past and present:

> Our perceptions are undoubtedly interlaced with memories, and inversely, a memory [...] only becomes actual by borrowing the body of some perception into which it slips. These two acts, perception and recollection, always interpenetrate each other, are always exchanging something of their substance as by a process of endosmosis. (*MM* 32)

The exchanging process to which Bergson alludes must be understood as reciprocal and, thus, the two components are equally susceptible to change and mutate. Present situations are attributed features and notions that actually belong to the memories brought forward. And, inversely, past recollections are reshaped by gaining present conditions. These alterations are by no means harsh nor strident, but they tend to remain subtle and pretty much unnoticed. In fact, this process provides an excellent explanation regarding the metamorphosis of memories throughout time. In order to illuminate these alterations, the following case should be considered.

Imagine a subject who is entirely oblivious to colour red. Whether this is the result of an external suppression or of mere coincidence does not matter. This feature should be conceived as simply not available in any of their recollections nor in the world surrounding them. Now, if such an individual—whatever their age may be and however big or small their whole of memory is—has never experienced colour red, they are simply unable to uncover it from a long-stored memory and use it to influence a present experience. Nothing they remember or experience could be mistakenly *painted* red.

Should this example be taken to an extreme, it would be observed that a subject's increasing number of recollections are only altered in so far as two propositions meet: that the recollections keep, indeed, increasing and that there be more than one recollection to begin with. That is, if an individual has stored but one recollection and has no further input of experiences, that one recollection can never be influenced. It may only be lost—forgotten—, but it could never vary. This regards, of course, an absurd premise. Nevertheless, its serves to illustrate that, for any ordinary subject, the past is constantly merging with the present and vice versa. The past is, to sum up, anything but stable.

The relentless merging of past and present recollections generates the individual's reminiscent system. According to Heidegger, this recollective scheme shows a sovereignty of order over reconstruction. The preference of ordering instead of shaping could be translated as the preference of knowing the *location* of the elements of a series instead of acknowledging other features of their nature. In this case, Dasein tends to have a more orderly approach when trying to reconstruct a day than it tends to categorise those elements individually. Therefore, an individual's first approach when reconstructing a day would be to enumerate—in an orderly way—their actions instead of measuring their length. Heidegger states that this behaviour can be observed in the more or less amount of expectation individuals allow towards the future in contrast to their disinterest in the past:

> Accordingly, the irresoluteness of inauthentic existence temporalizes itself in the mode of a making present that does not await but forgets. The irresolute person understands himself in terms of the events and

> accidents nearest by that are encountered in such making present and urge themselves upon him in changing ways. Busily losing *himself* in what is taken care of, the irresolute person *loses time* in them, too. Hence his characteristic way of thinking: "I have no time." (Heidegger 390-391)

It would seem as if the gaps that permeate the past time—whether recent or ancient, long or brief—of every individual had caused Dasein to inevitably design a system it could undoubtedly rely on. This assertion proves to be of extreme interest, since it introduces the meeting point of Heideggerian and Bergsonian temporalities:

> Thus in *measuring time*, time gets *made public* in such a way that it is encountered in each case and at each time for everyone as "now and now and now." This time "universally" accessible in clocks is found as an *objectively present multiplicity of nows*, so to speak, though time measurement is not directed thematically toward time as such. (Heidegger 397)

Although the "multiplicity of nows" gets effortlessly related to Bergson's spatial simultaneities, such a multiplicity of *nows* does not completely correspond to a multiplicity of *theres*. From a Heideggerian point of view, space and time in the quantitative world are somewhat related—as it is their measurement—, but they should never be observed as either the same entity or as being of a similar nature.

According to Heidegger, the many layers that emerge within the individual's consciousness originates in the working jointly of temporality and space. Thus, this collaboration between the qualitative and the quantitative does not split the subject as Bergson suggested in the first place. For Heidegger, this collusion of elements creates multiple dimensions within the individual. Instead of limiting its consciousness, Dasein unravels and expands. It mutates and adjusts itself to every alteration, always moving back and forth between quality and quantity and never losing sight of the prefixes given by the community.

In fact, Heidegger maintains that temporality and world time—“[t]he time ‘in which’ innerworldly beings are encountered” (Heidegger 398)—are not that different from each other.[18] Indeed, he separates the subject from any preconception of temporality and advocates that vulgar time is neither objective nor subjective. According to the German philosopher, vulgar time does not exist at the cost of relegating the individual—who is always influenced by the external world—to a diminished version of their supposedly greater self:

> *World time is “more objective” than any possible object because, with the disclosedness of the world, it always already becomes ecstatically and horizontally “objectified”* [...] *as the condition of the possibility of innerworldly beings.* [...] *But world time is also “more subjective” than any possible subject because it first makes possible the being* [Sein] *of the factically existing self* [...]. “Time” is present neither in the “subject” nor in the “object,” neither “inside” nor “outside,” and it “is” “*prior*” to every subjectivity and objectivity, because it presents the condition of the very possibility of this “prior.” Does it then have a “being” [“Sein”] at all? And, if not, is it then a phantom or is it “more existent” [“seiender”] than any possible being [“Sein”]? (Heidegger 399)

Thus understood, natural time would generate both temporality *and* world time. This idea seems all the same reasonable—and scientifically oriented—, for it would imply that the natural world, the realm of the homogeneous, first influences the subject and implants on them the notion of temporality, which, only afterwards, would flourish into the need of quantifying and regulating the natural sphere: “*[t]his*

18 World time, for the German philosopher, relates to the objectified and measured version of temporality which individuals *use* within the external world to establish a common time for the community. That is, it refers to a time that can be shared and that is impervious to be changed or altered in any subjective way whatsoever. Thus, it alludes more to natural time: that stream of nows which permeates externalities or, better, which corresponds with externalities itself. That same stream of nows, under Bergsonian terms, becomes either a series of spatial simultaneities or does not exist at all. In short, natural time —if present at all for the French philosopher—entails a very obscure and unexplored entity as exposed in *Time and Free Will*. According to Heidegger, however, world time refers to the objective measurement of an external phenomenon, of natural time.

time is what is counted, showing itself in following, making present, and counting the moving pointer in such a way that making present temporalizes itself in ecstatic unity with retaining and awaiting horizontally open according to the earlier and later" (Heidegger 400).

Therefore, Heidegger states that there is a double influence between the two realms, in contrast to Bergson's envisioning of a straightforward influence directed solely to the external world. And, as such, there is a double influence between the different portrayals of temporality that pertain to the individual. It is precisely this double influence the one that dissociates the subject from the compound of temporality and attaches them to a more chronological understanding of the world:

> What is counted are the nows. And they show themselves "in every now" as "right-away-no-longer-now" and "just-now-not-yet." The world time "caught sight of" in this way in the use of the clock we shall call *now time*. [...] And thus time shows itself for the vulgar understanding as a succession of constantly "present" [...] nows that pass away and arrive at the same time. Time is understood as a sequence, as the "flux" of nows, as the "course of time." (Heidegger 401)

Consequently, temporality is, in the Heideggerian rationale, disrupted and robbed of its very *temporal* component. The compound of past, present, and future—in a very poorly stated way, for there should be no distinction of times within the temporal conglomerate—cannot be said to be broken so as to mimic the external world, but, instead, that arises as a more abstract representation of world time. This is, actually, a more sensible result, for the world is eminently understood in spatial terms, or in a linear course of time. Instead of envisioning realities from the perspective of the evolving conglomerate that mutates and alters itself with disregard of past or future components, the subject adapts their understanding of the world to that of the simplistic present.

Strictly speaking, the stream of nows does not represent an actual stream of nows that evolve from future to past, but rather just a simplistic series of

uncomplicated nows with no relation to one another or to themselves. In other words, it only refers to a raw set of moments which are said to be on a *series* not because they are seen as working collectively towards a *becoming*, but because they are considered to *replace* one another. Thus, in a vulgar interpretation of time, the emphasis is always being made on the pure now with an utter disregard for anything that is not *presently present*. This characterisation of time rejects datability as a constituent of its very system because datability relies mostly on a multi-dimensional conceptualisation of time—one that slightly reminds of that of temporality, though. As such, the vulgar understanding of time denies any dissolution of *times* by definition, since it does not contemplate any other time than the now.

In short, the individual, when found extremely grounded in a public interpretation of world time, represents a being that—for the most part—forgets and, at the same time, does not maintain any sort of expectation towards the future. These acts of expecting and remembering are quite paradoxical, for their absence refers to a conceptualisation of time purely based on the stream of nows in which events are seen individually and only when they are *present*. Accordingly, future events should not demand as much interest for the subject, since the individual's focus stands on the *presently present* event—nor should past events for the exact same reason. But then:

> Why do we say that time *passes away* when we do not emphasize *just as much* how it comes into being? With regard to the pure succession of nows, both could, after all, be said with equal justification. In talking about time's *passing away*, Dasein ultimately understands more about time than it would like to admit, that is, the *temporality* in which world time temporalizes itself is *not completely closed off* despite all covering over. (Heidegger 404)

That is to say, the understanding of vulgar time as the continuous stream of nows that do not relate to one another, and that ignore any other temporal component that does not show itself as present, does not represent a process that is completely isolated. The anxiety shown by the individual regarding the passing of time does,

indeed, prove otherwise. The vulgar conceptualisation of time is not absolutely detached from the mechanics of temporality. Consequently, past and future events are not as stressed—or as *present*—for the subject as the series of nows is, but, nonetheless, they are marginally included within the vulgar structure of time. The inclusion of these terms emerges from a conflict of interests between two temporal dispositions:

> The main thesis of the vulgar interpretation of time—namely, that time is "infinite"—reveals most penetratingly the leveling down and covering over of world time and thus of temporality in general belonging to this interpretation. Initially, time presents itself as an uninterrupted succession of nows. Every now is already either a just now or a right-away. If the characterization of time keeps primarily and exclusively *to this succession* then, in principle, no beginning and no end can be found in it as such. Every last now, *as a now*, is always *already* a right-away that is no longer, thus it is time in the sense of the no-longer-now, of the past. Every first now is always a just-now-not-yet, thus it is time in the sense of the not-yet-now, the "future." Time is thus endless "in both directions." (Heidegger 403)

Forcing the vulgar understanding of time to become an isolated system in itself is precisely what gives the subject the fictitious illusion of time as an *infinity* of nows. Since the stress is located at all that is present right now, everything that is no longer—or that is not quite yet—is compelled to be still regarded as a no longer—or a not yet—*presence*. In a sense, the influence of the temporal configuration is dissimulated by the impersonation of any not-nows as, also, the nows. Since every thing is a now—and a now is always happening—, an illusory feeling of time being infinite captures the subject. But then, if time is infinite—or that is, at least, the way it is experienced—, why does the individual show anxiety towards the fleeting of it?

It is at this moment at which the conflict of interests mentioned above enters into play. On the one hand, the vulgarisation of time persuades the subject to encounter that—and only that—which is presently at hand, as it were. Hence, this

interpretation creates an atmosphere of infinitude which, paradoxically, cannot be penetrated by the passing of time itself. On the other hand, the envisioning of past and future events as part of the present one—that is, considering all of the not-nows as simply nows—represents a constant and subtle reminder for the individual that *their* present is not static or immobile, but, on the contrary, moving and passing away—that is to say, their present is finite.

> Talking about time's passing away gives expression to the "experience" that time cannot be halted. This "experience" is again possible only on the basis of wanting to halt time. Herein lies an inauthentic *awaiting* of "moments" that already *forgets* the moments as they slip by. The awaiting of inauthentic existence that makes present and forgets is the condition of the possibility of the vulgar experience of time's passing away. Since Dasein is futural in being ahead-of-itself, it must, in awaiting, understand the succession of nows as one that *slips away* and passes away. *Dasein knows fleeting time from the "fleeting" knowledge of its death*. In the kind of talk that emphasizes time's passing away, the *finite futurality* of the temporality of Dasein is publicly reflected. (Heidegger 404)

The reminder of the finitude of the individual's time becomes a constant component of the subject's consciousness. Hence, the battle between time and space which Bergson introduces becomes now a battle between eternity and finitude, between an everlasting becoming and utter termination. In truth, this is no different to the old struggle of realising of one's death. The individual has to position themselves in a state of equilibrium between the thorough interpretation of reality—in which temporality makes itself uninterrupted but difficult to grasp—and the effortlessness of a granulated vision of the world. Locating oneself almost exclusively at any of these extremes would entail an utterly shallow and inconsistent experience.

Becoming, therefore, constitutes the major issue regarding the self-preservation of the individual. This problem will later be displayed as a major motif

for many of Faulkner's characters. Undoubtedly, the fleeting of time as well as an unhealthy obsession with the past show in the work of the Mississippian author. Characters, being in conflict with themselves, are unequivocally in a direct relation with the many issues which the concept of becoming encompasses.

Consequently, if becoming is primarily understood as in conflict with regard to the concept of the now, it is of no surprise at all that the notion of eternity comes into play. In *Time and Narrative* (1983), Paul Ricoeur explores the multiplicity of time and arrives at the very same conclusion that Heidegger stated previously: "[e]ternity is 'for ever still [...]' in contrast to things that are 'never still.' This stillness lies in the fact that 'in eternity nothing moves into the past: all is present [...]. Time, on the other hand, is never all present at once'" (Ricoeur 25).

It is in relation to this argument that a distinction should be noted between the concepts of *eternity* and *infinity*; for the former dwells around the idea of a static *forever*, whereas the latter is more interested in the uncertainty of locating a beginning or an ending.

> The eternal present does not appear to be a purely positive notion except by reason of its homonymy with the present that passes. To say that it is eternal, we must deny that it is the passive and active transit from the future toward the past. It is still insofar as it is not a present that is "passed through." Eternity is also conceived of negatively, as that which does not include time, as that which is not temporal. In this sense, there is a double negation: I must be able to deny the features of my experience of time in order to perceive this experience as a lack with respect to that which denies it. It is this double and mutual negation whereby eternity is the other of time that, more than anything else, intensifies the experience of time. (Ricoeur 236)

It is of no surprise that, according to Ricoeur, just as a Heideggerian perspective declares, the experience of time depends on the constant conflict between the *presence* and *absence* of time. Paradoxically, as Ricoeur points out, the lack of

any passing of time whatsoever represents the absence of actual time. The subject is left to wander through the illusory feeling of eternity which the always-present *present* conceives.

If the future and the past can be, and are, indeed, understood as absent—that is, they are seen as part of the present only by means of rejecting their actual condition of not-now—, the subject is said to have entered the fictitious field of the eternal. In short, eternity, so to speak, represents the definite basis of the social boundary: an illusory state of only regarding and engaging oneself in that which is exclusively present. Ricoeur observes it is in the passing of time—in its measuring—which this enchantment breaks so easily and frequently.

> [W]e measure time *when it is passing*; not the future which is not, nor the past which is no longer, not the present which has no extension, but "time passing." It is in this very passing, in the transit, that both the multiplicity of the present and its tearing apart are to be sought. (Ricoeur 16)

In short, the need of filling the gaps—of reconstructing a time gone by—serves as the element that triggers the shifting between a static everlasting present and a multidimensional assortment of temporalities. It all seems to go back to the need of ordering; which, paradoxically, originates in the social compound. Even more paradoxical still, this same need of ordering—in the latter quote exposed as the need of measuring—emerges when the focus is located at something that cannot be measured; that is, the everlasting present. In other words, the subject pushes away the illusion of the stationary present in search for a way to recover that which has been forgotten, as much as that which has been awaited. This recovery points towards Heideggerian temporality and, as it will later be expanded, towards Faulknerian time:

> As is well known, Heidegger reserves the term temporality (*Zeitlichkeit*) for the most originary form and the most authentic experience of time, that is, the dialectic of coming to be, having been, and making present. In this dialectic, time is entirely

> desubstantialized. The words “future,” “past,” and “present” disappear, and time itself figures as the exploded unity of the three temporal extases. (Ricoeur 61)

It is only by means of temporality—that is, the temporal disposition of the subject’s psyche—that the individual grasps an incomplete version of a past time—or imagine a fragmentary construction of future events—, as it is only by means of this same temporality that the individual tries to reconstruct the shattered episodes that build up their identity.

The reconstructive process reflects itself on the linguistic approach which individuals take regarding time. Filling the gaps of a given experience—that is, a specific period—mirrors the exuberant presence of temporal components within language, inasmuch as these two parallels attempt to detach themselves from the influence of vulgar time and, in doing so, to gain back some of their fundamental constitution. In other words, memory tries to refrain the subject from lingering too long—as Heidegger would put it—“within-time-ness.” Without memory, there would be nothing but the plain presence of the forever constant present: not following or preceding anything and, consequently, perpetually isolated.

> In this way, within-time-ness or being-“within”-time deploys features irreducible to the representation of linear time. Being-“within”-time is already something other than measuring the intervals between limit-instants. Being-“within”-time is above all to reckon with time and, as a consequence of this, to calculate. It is because we do reckon with time and do make calculations that we must have recourse to measuring, not vice versa. It must be possible, therefore, to give an existential description of this “reckoning with” before the measuring it calls for. Here expressions such as “have the time to,” “take the time to,” “to lose time,” etc. are very revealing. A similar thing can be said about the grammatical network of verbal tenses and the highly ramified network of temporal adverbs[...]. (Ricoeur 62)

By making use of memory, therefore, the individual points toward the more temporal aspect of their consciousness, whilst at the same time language maintains them grounded into the experience of a linear time. Consequently, it is into the relationship of memory and language that the subject is able to reckon with their own consciousness at a given time. Pilkington's conclusion rests on these two terms as well. According to him, memory and language do not only reverberate onto the multiple layers of a subject's life, but also shape the various elements that determine the individual's inclination towards either realm—the more private or the more social—in which their consciousness is primarily grounded:

> There are then two levels of conscious life and two forms of multiplicity; a superficial level composed of discrete sensations and separate states and a deeper level where there is no separation but a pure continuity; and then, there is the inveterate tendency of the intellect to assimilate the latter to the former and to see the whole of one's mental life only as it is refracted through a spatial and linguistic prism; only by an effort of introspection does one realise that the prism is there at all [...]. Hence the intellect, which operates essentially in terms of the discrete and the separate, substitutes for the reality of consciousness a symbolic representation; it loses sight of the *stream* of conscious life and sees only the spatial schema by which is has replaced it. There is great pressure upon us to subscribe to this illusion and to deal only in the spatial schema — the pressure of language itself. (Pilkington 4-5)

Nevertheless, the antagonist relation of memory and language—not in nature, but in function—slowly stops being that of an exclusion and becomes an organic incorporation of terms. Bergson views space as that which corrupts and misleads the pure experience of temporality which individuals should have, if a rather long list of theoretical conditions were fulfilled. However, space is never regarded as the origin of anything at all. Instead, it is dismissed as the least relevant

notion that takes place within the psyche and, even, its concreteness is taken into account only through doubts and obscure argumentations. Nevertheless, Bergson's rationale shares with Heidegger's and Ricoeur's its core argumentation regarding the intertwining of temporality and time.

The only objection to Bergson's theoretical background, present in both of Heidegger's and Ricoeur's manuscripts, is the much less beneficial treatment which the natural world is granted in Bergsonian theories. After Bergson, nature is not only envisioned as the origin of the subject's conceptualisations regarding time in general, but also as the very ancestor of the individual's *rhythm*:

> All these expressions, with their extreme subtlety and fine differentiations, are oriented toward the datable and the public character of the time of preoccupation. Yet it is always preoccupation that determines the meaning of this time, not the things we care about. If being-"within"-time is nevertheless so easily interpreted as a function of the ordinary representation of time, it is because the first measurements of this time of our preoccupation are borrowed from the natural environment and first of all from the play of light and of the seasons. In this respect, a day is the most natural of measures. (Ricoeur 62-63)

Natural time—or natural change—is not only introduced as a key component of the discussion, but, furthermore, it represents the one element able to reverse the demeaning of the natural environment. The external world stops getting downgraded to merely space, and, in its turn, becomes the origin of any passing of time whatsoever that, likewise, implants the notion of change into the psyche of the individual. The world of the physical externalities cannot be observed any longer as the setting *where* only a series of spatial simultaneities takes place.

Such a reorganisation should not, however, be regarded as a panacea. It certainly rearranges under an entirely different light the many notions covered up until this point of the present text, and, therefore, helps to solve the major inconsistency of Bergson's rationale. However, this new arrangement of terms does

not change their actual performance that much. Surely, if the natural environment is taken into account as the medium where time—world time—originates, the argumentation regarding the phenomenon of temporality takes a more intuitive turn. Temporality, to some extent, can now be understood as a fictitious impression that mirrors the passing of real time in the world. That is to say, temporality now embodies the product, and vulgar time becomes the producer. Nevertheless, this new organisation of notions does not free the subject entirely from getting stuck at either of the qualitative or quantitative ends.

Thus, all of the paradoxes regarding time and temporality should not be simply annihilated by this reordering of notions—e.g. how linear, static, changeable or continuous a specific *time* is said to be—, as neither should be the multiple ways in which these paradoxes modify the individual's consciousness in relation to the latter's temporal arrangement. In fact, Ricoeur insists on the necessity of identifying and differentiating these obscure contradictions so that the many levels at which temporality operates do not get reduced merely to points—or moments—on a clock.

> In order to preserve the meaning of "now" from this reduction to an abstraction, it is important to note those occasions in which we say "now" in our everyday acting and suffering. "Saying 'now,'" says Heidegger, "is the discursive articulation of a *making present* which temporalizes itself in a unity with a retentive awaiting" [...]. And again: "The making-present which interprets itself—in other words, that which has been interpreted and is addressed in the 'now'—is what we call 'time'" [...]. (Ricoeur 63)

Therefore, the "now" emerges from the natural interplay of day and night. This "now" temporalises itself in terms of all of the previous and the subsequent nows which the individual either remembers or awaits. In other words, temporality is —in very general terms—nothing but the synthesis of a natural phenomenon which, eventually, comes back to that same phenomenon and alters it to the point of obscuring its initial configuration. The individual, subsequently, is able to determine the passing of time in a computational sort of way—i.e. the use of clocks—only

because there was a natural measuring of the day in the first place. Under these considerations, reality stops referring to the organic changes that take into account the day and the night. In contrast, the subject becomes aware only of the exclusion inherent to these terms: day*time* and night*time* cease to exist in a unified fashion, for the antagonistic features between these notions become restrictive to one another.

The fact that Heidegger enforces the role of language within the dilemma of time remains, nonetheless, quite an interesting discussion. Ricoeur makes an extraordinarily well-structured effort to highlight the inclusion of a linguistic approach into the question of the self-interpreting making-present. In other words, Ricoeur implements within his reasoning the same argumentation that Heidegger establishes regarding language and time: articulating the now by means of an authentically making-present is still going to be misleading regarding the times that concern the public world.

> It is understandable how, in certain practical circumstances, this interpretation can go adrift in the direction of the representation of linear time. Saying "now" becomes synonymous for us with reading the hour on the clock. But to the extent that the hour and the clock are perceived as derivations from the day, [...] saying-now retains its existential meaning, but when the machines that serve to measure time are divested of this primary reference to natural measures, that saying-now returns to the abstract representation of time. (Ricoeur 63)

In short, the primary connection to natural phenomena must be considered as a necessary condition so that the subject does not lose the conjunction to an organic understanding of temporality in general, and of time in particular. In fact, Ricoeur describes a linear understanding of time as a conceptualisation which not only stands for something fictitious or imaginary, but also as something which is fabricated and originates in the need for clocks. This is unsurprising to a greater extent, since in the vast majority of cases the individual tends to mistake a linearity with a chronology. In fact, none of these two notions is extremely present in

Faulknerian literature, at least as embodying a standard chronological or linear perspective. In many occasions, the only possible way to discern any chronological aspect is to force it into the narrative. And, whereas the Faulknerian works covered by the present study are hardly ever linear or chronological—certainly never both—, these texts never lose their grip onto the natural world.

The oppositions between a linear or a chronological interpretation of the concept of time may very well be understood as deriving from the associations made for each of these two configurations. The chronology inherent to the use of clocks does derive from a conceptualisation of the world in which time unfolds itself, indeed, as a natural phenomenon. However, the feeling of linearity—or, better, the substitution of the chronologic constituent for a linear one—, originates in the attribution of that same phenomenon of time *exclusively* to a manufactured mechanism instead of to the natural environment. Consequently, the clock now becomes the originator of time instead of its surveyor. The clock has metamorphosed into the *place* where time is accessible and observable. Gilles Deleuze, in his work titled *Difference and Repetition* (1968), acknowledges this same confusion:

> Space and time display oppositions (and limitations) only on the surface, but they presuppose in their real depth far more voluminous, affirmed and distributed differences which cannot be reduced to the banality of the negative. It is as though we were in Lewis Carroll’s mirror where everything is contrary and inverted on the surface, but ‘different’ in depth. (Deleuze 51)

Chronology and linearity—as reflections of time and space, respectively—cannot be understood as merely opposites. One is not the negation of the other, for their natures are truly disparate but not antagonistic. However, they are usually related in terms of opposition since they shape reality together and *at the same time*. The performance of the human mind, in so far as these two notions are always interpreted as two sides of the same coin, is what best explains the attribution of such opposition between them. If anything, one should be the affirmation of the other, independently of which were to be taken first.

> A succession of instants does not constitute time any more than it causes it to disappear; it indicates only its constantly aborted moment of birth. Time is constituted only in the originary synthesis which operates on the repetition of instants. This synthesis contracts the successive independent instants into one another, thereby constituting the lived, or living, present. It is in this present that time is deployed. To it belong both the past and the future: the past in so far as the preceding instants are retained in the contraction; the future because its expectation is anticipated in this same contraction. The past and the future do not designate instants distinct from a supposed present instant, but rather the dimensions of the present itself in so far as it is a contraction of instants. (Deleuze 70-71)

To this contraction, Deleuze attributes the name "passive synthesis" (Deleuze 71). In short, passive synthesis relates to a configuration of time that pretty much resembles that of temporality, although it is firstly encountered in the realm of the quantitative. Yet, it does not correspond to space, for Deleuze differentiates between time, as it is, and a succession of instants—which resembles the Bergsonian concept of simultaneity. Thus, it could not be said to correspond to vulgar time, for this synthesis is viewed as the contraction of the three temporal exponents—past, present and future—which, in addition to imparting "direction to the arrow of time" (Deleuze 71), takes place in the psyche of the subject.

According to him, passive synthesis is "prior to all memory and all reflection," and he determines that the already mentioned contraction of time "is subjective, but in relation to the subjectivity of a passive subject" (Deleuze 71). Deleuze distinguishes between the passive synthesis, in which the sequential flow of nows gets contracted, and the active synthesis, which introduces a discontinuity of events within memory. His determination to differentiate between the two somewhat resembles a few concepts already exposed in the present text. That is to say, the notion of awareness and unawareness referring to consciousness. In fact, Deleuze's conception of passive synthesis reminds of the unawareness of consciousness which

characterises the incorporation of the succession of presents. Similarly, active synthesis seems to mirror the awareness of consciousness regarding the temporal reorganisation of memory.

> [O]n the basis of the qualitative impression in the imagination, memory reconstitutes the particular cases as distinct, conversing them in its own ‘temporal space’. The past is then no longer the immediate past of retention but the reflexive past of representation, of reflected and reproduced particularity. Correlatively, the future also ceases to be the immediate future of anticipation in order to become the reflexive future of prediction, the reflected generality of the understanding (the understanding weights the expectation in the imagination in proportion to the number of distinct similar cases observed and recalled). In other words, the active syntheses of memory and understanding are superimposed upon and supported by the passive synthesis of the imagination. (Deleuze 71)

There are, in truth, quite a few differences between the two approaches presented by the French philosophers. Whereas Deleuze measures these two configurations in terms of its temporal arrangement, Bergson remains faithful to the concepts of time and space. Additionally, Deleuze introduces the notion of memory only as the component that indicates whether or not the subject has elapsed from the passive configuration to the active one. In other words, according to him, memory serves to establish a temporal disorganisation with regard to the original linearity in which the sequence of present moments is displayed. Thus, to Deleuze, the identity of the subject is, to a greater extent, an illusion. On the contrary, Bergson envisions memory almost as the equivalent of the subject’s identity. In fact, to Bergson, consciousness truly emerges from the combination of memory and psychic life.

All in all, both philosophers seem to be referring to quite the same notion working pretty much on the same manner; the only difference being its actuality. In fact, they depict the union of memory and time within the consciousness of the individual under the same premises. Take the following example:

> [F]our o'clock strikes ... each stroke, each disturbance or excitation, is logically independent of the other, *mens momentanea*. However, quite apart from any memory or distinct calculation, we contract these into an internal qualitative impression within this living present or *passive synthesis* which is duration. Then we restore them in an auxiliary space, a derived time in which we may reproduce them, reflect on them or count them like so many quantifiable external-impressions. (Deleuze 72)

Deleuze uses here a similar example given by Bergson in *Time and Free Will*. Deleuze coincides with Bergson in the fact that the strokes, besides each having an independent existence of their own, are perceived by the subject as a unified event which is contracted into their consciousness. He also supports Bergson's subsequent explanation regarding the reconstitution of the unified event so that each stroke be restored as an independent entity once again.

In fact, Deleuze attributes the perception of such a contraction of strokes to something happening within passive synthesis, which is a direct reflection of Bergson's unification of temporality taking place into the consciousness of the individual. Moreover, this process is surveyed by the subject's (un)awareness. Usually, whatever task carried out by an aware individual will be rather permeated by a spatially oriented perspective, for their psychic life would be thereof located at a more superficial level of the cone. This process easily exemplifies the incorporation of the spatial component into the temporal one, and vice versa.

There is, definitely, some sort of differentiation between the two discourses, for Deleuze *places* passive and active synthesis in an illusory plane and does not conceive identity as the result of these processes. According to Deleuze, Bergson's depiction of unawareness agrees with his description of passive synthesis: it represents a process that is carried out independently of the subject's consciousness configuration at a specific moment in time. Moreover, they could even be said to agree in that they are *somewhat* prior to memory, for this process virtually points to an involuntary accumulation of lived experiences.

In short, unawareness and passive synthesis point towards a configuration of the self which is usually not dominated by the reconstruction of memory. Moreover, this configuration tends to contract the experiences from the external world into an indivisible unity due to its parallels to temporality. For Bergson, however, memory functions *at all times*, whereas for Deleuze it is only applied to the experiences once these have already been accumulated into the whole of the individual. As a consequence of this, Deleuze introduces the notion of simulacrum:

> The identity of the object read really dissolves into divergent series defined by esoteric words, just as the identity of the reading subject is dissolved into the decentred circles of possible multiple readings. Nothing, however, is lost; each series exists only by virtue of the return of the others. Everything has become simulacrum, for by simulacrum we should not understand a simple imitation but rather the act by which the very idea of a model or privileged position is challenged and overturned. The simulacrum is the instance which includes a difference within itself, such as (at least) two divergent series on which it plays, all resemblance abolished so that one can no longer point to the existence of an original and a copy. It is in this direction that we must look for the conditions, not of possible experience, but of real experience (selection, repetition, etc.). It is here that we find the lived reality of a sub-representative domain. (Deleuze 69)

Since Deleuze relies his argumentation of time and the self pretty much on repetition, it is of no surprise that he determines that the subject finds possible multiple versions of a given interpretation, just as they would find possible multiple readings depending on when a book is read. This theory can be extended to the individual's self, as Deleuze himself points out by prolonging his argumentation to the subject's experiences. It is all the more coherent for the present text to take into account the philosopher's concept of simulacrum, since this idea gracefully serves to illustrate the mechanics of temporality, where there is no discernible distinction

between a before and an after. Likewise, within the individual's temporally oriented consciousness, there should be no distinct features that mark *temporal* changes within the self.

The problem inherent to this notion is that, eventually, for Deleuze everything becomes simulacra. In fact, this reasoning should not be inevitably left aside, for if temporality does not distinguish between specifics at all, it makes perfect sense that a prolongation of consciousness—an evolved self—be indistinguishable from its *previous* analogous. Certainly, in small talk it can be specified that a self stands for a *previous* or a *consecutive* one, since the performance of linear time is never truly extinguished. Nevertheless, the subject should be unable to discern a chronological list of changes from the evolution experienced by their self.

Notwithstanding, the inability to differentiate between specifics should not entail that a given simulacrum exists only by virtue of the rest of the simulacra. Deleuze conceives multiple possibilities when it comes to the *diversion* of a series, which does not completely correspond with the conception of multiple possibilities when it comes to the *progression* of that same series. That is to say, it should still be equally impossible to discern exactly when and how the consciousness of the individual has mutated, but not because it has mutated into multiple different things. Although the subject should fail at pointing how different their self of today is from their self of ten years ago, the individual still perceives that some changes have been, indeed, taking place in a chronological order.

It could be argued whether the premise exposed by Deleuze would apply to a scenario where the subject exclusively pertains to the world of the temporalities. In truth, it remains quite difficult to imagine how—without the notion of natural consecution—the progression mentioned above could still take place. However, the diversion suggested by Deleuze seems much more appropriate for such a hypothetical context, since the individual would not only be unable to distinguish when a given change took place, but also if any change took place at all. Somehow, for that subject, all possible ends would remain forever true. Paradoxically, the complete absence of the external world and the notions of space and vulgar time would turn pure temporality into an amalgam not so different from the concept of eternity. Such a scenario would force the individual to *contemplate* one and all

possibilities being true at the exact same time. The absence of any sense of progression would deprive temporality from its very own temporalisation:

> Time does not escape the present, but the present does not stop moving by leaps and bounds which encroach upon one another. This is the paradox of the present: to constitute time while passing in the time constituted. We cannot avoid the necessary conclusion — *that there must be another time in which the first synthesis of time can occur*. (Deleuze 79)

Thus, time and temporality—space and time, in Bergsonian terms—do not simply influence one another. Moreover, they originate each into the other and, specifically, depend on one another to maintain the nature of their respective configurations. That is, the natural time that is found within the world of the homogeneous does, indeed, generate the notion of a pure temporality in the first place. It is this same temporality the one component that precipitates the need to order the natural time and, ergo, it is within temporality that the concepts of progression, chronology and, consequently, linearity emerge. It is only accidental that individuals tend to observe these two extremes as opposites instead of complementary constituents of the very same reality.

Take, for instance, the example of Proustian experiences which Deleuze uses to demonstrate the analogies that trigger memory within this counter-relation between time and temporality:

> No doubt, to remain at a first dimension of the experience, there is a resemblance between the two series (the madeleine, breakfast), and even an identity (the taste as a quality which is not only similar but self-identical across the two moments). Nevertheless, the secret does not lie there. The taste possesses a power only because it *envelops* something = *x*, something which can no longer be defined by an identity: it envelops Combray *as it is in itself*, as a fragment of the pure past, in its double irreducibility to the present that it has been

> (perception) and to the present present in which it might reappear or be reconstituted (voluntary memory). This Combray in itself is defined by its own essential difference, that 'qualitative difference' which, according to Proust, does not exist 'on the surface on the earth', but only at a particular depth. It is this difference which, by enveloping itself, produces the identity of the quality which constitutes the resemblance between the series. Identity and resemblance are therefore once again the result of a differenciator. (Deleuze 122)

Certainly, one clear way to envision the mechanics explored in the previous remark would be to establish that analogies between given situations do trigger the working of memory. However, there is an equally legitimate reasoning that, in contrast, would observe memory as the originator of the so-called analogies. Undoubtedly, there is usually one or several objective components by means of which two situations can be said to be analogous. Still, there is a considerable amount of subjective constituents when analysing the "ordinary" joining of two or more events that depend exclusively on given particularities surrounding a specific individual. Pretty much resembling the dialectics of time and temporality, memory does not represent a reality that can be dissected in terms of universal truths.

There is no definite autopsy regarding the temporal configuration of an individual, just as there is no definite saying regarding how the subject will process and interiorise the quality of a given event and, furthermore, how this quality will join the rest of the subject's imaginary. Under this perspective, Deleuze's notion of simulacrum seems all the more accurate in order to establish a connection that agglutinates all of the qualities pertaining to an experience:

> The essential point is the simultaneity and contemporaneity of all the divergent series, the fact that all coexist. From the point of view of the presents which pass in representation, the series are certainly successive, one 'before' and the other 'after'. It is from this point of view that the second is said to *resemble* the first. However, this no

> longer applies from the point of view of the chaos which contains them, the object = *x* which runs through them, the precursor which establishes communication between them or the forced movement which points beyond them: the differenciator always makes them coexist. We have encountered several times the paradox of presents which succeed one another, or series which succeed one another in reality, but coexist symbolically in relation to the pure past or the virtual object. (Deleuze 124)

Since the configuration and workings of temporality tend to erase any sense of previous and following, it could be stated that everything within this temporalisation has become simulacra. Definitely, the present text insists on not inferring from this that all has turned into simulacra, meaning that there exists an impossibility on identifying the original—as it were—event within a series. On the contrary, the notion of simulacrum should be understood as removing the initial qualities of that event and, thus, as losing its *originality* to some extent. On this note, Deleuze extends the argumentation to point out that even the subject has become a simulacrum to a certain degree:

> It is indeed a problem of resonance between the two series, but the problem is not well formulated so long as we do not take into account the instance in relation to which the two series coexist in an intersubjective unconscious. In fact the two series — one infantile, the other adult — are not distributed within the same subject. The childhood event is not one of the two real series but, rather, the dark precursor which establishes communication between the basic series, that of the adults we knew as a child and that of the adult we are among other adults and other children. (Deleuze 124)

The simulacrum of the subject derives into an intersubjective form of remembrance that, unavoidably, inflicts change both into the individual's memorabilia and the individual themselves. Such changes within the individual raise

questions regarding the extent to which the subject(*s*) endure this inexhaustible process. Whereas the individual is usually treated as a fragmented whole—that, nonetheless, changes, evolves, and partakes of substantially different worlds—, the question of their integrity and unanimity remains still inaccessible.

> The indivisibility of the individual pertains solely to the property of intensive quantities not to divide without changing nature. We are made of all these depths and distances, of these intensive souls which develop and are re-enveloped. We call individuating factors the ensemble of these enveloping and enveloped intensities, of these individuating and individual differences which ceaselessly interpenetrate one another throughout the fields of individuation. Individuality is not a characteristic of the Self but, on the contrary, forms and sustains the system of the dissolved Self. (Deleuze 254)

Just as Deleuze observes this sort of dissolution within the subject as a whole—and the disruption of the multiple layers that constitute their temporal scheme—, Pilkington analyses this same phenomenon, again by making use of Proust's work:

> Part of Proust's originality was that he saw life as a succession of unique and unrepeatable moments of experience, which the intelligence, working from the same to the same, cannot grasp; but which we are aware of in sudden moments of realisation when a memory can recur, accompanied by the totality of the moment of experience, which the memory of intelligence, the 'mémoire volontaire' had set aside as logically unconnected, and which at a deeper level of spontaneous recollection were nonetheless uniquely associated with the recurring memory[...]. Marcel now feels able to explain the exact nature of the sense of joy that accompanies this experience; it springs from the fact that he is experiencing an impression simultaneously in the past and in the present, through

> both imagination and sensation, and therefore in some sense outside time. (Pilkington 148)

In short, Pilkington establishes a key component in order to analyse the psyche of the individual. That is to say, not only does the subject find themselves scattered in multiple fragments that, usually, can by no means be restored back to unity. Furthermore, all of the pieces that constitute the subject's identity are lost in time, together with the ever-changing remembrances that add up to the individual's memorabilia. This feeling of fragmentation, alongside the loss of one's various selves through time and temporality, marks the impossibility to repair one's consciousness.

If the individual conforms the whole of their experiences and events, affinities and disinterests, it is only logical that a reinterpretation of these elements naturally imply a reorganisation of the unifying component. The subject's consciousness—their individuality as such or, in other words, their identity—spawns by means of a wide spectrum of elements belonging to a great variety of natures. The subject's identity does not correspond with a logically deduced scheme. Consequently, identity will never be able to represent the result of a formula, so to speak, and its acknowledgment will remain within a thorough process of interconnection and temporal deduction that permeates the entirety of the subject relentlessly.

In short, Bergson introduces the mechanics of memory by means of analysing the relationships between subjects and objects in the physical world. He defines the process of perception as, primarily, a diminishing of the original phenomena being perceived. Thus, the individual not only does not have access to the unabridged version of the physical world, but they also modify the nature of that which is perceived. In other words, the external world is perceived by means of both reduction and alteration. In addition, perceptions undergo a conscious or unconscious classification when it comes to their storage within the individual's memory.

Consciousness emerges from the combination of the deep or superficial levels at which memory and psychic life operate at a given moment. However, while these levels tend to match in terms of their depth, a parallelism between the two is

not necessarily bound to take place. It is by perceiving the environment which the memorial process and psychic life are assigned a determined depth.

The lack of continuity regarding an individual’s memory represents a problem in relation to the continuity of their consciousness. Since recollections are endlessly mutated and relocated within the whole of the subject’s memory, so are the constituents of their psychic life and, ultimately, their identity. By incorporating the past into the present, past recollections gain additional qualities that did not originally belonged to them. Similarly, present situations lose some nature of their own and are merged within the memorial compound; they are, to some extent, substituted by past events.

In the end, the opposing natures between a stream of nows and a disorganised temporal compound entail a fundamental premise with regard to the storage and recovery of recollections. In that respect, the notions of chronology and linearity are directly related to the synthesis of the succession of instants. Thus, differentiated nows are contracted into a non-linear “unity.” This process mirrors the contraction of time made by consciousness prior to the rearrangement of temporality executed and embodied by the memory of the individual.

4/ THE LANGUAGE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

It is all the more necessary to address the issue of language regarding the questions of time and temporality. Whereas the present text favours the inquiries of time and space, for the nature of the texts studied demands so, language should not be left aside on the matter of the identity of the individual. In fact, and specifically, for Modernist texts, the linguistic approach is all the more relevant in so far as Faulknerian works regard language as not only the container but also the contained material of the story.

While it is impossible to detach the individual from the notions of time and space—and the multiple forms which these terms can embody—, it is equally necessary to address the established relationship between the subject and the linguistic field. This is exceptionally imperative for a thorough study on the arising of the individual's identity, such as the present one.

In truth, the problem surrounding language and the individual does not only concern the present text in so far as the complexity of temporality invades language as such, but also regarding the connection between language and the interpreting of the world. It is, indeed, within this conjunction of terms that some notions will be considered regarding the characters depicted by William Faulkner. Such as, among

others, to which extent the use of language determines the temporal configuration of a given consciousness.

Aside from that primal junction of language and time, the emphasis which language brings along regarding the spheres of the individual and the community becomes likewise significant inasmuch as these represent the two extremities through which the consciousness of the subject oscillates. Additionally, the way in which language is used can be seen as somewhat determining to which of these realms the subject orients themselves—either in general terms or at a specific moment in time. Also, language is conceived as the origin of an emerging conflict between an exclusively private language and a socially accepted one. This proves to be paramount insofar as the stream of consciousness represents a vital component of the mentioned narrations, due to which they provide with a convoluted transcript of the inner workings of the characters' minds and thoughts.

This so-called conflict, nonetheless, is concerned with the contingencies that are obviously inherent to both an exclusive language and an inclusive one. In fact, the opposing disagreement between the two illustrates the extent to which a subject's realities are shared by the community, and vice versa. In other words, the emancipation of language from the community derives into a conception of the world —and, consequently, of the individual themselves—that distances from a straightforward interpretation of the realm of the homogeneous.

Interestingly enough, there is another argument to which, to some degree, the previous opposition between society and individuality are far more beneficial. If language is observed, as it were, as a tool that literally fills the gap between the subject and the external world, it could then be stated that there is no understanding of oneself isolated from an understanding of the world. Or, in other words, the emergence of a consciousness, and its (self)interpretation, pretty much depends on the relationship between the subject and the world of the externalities. The latter does, at the same time, derive from the specific use and understanding of language which the individual accomplishes.

A central idea that is present alongside Faulkner's texts is whether language has the ability to *deny* itself. That is to say, language—in as much as it is understood as a tool that oscillates between a social purpose and an individual organisation of the

world—ultimately refers to a process and not to a product. Communication, taken as the generalised achievement to which language aims, should not be mistaken with the tool that originates it. In fact, Deleuze observes this very hierarchy with regard to the instrument that conveys meaning and the actual meaning itself:

> It is not surprising that it should be easier to say what sense is not than to say what it is. In effect, we can never formulate simultaneously both a proposition and its sense; we can never say what is the sense of what we say. From this point of view, sense is the veritable *loquendum*, that which in its empirical operation cannot be said, even though it can be said only in its transcendental operation. The Idea which runs throughout all the faculties nevertheless cannot be reduced to sense, since in turn it is also non-sense. Nor is there any difficulty in reconciling this double aspect by means of which the Idea is constituted of structural elements which have no sense themselves, while it constitutes the sense of all that it produces [...]. There is only one kind of word which expresses both itself and its sense — precisely the nonsense word: abraxas, snark or blituri. (Deleuze 155)

The impossibility to comprehend the meaning of what is said within that which is being said does refer directly, on the one hand, to the understanding of language as a mere vehicle and, on the other hand, to the individualistic approach inherent to every single linguistic process. Undoubtedly, the primary purpose of language emerges within a need which is shared and socially addressed; that is, to communicate meaning. Nevertheless, there is an inescapable element surrounding the linguistic reality which simply cannot be obliterated: language, as an everyday tool, originates in the individuality of the subject's mind. As a consequence of this, the *true* meaning—the sense—of that which has been said escapes every subject but the one who originates the meaning.

In other words, the sense of that which is being expressed cannot be realised by simply lingering around a more objective meaning. In contrast to determining

natural phenomena, language cannot be truthfully found by simply examining the external world. Thus, while colours undoubtedly correspond with a certain wavelength or frequency within the visible spectrum of electromagnetic radiation, their *naming* and interpretation relies more on the subjectivity of an individual. And, more even so, the identification of so many colours does, to some extent, rely on this very subjective use of language.

Language, thus, somewhat abandons every objective rationalisation. This could be said to happen only at specific moments or certain situations when the individual is not as attached to the social domain. However, there is no possible way for the individual to get rid of their very own subjectivity at any given time. Certainly—just like the cone-shaped figure suggests—, there are different degrees to which a subject's language can adjust depending on what the present situation demands of a given psyche. Nevertheless—and pretty much resembling the impossibility to reach any extremity of the cone—, the subject cannot ever entirely modify *their* language so that it becomes completely exclusive nor inclusive.

Consequently, language, for the most part, becomes a tool that is used to express realities which are shared by the community, while, at the same time, is transformed into an instrument that remains accessible only to its present user. On this matter, Deleuze states that nonsense is the only sense there is, for its impossibility to be acknowledged is first imposed on its very articulation:

> As so many authors have recognised in diverse ways (Flaubert, Lewis Carroll), the mechanism of nonsense is the highest finality of sense, just as the mechanism of stupidity is the highest finality of thought. While it is true that we cannot express the sense of what we say, we can at least take the sense of a proposition — in other words, the *expressed*, as the *designated* of another proposition — of which in turn we cannot express the sense, and so on to infinity. As a result, if we call each proposition of consciousness a 'name', it is caught in an indefinite nominal regress, each name referring to another name which designates the sense of the preceding. (Deleuze 155)

Such an “absurd” regression does not represent but the actual process by which sense is finally achieved. The individual proceeds throughout a regressive path in order to extract not only what a specific assertion *means* for them, but, more concretely, what sense is conveyed at the current moment. Sense, therefore, symbolises the final product of all of the different connotations that the individual attributes to something—a word, an expression, a given reality—through time.

The fact that the process of unfolding that which is expressed be regarded as absurd serves to emphasise the *absurdity* that is usually associated to nonsense and the paradoxes this genre brings forward:

> Lewis Carroll gave a marvellous account of all these paradoxes: that of the neutralising doubling appears in the form of the smile without a cat, while that of the proliferating redoubling appears in the form of the knight who always gives a new name to the name of the song — and between these two extremes lie all the secondary paradoxes which form Alice’s adventures. (Deleuze 156)

It is worth mentioning that nonsense literature brings forward a paradoxical arrangement of the understanding of language on which, usually, ordinary literature does not focus. That is to say, since nonsense does make the individual aware in advance that the insurmountable barrier that language imposes will not, indeed, be surpassed, the very form which language adopts equals the sense which is expressed. In fact, in no other genre are words so relevantly and prominently governing the text. In nonsense, words are located at the same level as sense is; for, by acknowledging this unsurpassable barrier, that barrier tends to dissolve. Paradoxically, nonsense is, in a manner, no different to sense; there is no distinction between them.

Remarkably, the fact that in that genre both words and the sense they convey represent the same reality does not imply that such an entity is free of the influence with which the individual can cover it up. Indeed, one of the fundamental pillars of nonsense relies on the ability to escalate to so many individuals while at the same time depending eminently on private meanings. This serves to illustrate that, although language indeed represents a social instrument, it may be as well deeply

rooted on the inner workings of a specific individuality. Jean-Jacques Lecercle, on his renowned work on language and the texts of Lewis Carroll—*Philosophy of Nonsense* (1994)—, exposes this duality regarding the linguistic infrastructure that governs the mentioned works:

> The school is the institution that develops the need for meaning and a reflexive attitude towards language, and channels them in socially acceptable ways. The school is the institution where not only rules of grammar, but also maxims of good behaviour, linguistic and otherwise, are learnt. [...] Of course, such a thesis has a strongly paradoxical flavour, as it is immediately apparent that nonsense texts aim at (and choose their characters from) the type of child who has not yet been captured by the institution — [...] little girls in the case of Carroll[...]. (Lecercle 4)

Under no circumstance does the present text try to suggest that language be an inherent instrument to the human mind and that, only afterwards, does it evolve and adapts to a more social sphere. However, it should be noticed that there is no way of restricting the creative liberty of language to a thorough categorisation of its principal components. Thus, just like the previous example served to illustrate, colours can be objectively defined by a precise and scientific way of measuring them. Language, on the contrary, cannot undergo the same process—independently of dictionaries, grammar, and syntax patterns.

Yet, language is no more than an ordered set of components and the rules that arrange them. That is, language resembles a pretty objective and standard synthesis that serves a social function masterfully. And, yet, there is no way of corroborating whether the *sense* experienced by an individual corresponds with the one experienced by any other subject. Indeed, the sense that Deleuze talks about seems to be the logical product of an extremely well-*articulated* system of multiple elements; language evolution, life experiences, and memory, among others.

Within nonsense, the two sides of language—the one free and individualistic that aims towards creation and mutation, the other restrictive and circumscribed

between the considerably fixed rules that govern its functioning—are viewed under a different light and, hence, proliferate under the rules of different interactions:

> I think we can take 'Jabberwocky' as an emblem of nonsense as a genre: a conservative-revolutionary genre, subverting but also comforting language, given free rein to our linguistic imagination, but also imposing the constraints of a regular language on us with a vengeance. The commonplace view of nonsense is that it presents us with the charming disorder of freedom. Alice is liberated, during her stay in Wonderland, from the constraints of a Victorian education; the text is freed from the usual rules of language. (Lecercle 24-25)

There is quite an interesting paradox relying on the premises exposed in the last remark. Whereas nonsense seems to highlight the interplay of the rigidity with which language operates and the freedom that triggers the creative individual, that which is being used still depends on the very same set of categorised words and elements. In short, not even language can escape language. Similarly to the impossibility of the individual to obliterate space once they have experienced it, there is no way for nonsense—for any linguistic portrayal, really—to depart from the inflexibility of the classified rhetorical system.

> Nonsense, therefore, is a kind of textual double-bind, or paradox. It is both free and constrained. It tells the reader to abide, and not to abide, by the rules of language. We are back with the already mentioned paradox: I speak language, in other words I am master of the instrument which allows me to communicate with others, and yet it is language that speaks: I am constrained by the language I inhabit to such an extent that I am inhabited, or possessed by it. The grandeur of nonsense, as a literary genre, is that it foregrounds the predicament of every speaker of language: we are torn apart between the two opposite poles of the paradox and yet we must, somehow,

> hold them together. What I am suggesting is that nonsense itself, if this is the core of it, is a paradoxical object. (Lecercle 25)

Just as much as the manoeuvrings of language govern nonsense literature—for it stops being merely a tool and becomes that which is being conveyed—, language surpasses its own limitations when it comes to Modernist fiction; Faulknerian, in particular. Not only does the lack of principles and standards act as their only guideline, but the proliferation of anomalous uses of language—and their consequent deviation from a more classically accepted usage—becomes its primal medium. Precisely, this very deviation from a standard view of how language should portray a given reality corresponds with the use that is pre-eminently found both in Lewis Carroll and William Faulkner.

Clearly, Faulkner's discourse does not rely on a nonsensical usage; not entirely, at least. Nevertheless, the ultimate purpose, as it were, of the Faulknerian linguistic layout is to break with the standards of narrative and reject a normalised speech. Indeed, this is all the more relevant insofar as Faulkner's works usually revolve around illustrating the inner workings of a character's psyche. In this sense, it seems all the more logical to observe the methodology that nonsense depicts as a less strict forebear to the one exhibited by the Mississippian author.

> The reading is no longer systematic and rational, but desultory and playful. There is no fixed and unique meaning or interpretation, but a proliferation of variously ambiguous partial structures. By focusing on the semantic gaps, this second reading lets language play on its own — it lets language speak. (Lecercle 24)

In fact, the paradox of Faulknerian literature is that such linguistic disruptures are not merely addressing the reader, but they are synchronically being approached by the specific convoluted consciousness which produces them in the first place. Faulkner exemplifies the various uses of language as a logical correlation of multiple features inherent to the present narrator. And he does so not only to represent straightforward factors pertaining to age, gender, origin or ideals; but he

also applies language to the character’s inner fixations and passions. Obsessions, neuroses, and phantoms become more intrinsic to characters than their physical appearance could ever be. On this note, Lecercle exalts the substantialness of language and its repercussion on the user by stating that “[l]anguage is both more real and more terrible than the tame dragons of our nightmares” (Lecercle 24).

In short, language embodies a marvellous and outstanding contradiction. On the one hand, it serves the individual to communicate with others at levels of exceptional accuracy. On the other, it encircles and isolates the subject. Lecercle observes a similar contradiction on the very name of the nonsense genre, whose negative prefix “rejects meaning at the cost of evincing a strong fascination with it — nonsense texts *need* meaning, at least as much, and perhaps even more so, than meaningful texts” (Lecercle 115). In a sense, this is a duality that is present in language in general, for the latter represents an elaborate system designed to communicate as faithfully as possible and with no influences of interpretation whatsoever. Nevertheless, the irruption of interpretation is not only an event which is bound to occur in the communicative process, but the very phenomenon that allows, to begin with, such a process to take place.

The problem of the insertion of the interpretative process within the communicative act refers to the fact that interpretation does not only take place at either side of the individual or social extremities. In fact, interpretation always intervenes as a resulting combination of the two. That is, the subject’s interpretation of the linguistic process is based, first, on the extraordinary set of rules that governs the exchange of information and, second, on the individual’s rationale; both of which —although especially the latter—are in constant development and transformation. The interpretative process could not take place differently, since, then, language would either lack the objectivity required to be intelligible by the entire community or the subjectivity needed to concern the individual.

Therefore, whereas interpretation allows for the communicative process to take place, it also somewhat corrupts the message. The extent to which the final meaning transmitted has mutated refers to the degree of individuality which the subject inserts within communication. This does not, indeed, allude to a voluntary eagerness to adopt a more private or a more social approach towards language.

Undoubtedly, the subject may transform their speech in terms of the social and the private at will. Nevertheless, some individuality always remains unintentionally within the speaker's communicative approach. That is to say, there are some private meanings within language that simply cannot be extrapolated to any other subjects. And this is so because it is virtually impossible to measure the exact sense implied by a given individual at a very specific moment while referring to a very concrete situation. In fact, the impossibility to envision how different or similar the senses are, which two subjects attribute to the same linguistic reality, remains bulletproof.

Since language represents a somewhat rigid system of rules, communicating faithfully and in a completely objective way is unfeasible because of the insurmountable barrier which the subject's individuality encounters. Different subjects hold different interpretations of the world that derive from having lived different experiences at specific vital moments. This, together with multiple other elements—certain components that do not interest directly the present text: genetic heritage, education, cultural background, etc.—that help shaping a subject's disposition towards language and the world, originates the interpretation of the individual. A. E. Pilkington recovers the impregnable quality inherent to the different uses of language between subjects and establishes that such a deviation of meaning is especially present within the Modernist works:

> It is thus possible to verify in the light of one's own experience the truth of the writer's vision. Marcel invites his readers to be the readers of themselves, since his book is a sort of magnifying glass through which they can see the world from a fresh angle and perspective; that is, it will reveal them to themselves and make them aware of complexity and individuality in their own experience which had always been present but unnoticed[...]. (Pilkington 162)

The faculty to interpret, nonetheless, should not be seen as merely favouring the private sphere of the subject. In fact, it is the key component that motivates a successful understanding of every social and shared constituent which, as a consequence of not originating within a particular subject, always remains somewhat

foreign. In short, interpretation connects both worlds. It serves as a bridge that associates the most private understandings of the world—every individual conception which the subject holds of the *other* and of themselves—with the less familiar and intuitive patterns—since they do not emerge from individuality—that tend to govern the vast majority of the subjects' daily lives. In this respect, interpretation is also at the service of that which the social aspect of a language values the most: efficiency.

> Words provide us with a classification of the world by collecting objects together into groups and attaching labels to them, with the result that we come to pay less attention to the particular object we are faced with, since it is more economical just to notice the label, which provides us with the information we need to act in an efficient way upon the world — efficiency of action being more important than attention to the specificity of the object. (Pilkington 175)

There is, however, another difficulty that applies to the impracticality of achieving an accurate discernment of language. As previously observed, two subjects cannot ever accomplish a completely precise and definite exchange of information. Each individual will adhere to their own private set of meanings which, although allows for a coherent and an effective exchange of information, does eventually prevent a completely accurate understanding from taking place. Such an authentic exchange is neither achievable, nonetheless, even for a single subject along time. That is to say, just like the compound of vital experiences grows, the way the individual interprets the world and themselves mutates as a result of the incorporation of new occurrences and events. Therefore, the individual does never represent a faithful image of their past selves. A subject who is in constant change and evolution—as it is the case for virtually every individual, although Faulkner will prove otherwise—will expose an interpretation of the world that does not correspond with any of their previous ones.

> A text remains beyond the physical presence of its original speaker, like a riddle the solution to which has been lost. It can be quoted, reworked and reinterpreted. Each reader is like an actor: he or she re-enacts the original speech act, but such reproduction is a reproduction of the same text, and at the same time a different text, a different reading, in both senses of the term. (Lecercle 128)

In accordance to the last remark, it could be concluded that there is no survival of the *present* subject at all. Just like there is an impenetrable gap between the writer and the reader, there exists an equally insurmountable barrier that separates the present subject from their past selves. What is referred to as subjectivity—or, better, the consciousness of the individual; their identity—is no more than the product of a rather complicated chain of interactions between the subject and the world, and between the subject and *their-selves*. Clearly, all past identities serve to modify and shape the present one, and so on and so forth, together with the accumulative process of enlarging one's vital experiences both in quantity and quality. But the subject still is, nonetheless, unable to reach and comprehend any past self as it was and, consequently, unable to participate in the specific interpretation inherent to any past selves whatsoever.

From the perspective of taking into account all these inevitable disagreements and incompatibilities which the subject is bound to suffer regarding themselves, it should be observed that language becomes extremely temporal. It becomes the most eminent tool which the subject uses to arduously acknowledge—or try to acknowledge—the evolutionary path which all of their identities have followed:

> Identity, the identity of the speaker's self and of the other speakers, is what interpretations construct, a never-ending process, in language. Because language is not transparent, because representation is always also betrayal, all we have access to is images, that is conflicting interpretations, not persons 'as they really are', hence the need to defend one's interpretations against those of

> others, and the agonistic turn the exchange inevitably takes. (Lecercle 141)

It is precisely this temporal aspect of language that which governs Faulkner's texts in multiple levels. For Faulknerian characters, language stops being merely a vessel to become both the process *and* the product itself. Language inhabits the characters just as much as characters inhabit the text and, hence, they inherit the whole of the paradoxes and contradictions involved in the linguistic process. The individuality of the subject becomes part of the world of representations and, just like everything else to which language applies, there is no clear way of establishing to which extent one's identity is a myth or a reality. Lecercle shares the same daunting concern: "[w]e may then discover that, even as there is only a blurred separation between dream and reality, there is no telling where the text ends and where reality begins" (Lecercle 161).

The constraints that language imposes upon defining a clear demarcation between fantasy and truth can be certainly found both in the nonsense genre and the Modernist corpus of texts. The disheartening feeling regarding the self which arises as a consequence of the absolute inability to *locate* one*self* becomes a major concern for the Modernist definition of identity. Thus, identity will oscillate between never be seen as a unity nor a categorised inventory of elements; no more representative of a coherent subject than it is representative of a living contradiction dictated by somebody else. In short, the Modernist definition of identity does not limit this notion by irrevocably dictating what identity *is* or *is not*, but, in contrast, it embraces its contradictions and conceives it as a fragmentary unity that *is being*—by means of, largely, language.

> The interesting point is that both sides of the contradiction are tenable because of the manoeuvring that language allows. For language constructs interpretations and thus creates represented objects, but it ruins those interpretations by making them incompatible and contradictory, or else it makes them so coherent

> and logical that they end up betraying what they purport to represent. (Lecercle 140)

In short, the individual should not be seen only as the product of their use of language, for that represents a quite limited and inaccessible reality for the rest of subjects. Instead, an individual's use of language could be said to be the result of multiple elements that come together and fall apart relentlessly throughout the subject's lifespan. Very much resembling the mechanisms of memory, language never stops influencing itself. This process should not necessarily be carried out by an enlargement of the linguistic skills—which, on the other hand, do determine the number of layers through which the subject will, linguistically, roam—, but by the many interactions performed by the individual.

In particular, the degree to which the subject may impose themselves as master of their own interpretation depends mostly on how they understand the joining of language and meaning. That is to say, the more an individual rejects any strict correlation between what is said and what is meant, the more malleable their use and understanding of language will result. Denying any prefixed connections within language entails a more profound recognition of the duality of the public and the private. Consequently, a subject that adheres to a more flexible approach regarding interpretation will contribute to the endurance of multiple readings for multiple situations.

> The way out is not, of course, the idea that, in the field of interpretation, anything goes. It is rather the awareness, which the proliferation of meaning triggers, that it is a fundamental characteristic of language that utterances are independent of meanings, thus allowing meaning to proliferate. (Lecercle 231)

However, and just like Lecercle observes in the previous remark, the awareness of the multiple layers of interpretation does not simply validate the appearance of private meanings. Surely, a determined degree of privacy will always be involved within the linguistic exchange, simply because there is no way for the

individual to avoid it and to turn language into an exclusively aseptic vehicle. Nevertheless, this awareness should serve to, on the one hand, modify one's own discourse to promote a more profitable course of communication and, on the other, to achieve a greater discernment within the others' speech.

> The question 'What is language?' is merely the consequence of the raising of the more fundamental question, 'What is meaning?' And, as we shall see, the question of meaning — of its nature and of its construction — takes the privileged form of, 'Does the speaker mean what she says?' (Lecercle 116)

Faulknerian characters are possessed by this sense of unreliability whenever they *speak*, both to others and to themselves by means of the stream of consciousness. This is mostly originated by the impossibility to know whether these characters show any intentional will to actually mean anything at all, to actually speak to themselves. Furthermore, the dubious and obscure speeches that are generated within the narrative contribute to a feeling of ambiguity and uncertainty not only because it is unclear whether or not there is any willingness of meaning— which, incidentally, does indeed happen—, but because it is simply not possible to determine what their implied meaning, so to speak, means.

Unsurprisingly, the effect of inconclusiveness that is compelled onto the reader gets magnified due to the use of the stream of consciousness. This literary technique is sometimes used by Faulkner in quite an explicit way, although in other cases it is more or less concealed within the text. Nevertheless, it serves to bring the characters closer to the reader and to force the latter into the imaginary realm of Faulknerian psyches. This open exposition of the characters' minds and consciousnesses precipitates the reader onto the multiple private worlds that are depicted along the texts. It is especially in these situations when the confrontation of the individualism and the community can be better recognised.

> Their [a subject's collection of interpretations'] success or failure does not depend on their adequacy to an unknowable 'true' state of

> affairs, but on their acceptance by the community, be it local or global, of interpreters, and therefore largely on the skill with which they are defended. (Lecercle 142)

In other words, the private sphere of a subject cannot ever be entirely private, or, else, there would be no possible way to interact in any direction with the rest of the community. This is a notion extensively analysed by Lecercle in *Philosophy of Nonsense*, for the appearances of almost completely private sets when interpreting language are not uncommon in the characters that inhabit the literature of nonsense. A masterful example of this would refer to the figure of Humpty Dumpty in the *Alice* books, by Lewis Carroll. Humpty Dumpty crowns himself as master of language when, in reality, his language is simply not accessible to anyone but him. The irony of his attitude is that, in the end, language becomes Humpty Dumpty's master, as it is proved by the iconic demise of the character:

> Humpty Dumpty is the 'master' of potentially unruly words. If the question is 'which is to be master', the implication is that words have a will of their own, and therefore a force of their own, and must be kept down. The speaker is king over a rebellious population of words. And since Humpty Dumpty claims to be that sort of king himself, we may well imagine that such sovereignty over words places the speaker in a position as precarious as that of Humpty Dumpty on his wall — a revolution by words, toppling the speaker who utters them, is always to be feared. It is, after all, language that speaks. The irony is that the masterly speaker is entirely subjected to a number of words, the words of the rhyme that spell out his fate — the so-called master is a slave after all. (Lecercle 157)

In Faulknerian texts, nonetheless, this concept is exposed under a different perspective. The privacy with which characters embrace the world surrounding them is mostly present whenever a character isolates themselves from the social domain; that is, when language is less active and less dominant in the whole of their

consciousness, but, still, somewhat present. This does not imply that the same individuality expressed by Humpty Dumpty by means of his use of language is not present in Faulknerian characters, for the latter count on a wide corpus of individually chosen linguistic uses. However, it can be easily acknowledged that Faulkner prefers to highlight this individuality whenever his characters rely solely on themselves.

A trivial and shallow study would conclude that focusing on the individuality of the self when the narrative is based purely on the social sphere—as it is the case with Humpty Dumpty, whose dialectics get confronted by those of Alice—would originate a greater feeling of opposition between these two realms. In such a situation, the inaccessibility of a private set of interpretations—that is, a private language—must be made much more explicit. This choice, although extremely clever for a nonsensical text, only seems to point out how big such an opposition is by incorporating what could be said to be, virtually, an impossibility:

> No language thus constituted could work: it would not provide the elementary stability of meaning on which intersubjective communication must rely. At worst, it would be an instance of that notorious impossibility, a private language. (Lecercle 155)

The choice made by Faulkner results to be somewhat more sophisticated and much more obscure than Carroll's, for the former does not try to conceal any hiding opposition between terms. The Mississippian author, in fact, derives the reader to the grounds where the stream of consciousness operates, thus eliminating the relevance of the social charge (but not erasing it completely). By means of this, the result is not merely a highlight of the private realm. On the contrary, the reader is left to face the unintelligibility of a raw individuality different to their own. Suddenly, the social sphere gains back its strength and returns to the narrative only as the ghost of a presence that, by being absent, does not help to surmount the gap between the self of the character and that of the reader.

And yet, within all the strangeness found while confronting a consciousness other than one's own, there is a feeling of familiarity that language brings about. This

feeling, nonetheless, turns out to acquire some uncanny features, for—although language gives the impression of erasing the gap between consciousnesses—it also precipitates the subject to consider the nature of such familiarity. In other words, the subject is abandoned between the impossibility to comprehend an external consciousness and the hopelessness of understanding their own. Language only gives the impression of closing the so-called gap between individuals, while, indeed, it represents the actual barrier that isolates the subject from others and from themselves.

Lecercle maintains that such a feeling of isolation may very well depend on the realisation of the actual dominance and competence of language in an individual's daily life. For this purpose, he illustrates his arguments by referring to the excerpt where Alice is asked to recite some rhymes. Unsurprisingly, the figure of the Caterpillar introduces at this point of the narrative an allusion to the nature of the relationship between meaning and saying. Accordingly, this relationship—or the absence of it—gets emphasised due to the use of an ancient rhyme; that is, something that is not as contemporary as could be. The main purpose of choosing a rhyme that is old relates here to portray a bigger distance between the original author and Alice. Like so, the already mentioned connection between meaning and saying is forever lost, and the individual is left to contemplate the futility of language:

> Poor Alice is reduced to the state of a tape recorder, a possessed mystic or a raving lunatic. The words that come out of her mouth are not hers. In a way this is a natural state of affairs, since in any case she is reciting a poem. But it raises the awesome possibility that we are all, to some extent, mere mouthpieces, repeating words that are not ours. Even worse in this case, Alice's words are not hers not only because they have a previous author, but because she no longer has any control over them. (Lecercle 118-119)

In the mentioned passage of the conversation between Alice and the Caterpillar, Carroll exceptionally points towards a situation of saying without meaning, for which the speaker is actually intending to mean. Meaning, as Alice ends

up realising, is conveyed not only in language, but in the linguistic inheritance that permeates every language. The resulting outcome of this occurrence is Alice's final acknowledgment of the limitations within which she is forever confined. Apparently, meaning is not something she is at times just unable to express, but a reality that might—and will—abandon her very self.

> No wonder this state of affairs raises doubts about her identity in Alice. This is the scene where she utters the famous sentence: 'I am not myself, you see', to which the Caterpillar answers, with apparent common sense — but a common sense so excessively literal that it threatens to subvert the generally accepted view it is supposed to express — 'I don't see'. (Lecercle 119)

In short, language and meaning govern those texts in which the linguistic process is highlighted by the use of certain features; i.e. the Modernist use of the stream of consciousness, or the nonsense genre in general. With respect to the concerns of the present study, language cannot but be observed as the force that determines the inner processes taking place within the Faulknerian set of characters. Furthermore, the linguistic capabilities which characters exhibit within the Faulknerian realms should be placed alongside their specific memory processes of recovering reminiscences and the temporal patterns displayed within the inner workings of their self.

In this type of narratives, and for this particular compendium of characters, language serves not only as the vehicle, but is also the scenario where all of the previously mentioned concepts arrange and rearrange themselves in a relentless process of becoming. As a consequence of this, the identity of the self is questioned in terms of the many and widely varied configurations which these features may achieve. Together with the relation which the individual establishes between these notions and the—usually—not so balanced approach toward that which the community establishes, the identity of the individual will be explored as both a resulting and logical product of its many components and as a fluctuating irresoluteness, never to be determined.

There is, however, no decisive approach regarding any of these concepts. From all of them, language, in particular, illustrates the perfect paradox, for it represents a living thing in constant change and evolution which, ironically, eventually detaches itself from the individual in which it first arises. Due to this, language tends to eliminate the private sphere of the subject, or else it accepts it painfully and inefficiently, only to end up losing its original function. It integrates the individual just as much as it isolates them. It can reach incommensurable levels of accuracy and degenerate meaning to unimaginable extents. But, most of all, language shapes the individual's self to the point of becoming indistinguishable from it, hence the agony and the torment which Faulkner embedded into it.

5/ YOKNAPATAWPHA, A COUNTY OF SPEAKING GHOSTS

On December 10th, 1950, as part of his address upon receiving the Nobel Prize for Literature, William Faulkner openly stated what would later be considered the key to understanding the underlying motive that gives shape to his literary work as a whole:

> [T]he young man or woman writing today has forgotten the problems of the human heart in conflict with itself which alone can make good writing because only that is worth writing about, worth the agony and the sweat. (Faulkner 2003a, 649)

It is precisely this "human heart in conflict with itself" that which is repeatedly found throughout Faulkner's imaginary. It does not matter whether one looks at Quentin Compson and his brothers, or the forever elusive Caddy, the ambiguous Joe Christmas, the rampant and raging Darl Bundren, Thomas Sutpen and his Sutpen's Hundred, or Isaac McCaslin, who was "uncle to half a county and father

to no one" (*GDM* 5). Faulkner seems to be providing his readers with a picture of a county where nothing ever happens and everything appears to be at stake; where things, and characters, and situations tend to show a faded quality, as if the wholeness of this world were better assimilated once one is done with the reading. Malcolm Cowley, on his memorable introduction to the Mississippian author's selected collection of stories and excerpts, establishes that "Faulkner's novels have the quality of being lived, absorbed, remembered rather than merely observed" (Cowley xxvi).

In fact, the uncanny feeling of broken perpetuity that goes in hand with those of Faulkner's most memorable works is by no chance accidental. The southern author makes sure to shape and colour his stories in a certain way by making use of quite a specific set of tools. One of the greatest achievements of outlining a world where one can observe characters and events interconnected throughout a whole set of novels is the actual conception of the Yoknapatawpha County itself:

> Yoknapatawpha County—"William Faulkner, sole owner and proprietor," as he inscribed on one of the maps he drew—has a population of 15,611 persons scattered over 2400 square miles. It sometimes seems to me that every house or hovel has been described in one of Faulkner's novels, and that all the people of the imaginary county, black and white, townsmen, farmers, and housewives, have played their parts in one connected story. (Cowley xi)

Yoknapatawpha County is not just an imaginary county where a certain number of events happened, but where things keep happening all over again. It is a land of ghosts, where the present is anticipated in the past, and the past is digested within the present. Yoknapatawpha is the realm of memory, and its inhabitants partake of the many ambiguities which one would expect from a world entirely dedicated to time. Indeed, Yoknapatawpha is so crowded with time that the latter somehow dissolves and evaporates, leaving only a trace of itself on the space it inhabits.

“No one has grappled more continuously with the ‘burden of Southern history’ than Faulkner, no one has been more haunted by the dilemma of the meaning of the past” (Schneidau 179). Unsurprisingly, Faulkner’s works may as well be seen as bursting with the spatial dimension, for the temporal aspect haunting this world gives the illusion of abolishing itself. As a consequence, thus, of the enhancement of time—whether by its presence or absence—, space takes the lead insofar as a continuity and cohesion of texts is concerned. Malcolm Cowley identifies this pattern within the walls of Yoknapatawpha:

> All his books in the Yoknapatawpha cycle are part of the same living pattern. It is this pattern, and not the printed volumes in which part of it is recorded, that is Faulkner’s real achievement. Its existence helps to explain one feature of his work: that each novel, each long or short story, seems to reveal more than it states explicitly and to have a subject bigger than itself. All the separate works are like blocks of marble from the same quarry: they show the veins and faults of the mother rock. Or else[...] they are like wooden planks that were cut, not from a log, but from a still living tree. The planks are planed and chiseled into their final shapes, but the tree itself heals over the wound and continues to grow. (Cowley xiv)

Paradoxically, this approach to define and establish a literary world would seem to contradict a writer’s primary purpose; that is, to arrest life within words. Or, as Faulkner himself would put it, to *write* the human heart in conflict with itself. Now, it would seem rather obscure trying to arrest—as words do—such a primal conflict. In his turn, Faulkner chooses a different approach and, by means of inserting temporality within the narrative—or, better, by making the narrative thoroughly become temporality—, such a purpose is beautifully fulfilled.

Characters—just like people—*are not*, they *are being*. They are *is* and *was*, and one cannot just tell when each of these terms ends or begins. Similarly, events do not start and finish within an objectively regulated temporal frame. In contrast, they keep happening and influencing “present” circumstances relentlessly. Within

Yoknapatawpha, there are not well-defined characters who lived well defined events, but a constant process that does not even abide itself to the actual published books. An extremely popular example of this phenomenon is illustrated by the genealogy of the Compsons, which was not originally published in *The Sound and the Fury*:

> Whereas the novel is confined (except for memories) to a period of eighteen years ending on Easter Sunday, 1928, the genealogy goes back to the battle of Culloden in 1745, and forward to the year 1943, when Jason, last of the Compson males, has sold the family mansion, and Sister Caddy has last been heard of as the mistress of a German general. The novel that Faulkner wrote about the Compsons had long ago been given what seemed its final shape, but the pattern or body of legend behind the novel—and behind his other books—was still developing. (Cowley xiv-xv)

R. Rio-Jelliffe proposes the same approach in order to reach an insight of Faulkner's mythical county: "[t]he 'design' of each book and of the 'sum' of his work is not the Yoknapatawpha theme, as it is generally assumed, but a pattern of multiple yet correlated unfoldings from a concentric point" (Rio-Jelliffe 21). Faulkner's novels, consequently, are not stories about people, or about a place, of about anything that could have ever happened there to any of them. They are stories about the past, about a past that comes back to permeate the present and, thus, to change it. These are stories about time and its reluctance to die, for "Faulkner himself was obsessed with a feeling that the past endures in every moment of our lives. He kept scrutinizing the past with a sort of anguish, in the hope that it would explain a present dilemma" (Cowley 595). And, along with this reluctance, comes a feeling of inherited endurance, as if one is not only oneself, but a pastiche of thousands of fragments of ghosts who persevered.

Now, it is unsurprising why some of his works are considered a part of the southern gothic genre. However, whereas his texts do not deal directly with spirits, or haunted houses, or corpses coming back to life—not in the canonical way, at least—, the reader is frequently encountered by an eerie feeling emanating from the

uneasiness which the fragmentation of the self-entails. This so-called fragmentation never comes unaccompanied, as R. Rio-Jelliffe notes on her study of language and form in some of Faulkner’s most eminent novels (five of which coincide with the ones considered by the present text). Regarding them, Rio-Jelliffe manifests that:

> [A]ll exemplify two central tenets on time and structure in the two primary components of Faulkner’s form: the diverse linguistic simulations of synchronic time that fragment narrative and the contrary operation of dispersal and counterpoint that organize disjunct narratives. (Rio-Jelliffe 10)

In other words, that of Faulkner’s is a play of breaking and mending, of moving forwards and backwards, of finding the key to comprehend the many embodiments of fragmentation involved in his works. Thus, the individual’s identity is not only fragmented insofar as the most eminent forms of oneness are jeopardised, but also with respect to language, the community, and a temporal dissociation of the present self, among other elements. Rio-Jelliffe observes that “[t]ime fused in layered voices, points of view, styles, concentric images, and other elements of technique breaks the sequential flow of narrative and causes discontinuity” (Rio-Jelliffe 20) in Faulkner’s fiction.

The techniques mentioned above are but a few examples of the multiple ways in which time—along with its own rupture—is brought forward within the narrative. Moreover, this so-called temporal rupture does not only permeate the story as such, but the psyche of the characters—major and minor—as they *progress* through the pages. “The consciousness of a character becomes the actual agent illuminating and being illuminated by the central situation. Everything is immobilized in this pattern; there is no development of either character or plot in the traditional manner” (Vickery 2014, 325). Faulkner’s work is undeniably filled with temporal allusions, which, on the other hand, turn out to become further emphasised the more the spatial aspect is encouraged through the narration. This argument takes the present study back to its initial considerations, which dealt with Bergsonian notions of time and the disarray that the individual’s identity is compelled to suffer:

"[c]onsistent with his philosophy, Bergson thought a truthful novel would have to create some sense of the incessant motion of reality; it would have to present a character not as if he were being lived by a preconceived scheme, but in the act of creating the scheme itself" (Kartiganer 1970, 615).

Bergson and Faulkner have been associated to one another by many critics, and it has furthermore been suggested that William Faulkner himself was indeed familiar with the analysis and examinations provided by the French philosopher. Rio-Jelliffe is no exception to this linkage between the two, for she considers Bergsonian ideas regarding the individual's consciousness to be eminently present in the southern writer's work:

> Bergson associates the two primary components of the human psyche with two distinct beings, each with its own mode of time and language. The intellect governs the "practical life" of the "phantom self," while the "living self" lies rooted in the intuition and imagination. The "ego" with its "superficial psychic life" apprehends time "spatialized" in disjunct "befores" and "afters" [...]. (Rio-Jelliffe 53)

The two modes of the subject's intellect—that is, the two forms of consciousness that have been previously depicted as lying at the extremes of a cone—only reflect the two different times which the individual can encounter. As such, in Bergson as well as in Faulkner, the subject—the character—is doomed to live in a continuous fluctuation between true duration—temporality as such—and the world of quantities—space. Rio-Jelliffe notes that the Mississippian author's novels:

> [E]xemplify in form and theme the parallel prescriptions of Bergson and Faulkner on the language of time in fiction. Close correspondences between the philosopher's doctrines and the novelist's theory and practice suggest the influence over Faulkner may be more comprehensive than previously thought. For Faulkner [...], events are less than their reverberations in mind and time.

> Faulkner’s linguistic formulations of “indivisible” time [...] include divided/layered mental stages, voices and points of view, flashforths, [...] and the past/present/future in “a single identical time. (Rio-Jelliffe 57-58)

Whereas the quest for the indivisibility of time is certainly observable within Faulkner’s use of temporal shiftings throughout the narrative and the latency of the past within the present, it is also worth mentioning that language is the ultimate Faulknerian tool to depict time. Curiously enough, Bergson had previously stated that different mental states correspond with equally different modalities of language:

> The capacity of language to render at once outer and inner worlds offers the writer the means to transcend it. In Bergson’s system, two distinct modalities of language match the two kinds of self, the “deep-seated” being and the “superficial ego,” the “two aspects of conscious life,” and the “two very different ways of regarding duration [...]. (Rio-Jelliffe 55)

Not to wonder, then, why Faulkner makes use of the stream of consciousness to illustrate the wide set of psychic tensions and the many progressions which the past can undergo so as not to disappear completely. As a matter of fact, Cowley observes in Faulkner’s use of language a reflection of these temporal (dis)arrangements so brilliantly accomplished that the past is never even past. According to Cowley, the elongation of the past into the present is “one reason for his writing inordinately long sentences” (Cowley 595).

Consequently, and following up with Bergson’s rationale, Faulkner attributes his most sophisticated linguistic techniques—which do not necessarily entail the sophistication of language itself—to those characters who usually maintain themselves within the deepest levels of consciousness. And, paradoxically, it is for this set of characters where language tends to dissolve and disappear the most. “The

modernist irony[...] rests on the effort to transcend language through language" (Matthews 2014, 486).

Certainly, this discussion resembles the theories by Jean-Jacques Lecercle, who observes the many roles which language can adopt. Whereas words are the tool which shape the world of the individual, and, especially, the world of the community, they also represent a cage for the subject. A speaker is as much freed by language as they are imprisoned by it. Faulkner did not ignore this duplicity that words bring along. Moreover, he seems to encompass this paradox to some extent in many of his texts—certainly in those dealing directly with time—, and, notably, in the figure of Addie Bundren.

Many critics have noted that Faulknerian language seems to resonate beyond itself, but the present study feels more compelled towards the association of this quality of language to the presence of temporal digressions in the fictional work. R. Rio-Jelliffe appears to attribute this connection primarily to the use of silence within the narrative:

> The word mediates but also obstructs thought, art, and human relating. Yet the writer has no other means to conquer his enemy but language itself. That paradoxical premise underlies Faulkner's theory of language and narrative, whose primary articles address the problem of giving voice to the imagination with the duplicitous word. He overturns canons of narrative to convert language into word-transcending form. The writer's distrust of language is widely noted, but the solution he expounds in theory and practices in fiction is generally unnoted. Faulkner overcomes the word, not in wordlessness, as it is often denoted, but in silence where the word resonates beyond itself. (Rio-Jelliffe 19)

This silence—or, better, implied silence—should not be understood simply as the evaporation of language by mere sheer reading comprehension. Certainly, the mechanics of language guarantee to some extent the dissipation of words by the sake of communication. However, the so-called silence introduced by Rio-Jelliffe can be

nonetheless observed as a duplicity of the character's mind within the text. That is to say, only by depicting such a transgression of words can the individual's thoughts be accomplished in the fictional world. This silence, then, refers but to the "absence" of language one experiences when deeply in introspection.

Paradoxically, just as a writer needs to conquer language to avoid language's cage, the character's thoughts need to pretend the absence of language is real in order to achieve silence. Nevertheless, this silence relies solely on the unavoidable nature of words. It is words by which silence arises within the subject, as much as it is words which that same silence denies. Such is the paradox of Addie Bundren, who could not escape language even—some may say especially—after death.

> If you believed that words mainly betray the experience they pretend to convey, you would either not write novels at all or at least not write conventional ones. If you persevered in writing anyway, you would find yourself in an endless struggle with words themselves, trying to keep them from going "straight up in a thin line," as Addie put it. Instead, you would labor to trick them into saying life as it actually happens[...]. This is the central reason for Faulkner's difficulty. Novels that too easily turn the messiness of life into the orderliness of words are—for him—[...]oversimplified, too neat and regulated, their orderliness superficially pleasing but ultimately weightless. The verbal report they give on nonverbal reality is inauthentic. (Weinstein 2016, xvi-xvii)

The problem resides, then, on the difficulty of achieving such a portrayal of the individual. Clearly enough, Faulkner relies on the duplicity of language and the subsequent digression of time which the former encompasses. However, the resources one must use to illustrate this working jointly of language and time, while at the same time alluding to the psyche of the subject, seems to be dubiously achievable. If determined to negate language, how should words be incorporated? And, likewise, if determined to disrupt time, how could a narrative make any sense?

> Formulas like flashback and foreshadow appear in the novels, but the myriad linguistic representations of "true duration" distinguish Faulkner's work from writers like Marcel Proust, Joseph Conrad, and James Joyce, who also sought to conquer time and language. Faulkner, in addition, sets antinomies inside one another and entwines counterprocesses. He splinters so as to converge and cause resonances among unlike voices, viewpoints, styles, stages of knowing, and even resorts to deviant grammar and typography to merge temporal planes. Notable among the synchronic formations are the flashforths that bring the future to bear on the past and present, and, most powerful of all devices, the image enclosing past/present/future and multiple significations. Faulkner's revisions in several works attest to his increasing compulsion to convert the word into voice that speaks the language of "indivisible" time [...]. (Rio-Jelliffe 37)

It is perhaps the word "indivisible" the one which describes best Faulknerian fiction. Not only do the Mississippian author's works melt into one another, as already explained, but the *times* that order those works are by no means something one can reconstruct at all. Rio-Jelliffe observes this indivisibility not only in the unified works as a whole, but also in the smaller statements made by characters when reflecting upon the progression of time: "[i]n the context of the whole theory, such statements denote not an *absence* of time, but the *copresence* of all time, that is, the 'timefull'" (Rio-Jelliffe 36). In a way, then, time reflects barely on itself, there is no possible progression nor is it viable to dissect time.

Surely, one can attempt to establish an order, as it were; to reconstruct Faulkner's works chronologically. The result, nonetheless, would have little to do with the paradigms and obsessions suggested in the narrative, for the latter relies on its impossibility to reconstruct. Addie Bundren's monologue would have no room in such a restoration—dead people do not come back to give a soliloquy—, nor would have the figure of Benjy as a whole. Therefore, one must linger upon that indivisibility which not only applies to time in the broadest sense, but also to the

characters as a fragmented unity. “The ‘best point of view’ [...] and voice in the great works tend to be plural. Embedded in one another, distinct points of view and voices fuse time” (Rio-Jelliffe 37). Inseparable from one another, the characters that inhabit Yoknapatawpha create an organic whole, which is not—nor should be—free from incongruities.

Thus, one encounters Benjy, who never lost Caddy, but keeps weeping for her. Or Quentin, who seems to have been born much later than the time when the events that would shape his being took place. Philip Weinstein, one of Faulkner’s greatest critics, is especially fond of creating a troubled connection between past events and present ones, and assumes that this same process is present in the author’s fiction as a reflection of its presence in the author’s life itself:

> The tick-tock of clock-time is progressive and ongoing, but if you look harder, you come to a more disturbing model of temporality. Faulkner saw that lives, which were apparently moving forward, might be invisibly arrested or deformed by events from the past because Southerners remained passionately attached to values that had ceased to be viable since 1865—when the South lost the Civil War. (Weinstein 2016, 3)

For, in the end, “[a]lthough he did not fight in it, the Great War would haunt Faulkner for decades” (Weinstein 2016, 1). There was another war that would influence him greatly, but, as Weinstein points out, “[t]he Civil War had ended 32 years before his birth” (Weinstein 2016, 1). The convoluted time depicted in the novels, therefore, is by no means accidental. William Faulkner himself was prey to a past that made no sense in the present, and although he succeeds in portraying this reality within the pages of his novels, he always leaves some room for the intricacies of the community as a counterpart. Weinstein notes this duality of interests when it comes to different consciousnesses and establishes it as a starting point for the novelist: “[w]hat added to the complexity of the situation was that people, he realized, did not move through time at the same pace. They did not have the same

memories and assumptions and were not headed toward the same goals" (Weinstein 2016, 2).

Whereas the figure of Quentin Compson has become one of the most studied by Faulknerian critics regarding the mentioned temporal disarray, this is certainly no coincidence. Quentin embodies virtually all of Faulkner's incongruities and complexities when it comes to language, time, the oppression of the community, and the eerie feeling of having inherited a burden that places the self back into a time where it does not belong. It is, then, in Quentin—both in *The Sound and the Fury* and *Absalom, Absalom!*—where the motion of a consciousness thoroughly set at work—or, perhaps, aimlessly wandering through the self—can be found. Quentin can achieve such levels of linguistic disarrangement that his monologue becomes images—memories, as it were—instead of words. Language, for Quentin, has a tendency to disappear, which is all the more paradoxical regarding this particular character.

> The 19th century tools for representation that Faulkner inherited could only narrate character as a something seen from a distance and gathered into wholeness, in black and white, so to speak. By contrast, Faulkner knew that the psyche under enormous stress was radically different—it was in motion, in full color, penetrated by absent forces, hurtling through space and time. To articulate that color, Faulkner's prose had to reposition his character's mind in space, time, and the field of others. Most of all, Faulkner had to get his own narrator out of the scene of writing. He had to dramatize his character's distress as though it were happening on its own, without Faulkner's narrator telling it. (Weinstein 2016, 26)

To his own dismay, Quentin is a wanderer. He spends too much *time* trying to get a hold of the past, while all he achieves is instability. His is a peculiar linguistic approach, for Quentin is an eminently individualistic figure. However, when it comes to language, he always appears to be willing to defend the superiority of a well-established linguistic system. The most famous example of this refers to the problematic relationship he maintains with the concept of virginity:

> And Father said it's because you are a virgin: dont you see? Women are never virgins. Purity is a negative state and therefore contrary to nature. It's nature is hurting you not Caddy and I said That's just words and he said So is virginity and I said you dont know. You cant know and he said Yes. On the instant when we come to realise that tragedy is second-hand. (*SF* 77)

From all of Quentin's monologue in *The Sound and the Fury* and all of his narration in *Absalom, Absalom!,* this is probably the excerpt that exemplifies best his inner conflict. Words haunt Quentin as much as time does. This, nonetheless, is no surprise, for no other character in Faulkner's work depicts—throughout so many layers—that human heart in conflict with itself which Faulkner believed should be written out. Thus, Quentin's conflict is not only a conflict of the individual facing temporality, but also a struggle against the community.

It would seem, perhaps, that Faulkner embeds his characters with a certain inclination towards each of two extremes: the individual or the social. In fact, this inclination tends to be presented whenever characters find themselves sailing through the deeper levels of their consciousness. Furthermore, it can be seen that a given consciousness will systematically find this very conflict reflected in all aspects of their existence. In other words, each character fights their own unique battle through time, language, and memory.

In Quentin's case, the conflict is all the more exceptional, for it presents a duality which is not usually found in every other character. Quentin's consciousness circles around the same problem throughout the narrative—and by making use of multiple angles—, but while Quentin shows a high degree of individuality when it comes to temporal arrangements, he is, on the other hand, unable to abandon the sphere of shared realities that language provides. That is to say, his consciousness is not only out of balance with respect to a prefixed—as it were—inclination, but it also seems to be divided with regard to a hierarchy of terms whatsoever. Therefore, Quentin's consciousness cannot be said to belong either to the realm of

individualities nor to the world of the shared experiences. His is a conflict such that Quentin is unable to position himself at either side.

The positioning of characters in relation to a shared problem seems to be the motif in *The Sound and the Fury*. Regarding language, this novel is self-explanatory. The three main characters—Benjy, Quentin and Jason—are observed under the scope of inner thought in reference to the figure of their sister; Caddy, who “is not a character but an idea, an obsession in the minds of her brothers, [...] she is the very symbol of loss in Faulkner’s world—the loss of innocence, integrity, chronology, personality, and dramatic unity” (Sundquist 2014, 387). Whereas this novel also explores many other notions of the self, like time itself or the influence that memory exerts on the individual, the linguistic aspect should be considered before analysing any others.

What the reader primarily encounters is Benjy, who does not seem to execute any individuality whatsoever. Benjy’s language makes this point clear, for he limits himself to capture the external world as if he were not part of it. Thus, his linguistic choices rely on objective descriptions, short sentences, extreme uses of punctuation and utter chaos regarding an ordered sequence of events. On a first reading, Benjy acts like a camera that simply records whatever it is that happens around him. He is completely silent—with respect to uttered language—not only throughout his entire *monologue*, but through the complete novel as well. The problem is that he is not oblivious to language; and this cancels the possibility of observing him merely as an *object*, in the broadest sense of the word. “Purely objective mechanical reporting is hardly a human characteristic, yet the reader must see through Benjy’s eyes” (Truchan-Tataryn 516).

On a different reading, Benjy moves away from this object-like consideration and becomes a subject. This perspective denies the objectification of the character insofar as he introduces an exquisite collection of impressions and inner thoughts governed by synaesthesia: “I couldn’t feel the gate at all, but I could smell the bright cold” (*SF* 5). Many of the examples found in the text deal with the duality of light and darkness:

> *She smelled like trees. In the corner it was dark, but I could see the window. I squatted there, holding the slipper. I couldn't see it, but my hands saw it, and I could hear it getting night, and my hands saw the slipper but I couldn't see myself, but my hands could see the slipper, and I squatted there, hearing it getting dark.* (*SF* 48)

However, it still remains unclear whether Benjy suffers from synaesthesia, or, on the contrary, if this synaesthesia is a diagnosis which the reader themselves embed within Benjy's dialectics. In any case, Benjy defines the world that surrounds him in a rather peculiar way. This manner of describing the external world does not limit itself to be purely objective. In fact, Benjy's considerations when it comes to exemplify realities result in a much more colourful and subjective set of portrayals of his environment. Many of these portrayals, moreover, have to do either with the natural world or with more archaic events. As such, it is found that Benjy does not understand completely what ice is—"[s]he broke the top of the water and held a piece of it against my face" (*SF* 9)—or the unintentionality surrounding the motion of objects—"[t]he spoon came up and I ate[...]. The bowl went away" (*SF* 17).

It is unsurprising why Benjy may have been considered by so many critics as a senseless object that limits itself to observe the world; the last remarks on the mobility of objects do indeed support this argumentation. Nevertheless, there is, actually, some intentionality within Benjy's actions, and, more interestingly, a path of memorial recollection that exhibits his vital preferences. In fact, Benjy is always observed in relation to quite primitive actions, like eating, sleeping, crying or observing nature. Benjy's language, consequently, always remains primal, short, and direct: "I leaned my face over where the supper was. It steamed up on my face" (*SF* 16). He does, nonetheless, provide with less explanatory, and far more metaphorical, phrases: "[t]he bowl steamed up to my face, and Versh's hand dipped the spoon in it and the steam tickled into my mouth" (*SF* 18).

Whereas Benjy maintains himself within a quite objective—or, rather, non-judgmental—envisioning of the world, he surrounds himself with food imagery and natural phenomena, like rain or fire. Now, while his way of describing these phenomena does not necessarily mean that he has any inclinations whatsoever, his

path of memorial recollections does indeed demonstrate that an individual preference has been established and is being performed. Benjy, in fact, reacts to the world surrounding him in terms of how *natural* his environment is. Just like Quentin's, Benjy's consciousness moves more easily around some notions. In the case of Benjy, his consciousness is constantly roaming around nature as a non-corrupted medium and, when this corruption takes place in excess, Benjy stops tolerating the world. The incident with the perfume gracefully illustrates this conflict:

> She took up the bottle and took the stopper out and held it to my nose. "Sweet. Smell. Good." I went away and I didn't hush, and she held the bottle in her hand, looking at me.
>
> "Oh." she said. She put the bottle down and came and put her arms around me. "So that was it. And you were trying to tell Caddy and you couldn't tell her. You wanted to, but you couldn't, could you. Of course Caddy wont. [...]"
>
> Caddy dressed and took up the bottle again and we went down to the kitchen.
>
> "Dilsey." Caddy said. "Benjy's got a present for you." [...]
>
> "Well, I'll declare." Dilsey said. "If my baby aint give Dilsey a bottle of perfume. Just look here, Roskus."
>
> Caddy smelled like trees. "We dont like perfume ourselves." Caddy said. *She smelled like trees.* (*SF* 28)

The sentence "Caddy smelled like trees" seems to be Benjy's touchstone throughout his entire section. Unsurprisingly, it contains Caddy, the senses, and the natural environment. For Benjy, perfume is but an intruder, an artificial element that contaminates his eminently natural world of smells, and tastes, and colours. The perfume's purpose is to cover up one's true smell and, as such, Benjy sees it as a degrading component—widely accepted by the community and arising from it—that threatens one's identity. Interestingly enough, Caddy is the only one who somewhat notices Benjy's conflict in the novel. Although Dilsey certainly acknowledges it, she does not identify what his struggle really is.

The main problem regarding Benjy's predilection for the natural medium lingers in the fact that nature, by definition, is everything but static. Benjy's language does not evolve or mutate along his narration; which, in fact, comprises as many events—if not more—from the character's childhood as from his present adulthood. One cannot help but wonder what the reason of this immobility is. Benjy's linguistic approach does not show itself as unusual, in the sense that it does not fail to convey meaning. Now, his monologue cannot—and should not—be understood as a manuscript, since all the reader has access to is the character's inner thoughts and, consequently, it cannot be completely judged in terms of triumphantly conveying meaning or not. Therefore, since the character does not speak at any point of the story, it would seem that there is no reasonable way of knowing if he has indeed the ability to execute language as such. However, whereas he does not speak, he listens. He does react to language and understands whatever he is being told. Hence, whereas there is no way of assuring whether Benjy *thinks* in language, it is contrariwise possible to affirm that he is still located within language. He truthfully partakes of it.

If Benjy does not escape language, then, language must operate as a filter for the character's understanding of the world. That is to say, whereas it cannot be known the medium through which Benjy thinks, it can certainly be observed that the linguistic process is present in Benjy's relations with the outside; although not in a regular fashion. Bearing this in mind, it seems unlikely that the individual's inner works keep unchanged throughout the years, since language, as it has been explored previously, influences the subject and the interpretations they envision of the world. In short, language evolves with the subject and likewise makes the subject evolve. Benjy, on the contrary, remains unchanged. His understanding of language does not show possible improvement or worsening, and the way he comprehends the world around him follows the exact same mechanics it did when he was an infant—in fact, one tends to forget that some of his section's excerpts come from the mind of a thirty three year old man.

Having the ability of language without being subject to the evolution this ability brings along seems quite implausible; at least, taking into account an ordinary linguistic system. Benjy's language, nonetheless, does not work as the rest of the characters' linguistic competences do. Many examples from the text demonstrate that

Benjy is entirely opposite to change. In fact, the three brothers revolve around an element that implies plainly *change*: Caddy. For Benjy, though, Caddy represents the change he cannot assimilate and, thus, cannot demonstrate in words. It would seem, then, that Benjy portrays an individual that cannot work with language and, consequently, cannot *put himself together*. His is an uttermost fragmented self, for all sort of progression has been denied to him. He cannot exercise language, and, hence, cannot make his vision of the world evolve. To him, realities simply remain the same through time, and, although he shows a clear preference of events, his recollections do not follow a wilfully ordering at all.

The text shows that Benjy makes associations between the many clear and straightforward concepts that surround him. Thus, his memories jump from past to present and vice versa not by means of thorough thinking and complex reflection—as Quentin usually exhibits—, but by hazardous connections between the mentioned episodes. While this joining tends to be more or less random for an average individual—at least when taking place unconsciously—, a rather deliberate joining between memories is likewise conceivable. For Benjy, however, there is no such an option, since he does not order and categorise, and, consequently, cannot attain purposeful connections. His consciousness merely roams through the different pasts with no determined connection among them other than purely accidental elements present in these past experiences. Temperature, lightning, odour, or sounds—let us not forget about the iconic opening of the novel, when Benjy starts bellowing at the hearing of "caddie," and not "Caddy"—guide Benjy's memory.

The consequences of Benjy's irresoluteness to progress, so to speak, will be explored in depth later on together with the temporal arrangement of Faulkner's characters and novels. However, it is interesting to consider whether Benjy's linguistic abilities resemble his lack of temporal organisation regarding his vital experiences, or, in contrast, whether his "use" of language is the primary cause of this situation. Richard Godden reflects upon Caddy's sexuality as the point of inflection from which Benjy's consciousness stopped developing connections between events:

> It would seem that Benjy stopped when he saw his sister's muddy drawers—that is to say, he refuses to grow mentally beyond the point at which the signs for sexuality and death[19] enter his life. [...] Further, because up to this moment Benjy was without words, tree climbing here marks the fall into not only a potential or "inchoate story" about sex and death but also into language. (Godden 475)

There is, of course, no possible way to enunciate either true or false the considerations exposed above. Whereas language is the cause of Benjy's temporal disarray or vice versa, the present text is bound to consider the linguistic component as the labelling tool that categorises and classifies the subject's experiences. Doreen Fowler points out that:

> Because the speaking subject is constituted by creating absence, by repressing he original unity with the mother and the world and covering over the resulting emptiness with a sign, the subject only functions as an effect of a loss of being. (Fowler 2014, 460)

Benjy, however, is not a speaking subject. In fact, he is by no means repressing the original unity with the mother. His emptiness is all about the fragmentation of that unity, but not the original one, since Mrs. Compson is early substituted by the more maternal figure of Caddy. Since the original unity with the mother was never fragmented in the first place, but simply substituted, there is no way of knowing which event is responsible for the immobility of his identity. In a way, it could be stated that the substitution of the mother is as destructive for his identity as the supposedly fragmentation of the mother. But, in contrast, it could be also discussed that Benjy emerges in the first place as an already fragmented identity that was never whole and, only after Caddy's assumption of her role as a mother does Benjy stop evolving. In any case, his linguistic approach—to some extent, the absence of language—should never be said to be either objective or as lacking

19 This scene unites both sexuality and death, since it encloses the foreboding of Caddy's sexual growth and the imminent death of Damuddy, the children's grandmother. Both sexuality and death embody crude disruptures of nature, since the two imply change.

personal interest. For, if that were the case, he would never lament Caddy’s absence nor wander endlessly through his memories of her.

> Benjy has lost Caddy but he remains within her maternal discourse, for her voice has imprinted both itself and *himself* upon the receptable of his memory. We can envision him at the state mental hospital, still hearing her speak his name and still recognizing the sound of her name within language—a maternal language which traverses the chasm between her subjectivity and his. (Gwin 2014, 427-428)

Noel Polk centres the discussion on language in *The Sound and the Fury* around the differences between the three Compson brothers:

> If Benjy is nonverbal and trying to say, and if Quentin is extremely verbal and trying *not* to say, trying to maintain order by keeping his words inside his head, Jason is intensely, loudly, desperately, gloriously oral. He keeps himself talking loudly so that he won’t have to listen to the voices that threaten him: he drowns out one horrendous noise with an even more horrendous one. (Polk 446)

Whereas there is no possible way of confirming whether a character makes use of actual language when they are not directly speaking—that is, when their consciousness is focused on the deeper levels of thought—, there are clear differences between the Compson brothers when it comes to their individual streams of consciousness. In fact, Benjy’s inner thoughts are extremely simplistic while at the same time becoming really inventive. Quentin and Jason, in contrast, do not “misuse” language, in the sense that language be a somewhat foreign medium to their psyches. Their transcripts—for these ought not to be taken as written pieces of text—resemble a use of language far more familiar to the reader than Benjy’s. For this reason, these two brothers are the most likely ones to *think language*, and not just speak it.

> Faulkner uses the mechanics of the English language—grammar, syntax, punctuation, spelling—as a direct objective correlative to the states of each of the narrators' minds. The mechanical conventions of the writing, then, sometimes work *against the words themselves*, so that they reveal things other than what the characters are saying; they work, in fact, to reveal things that the narrators are incapable of saying or are specifically trying to keep from saying, things that have caused them pain and shame. (Polk 445)

In the case of Jason, the reader is able to see whatever it is that pains and shames him quite easily, for his use of language resembles the oral discourse. From the three brothers, Jason is probably the one who goes faster than his own thoughts. His monologue mimics an angry and bitter speech centered almost exclusively around money. Jason's resentfulness regarding his father and siblings—Quentin and Caddy, concretely—slowly forces him out of the familiar discourse, making him adopt money as the only resource of power left to him: "[a]fter all, like I say money has no value; it's just the way you spend it. It dont belong to anybody, so why try to hoard it. It just belongs to the man that can get it and keep it" (*SF* 128). Moreover, in the so-called "Dilsey section," there is a clear reminder of Jason's motives:

> Of his niece he did not think at all, nor of the arbitrary valuation of the money. Neither of them had had entity or individuality for him for ten years: together they merely symbolised the job in the bank of which he had been deprived before he ever got it. (*SF* 199)

Regarding the previous statements, one could conclude that Jason's monologue goes repeatedly back to resentment, and not to determining the reasons of this outrage. That is, Jason does not question the past nor its influence in his present situation. He is simply angry about it, but he shows no trace of obsession when it comes to past events. Quentin, on the other hand, represents quite the opposite. Somewhat in between Benjy and Jason—the one doomed to relive the past, the other

willing to forget it—, Quentin's relationship with the past influences his present discourse to the point of deforming the path of his current thoughts. His tragedy is that, unlike Benjy, he cannot achieve the immaculate past, and, unlike Jason, he is anything but willing to dispose of it.

In other words, Benjy's use of language does not evolve or change throughout the narrative because he *is* in the past. Jason's verbal monologue represents his being grounded in the present, whatever unfair or unsuitable his past may be. Quentin, however, finds himself right in between his two brothers. He cannot ignore the past as much as Jason does, and he cannot position himself in it as Benjy does. Therefore, his is a section not of sorrow as Benjy's nor of frustration as Jason's, but of obsession. Quentin's voice is neither in nor out of time, but agonising with it. Moreover, Faulkner brought Quentin back from the dead in *Absalom, Absalom!* only to circle around the same story; the same obsession. And, in the end, he is left in an even more compulsive situation than the one he faces in *The Sound and the Fury*.

The presentation of inner conflicts is a pattern that endlessly repeats itself among the characters of Yoknapatawpha. Benjy, Quentin, and Jason offer the first three introspective views regarding the nature of the self and the (in)consistencies upon which the psyche of the subject is founded. Each of these three characters fight a different dimension of change, embodied by the figure of Caddy. Paradoxically, the text agrees to halt the development of the narrative while, at the same time, it denies the characters any progress towards their individual yearnings.

Consequently, the text does not show the story of the Compsons, but three faded remembrances of it that, in fact, have each been corrupted in a particular way —probably even Benjy's. To some extent, it introduces the pattern of parallel stories that will be used in later novels. And, similarly, its irresoluteness also predicts the interconnection of the constituents of Yoknapatawpha through time and space, quite literally.

There is no story to be told in *The Sound and the Fury*, but the isolated hauntings of different retellings. In fact, none of these characters do even *speak* as such to the reader nor to themselves. All the novel provides is three mental convulsions that do not speak the present, but mutter the past. By providing several

re-enactments of the past, the present quality of this novel dissolves to a great extent. This dissolution, in short, defines the nature of Yoknapatawpha, whose fragmentation is ultimately not spatial, but temporal.

6/ Voices of the Self: Language Disorder and Distress

Faulknerian literature exhibits its characters in antagonism with pretty much any established structure, either social or individual. The characters' conflicts may regard the community, the nature of change and evolution, or even the memory they are supposed to inherit. Ultimately, though, any of these conflicts question the self and, consequently, they become a conflict of words.

By making use of the stream of consciousness, the texts included in the present study promote the accumulation of the characters' voices. That is, a character cannot be reduced to their particular use of language, for these novels presuppose a rather large array of linguistic structures pertaining to each individual. Accordingly, the agony of words is not only present as a motif referring to language-driven characters, but is also expressed in the actual form which the narration acquires.

Each character presents two extremes between which they linguistically arrange themselves. On the one hand, the actual functional form which their use of language adopts when in a rather social context. And, on the other, a less rigid and more indefinite embodiment which their language exhibits within the margins of

their psychic life. The merging of these two voices is paramount to discern the manifestation of the Faulknerian consciousness.

On the speculation of hidden voices and meanings between the lines of Faulknerian texts, Minrose C. Gwin states that "[we] listen for that of which we can hear the sense but not the substance, that which is always escaping language's appropriative gesture" (Gwin 2014, 424). This statement could hardly be more suitable regarding Faulkner's novels, for, whereas the reader encounters the characters' hidden worlds, they may bear in mind that these worlds are not necessarily accurate nor do they have to resemble a higher truth. Thus, Gwin associates this argument to the figure of Caddy, of whom there is only left her brothers' speculation. Philip Weinstein observes, rather similarly, the individuality of Faulknerian subjects as grounded not only in antagonism with the community, but with language itself. These forces that demand the division of the character's self mimic the author's inquiries on the matter:

> [T]he subject is not self-generative but rather [...] produced in and by *language*. [...] This embattled subject — one precisely not undivided, not master of his own house but beleaguered from within by "greater forces" — is of course the myriad focal figure of Faulkner's greatest novels. It is as though Faulkner explored himself most intimately and powerfully as a figure of tragic discord — a subjectivity irreparably fissured — and his memorable characters share this divisive (and ennobling) trait. (Weinstein 2008, 66)

Language, then, in Faulkner, serves this double purpose of, on the one hand, being the vessel that carries the characters' subjectivity, and, on the other, becoming the tool that fractures that same subjectivity for good. Being both the cause and consequence of that fragmentation, language only gives the impression of freeing the subject, or restoring it to some extent. Such a restoration is only momentarily so, for soon the character is bound to merge again with the communal aspect of language and, thus, with the convoluted cosmos of alliances that originate within the social

construct. Weinstein stresses that this impossibility to separate from the community derives from the fact that language arises within it:

> If the body is everywhere tracked by social coding, branded in the name of social norms, the voice is equally a register of a lifetime of social training. How we speak announces who we have and have not listened to, what "internally persuasive" accents of others we have made our own, what vocal communities we belong to as well as the ones we define ourselves against. [...] Utterance is inseparable from ideology, and the language we use to articulate our inner selves registers simultaneously our often involuntary affiliation within larger groups whose language has become our own. (Weinstein 2008, 66)

In Faulkner's work, the use of language as a mirror that reflects the inner self of characters is constantly present in the texts. However, the present study is far more interested in the way the use of language reflects that which is less obvious. That is, although there are clear approaches to show the character's age, gender, wealth, race, or even social state, when it comes to the construction of identity, reading between the lines seems all the more appropriate. Just as Weinstein points out, the interest does not reside in the fact that language cages and shapes the subject, but in its hidden function of reflecting the inner ego. This proves to be a troublesome task, for "[i]t is not always easy to live with the acceptance of this, the idea of identity as an intersubjective phenomenon realized through speech. Or, to put it more simply, we are generally happier with certainty: living with people we can pin down, and with a life that seems to have a settled meaning" (Gray 2010, 342).

This function of showing that which is not so apparent to the naked eye can be found in an astonishing number of occasions and as taking many forms. The less subtle forms by which language exhibits more than it would seem at first deal with concrete linguistic uses; like punctuation, grammar, syntax, and so on. In contrast to these, Faulknerian characters tend to explore how dissected their self is by recurring to more obscure methods. In the scene below, Quentin clearly illustrates how, in

order to ascertain his own identity as such, he projects himself onto the discourse rushed by Shreve while he keeps silent:

> "[...]There was the knowing what he suspected might be so, or not knowing if it was so or not. And who to say if it wasn't maybe the possibility of incest, because who (without a sister: I dont know about the others) has been in love and not discovered the vain evanescence of the fleshly encounter, who has not had to realise that when the brief all is done you must retreat from both love and pleasure, gather up your own rubbish and refuse—the hats and pants and shoes which you drag through the world—and retreat since the gods condone and practise these and the dreamy immeasurable coupling which floats oblivious above the trammelling and harried instant, the *was-not: is: was:* is a perquisite only of balloony and weightless elephants and whales: but maybe it there were sin too maybe you would not be permitted to escape, uncouple, return.—Aint that right?" He ceased; he could have been interrupted easily now. Quentin could have spoken now, but Quentin did not. [...]
>
> "I dont know," Quentin said. (*AA* 259)

This scene takes place in Quentin and Shreve's dormitory in Harvard, when they are discussing the story of Henry Sutpen—after Quentin helped Miss Rosa during the previous summer in Mississippi. Ignoring the fact that Shreve's discourse is slowly becoming a rushed continuum where one cannot find much punctuation, there are not many linguistic features out of the ordinary characterising this excerpt. The rhythm here, though, is vital, for Shreve's growing conjectures are suddenly stopped by his last questioning. At this moment, the reader is left alone with Quentin, who finds the matter of incest and sisters too overwhelming to answer. Caddy, as a matter of fact, is never mentioned in *Absalom, Absalom!*, nor is the convoluted relationship Quentin has, or pretends to have, with her. However, the allusions to that circumstance are superlative. And, in addition, the resolution that can be extrapolated from the text in relation to this event is as silent as Quentin is.

Like everything else in Faulknerian literature, language also tends to be circular, in the sense that the Mississippian author seems to be rather fond of repetitions and retellings. John T. Irwin captures what appears to be Faulkner's motive throughout much of his literary work, specifically on the sense of writing *The Sound and the Fury*:

> He said that he began it as a short story told from the point of view of one character, but that wasn't right, so he told it again from the point of view of another character, but that wasn't right either, and then he told it again from the point of view of a third, which still wasn't right, so finally he told it from his own point of view, and when that turned out not to be right, turned out to be partial and incomplete, he stopped. And just as clearly in *Absalom*, Quentin realizes that his narration of the story of the Sutpens is an answer that doesn't answer—an answer that puts the answerer in question. (Irwin 8)

It is noteworthy to mention that the story narrated in *Absalom, Absalom!* is eminently told orally, in the sense that all Quentin has access to is a story told from his father and Miss Rosa, each of whom did somewhat presence the events narrated, but not wholly. "Rosa's narrative, which she apparently tells for the first time to Quentin, is an outgrowth of her memory. As we may have expected after seeing Quentin's futile efforts to recall the 'original' Caddy in *The Sound and the Fury*, Rosa's language only succeeds in representing a simulated Sutpen" (Matthews 1980, 582). In fact, Shreve and Quentin do their own retelling of those events, or even imagine others to which no living person has access—episodes taking place during the war, for instance. In a way, Faulkner is not simply telling the same story for each narrator in *The Sound and the Fury*, he is also circling around the same problem, the same obsession, from one monologue to another, from one novel to the next. This, of course, applies to works beyond the two mentioned in this paragraph.

> One reason that the voices of the different narrators sound so much alike is that we hear those voices filtered through the mind of a single listener: Quentin's consciousness is the fixed point of view from which the reader *overhears* the various narrators, Quentin included. Since Quentin is the principal narrative consciousness in *Absalom*, and since the story of the Sutpens contains numerous gaps that must be filled by conjecture on the part of the narrators, it is not surprising that the narrative bears a striking resemblance to Quentin's own personal history and that of his family. (Irwin 26)

The haunting which this circularity of events presents encloses far more than just a mere repetition or similarity between stories. That is, by making use of the stories of others, characters are provided with a medium through which to channel their obsessions and identities. They are, in a way, adopting those stories as their own, (un)consciously and (un)willingly to do so. Thus, while stories, events, and even characters present similarities within the Faulknerian world, it is not only in language, but also in time, that they are balanced. In a sense, every character in Yoknapatawpha resembles the rest of the community by enduring the cage which language imposes. The degree to which this cage is tolerated, though, is yet another matter to consider.

In a sense, there is no original truth in Yoknapatawpha, but a retelling of a retelling which, in some cases, emerges as the result of mere speculation. Memory, imagination, and, to some extent, dreams help shape the narrative path followed by everyone and no one at the same time. Recollections, for Faulkner, are the shape that language acquires to, paradoxically, redefine the past and, quite often, consolidate it even more so.

> Quentin uses his own experience of family life in a small Southern town to try to understand the motives for events in the story of Thomas Sutpen and his children, particularly that central enigmatic event to which the narration continually returns—the murder of Charles Bon by his best friend, Henry Sutpen. This is not to imply

> that the factual similarities between the stories of the Sutpen and Compson families are a product of Quentin's imagination, but to point out that, given these similarities of fact, Quentin as creative narrator could easily presume similarity of motivation. It is a mutual process in which what Quentin knows of the motivations in his own family life illuminates the story of the Sutpens and, in turn, the events in the Sutpens' story help Quentin to understand his own experiences. (Irwin 26-27)

Nevertheless, and whereas Quentin represents the Faulknerian character eminently caged by time, language is an inseparable element for him since he tends to turn time into words. Quentin's use of language could be considered as the most erratic of all the characters' contained in the texts that concern the present study—even more so than Benjy's. "Quentin's contemplation of time and its relationship to action [...] is also latent in the syntax patterns that transform experience into evaluation" (Bunselmeyer 324). From all Faulknerian characters, Quentin is the one who, literally, loses himself walking in circles. His identity is not only distorted by some personal conflicts, but by the conflicts of others who lived long before his time, either family or strangers.

> Quentin projects onto the characters of Bon and Henry opposing elements in his own personality—Bon represents Quentin's unconsciously motivated desire for his sister Candace, while Henry represents the conscious repression or punishment of that desire. This separation of the unacceptable elements from the acceptable elements in the self, this splitting of Quentin's personality into a bad half and a good half, with the subsequent tormenting of the good half by the bad and the punishment of the bad half by the good, involves a kind of narrative bipolarity typical of both compulsion neurosis and schizophrenia. The split is the result of the self's inability to handle ambivalence[...]. (Irwin 28-29)

However, although Quentin's linguistic rampage faithfully retells the character's obsessions, his conflict is inevitably and ultimately a temporal one. Quentin is possessed by time, and only afterwards does his psyche transform that into an obsession with words. In the Yoknapatawpha realm, nonetheless, there is yet another character whose compulsions deal more with the linguistic aspect to begin with: that is, Addie Bundren. Hers, paradoxically, resembles more a spatial conflict than a temporal one, and, consequently, language implies a far more problematic affair than it does for Quentin.

In his study on speech and writing in William Faulkner's narrative, *Fiction's Inexhaustible Voice*, Stephen M. Ross points out that "the 'who' that 'speaks' matters less in Faulkner than the 'how' by which speech comes into the world and into the discourse" (Ross 16). Therefore, there is a feeling of shared kinship regarding Faulknerian characters, in the sense that the text is more interested in what they have to say instead of who happens to be saying it at the time. Consequently, Ross identifies within that premise the need to embed characters with some sort of omniscience. This omniscience should not be regarded as it is usually understood, but as a pseudo-omniscience which makes the characters melt with one another. This results into a diversity of potentially omniscient narrators which, independently of who they are, share similar affinities and weaknesses. These texts, therefore, aim to a more profound and definitely more obscure narrative where their concerns be universal, but not completely disengaged from an individual.

> Only an omniscient author can, in principle, enter another's mind to record inner speech, but even here Faulkner allows the necessities of expression to overrule verisimilitude of source—and indeed, as we shall discover, the text as a written entity, more than an implied authorial speaker, becomes a source of psychic voice: in Faulkner the text "speaks." (Ross 17)

In other words, Ross maintains that, instead of a simplistic omniscient narrator reigning over Faulkner's narrative, a far more elaborate scheme takes the lead for this fictional corpus. By attenuating the omniscient powers of an anonymous

narrator—that, additionally, seems to govern the text—, the focus is placed on a fake omniscience which the characters supposedly maintain towards their own psyche. In short, the source of the characters' inner thoughts gives the impression of being absolute and undeniable, whereas the truth is that there is no reliable narrator that could possible adhere to those terms. As such, the narrative thickens and intensifies by the very use of language which the characters—consciously and unconsciously—depict.

In order to evaluate such an issue, Ross emphasises the insertion of sounds within the narrative as part of his argumentation. According to him, sounds are often disengaged from its original source in Faulknerian texts to accentuate the withdrawing of voice from a particular narrator. The text—the narrative—distances itself from the particularities of the individual so as to decentralise the original source of the turbulences presented by the story.

> It is common in Faulkner to find both sounds and sights reified, sometimes grotesquely, by figurative language that disengages them from their sources. The separation of voice from speaker is not a unique kind of image in this respect: the fiction abounds with imagery in which sound or sight ceases to be a product of its source. A familiar example, often cited, is the sound of the Armstids' wagon as it mounts the hill toward Lena Grove early in *Light in August*. (Ross 28)

The passage cited above goes as follows:

> She went on out of sight, walking slowly, the shoes unlaced about her ankles, until she reached the top of the hill a mile beyond. Then she sat down on the ditchbank, with her feet in the shallow ditch, and removed the shoes. After a while she began to hear the wagon. She heard it for some time. Then it came into sight, mounting the hill. The sharp and brittle crack and clatter of its weathered and ungreased wood and metal is slow and terrific: a series of dry

> sluggish reports carrying for a half mile across the hot still pinewiney silence of the August afternoon. Though the mules plod in a steady and unflagging hypnosis, the vehicle does not seem to progress. (*LIA* 7-8)

Curiously enough, Faulkner does not only create a separation of sound and source, but he also seems rather keen on dissociating the timing of sound and origin. In fact, Lena's acknowledging of the ever-arriving wagon does continue for a while:

> It seems to hang suspended in the middle distance forever and forever, so infinitesimal is its progress, like a shabby bead upon the mild red string of road. So much so is this that in the watching of it the eye loses it as sight and sense drowsily merge and blend, like the road itself, with all the peaceful and monotonous changes between darkness and day, like already measured thread being rewound onto a spool. So that at last, as though out of some trivial and unimportant region beyond even distance, the sound of it seems to come slow and terrific and without meaning, as though it were a ghost travelling a half mile ahead of its own shape. 'That far within my hearing before my seeing,' Lena thinks. She thinks of herself as already moving, riding again, thinking *Then it will be as if I were riding for a half mile before I even got into the wagon, before the wagon even got to where I was waiting, and that when the wagon is empty of me again it will go on for a half mile with me still in it* (*LIA* 8)

As often as it has been mentioned that Faulkner may have truly read Bergson's work on time and space, these conjectures seem, in fact, to be more than justified by passages like the previous one. Surprisingly—or, rather, unsurprisingly, indeed—, it is not unusual to find temporal disengagements observed by a character together with spatial dissolutions as well. In fact, Faulknerian fiction tends to lean one onto the other, and vice versa. Thus, the spatial component—moving through space—is not only located at the same level that the temporal element is, but is

positively inseparable from it.[20] Additionally, this unfolding of time and distance within language presents a third component that suffers from the same lack of timing with reality: that is, memory.

> Thinking, 'And if he is going all the way to Jefferson, I will be riding within the hearing of Lucas Burch before his seeing. He will hear the wagon, but he wont know. So there will be one within his hearing before his seeing. And then he will see me and he will be excited. And so there will be two within his seeing before his remembering.' (*LIA* 8-9)

In fact, the text forces itself upon the memorial field by entering a much more scattered narration. Thus, the ordinary world of facts and descriptions is slowly —sometimes harshly and effectively—transformed into a more imponderable setting where characters find themselves not only upon the dissolution of sound and source, but also on the verge of self-disintegration as well. Consequently, Ross notices, Faulkner always aims towards the so-called separation between sounds and their physical sources so that the text also registers a demarcation between voice and psyche.

> But voice is not just another sound, not is a speaker just another visualizable object, unlike a wagon and its terrific creaking, a speaker and voice are a signifying duality. To fracture the bond between vocal sound and its source shifts the perceived origin of meaning away from portrayed individual consciousness into a disseminated "consciousness" discernible only within the novel's overall texture. In this sense voice as signifying sound is a perceivable phenomenon superior to others—not morally superior,

20 It should not be forgotten that two maps of Yoknapatawpha were drawn by Faulkner himself, accentuating the significance which the spatial aspect of the county maintains within this literary corpus. One of them appears at the end of *Absalom, Absalom!*. The other was specifically drawn to be included in Malcolm Cowley's *The Portable Faulkner*. Both of them are included in the appendix at the end of the present study.

> but superior in viably rendering a discernible universe outside the self. (Ross 28)

This technique usually leads to a manipulation of the reader's expectations regarding clear demarcations within which the characters' identities are contained. Like so, the reader often finds themselves figuring out who is *talking* within the narrative. Voices get mixed up, and not only in relation to the impossibility or intricacy of identifying who is actually talking, but rather in the sense of being unable to establish who is who and which identity belongs to whom. Faulkner's writing does "speak against itself, creating a relationship of interior otherness [...]. Such a text suggests[...] that identity is not one thing but rather many; and that those many[...] may indeed necessitate a rethinking of the whole notion of *character*" (Gwin 2002, 153-154).

Undoubtedly, modern fiction has its readers used to this sort of treacheries regarding the narrative's playfulness. However, Faulknerian texts reach such levels of confusion that not only the narrative gets tangled and unreliable, but so do the works' titles. Ross reflects on the complexity and the issues of attributing—or ordering—to a particular character the ultimate word which the readers are provided within a work; its title. In the case of *As I Lay Dying*, he establishes that the title imposes such an impracticality to be applied to any character that it emancipates from the voices contained within the text. In fact, the impossibility to merge the title with anyone suggests the dissolution of a primal voice within the narrative, or, at least, of that which is expected to be the fundamental one.

> We can naturalize the title by identifying who among the story's personae says "as I lay dying." The most likely candidate is Addie Bundren, who does indeed lie dying for much of the story and who like Agamemnon, speaks from beyond death. But Addie never in fact says "as I lay dying," and her perspective (which we share for only one of the novel's fifty-nine monologues) may not warrant treating her "I" as the titled focus for the entire book (as we can legitimately treat Jane Eyre as the central personage in *Jane Eyre*). Perhaps it is

> Darl Bundren who should be construed as saying "as I lay dying," at least in a figurative sense, since his is the most frequently heard voice in the novel, his mind the closest to a controlling consciousness, and he dies a kind of emotional death by the story's end. (Ross 66-67)

Nevertheless, the approach which Ross adheres to resembles that which an average reader may adopt regarding a more standardised novel. The provided example of Jane Eyre in *Jane Eyre* helps beautifully to illustrate how ordering a narrative follows certain patterns. Consequently, these same patterns tend to appear as well when not so straightforwardly conceived novels are in focus. From the point of view of the use of language, order is a key component regarding obviously not just titles, but story development, characters' inner worlds, and temporal schemes in Faulkner. Speech, therefore, becomes the vehicle that both gives and takes; it is the tool from which to expect a given set of rules that will, to one's dismay, not serve to solve the puzzle.

On this note, Ross argues that "[i]mportant as the dramatic illusion of speech is, it tends in Faulkner to play a subsidiary role to other discursive needs, especially the need to say as *much* as possible, to expand discourse until [...] it embraces the whole world in each sentence" (Ross 86). Part of this technique is reflected on the particular use Faulkner makes of punctuation, attributing painstakingly long sentences—long even for a monologue—to his characters. Under such premises, characters lose themselves among their own words. It becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish a before from an after, a "me" from a "you," and, especially, a "me-was" from a "me-is."

As I Lay Dying is a fundamentally spoken novel and, as such, is governed by speech. In order to understand the multiple layers which the different voices may adopt throughout the narrative, it is convenient to introduce Ross' concept of "mimetic voice:"

> Mimetic voice is an index of personal identity, and plausibility requires that a voice belong to someone and that the voice match

> other personal attributes such as socioeconomic class, level of education, probable mental powers, and so on. Any loosening of the bond between speech and person violates verisimilitude, making utterances sound "unnatural." Faulkner willingly risks diminishing mimetic voice in order to fulfill narrative goals, especially to create psychic voice by attributing sophisticated, highly figural rhetoric to ordinary or even uneducated dialect speakers. (Ross 85)

Accordingly, in Faulkner it is not unusual to find a counter-play between a truly well-established mimetic voice—that is, one that reflects a character's boundaries in so as to *who* society labels them to be—and a more disrupted and individualistic voice. In fact, this going to and fro between these two stages is not something that applies to different characters so as to unite them, but a technique independently addressed to characters as single given personalities in the narrative. Thus, it is found that "besides existing as an actor in the novel's drama, or more precisely in each other's fictions, every persona in *As I Lay Dying* exists by virtue of his or her own voice" (Ross 112).

This argument seems to be pointing to the fact that there needs to be a realistic correlation between a piece of transcription from a character and what could actually be expected from that given character. The reader, however, will soon realise that such a correlation is more often than not purposefully abandoned and, consequently, the text enters a much more eerie arrangement. Take, for instance, the case of Vardaman. An uneducated country child who suffers the whole process of losing his mother and then becomes an active member of the pilgrimage which the Bundrens carry out in order to bury her. This character is attributed the following rhetoric:

> It is dark. I can hear wood, silence: I know them. But not living sounds, not even him. It is as though the dark were resolving him out of his integrity, into an unrelated scattering of components—snuffings and stampings; smells of cooling flesh and ammoniac hair; an illusion of a coordinated whole of splotched hide and strong

> bones within which, detached and secret and familiar, an *is* different from my *is*. I see him dissolve—legs, a rolling eye, a gaudy splotching like cold flames—and float upon the dark in fading solution; all one yet neither; all either yet none. I can see hearing coil toward him, caressing, shaping, his hard shape—fetlock, hip, shoulder and head; smell and sound. I am not afraid. "Cooked and et. Cooked and et." (*AILD* 33-34)

There are two major facts to be considered regarding the last fragment. First, this excerpt originates in the mind of a young uneducated child. And, secondly, this takes place right after Addie Bundren, Vardaman's mother, dies. As such, it could be taken as a reflection of the character's breakdown after a traumatic event has taken place. Nevertheless, this use of language is far beyond Vardaman's reach. There is absolutely no way a young child living in the countryside could, to any extent, perform such linguistic abilities.

In fact, whereas the use of this technique feels rather illustrative of truly convoluted episodes of trauma or of profound introspection, it also turns out to be problematic. Ross cleverly points out that the discontinuity of the linguistic expectations within the narration may entail the rupture of its credibility:

> For many readers the most troublesome violation of conventional expectations about speech and identity is not Darl's clairvoyance but his and (even more) Vardaman's sophisticated rhetoric. Faulkner attributes to uneducated farmers, one a young boy, diction and imagery beyond the range of most educated speakers. Readers have found discourse they cannot believe[...]. (Ross 123-124)

And, curiously, psychic powers tend to be far more approved than linguistic inconsistencies. In a way, this gets explained by the fact that such a use of language attributed to such a specific character breaks the suspension of disbelief. Readers may accept a fact as simply not real, but never as not credible. However, all of this disruptive process within the narrative's linguistic transcriptions must add to

something, for, otherwise, the story would simply collapse under the lack of credibility.

Mimetic voice, in Faulknerian texts, means everything. Mimetic voice is a character's extension of their identity, a photocopy of their outer and inner selves. It plays a role both when simply accomplishing the expectations held upon that character, and also when disintegrating whatever social assumptions the text may have *in*accurately introduced as valid and real. That is to say, the fracture of mimetic voice and the subsequent distancing of psychic voice from it—a character's valid and compliant transcription, and their not so precise and faithful linguistic representations—help build the character's consciousness. Voice, then, does not only shape in the ways it could be merely expected to, but it is also reshaped during key moments in the narrative.

> [T]he collaboration between voice and character in *As I Lay Dying* takes a perverse form: consciousness emerges not from appropriate speech, but from the *in*appropriate disruption of mimetic voice. In those moments when mimetic voice "breaks down," when speech is dis-illusioned, we discover character. The illusion of speech unconventionally generated in a title, where some "I" speaks of lying and dying, generates a power of voice that transcends mimesis. (Ross 112)

The disruption of mimetic voice is by no chance established randomly. The texts demonstrate that every voice, as well as its fragmentation, is carefully measured and placed. Thus, the reader first encounters Vardaman as he is more *believable* to be: a simple young boy from the countryside who seems to be quarrelling about some dead fish as a way to evade himself from the recent death of his mother. In fact, Vardaman's first chapter begins by introducing such a disoriented character that his very first remarks about the fish may not be taken as acutely as he intends them to be.

> Then I begin to run. I run toward the back and come to the edge of the porch and stop. Then I begin to cry. I can feel where the fish was in the dust. It is cut up into pieces of not-fish now, not-blood on my hands and overalls. Then it wasn't so. It hadn't happened then. [...] If I jump off the porch I will be where the fish was, and it all cut up into not-fish now. (*AILD* 32)

One must keep in mind that the last thing the reader was exposed to prior to this last remark was "*Jewel, I say, she is dead, Jewel. Addie Bundren is dead*" (*AILD* 31), which actually introduces Addie's death, but certainly does not serve as confirmation of it. Since Darl and Jewel are not present when the incident takes place and, thus, the first acknowledgement of Addie's death emerges from Darl's psychic range remotely, the decease is still unreliable from the reader's perspective. Vardaman is, indeed, the one character in charge of *credibly* introducing the reader to his mother's decease.

In fact, the voice of a young boy is here taken far more seriously than the one of Addie's third oldest son, Jewel. In *As I Lay Dying*, voices experiment a back and forth journey between reliability and deception until a point is reached in which the reader is finally able to measure the two manifestations that a voice embodies. Thus, each mimetic and psychic voice are evaluated not only regarding the self which they represent, but the relationships of that very self with the rest of the characters in the narration. Paradoxically, it is through the mutilation of verisimilitude—through the shattering and mutation of mimetic voice—which actual authenticity and genuineness regarding the character's consciousness is achieved.

> *As I Lay Dying* constructs its verbal world, and its characters' expressive identities, by first generating convincing mimetic voice and then either heightening or disrupting the illusion of speech in a manner that articulates a given speaker's consciousness in its relation to others. Faulkner's typical rhetorical gesture places the reader within imaged speech and then disturbs the discursive illusion so that the mimetic voice we hear translates into another register,

> another mode of voice—the phenomenal, the psychic, even the oratorical. Faulkner makes speech an index to character not, as in conventional realistic fiction, by recording it "faithfully" and "consistently," but by disrupting such verisimilitude. (Ross 112-113)

So extensively is the disruption of verisimilitude taken into account that the text introduces Addie's monologue to its readers way after her death. In fact, if any temporal linearity is to be extracted from the ordering of the chapters—which pretty much seem to be arranged chronologically—, Addie's soliloquy emerges from the world of the dead. It takes place during the episode where her coffin falls into the river's stream which, logically, occurs after her decease.

And, yet, once again, the paranormal incorporation of her chapter seems to disrupt the consistency of the narrative way less than the attribution of a complex, flourished identity that talks in unexpected ways to Vardaman. Ross observes that the breaking down of correspondence between character and voice helps to identify the multiple layers which a consciousness may endure. However, he concludes that the longing for an unjustifiably expected agreement between those two terms governs the text insofar as acceptance is concerned.

> The objection raised here derives from conventions of expressive identity. Vardaman as a person could not talk this way[...].[...] The loosening of expected bond between voice and person sounds "unnatural" to the reader's ear because readers accept the representation of the person as an actuality that voice must match. Violations of points of view—Darl's ability to describe distant events, Addie's posthumous reminiscence—bother us less than Vardaman's description[s] [...] because Darl and Addie *sound* natural —natural, at least, to the person constituted by our reading. (Ross 124)

It would seem, then, that person must come before voice; or, rather, that personality must overshadow identity. In a sense, this would simply imply that

readers tend to prioritise the social component of a character to their individual structure. This observation matches yet another argument explored earlier regarding how the physical world is detached from what characters really experience, as if there was an impassable barrier between the subject's perceptions and the origin of those perceptions in the external world. The passage explored earlier on sounds—and their separation from a source—and Lena Grove seems to be of a similar nature. Of course, there is no actual disagreement regarding the modes in which Lena expresses herself in that episode. Nevertheless, there seems to be a direct connection to Lena's passage insofar as the more a character distances themselves from the social world—represented in the supposedly never diminishing separation between Lena and the wagon—, the deeper their consciousness tends to descend.

Her separation from the social compound is likewise reflected on Lena as the bearer of a more primal language. Being in absolute communion with the natural environment, and thus opposing the social compound, "Lena's childbearing, presented in a language unknown to men, marks a prediscursive reality which exposes the vulnerability of discursive reality" (Clarke 1989, 399). This is particularly accentuated when experienced from the perspective of, unsurprisingly, a male character:

> He knew now that when he ran to the cabin and looked in, he expected to see her sitting up; perhaps to be met by her at the door, placid, unchanged, timeless. But even as he touched the door with his hand he heard something which he had never heard before. It was a moaning wail, loud, with a quality at once passionate and abject, that seemed to be speaking clearly to something in a tongue which he knew was not his tongue nor that of any man. [...] She did not even seem to be aware that the door had opened, that there was anyone or anything in the room save herself and whatever it was that she had spoken to with that wailing cry in a tongue unknown to man. (*LIA* 399)

Accordingly, the dissociation of sound and material source triggers Lena's mind to reflect on the movement of bodies, spaces and distances. In an extraordinarily similar pattern, the distance of voice and social persona pulls Vardaman—and every other character that experiences this sort of emancipation of their selves—to a deeper and far more intricate level of thought where he can, even, confuse his mother with a fish.

All of this pulling back and forth serve one purpose: to create an unreliable space within the text that covers, and somewhat unite, all characters and events. There is not a single character from which the reader can ever extract an objective truth in Faulknerian narrative. Not even Benjy, who to a greater extent limits himself to record whatever happens around him, can be trusted. There seems to be a systemic pattern in this fiction, for no one can reach trustworthiness. No matter how socially inclined or individually driven—Jason and Quentin, respectively—, nor how in consonance with nature or at battle against it—Lena and Joe Christmas in *Light in August*. The final conclusion deals with the fact that, when it comes to consciousness, there are definitely some possible measurements to be taken, but there is no final formula to solve. From the linguistic point of view underlying these works, no one is ever safely portrayed because nobody ever gets to fully and exclusively express them*selves*. As Ross observes, the individuality of the self can be approached exclusively from the discourse of the otherness. Particularly in *As I Lay Dying*, this approach is only marginally executed:

> Voice in *As I Lay Dying* also interrogates the metaphysics of *individual* consciousness, revealing characters' secret selves by immersing them in a *communal* discourse, making their private thought a function of how they hear, respond to, and render each other's speech. Ultimately, *As I Lay Dying* depicts a community of voices more than a series of isolated souls [...]. (Ross 125)

However, the motif of isolation appears along the whole story. *As I Lay Dying*, being an eminently spoken novel, centres around the seemingly distance that can be found between characters. Nevertheless, this so-called distance proves to be

misleading, for—although the linguistic differences are unequivocally there in order to mark a conglomerate of selves—language here unites as much as separates.

Isolation, indeed, is established in a rather concentric fashion, for not only characters give the impression of being contained in opposition to others, but the Bundrens also share this feeling of contrariness to the world surrounding them. Ross provides an excellent example on this matter, for he notices that only characters less attached to Addie describe Cash's sawing as a metaphorical snoring—for instance, Cora or Peabody, who are not members of the Bundren family; and Vardaman, who, although being a Bundren, is still the youngest member of the family and, consequently, the one less fastened to Addie's identity.

Ross aptly points out that this issue has less to do with an accidental choice of metaphor and more with the fact that a bunch of characters perceive some particular phenomena, while others seem to be rather oblivious to it. None of the Bundren members observe the making of the coffin as exasperating, nor do they actually perceive it at all.

Interestingly, Jewel is the only member of the family who gets extremely aggravated by the sound of Cash's working on Addie's casket. Not even Addie seems to be bothered by the sawing. On the contrary, she appears to be supervising Cash on the making of the coffin. The constant reminder of her imminent death does not irritate any of her children but Jewel, and definitely not her husband. It does not seem shocking, then, that Jewel turns out not to be a Bundren himself.

> It's because he stays out there, right under the window, hammering and sawing on that goddamn box. Where she's got to see him. Where every breath she draws is full of his knocking and sawing where she can see him saying See. See what a good one I am making for you. I told him to go somewhere else. I said Good God do you want to see her in it. It's like when he was a little boy and she says if she had some fertilizer she would try to raise some flowers and he taken the bread pan and brought it back from the barn full of dung[...] and that goddamn adze going One lick less. One lick less. One lick less until

> everybody that passes in the road will have to stop and see it and say what a fine carpenter he is. (*AILD* 10)

However, the fact that some members of the community—the same community to which the Bundrens belong to—do indeed perceive the sound, and, moreover, identify it as snoring is, given the circumstances, somewhat distressing. That is to say, these people are not only paying attention to a very specific phenomenon of the world in rather significant circumstances, but they also process the mentioned phenomenon as if they were indeed somehow connected to each other. Now, whereas this is an insignificant and random incident cannot be determined for sure, since the paranormal is materialised in different occasions in *As I Lay Dying*.

On his study on voice in Faulkner, Ross also examines the duality inherent to discourse—either direct or indirect—which divides the linguistic capabilities of a given narrator. In fact, he observes that the oscillation which Faulknerian narrators present between a use of language that matches their actual linguistic competences—those that would be expected for a certain character—and a more unrealistic use—explored previously—does succeed at representing the mechanics of inner thought. Now, Ross determines that this exaggerated and unreachable use which narrators often seem to portray represents, paradoxically, a temporary lack of words for the *speaker*.

> The grammar of free indirect discourse (in represented speech or thought) permits rhetoric beyond a character's competence because the character's actual words are not, technically, being reported: the discourse implies no communicative function, only a representational one. But signs of communicative context, such as the presence of an identified speaker-narrator and the use of present tense, normally take grammatical priority and thus return discourse to a communicative posture. Faulkner, however, sidesteps the grammar of *both* indirect *and* direct discourse[...]. (Ross 124)

Understandably, one would not expect to find an exact formula to apply to every Faulknerian text, chapter or even character. There is no way of identifying a pattern through which a character could be dissected in every episode of the narrative. Direct speech is crowded with mimetic voice, but it also presents some inconsistencies which, in the majority of cases, tend to indicate a fluctuation towards the character's psychic life. And, inversely, indirect speech—either thoughts, memories, or even aleatory re*constructions* of the past—is not always unstable and intensifying. There are relentless influences between these two states of mind—as if characters only had two—and, pretty similarly to Bergson's cone-shaped figure, there is no way of measuring or resolving them accurately.

All this leads to a narrative disorderliness and confusion to some extent. Undeniably, it is always possible to reinstate order and to take control over a simplified array of events—factual or fabricated—extracted from the texts. However, there is little certainty regarding the accuracy of such a reorganisation. There is no absolute way of knowing or approaching the text, pretty much like characters have no absolute way of knowing themselves. It does not take long to realise that one has entered the domain of speculation. The interesting part is that, although there is no straightforward procedure to break into the final arrangement of characters and the text—for these are random and particular—, still some improbable correlations like the snoring metaphor are found.

In other words, the texts seem to be pointing to two different premises at the same time. On the one hand, they establish that no pattern can be, at least easily, discernible with regard to identifying a methodology that could be applied to the characters as a whole. In other words, these novels present a high degree of random individuality with regard to the psyche of the subject. That is, the construction of the self refers to such an irregular procedure that it cannot be expected to exactly repeat itself for a different subject nor for the same subject at a different *time*. This leads to an even feeling of isolation with regard to the individual, for "each of the numerous monologues constitutes a new demonstration of the obvious: the fundamental isolation inherent in the very structure of consciousness" (Bedient 265). On the other hand, certain patterns and repetitions can be certainly found among multiple individuals, like the snoring metaphor shared among various characters. Somehow,

the text tricks the reader into finding patterns that mean nothing, and, consequently, add up to nothing. Works like *As I Lay Dying* are so clearly divided—the realms of consciousness and the community are so evidently demarcated—that the text relies on language to merge both realms and reincorporate them into one another.

> Indeed, consciousness itself in *As I Lay Dying* often seems a matter more of communal awareness than of psychological idiosyncracies —and this is perhaps to say that, rather than being *revealed* by interior speech, consciousness *equals* speech used by and shared by the narrating figures. The sharing is evident at the level of dialect, as the closer the speaker is to Addie's death the fewer dialect distinctions his or her speech evinces in relation to others also close to Addie. The sharing is evident, too, on the level of imagery. (Ross 125-126)

The novel should be read as a communal work and not as a collection of single entities. It is organised in fifty-nine chapters narrated by a specific character each, having fifteen narrators in total. Darl narrates nineteen chapters, whereas Addie only owns one. Countryside characters as well as narrators from town, led by the Bundrens, help to shape the novel not by presenting an individual participation, but by engrossing the corpus of performances. This organisation, however, misleads to believe that what the novel offers is many different views of the same event. While this is to a lesser extent true, it only hides a more subversive reading; and that is that speech does, above all, rely on the community. "This story is full of secret knowledge, private and shared [...] that could perhaps subvert dead forms that their lives are trapped by[...]. Saying it would drag it into the light, bring it into view, expose it. Saying it would mean seeing it" (Slaughter 27). Consequently, in *As I Lay Dying* one does not find a retelling of the same story, as *The Sound and the Fury* promotes, but multiple instances that both oppose and shape a bigger social unity.

And yet, huge differences on theories regarding the opposition between the community and the individual in relation to language can be found among the latest

studies of Faulknerian critics. André Bleikasten, on his monumental study on Faulkner, *The Ink of Melancholy*, introduces *As I Lay Dying* as follows:

> Through another tour de force, *As I Lay Dying* manages to tell of people's lives while saying nothing about them. One after another the characters appear out of no definable place or time and speak as if on an empty stage, telling what they have to tell; then they vanish as suddenly and as inexplicably as they arrived. They all tell fragments of their own or others' stories, voice wonder at their life or outrage at their miseries; but somehow their speeches do not add up, do not fall into place, do not quite make sense. Even if they end up telling a complete story, their words seem to arise from and fade into a strange silence, and once we have read the book it is almost as if we had been watching a mystifying pantomime. (Bleikasten 2017a, 201)

Certainly, Bleikasten succeeds in putting into words the feeling one has when reading Addie's monologue, for instance. It is not at all expected, and, as such, it materialises out of nowhere. No one knows where Addie speaks from or, even more so horrifying, why. And, above all, after she is done, nothing really seems to have changed. There is no clear meaningfulness which one can extract from her speech nor the context of it. Not only is Addie's monologue volatile and somewhat erratic, but her whole manifestation as a character is equally unstable and elusive. Neither her monologue nor her as an individual bring any sense of stability into the narrative. "Addie[...] smears death all over the narrative, making it impossible to discern presence from absence in any cogent way. She speaks after she's already decomposed, she remains a literal presence for almost the entire length of the novel" (Blaine 86).

Darl and Vardaman—and, to some degree, Cash—also partake of this eerie association of character and context. Each of them has a motive that explains this uncanny ambience, though. Addie, for starters, is plain dead when she addresses the reader, if that is what she does indeed. Darl is always present and absent, due to his

particular psychic wanderings. Vardaman, perhaps reminding the reader excessively of Quentin Compson, is nonetheless lost in time. And Cash, maybe only by sheer opposition—and slightly reminding of Benjy—could be considered to "arise and fade into a strange silence" (Bleikasten 2017a, 201) by being too literal; too exact.

> I made it on the bevel.
>
> 1. There is more surface for the nails to grip.
>
> 2. There is twice the gripping-surface to each seam.
>
> 3. The water will have to seep into it on a slant. Water moves easiest up and down or straight across.
>
> 4. In a house people are upright two thirds of the time. So the seams and joints are made up-and-down. Because the stress is up-and-down
>
> 5. In a bed where people lie down all the time, the joints and seams are made sideways, because the stress is sideways.
>
> 6. Except.
>
> 7. A body is not square like a crosstie.
>
> 8. Animal magnetism.
>
> 9. The animal magnetism of a dead body makes the stress come slanting, so the seams and joints of a coffin are made on the bevel.
>
> 10. You can see by an old grave that the earth sinks down on the bevel.
>
> 11. While in a natural hole it sinks by the center, the stress being up-and-down.
>
> 12. So I made it on the bevel.
>
> 13. It makes a neater job. (*AILD* 48)[21]

Isolation, then, is not an option, but a certainty to which the individual is bound. Words are everything the individual ultimately has access to, and they paradoxically symbolise the bridge that joins every character's cage of solitude.

21 The last quote represents Cash's first chapter in its entirety, followed by Vardaman's "[m]y mother is a fish" (*AILD* 49) chapter—solely constituted by that sentence.

Addie, however, learns that words govern only as long as meaning and substance is credited to them.

> So I took Anse. And when I knew that I had Cash, I knew that living was terrible and that this was the answer to it. That was when I learned that words are no good; that words dont ever fit even what they are trying to say at. When he was born I knew that motherhood was invented by someone who had to have a word for it because the ones that had the children didn't care whether there was a word for it or not. I knew that fear was invented by someone that had never had the fear; pride, who never had the pride. (*AILD* 99)

Whereas in Faulknerian texts it is not unusual to find characters governed by time, who keep pushing back to a past that might not even belong to them, it is equally probable finding some narrators obsessed with words. Addie is, *par excellence*, Faulkner's most linguistically preoccupied character: "Addie, variously, is mother, origin, language, spirit, body, consciousness, writing, the unconscious, the feminine, desire personified, life, death, voice, the unutterable" (O'Donnell 329). According to her, language lacks that which it tries to portray the most, and words do not serve ultimately to express and connect—that is, to leave "at least a scratch, something, something that might make a mark on something that *was* once for the reason that it can die someday" (*AA* 101). Pretty much like Judith's desperate attempt to "scratch" someone's life in *Absalom, Absalom!*, Addie looks for a similar penetration into someone else's self:

> 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. 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 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 ever planted me. I would look forward to the times when they faulted, so I could whip

> them. When the switch fell I could feel it upon my flesh; when it welted and ridged it was my blood that ran, and I would think with each blow of the switch: Now you are aware of me! Now I am something in your secret and selfish life, who have marked your blood with my own for ever and ever. (*AILD* 98)

Interestingly, Addie turns toward physical violence against her students during her schoolteacher years in a frantic attempt to *enter* the other's life. In other words, for her, language is not enough to acknowledge the other's existence; words simply do not serve that purpose. Words are lacking meaning, and whenever they do indeed convey it, that meaning gets corrupted and lost in the process. "Language, according to Addie, divides and degrades its users. For true communication or, even better, for actual communion to take place, we had better abandon language and try other ways of relating to others" (Bleikasten 2017a, 202). In order to *know* the other, one must set aside the futility of language and, remarkably, adhere to the world of the physicalities. In the end, the individual is eminently a physical being. In fact, she only learns about the futility of words by the influence which the physical world holds upon her. "The birth of Cash confirms her feeling that words are irrelevant and that only physical experience has reality and significance" (Vickery 2010, 239).

Moreover, this is somewhat repeated in the relationship which characters like Lena or Dewey Dell maintain with the natural environment. Faulkner tends to embed a primal connection with the natural medium to pregnant women. Olga Vickery stresses the transgression which maternity imposes on the female identity both physically and with regard to the integrity of consciousness, for "[t]hrough the act of giving birth she [Addie] becomes part of the endless cycle of creation and destruction" (Vickery 2010, 239).

While Lena, however, seems to somehow embrace her pregnancy—or, better, she is not bothered by it in the least—, Dewey Dell, resembling her mother, does not show such an organic acceptance. The connections which the text establishes between pregnant characters and the natural medium, nonetheless, address Dewey Dell as much as they address Lena. They are, however, drastically different:

> The cow lows at the foot of the bluff. She nuzzles at me, snuffing, blowing her breath in a sweet, hot blast, through my dress, against my hot nakedness, moaning. [...] The cow in silhouette against the door nuzzles at the silhouette of the bucket, moaning. Then I ass the stall. I have almost passed it. I listen to it saying for a long time before it can say the word and the listening part is afraid that there may not be time to say it. I feel my body, my bones and flesh beginning to part and open upon the alone, and the process of coming unalone is terrible. (*AILD* 36)

Nevertheless, Addie's problem does not seem to be merely a conflict with language. Yes, one can indeed abandon the realm of words to some extent and figure out the otherness by means of physical transgression, but still Addie seems to need that transgression to be mutual. She does not want to merely become part of the other's experience, but to achieve some sort of *sharing*; not temporal, and definitely not lingual. "To leave a scratch," nonetheless, Addie must first turn her back to words.

> Addie protests against the unbearable lightness of language. Words, for her, are lifeless abstractions, forms devoid of substance; like children's balloons, they rise and vanish into thin air. While language is commonly assumed to be both referential and expressive, neither of these functions is acknowledged by Addie. Words, she contends, fail to make contact with the world around and within us. And not only do they fall short of their presumed referents; the trouble with them is not just that they do not lead anywhere but that they are perversely misleading: instead of conveying the facts and feelings of life, words serve to cloak their absence and are in fact the tenuous traces of their withdrawal and loss. (Bleikasten 2017a, 202).

Resembling the rationale explored earlier by the present text, Addie seems to acknowledge that language will never take her anywhere. Words are nothing but a tool, or, better, the simulation of a tool, that do not fulfil the purpose they intend. Whereas language should unite and fill the gaps, it isolates and corrupts itself. In short, words only give the impression of a feigned control, they orient the individual towards the social aspect of their self. In fact, they are exceedingly successful at that, but Addie, pretty much like Quentin's father, and his father before him, does not seem to be contempt in that trap.

The relationship which the Compsons uphold with language is exceedingly explicit in Quentin's father and grandfather. Their approach to language mirrors pretty much that of Addie's. However, they choose to rest on a nihilist and meaningless understanding of it—merely acknowledging its futility—, while Addie epitomises anger and distress.

> language (that meagre and fragile thread, Grandfather said, by which the little surface corners and edges of men's secret and solitary lives may be joined for an instant now and then before sinking back into the darkness where the spirit cried for the first time and was not heard and will cry for the last time and will not be heard then either) (*AA* 202)

The futility of language is a constant motif on Faulkner's fiction. And, yet, the most eminently language driven characters are usually the ones who—somewhat directly in the case of Addie, indirectly in the case of Quentin and his ancestors—*speak* the most. While Addie talks back from the dead, Mr. Compson or his father—Quentin's grandfather—talk through the lips of Quentin; the reader never gets to meet these characters directly. Moreover, while Addie is, to some extent, fully in control of her monologue, she still speaks back from the dead. This inevitably imposes a barrier between Addie and the reader that, although not as evident as the indirect means by which the Compson ancestors are met, places her discourse behind a veil. It seems rather interesting, thus, that those who seem to acknowledge the frivolousness of language are either never given the opportunity to fill the narrative

with their own words, or, otherwise, they purport some uncertainties regarding the accessibility of their narrative context.

Nevertheless, whereas they seem to be muted to some extent, there is another feature that unites them; the serenity and stoicism of their speech. Unlike Quentin—who does not struggle so much with words than he does with time—or Jason—whose struggles do not deal with words, but with the social sphere—, Addie and the two Compsons mentioned above are never panicking. Theirs are certainly harsh and sometimes urgent speeches, but these have been meticulously measured and thought out; they do not originate in sudden exasperation, but in a gradual awareness that leads to a tranquil outrage, almost lethargic. They merely seem to be contemplating a whole set of certainties from which they cannot ever escape, while Quentin, for instance, is unable to achieve any acceptance at all.

These tranquil but imperative speeches, nonetheless, have a price. The apparent calmness which these characters impersonate should not be mistaken for a serene conformity. In fact, language driven characters only seem to be less agitated than others because, on the one hand, their use of language does portray the helplessness of words which they advocate in the first place, and, on the other hand, because they are usually relegated to a secondary stage. Thus, Addie's tragic life is ultimately embodied by two premises: the linguistic nature of her final speech, and the fact that the latter is uttered by a corpse.

> To Addie, words are meaningless, empty sounds that the weak substitute for active confrontation with the forces of the real world. She has lived her life as a desperate struggle to unite her private self with the inaccessible outside world; she has sought to push herself into the elemental flux of life[...]. She had sought some ultimate and final acknowledgment from mankind and the universe itself, some recognition that she truly does exist. (Ross 127-128)

And, in the end, she has not found such a recognition. In her case, the tragedy is even more accentuated, for it is only through words—almost in a biblical fashion—that she realises her salvation will only come to her way after her death:

"He [Jewel] is my cross and he will be my salvation. He will save me from the water and from the fire. Even though I have laid down my life, he will save me" (*AILD* 97). Conveniently, Addie's section appears right between the flooding river incident—water—and the burning barn episode—fire.

The original conception of that salvation which Addie struggles to achieve emerges, to a greater extent, in relation to rather physical experiences she endures during her marriage to Anse. Concretely, Addie seems rather driven by bodily and tangible changes that could, or indeed do, modify her original self. Motherhood, in particular, is what she conceives as the principal cause of the corruption of her identity, for it directly contradicts linguistic entities.

> Experience—especially experiences directly involving her body: sex, pregnancy, childbirth, and mothering—is what makes Addie aware of the ultimate futility of words, but it also teaches her to acknowledge their insidious power. People think they can appropriate and master language and use it for their own ends, but it is language that uses them and makes game of them, urging them to act in ways they never intended. No one is outside the prison-house of language. (Bleikasten 2017a, 203-204)

In fact, throughout Addie's monologue, it is clearly established that her conflict originates in the opposing forces of language and nature. That is, she feels her integrity threatened by standing in the middle ground between the natural world —a realm that ignores and that does not depend on language—and the fabricated cosmos of words. Doreen Fowler observes Addie's conflict between the material and the artificial order of words. According to Fowler, "with her funeral journey, Addie inverts this order and makes her family bear the literal, carrying her body overland, retrieving her from the flooded river and the burning barn" (Fowler 2010, 322). Addie seeks for some sort of ultimate truth which, unequivocally, she places somewhere among the realm of natural forces. Her body, consequently, suffers the consequences not of natural development, but of the treachery of words:

> He had a word, too. Love, he called it. But I had been used to words for a long time. I knew that that word was like the others: just a shape to fill a lack; that when the right time came, you wouldn't need a word for that anymore than for pride or fear. Cash did not need to say it to me nor I to him, and I would say, Let Anse use it, if he wants to. So that it was Anse or love; love or Anse: it didn't matter. I would think that even while I lay with him in the dark and Cash asleep in the cradle within the swing of my hand. I would think that if he were to wake and cry, I would suckle him, too. Anse or love: it didn't matter. My aloneness had been violated and then made whole again by the violation: time, Anse, love, what you will, outside the circle. (*AILD* 99)

Nature, unsurprisingly, becomes a vehicle to escape for those Faulknerian characters seeking a way out of the preconceived realities that the community imposes, be it by the rigidness of language or the disintegration of the self. Addie, consequently, pursues a communal union with the natural medium. This behavioural pattern can also be seen—with more or less clarity depending on the levels of inner stress—on a whole set of characters distressed about the social sphere. Isaac McCaslin, in *Go Down, Moses*, might be the one Faulknerian character who impersonates best that longing for the natural environment. Whereas Isaac's might not be seen as a quest to avoid language, *Go Down, Moses* still presents quite a few linguistic trickeries regarding its characters names. However, the distress of not achieving a communion with the natural environment in *Moses* has more to do with the social sphere as a whole than with language in particular.

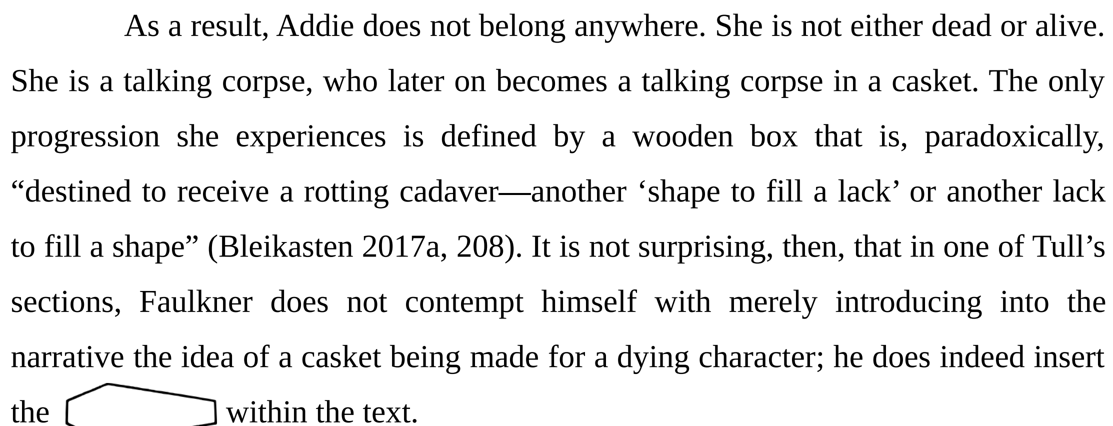
The paradox of Addie's story is that her own craving of communion with nature, her own despising of "empty shapes to fill a lack," is not only what ultimately traps her in the realm of language, but also that which causes the distortion of her "aloneness." There are multiple allusions to the uncanny presence of the natural medium during her speech:

> In the early spring it was worst. Sometimes I thought that I could not bear it, lying in bed at night, with the wild geese going north and their honking coming faint and high and wild out of the wild darkness, and during the day it would seem as though I couldn't wait for the last one to go so I could go down to the spring. (*AILD* 98)

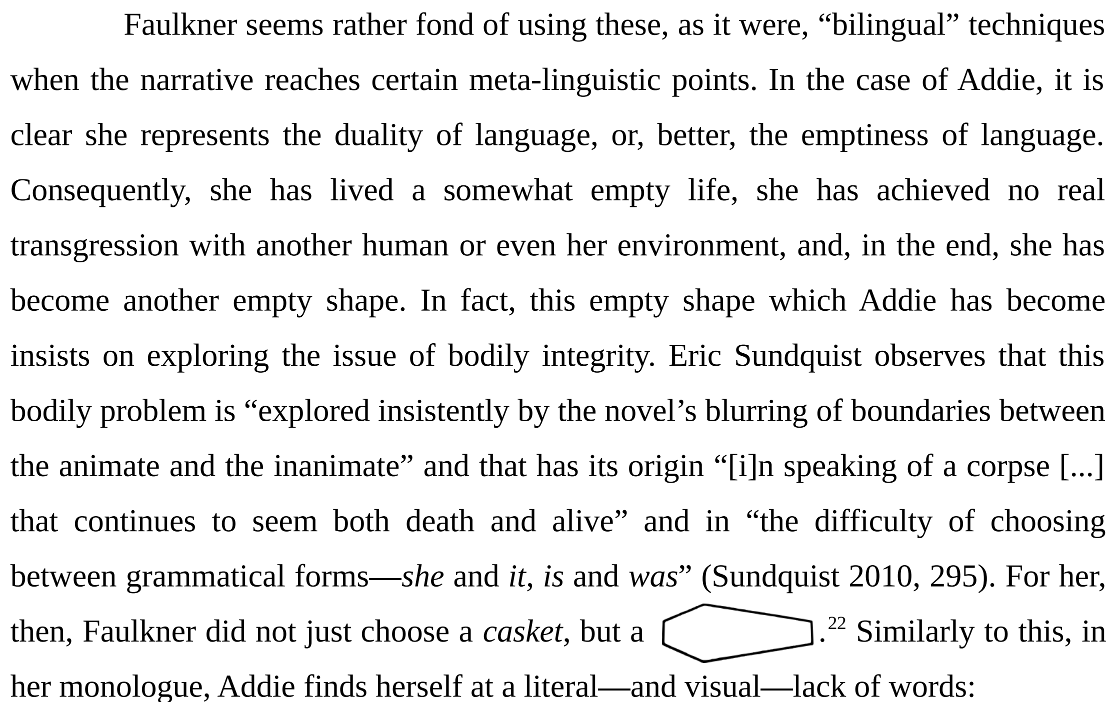
Or:

> And then he died. He did not know he was dead. I would lie by him in the dark, hearing the dark land talking of God's love and His beauty and His sin; hearing the dark voicelessness in which the words are the deeds, and the other words that are not deeds, that are just the gaps in people's lacks, coming down like the cries of the geese out of the wild darkness in the old terrible nights, fumbling at the deeds like orphans to whom are pointed out in a crowd two faces and told, That is your father, your mother. (*AILD* 100-101)

As if talking about belonging, Addie envisions her own metamorphosis from her early single years where her world would only consists of her—no living family nor deep, true connections to real people, who were just shapes—to her years of marriage where her own impulses to breach the linguistic cage have trapped her in a more profound enclosure. Now, married and bearing multiple children, she has not only not been able to trespass the barrier imposed by words, but she has also failed in finding that be*longing*.

As a result, Addie does not belong anywhere. She is not either dead or alive. She is a talking corpse, who later on becomes a talking corpse in a casket. The only progression she experiences is defined by a wooden box that is, paradoxically, "destined to receive a rotting cadaver—another 'shape to fill a lack' or another lack to fill a shape" (Bleikasten 2017a, 208). It is not surprising, then, that in one of Tull's sections, Faulkner does not contempt himself with merely introducing into the narrative the idea of a casket being made for a dying character; he does indeed insert the  within the text.

> Addie's own harsh and urgent talking denies that language can help one deal with one's human condition, that words can ever bridge the gap between oneself and the world outside. Addie's *voice*, however, the voice of a corpse, demonstrates the irony of human existence in language, for by voicing her need and her deed Addie belies her own claim for "reality" over "words." Nowhere is Faulkner's comic-tragic irony stronger. In taking Rev. Whitfield, a master of the hypocritical word, as her lover, Addie gives in to language[...]. (Ross 129)

Faulkner seems rather fond of using these, as it were, "bilingual" techniques when the narrative reaches certain meta-linguistic points. In the case of Addie, it is clear she represents the duality of language, or, better, the emptiness of language. Consequently, she has lived a somewhat empty life, she has achieved no real transgression with another human or even her environment, and, in the end, she has become another empty shape. In fact, this empty shape which Addie has become insists on exploring the issue of bodily integrity. Eric Sundquist observes that this bodily problem is "explored insistently by the novel's blurring of boundaries between the animate and the inanimate" and that has its origin "[i]n speaking of a corpse [...] that continues to seem both death and alive" and in "the difficulty of choosing between grammatical forms—*she* and *it*, *is* and *was*" (Sundquist 2010, 295). For her, then, Faulkner did not just choose a *casket*, but a .[22] Similarly to this, in her monologue, Addie finds herself at a literal—and visual—lack of words:

> He did not know that he was dead, then. Sometimes I would lie by him in the dark, hearing the land that was now of my blood and flesh, and I would think: Anse. Why Anse. Why are you Anse. I would think about his name until after a while I could see the word as a shape, a vessel, and I would watch him liquify and flow into it like cold molasses flowing out of the darkness into the vessel, until

22 *Fig. 2* (*AILD* 51)

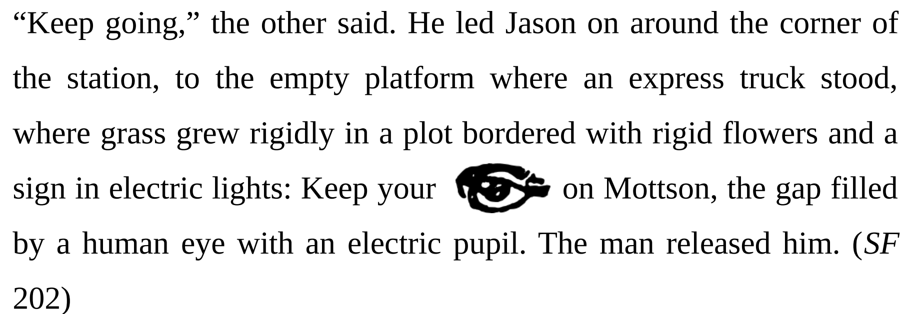
> the jar stood full and motionless: a significant shape profoundly without life like an empty door frame; and then I would find that I had forgotten the name of the jar. I would think: The shape of my body where I used to be a virgin is in the shape of a   and I couldn't think *Anse*, couldn't remember *Anse*. It was not that I couldn't think of myself as no longer unvirgin, because I was three now. And when I would think *Cash* and *Darl* that way until their names would die and solidify into a shape and then fade away, I would say, All right. It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter what they call them. (*AILD* 100)

The loss of words at which Addie finds herself regarding Anse, her past selves, and naming in general shows that she has detached from what words try to portray so much that she is now unable to access those portrayals. It is not that she has become illiterate in the sense that she has no control over words, but in the sense that she is no longer able to acknowledge the fictitious joining of words and the physical world. "Nouns in particular irritate Addie, as well they might, because the prestige of nouns keeps the world from liquefying or muddying" (Limon 355).

Thus, her lack of words actually refers more to a repudiation of words, which, at the same time, leaves her wordless and looking for meaning without the linguistic tool that gives rise to it. Her inability to remember, paradoxically, has more to do with the fact that she rejects language than with the mental stress that her individual motivations lead her towards. Therefore, she is not less aware of her surroundings or her past than the rest of the characters are, she is just unable to conduct meaning to her*self*.

The pictorial technique of introducing other than words—an actual gap, in this case—within the text does not arise at random moments of the narration. Indeed, it gets introduced in the narrative at specific points when the text requires them the most. That is to say, when language is simply not enough or, on the contrary, too present. In *The Sound and the Fury*, in the last of the four chapters that constitute the novel, Jason is finally caught up on a fight when looking for his fleeing niece. After

being beaten on the head, the attention of the character is moved towards an electric sign:[23]

> "Keep going," the other said. He led Jason on around the corner of the station, to the empty platform where an express truck stood, where grass grew rigidly in a plot bordered with rigid flowers and a sign in electric lights: Keep your  on Mottson, the gap filled by a human eye with an electric pupil. The man released him. (*SF* 202)

The last remark indicates two things. First, that it is more than probable that Faulkner intended to leave a blank space—just like in the previous quote by Addie—

---

23 *The Sound and the Fury* initially presents its characters and events, and only then are they moved along time in a vertiginous rampage towards the future. Of course, it is not implied here that the time shifts between periods do not actually take place, which they do. However, the narrative emphasises certain features of the characters and the setting around which they revolve so as to create a bigger gap between the past and the future. Consequently, the Compsons' story is relentlessly leading to the collapse of the family, not only in the literal way, but also in the sense of the community distancing from the traditional family values of the South.

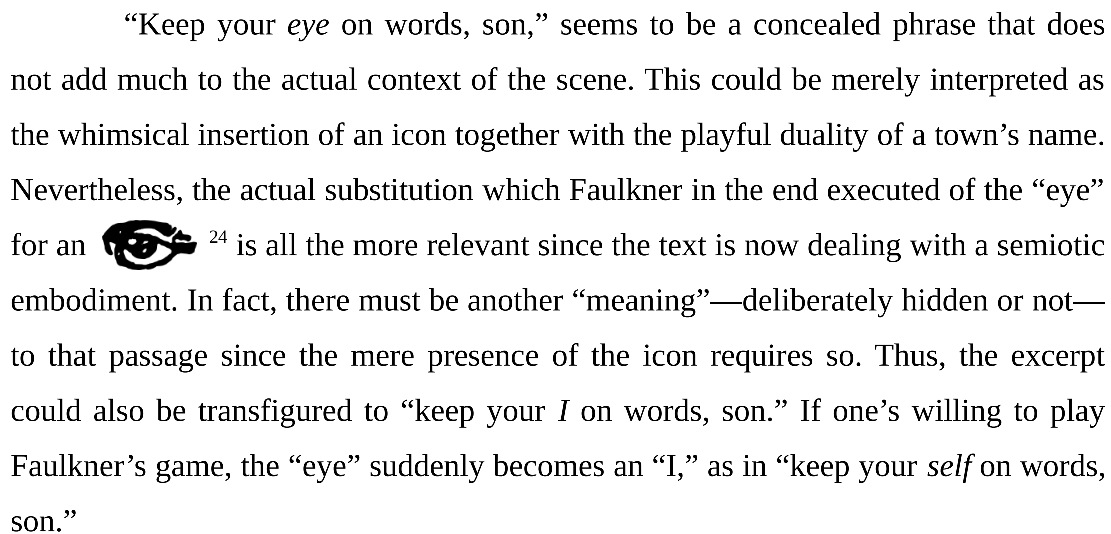
In fact, the beginning of the story highlights the carriage and the horse, the honour of the family name, the protectiveness which a brother holds to his sister, et cetera. By the end of the story, nonetheless, the remaining Compsons are found between speeding cars, electric signs and electricity. There is, however, just one exemption to this technological progression, which is embodied by Benjy. He, in spite of everything and everyone, maintains himself still trapped in his motionless world where no changes are ever allowed. Thereupon, the last paragraph of the novel features Benjy in the carriage, not the car, being pulled by the now old mare and following the exact same route it has followed many times before.

Nevertheless, there is another reading to this argument. Benjy may seem to be the only Compson brother who rejects the natural transition of events toward the future, but this can derive from the fact that there are no many Compson descendants left at this point of the narrative. Quentin is dead, Caddy's whereabouts are not known, young Quentin has just run away from home... there is only Benjy and Jason now. It may seem rather implausible that Jason too reject this moving toward the future which the novel brings along with itself. In fact, he works in town, owns a car, and represents the most socially acceptable character of the Compson children. He may seem, in short, the most functional one, while in fact he "rides daily in a car that brings on migraines, unable to forgo this replacement of his lost status symbol" (Weinstein 2008, 115).

Whereas it may look like Jason is moving comfortably with society, he is not doing so. Undoubtedly, his oral domain—his socialisation, his attempts to establish himself as part of the social compound—may trick the reader into believing he does go with the flow. In truth, however, he is painstakingly governed by society, as much as Quentin is governed by time or Addie by words. Jason finds himself trying to restore the falling of a somewhat aristocratic family of the South and placing it back into a social sphere that does not accept it any longer.

where the eye figure finally appears, for the text stresses “the gap filled by a human eye with an electric pupil” (*SF* 202). Second, that if in the end, as it happened, he changed his mind and decided to fill the blank space with the eye figure, he could have done the same for Addie’s blank space “where she used to be a virgin,” since *As I Lay Dying* was published after *The Sound and the Fury*, so such technical matters should not have been an issue. Thus, Addie’s space was left blank intentionally so as not to substitute words at all.

Jason’s image of an eye is a little bit trickier, since the aim is not only to play a game with the image, but also with the words accompanying that image. For instance, the name of the town, Mottson, could be taken only as a plain name, or it could be depicted as a camouflaged substitution for “mot, son.” This, in its turn, would be a translation from French to “words, son.” Thereupon, one could argue that the message Jason observes on the electric sign has a more obscure significance.

“Keep your *eye* on words, son,” seems to be a concealed phrase that does not add much to the actual context of the scene. This could be merely interpreted as the whimsical insertion of an icon together with the playful duality of a town’s name. Nevertheless, the actual substitution which Faulkner in the end executed of the “eye” for an  [24] is all the more relevant since the text is now dealing with a semiotic embodiment. In fact, there must be another “meaning”—deliberately hidden or not—to that passage since the mere presence of the icon requires so. Thus, the excerpt could also be transfigured to “keep your *I* on words, son.” If one’s willing to play Faulkner’s game, the “eye” suddenly becomes an “I,” as in “keep your *self* on words, son.”

This transitioning from a visual component to the notion of identity within the context of language, whereas clever and certainly Faulknerian, is extremely relevant with regard to Jason. He represents the most language-driven character of the Compson family. Jason is the most oral character in *The Sound and the Fury*, not only in terms of uttered speech, but also regarding his inner speech. That is, he is also oral in terms of how aggressively rendered Jason’s monologue is. Paradoxically, his mimetic and psychic voices certainly resemble one another, he talks and thinks under the same stylistic patterns.

24 *Fig. 3* (*SF* 202)

> Yet even more meaningful perhaps than the unfolding of the social scene in section 3 is the way in which society conditions and shapes Jason's very language and thought. None of the first three monologues is more deeply socialized, and none, as we have seen, is more thickly encrusted with ideological deposits. Jason is the only one of the Compson brothers to speak the colloquial idiom of his region and the only one to seek a social identity. Both Benjy and Quentin are outsiders: the former is separated from the world by mental deficiency, the latter estranged from it through his neurotic obsessions. Jason's case is different, since he is at least trying to find his niche in society. (Bleikasten 2017a, 120).

Jason's quest is a search for belonging, "he exists marginally in both the family and the community and cannot reconcile his public image with his private sense of self" (Davis 399). His is an attempt to become a part of society, to merge with it and to never disengage from it. Thus, when his niece finally escapes from his abusive grasp and robs him the money, he is reminded of his ultimate inner conflict: community. "Keep your*self* on words, son" may as well imply "maintain your identity within society," for language is a social tool. Therefore, although Jason never shows any especial link towards language and meaning—not in the way Addie shows it, that is—, he is in the end displaced to the linguistic medium, for it implies a representation of the social compound.

It would seem, then, that language in Faulkner does not only imply what it usually involves in a realistic work. Certainly, it serves to portray characters, to show the reader who a character is and how a character speaks. It does bring to life the mimetic and psychic voices Stephen M. Ross so thoroughly discusses, and it, too, serves to annihilate that same coherence which those voices presuppose. In Faulkner, specifically, language creates consciousness, in the sense that it creates the voice that *speaks* a stream of thought.

While language provides with a restoration of characters, nonetheless, this restoration is only momentarily so, for language annihilates as much as it builds.

Faulknerian voices are temporally unfocused, in the sense that they speak from nowhere and no*when*. Their partial restoration, consequently, is only achieved by acknowledging its fragmentation in the first place.

Paradoxically, language also serves a circular function with regard to such a restoration. Thus, characters are put together in a present by means of re-enacting past stories. This is undoubtedly observed in the repetition of patterns throughout the "history" of Yoknapatawpha, but also in other techniques: i.e. the recurrence of some characters' names, their connotation, or the decentralisation and merging of narrators. All of this promotes the diminishing of the characters' distinct features, for, in a way, the constant redefinition of the past consolidates it even more so.

In a sense, it is all the more intriguing that a greater confusion arises from the disorganisation of a single character's chronological voices than in the merging of voices belonging to different characters. It would seem, then, that the dissimilarity pertaining to a single subject is more arduously conceived than the resemblance between several individuals. Similarly, the literary accuracy inherent to the psychic voice of a character is only achieved by suspending the more believable aspect of their mimetic voice. A character's voice emerging within the social compound does, in fact, obscure their original self. In other words, consciousness emerges in the fracture of the social aspect of language and in the subsequent disarray which the psyche of the character undergoes.

7/ The Agony of Time; or, the Fragmentation of Memory

Acknowledging that Yoknapatawpha—or every Faulknerian work in general—is a place where everything has already happened and nothing is left for the present to develop is no epiphany at this point. Presenting every relevant incident as mostly belonging to the past highlights the fact that the narrative, in these works, is pretty much static. Certainly, there is a story to tell, and there are characters inhabiting the present situation—arguing otherwise would be pointless and absurd. But, in fact, the story does not seem to be adding up to anything. There is usually no final conclusion, no big enlightenment towards which the reader is directed, and in many cases the endings even feel as if they lacked some sense of closure. As Sartre once pointed out, "Faulkner always showed events when they were already over. In *The Sound and the Fury* everything has already happened" (Sartre 319).

In short, one is suddenly brought into the middle of a series of events that—in most cases—have their origin way before one's arrival into the narrative. And, then, one gets removed from those events with the same indifference with which one was brought to them in the first place. Furthermore, the reader is not even allowed or

encouraged to extract any meaning whatsoever from those events, for they are exposed to too many different places and times, memorial planes, or linguistic disruptions, that they simply cannot rely on any of them. There is, in many cases, a difficulty of identifying who really is talking at a given moment, or even of discerning whether that particular narrator is, in fact, talking, thinking, remembering, or imagining.

All of these features, nonetheless, help bring into the text a feeling of motion that opposes the rigidness which the narrative, being mostly located in the past, entails. On this respect, Richard P. Adams notices Faulkner's perseverance to determine that "life is motion" (Adams 4). However, this is a problematic proposition when it comes to represent life in a literary work, for, if life is motion, there should be no possible way to achieve that motion in the first place.

A literary work is, in spite of everything it may be trying to portray, static—due to the rigidness imposed by language. No matter the means by which a literary work tries to dissimulate the linguistic inflexibility that the text brings along, a narrative is always a dead corpse, an unchangeable thing arrested in time. Adams suggests that, although a narration may seem to move and progress, its actual representation is as motionless as a picture, and it is only through literary techniques that the work may come back to life. According to him, then, it is virtually impossible to represent life, for once the story has been told, it automatically becomes past. The story must, however, be told. And it is through the story which Faulkner attempted to "arrest motion" (Adams 5).

> The phrase "to arrest motion" is a rather tricky paradox, if motion is what is to be represented; but it is a paradox imposed by the nature of the problem. Because motion cannot be directly described, it must be demonstrated indirectly by the static "artificial means" the artist has to work with. If we conceive of motion as a stream (an image often used by Faulkner) we find that its power cannot be felt by someone moving with it, or in it, as living people normally do. If, however, some object, or better if some person, can be made to stand

> still against its flow, the result will be a dramatic and possibly disastrous manifestation of its energy. (Adams 5)

In order for motion to be found, nonetheless, it must be associated to some feature within the text so that it can, at the same time, be disassociated from some other elements of the narrative. Language and the arrangement of the story's chronology do, indeed, represent essential components in Faulknerian works, but these elements need extra peripheral factors to shape them and help them guide the story in a certain direction. Adams, early in his study on motion in Faulkner, identifies violence as a main constituent that gives rise to motion within the texts:

> His [Faulkner's] use of violence, for example, involves both a negative and a positive aspect. Its purpose is not merely to shock the reader, much less to cater to a sadistic fascination with the horrible for its own sake, as some early detractors assumed, but rather to dramatize the unquenchable vigor of life by showing it in the act of overwhelming and crushing static obstacles in its path. The accompanying imagery generally tends in one way or another, or in several ways at once, to build up a feeling of tremendous force and speed. Flood, fire, wind, stampeding animals, moving crowds of people, burgeoning vegetation, hot sunshine, odors of growth and decay, flocks of birds, and swarms of buzzing insects carry the sense of universal motion in hundreds of scenes[...].[...] The violence is inevitable and necessary, as the obstacles are, to show the power in concerted action. The strategy is especially successful when it involves great suffering on the part of a character who has the reader's sympathy. (Adams 5-6)

It is through violence, in many cases, that a very complex and thoughtful construction of the character's consciousness originates. Now, the materialisation of violence does not need to adopt a physical form: the violence of speech or the violence of hurried and precipitated memory are even more so present within the

texts than visceral bodily violence. In fact, Faulkner’s management of the urgency of memory is intrinsically merged with his management of time. For a text in which the stream of consciousness—in fact, multiple streams of multiple consciousnesses—is a basic pillar, the organisation of time and temporal planes within and without characters’ psyches becomes the stone upon which the motion of life is forged. Retrospective digressions and temporal fragmentations are simply inseparable from one another.

> The riddle of motion and immobility is the spatial and physical translation of the metaphysical enigma of time and timelessness. This is probably the reason that Faulkner finds it so exciting. Again and again he reverts to it and attempts to capture it in words. And there are moments indeed when revelation seems near. [...] [T]he paradoxical conjuction of motion and stasis reaches a kind of perfection, that motion becomes so slow as to be the mere tremor of immobility. Then space and time exchange their attributes; time becomes space, space time—not the time of events but a time accumulated like that of memory, bewitched like that of dreams, fluid and static; a time marking time. (Bleikasten 2010, 278-279)

An average individual recognises a linear—chronological—path that recollects temporality in terms of a distribution of positions alongside that *line* where the duration of events is made explicit. That is to say, a subject only acknowledges time when the temporal flowing—that linear progression—is somewhat distorted. As events systematically follow one another as time goes by, temporality is invisible to the subject’s eye, as it were. However, when the individual finds themselves—as Bergson would put it—on deep abstract thought at one of the infinite profound levels of inner thinking, time is no longer dismissed as an anonymous fluid that glues events together and make them alive, but as a *presence* that disrupts the natural flowing of the psyche.

Consecutiveness of actions disappears, and experiences do not follow a sequence anymore. Furthermore, events lose their magnitudes and are either

shortened or expanded in relation to the requirements of the dramatic moment which the character is witnessing. Adams, without any doubt, observes this rearrangement and resizing, so to speak, of time as the tool employed by Faulkner to either build up motion or, on the contrary, crumble that motion to pieces.

> Faulkner often departs from a straight chronological presentation in his fiction, and, by a calculated scrambling of the time dimension, short-circuits our intuition so as to concentrate the energy of a large amount of motion on a single, artificially fixed and isolated moment. When it succeeds, this technique may have the effect of compressing a lifetime into a single event. The scrambling prevents our feeling time as a thin, straight string with events marked off at measured intervals; instead, we feel it as a heavy cluster, knot, or tangle, with all the ends lost in the middle. Motion is lost, or stopped, and time is held still for esthetic contemplation. (Adams 7)

As I Lay Dying uses, eminently, language to portray a displacement of the individual's identity. Throughout an orally oriented setting, the many selves of the characters dwell between finding themselves present and absent in space. In *The Sound and the Fury*, in contrast, this displacement of one's identity is not explored so much through language as through time. Benjy and, especially, Quentin monopolize the text in this respect.

Each of the first three sections belong to a different Compson brother, the fourth and last section not portraying the psyche of any character in the novel but, for several reasons, commonly attributed to Dilsey. In contrast to *As I Lay Dying*, then, *The Sound and the Fury* is constituted by four chapters linked to 4 characters, whereas the former recollects the views of fifteen narrators throughout fifty-nine different monologues. And, yet, *The Sound and the Fury* has been and is still to this day a major source of debate regarding its organisation and the arrangement of its temporal agitation.

As Adams points out, the reader is introduced to the conflicts pertaining to the Compsons not only without learning about their origin first, but also ignoring a

conclusion that has already taken place. And, similarly, the disorganisation of events which the main structure of the novel promotes is also mirrored by the disarrangement of each particular monologue:

> It may be significant that the days of the four sections are not presented in chronological order. The Saturday of the Easter weekend of 1928 comes first, and it is followed by Thursday, June 2, 1910, then by Good Friday and Easter Sunday of 1928. Perhaps Faulkner had an epic pattern in mind, beginning *in medias res*, looping back in time, and then returning to the conclusion. If so, he greatly complicated the pattern by having his first two narrators, Benjy and Quentin, jump back and forth in time, usually without any explicit notice to the reader, in a bewildering fashion. (Adams 237)

Whereas *As I Lay Dying* is presented in a rather chronological way, *The Sound and the Fury*'s structure is disorganised from the very "beginning" of the novel. The former novel seems to be more standard in terms of structure, since the events are to some extent ordered and temporally unaltered. However, there are exceptions to this assembly that make the text more deceptive than it could seem at first. Although there is, indeed, a linear arrangement of episodes, the novel contains several flashbacks that break the narration at some points. Dewey Dell's rememberings of Lafe, Darl's recalling of the episode when Jewel bought his horse and Cash found out about it, Cora's dispute with Addie and, of course, Addie's entire monologue. None of them are particularly difficult to follow nor to associate, more or less, to some time prior to the beginning of the narration.

Kartiganer, nonetheless, identifies the only three chapters that are displaced in time and space—although the spatial dislocation would be quite impossible to ascertain. The most eminent one, of course, belongs to Addie. Her monologue—if one concedes that Addie's section is incorrectly located within the narrative's temporal arrangement—is appropriately framed by the only other two chapters that cannot be accurately placed within the structure. It almost feels as if Addie's

pronouncement requires some kind of transition both to enter the narrative and, once terminated, to exit the chronicle of the Bundrens:

> Each monologue, with the significant exception of Addie's (expressed at no identifiable time) and the two monologues surrounding hers by Cora Tull and Whitfield, follows the previous one in terms of the temporal progress of the action. Whether immediately after or hours later, the monologues serve the family project, the journey, even as the individual characters do, despite the private obsessions that surface primarily in the monologues themselves. (Kartiganer 2007, 433).

In fact, Whitfield's section—which is reported to the reader a few days after it actually takes place—does occur on the day of Addie's death. However, as Cora's and Addie's sections, it is excluded from the chronological path which the book has been following to this point, and which will later on continue to follow once these three episodes are concluded. Adams, in his turn, also observes that, even though there are no more temporal digressions past Whitfield's monologue, the novel still presents some overlapping of sections towards the end of the novel, as if to rush the final motion of chapters to some extent.

> One section is chronologically displaced, so that we are given Whitfield's account of his good resolution, and subsequent failure, to confess his sin with Addie at a point in the story several days after the failure has occurred. There is also a continual overlapping or partial recapitulation of one section by another, or several others, particularly at the end of the book, as if the supposedly single stream of time were shown to be more like a many-stranded rope or braid of interweaving motion. (Adams 71)

It is noteworthy the fact that *As I Lay Dying*, in spite of giving the impression of being a more straightforward story than *The Sound and the Fury*, can

still play the disorienting game which the latter does by means of disorganising the narrative completely. *As I Lay Dying*, nonetheless, does not require this disorganisation or, at least, it does introduce it in subtler terms. That is, *As I Lay Dying* does not alter the order of its episodes. On the contrary, the reader has access to a retelling which is unusually sequenced for Faulknerian standards. The disarray, then, must arise elsewhere.

Whereas one cannot find any temporal displacements—not too many, at least—, the text is rather insistent in presenting spatial dislocations. Tebbetts suggests the presence of space is a direct reflection of a medium through which Faulkner usually depicts the character's self, for "[t]hough he never expresses it explicitly, Faulkner suggests this materialist understanding of identity repeatedly" (Tebbetts 74). The most obvious representation of these displacements is a sort of teleporting arising within the consciousness of one of the major characters in the book; Darl Bundren. He tends to be described as the character with "psychic powers," since he seems able to enter other people's minds and, to some extent, alter their thoughts. Of course, this alteration does not refer to a malicious intention to modify someone's approach to a given matter, but rather to interrupt one's current stream of thought as he could interfere in any normal conversation. Take, for instance, Tull's feelings on this circumstance:

> "What you think, Darl?" He is looking at me. He dont say nothing; just looks at me with them queer eyes of hisn that makes folks talk. I always say it aint never been what he done so much or said or anything so much as how he looks at you. It's like he had got into the inside of you, someway. Like somehow you was looking at yourself and your doings outen his eyes. (*AILD* 72)

Since not many temporal dislocations take place within the novel, Darl's intrusions in the minds of his acquaintances, both neighbours and family members, are referred to in a far more spatial way. Adams alludes to this when arguing about the interconnected feeling which *As I Lay Dying* maintains regarding its characters. According to him, the complex disorientation suggested by the story relies more on

these subtle incongruities—spatial, temporal and linguistic—than in a major structural disarrangement from which other Faulknerian texts are conceived:

> This effect is reinforced by Darl's narration of several scenes and events as they happen, but at a time when he is somewhere else, out of sight and hearing. The cumulative result is a pervasive and fascinating sense, for the reader, of temporal end epistemological disorientation, which is further stimulated by Faulkner's frequent use of language that the characters in whose interior monologues it appears would be unlikely to articulate. These technical elaborations build a complexity of vision which contributes a good deal to the vibrancy of the story. (Adams 71)

Undoubtedly, Darl mimics the figure of Quentin from *The Sound and the Fury*. Both of them represent the most darkened and obsessed characters in their respective narratives, none seem to be able to maintain an average social existence and the two are, to some extent, detached from reality. However, where Quentin sees time, Darl encounters space. Or so it would seem at first.

Clearly, Darl is an *outsider*, in many senses of the word. He penetrates his relatives' and neighbours' minds as one might naturally interrupt a natural conversation. He is constantly present and absent not only during the narrative in general, but within and without of himself too. This mobility—which reminds again of Adams' acknowledgments of motion in the story—only works in a rather spatial setting. Everywhere he *moves* he encounters space.

In one of his chapters, Darl focuses his interior monologue on the existential anguish he suffers after the death of his mother on what is, perhaps, one of the most remembered excerpts of the novel:

> In a strange room you must empty yourself for sleep. And before you are emptied for sleep, what are you. And when you are emptied for sleep, you are not. And when you are filled with sleep, you never were. I dont know what I am. I dont know if I am or not. Jewel

> knows he is, because he does not know that he does not know whether he is or not. He cannot empty himself for sleep because he is not what he is and he is what he is not. Beyond the unlamped wall I can hear the rain shaping the wagon that is ours, the load that is no longer theirs that felled and sawed it nor yet theirs that bought it and which is not ours either, lie on our wagon though it does, since only the wind and the rain shape it only to Jewel and me, that are not asleep. And since sleep is is-not and rain and wind are *was*, it is not. Yet the wagon *is*, because when the wagon is *was*, Addie Bundren will not be. And Jewel *is*, so Addie Bundren must be. And then I must be, or I could not empty myself for sleep in a strange room. And so if I am not emptied yet, I am *is*. (*AILD* 46-47)

It is of no surprise that Faulkner switched from spatiality to temporality in such a small excerpt of text, for he tends to associate an existential crisis with, eminently, time. Consequently, Darl begins by settling himself around spatial notions: he first mentions the room, and the act of emptying. For some time, then, he goes on accumulating his existential anguish around these spatial images. Mimicking a Hamlet that has abandoned the court and has become a peasant—it would not be the first, nor the only, allusion to Shakespeare made by the author—, Darl goes back and forth reflecting on what the essence of existence is and, moreover, where it dwells. But then, space dissipates, and gives way to a much more abstract and indefinite medium.

Darl changes his focus to time because for him, just as much as for Quentin, space is only a reflection of temporality. In a rather Bergsonian way, which persuades many critics of the fact that Faulkner must have read the French philosopher's works, Darl dissolves his self in space and is thereafter reincarnated in time. It is at this point where the readers are provided with the temporal play of words exposed above, that, without question, feels familiar enough after having read Quentin's monologue.

> Darl, who has no professional discipline, confronts the problems of death and identity and relationship and life without defense, partly

> because he is the most sensitive of them all to his own identity and the identities of other people and things. His analysis is more subtle than any other, drawn out as it is by his inability to arrive at any satisfactory solution. In his soliloquy during the night of Addie's death, he reasons mainly in terms of time, by playing, like Quentin in *The Sound and the Fury*, on the tenses of the verb *to be*[...]. (Adams 78)

This playfulness regarding the entanglement of past, present, and future tenses of the verb to be can be found in several works and originating in many characters. It is, so to speak, a Faulknerian imprint. Quentin, without any doubt the king of temporal disarrangements, shows a similar contraposition of temporal locations:

> The draft in the door smelled of water, a damp steady breath. Sometimes I could put myself to sleep saying that over and over until after the honeysuckle got all mixed up in it the whole thing came to symbolise night and unrest I seemed to be lying neither asleep nor awake looking down a long corridor of gray halflight where all stable things had become shadowy paradoxical all I had done shadows all I had felt suffered taking visible form antic and perverse mocking without relevance inherent themselves with the denial of the significance they should have affirmed thinking I was I was not who was not was not who. (*SF* 112-113)

From the previous remark, two different issues should be noticed. First, the resemblance which Quentin's and Darl's speeches maintain with regard to the motif of sleep. Somehow, it would seem, both of them allude to sleep when they reason on their identities as such. This is not surprising since sleep can be easily related to the displacement of one's consciousness. Thus, it is in relation to the sleep motif that one encounters Darl's "emptying" himself for sleep and Quentin's association of smells to the inconsistency of his self. Secondly, Quentin's rampage feels much more

unstable due to the loss of punctuation and sentence ordering. However, it should be noted that Darl's quotation is extracted from the fairly beginning of the novel, where the narrative drama has not been fully intensified yet, whereas Quentin's excerpt appears towards the end of his chapter. This, consequently, could justify the difference in tone and psychic magnitude between the two.

These two characters, furthermore, resemble each other in so far as both of them can be analysed as somewhat static within a more or less dynamic narrative. In the case of Darl, he represents the only character whose obsessions lead him to a loss of space—ultimately a loss of time—because he is the only one who cannot fully move alongside temporality. Vardaman, for instance, shares a great deal of this inner constitution, but his obsessions only relate to the loss experienced by a child who does not fully understand death. Arguably, Vardaman surpasses Addie's death and, by the end of the book, starts showing a much more standard childlike behaviour than the one he first introduced the readers to. In fact, he joins the rest of the Bundrens in having a purpose for the whole trip other than burying Addie.

Every member of the Bundren family has a more or less concealed reason that motivates the funeral expedition. Anse finally gets a new set of teeth he has been announcing from earlier on the novel and, one should not forget, a brand new Mrs. Bundren. Cash contents himself with the "graphophone" (*AILD* 149). Dewey Dell fails on getting an abortion, but, still, it has been her major purpose for going to town. Vardaman, in his turn, has been able to see the red train at the toy store once again. Jewel, in contrast, might not have a definite purpose other than fulfilling his mother's last wish and thus bury her in Jefferson. But, again, he is not really a Bundren.

Adams reflects on the contraposition of terms which Darl and the motif of the expedition represent. On the one hand, the theme of the journey doubtlessly promotes the motion of the story. This, in fact, is reinforced by the final sense of closure which every Bundren member reaches—although Dewey Dell does not succeed in getting an abortion, she and Jewel are finally able to send Darl to a mental institution. On the other hand, Darl stands in contraposition to that motion as the bearer of truth. Not only does he try to sabotage the expedition on different

occasions, but he, by acknowledging everyone's selves, personifies the opposition to everyone's goals.

> The image of the epic journey, which is perhaps the largest single image in the book, is particularly dynamic. This powerful tendency to motion is systematically opposed by static elements in each of the characters, and by the fact that the journey is a funeral. Darl, although he is presented with entire sympathy, is especially static, and his breakdown serves most effectively as an artificial device for stopping the motion. [...] Although Addie is dead and Darl is insane, the rest of the Bundrens are conspicuously alive and still in motion when we see them last. The feeling we are left with after reading *As I Lay Dying* is a ruefully humorous conviction that no matter what happens life goes on. (Adams 82-83)

Therefore, Darl does not partake of the Bundren excitement about going to town for a private purpose. On the contrary, he does not show any expectancy of the future, because he is stuck in time. Being unable to merge within the dynamic resolutions which the members of his family show, he is finally sent to a mental institution and thus erased from and by the motion of life. Similarly, Quentin seems unable to catch up with time, for he remains surrounded by past events and past people throughout his entire fictional life.

As to what could the reasons be that explain these character's immovable approach to the world, the present text can only speculate that Addie, on the one hand, and Caddy, on the other—notice the resemblance of the names—, might be the figures one should be pointing at. The former's rejection or her second son leaves a motherless child, who cannot make his identity progress any further for this very reason:

> But my mother is a fish. Vernon seen it. He was there.
> "Jewel's mother is a horse," Darl said.
> "Then mine can be a fish, cant it, Darl?" I said.

> Jewel is my brother.
>
> "Then mine will have to be a horse, too," I said.
>
> "Why?" Darl said. "If pa is your pa, why does your ma have to be a horse just because Jewel's is?"
>
> "Why does it?" I said. "Why does it, Darl?"
>
> Darl is my brother.
>
> "Then what is your ma, Darl?" I said.
>
> "I haven't got ere one," Darl said. "Because if I had one, it is *was*. And if it is was, it cant be *is*. Can it?"
>
> "No," I said.
>
> "Then I am not," Darl said. "Am I?"
>
> "No," I said.
>
> I am. Darl is my brother.
>
> "But you *are*, Darl," I said.
>
> "I know it," Darl said. "That's why I am not *is*. *Are* is too many for one woman to foal." (*AILD* 58)

Quentin, in his turn, has based his identity on values long lost that circle around the identity of Caddy. Since the latter does indeed progress in time and changes—by embracing sexual development—, Quentin ceases to become and remains forever a static persona. In fact, as Deborah Clarke argues, while the reader has to deal with a fragmented version of Caddy that is only achieved through her brothers' eyes, the physical world still shows some marks of her dissolving presence. Caddy's point of view may not be represented in the text, but the presence and rebellion of her child, Quentin, shows Caddy's integration of change even while being absent. In other words, her being removed from the text and being denied a voice of her own does not downgrade her to an ever-static absence. Even while missing, she unfolds: "Caddy's voice may never be restored, but the evidence of her physical substance remains. If her 'speech act' does not dominate the text, her creative act does. Caddy's presence makes itself known less through her voice than through her body and its literal replication" (Clarke 1999, 148). Quentin's inability to partake of that motion of life, together with his particular demise, associates him with

the notion of doom which many Faulknerian characters share. Adams establishes that the sense of doom, or fate, tends to be connected with the character's tendency to enjoy the motion of life.

> The fact is that such terms as "doom," "fate," and "irremediable" in Faulkner's work almost always refer in one way or another to the inevitability of change in the world as he imagined it.[...] In that world a man is crushed if he is unable to move along with the motion of life; and certainly many of Faulkner's characters are crushed. It is also true that in Faulkner's world, as in Bergson's, human consciousness can never be immediately aware of anything that is not already past, and therefore "irremediable." But Faulkner's truth is not limited to these considerations. [...] [S]ome of his characters, such as Lena Grove and eventually Byron Bunch, do move with the motion of life, and they are not crushed. Moreover, their motion in the present carries them toward the future, which they cannot clearly foresee, to be sure, precisely because it is the future, but to which they are completely and powerfully committed. (Adams 133-134)

In fact, the insertion of "doom" or "fate" is something which Faulkner maintains to some degree in every of the five books that interest the present study. Doom is not only associated to Quentin in *The Sound and the Fury* and *Absalom, Absalom!*, but it also refers to the Sutpens in the latter novel. Some sort of condemnation—this time, in fact, in an even more religious context—can be observed in many of the central figures of *Light in August*. Fate is irremediably present in the broad genealogy of the McCaslins in *Go Down, Moses*. And, to be sure, there is some sort of catastrophic predicament in the verdict of the dead in *As I Lay Dying*.

This feeling of inherited doom, as it were, eminently arises around those characters who, unsurprisingly, do not adhere completely to social standards. Such is

the case of Thomas Sutpen, who clearly passes onto his children—all three of them —this sense of fatal condemnation. As Helen Lynne Sugarman reflects:

> One reason for this discomfort may be that while the townspeople clearly distinguish between themselves as white people and the black slaves as chattel, Sutpen does not draw the same distinction. He works along with the slaves to build his house and occasionally participates with them in the fights he stages to entertain his guests. Perhaps even more important, Sutpen acknowledges Charles Bon as his son, even though he is aware of Bon's racial background [...]. (Sugarman 55)

Faulkner's interest in time seems to have been channelled through two different paths. On the one hand, he attributes every character some sort of innate contingency with the matter of time. This likelihood to being obsessed with time is clearly observed in Quentin, Benjy—if one concedes that his immobility could be seen as a personal compulsion—, Darl, Vardaman—to some extent—, or Uncle Ike. This tendency to paralyse time, nonetheless, is shared by many more characters than the mentioned ones and to so many different degrees that it would be both vicious and inefficient for the present text to cover them all.

On the other hand, however, Faulkner seems to approach the matter of temporality also from the perspective of inherited torment through ancestry. This inherited downfall that a character may suffer is, in its turn, divided into a familiar inheritance and a community inheritance. In fact, these two are somewhat inseparable, insofar as each of them depends on the other. There is no way to extract family from the community, and, inversely, every family can be seen as a community in itself. However, besides the primary argument of considering the family a diminished version of a larger community, the fact that Faulkner presents his works within the southern rural setting must be taken into consideration. Cleanth Brooks, in his renowned study on Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha as the root of his fiction, observes that the communal aspect defines to a larger degree the authors' characters:

> One way in which to gauge the importance of the community in this novel [*Light in August*] is by imagining the action to have taken place in Chicago or Manhattan Island, where the community—at least in Faulkner's sense—does not exist. [...] The plight of the isolated individual cut off from any community of values is of course a dominant theme of contemporary literature. But by developing this theme in a rural setting in which a powerful sense of community still exists, Faulkner has given us a kind of pastoral—that is, he has let us see our modern and complex problems mirrored in a simpler and more primitive world. (Brooks 54)

From the five novels examined by the present text, it seems paradoxical that the only one that does not deal directly with any large family or dynasty—*Light in August*—be the one where the scope of the community is best ascertained. None of the big Faulknerian families are in a better position to counterpoint community as such; not the Compsons, not the Bundrens, not the McCaslins, and certainly not the Sutpens. *Light in August*, on the contrary, provides with orphans for most of the narrative, and sometimes even literally.

Lena Grove and Joe Christmas are, of course, the two main figures that seem to come from nowhere and, most relevantly, from no one. This does not necessarily mean that they have zero background behind them, for then these characters would be plain and blank. On the contrary, they have a rather extensively described background. But this background does not interfere with their present situation. In a sense, they are characters with too little time that get woven together with characters with too much time; Joanna Burden or Reverend Hightower being the two most prominent figures. In fact, the comparisons between these two are rather extensive.

> Joanna invites comparison with Hightower. Faulkner has pointed to the parallels between these two characters in a number of ways. Both are recluses. Both have been rejected by the community for good and sufficient reason. Both are dominated by the past, since the family

> past has impinged upon both of them in a special way. Because of all this, the incautious reader might even leap to the conclusion that it was something in the personal heritage of these two people that destroyed them, leaving them unfulfilled and incomplete. In contrast to Joe Christmas, who has no roots in anything, Joanna and Hightower may seem too deeply rooted, helplessly fettered by their personal traditions—the one of militant abolitionism, the other of the galloping Confederate cavalry leader. But neither's is a live tradition. It does not connect past with present. It is absurdly romantic. That, incidentally, is how the community judges both these obsessions. (Brooks 59)

Community, therefore, seems to represent a very accurately measured set of values and traditions. Give a character too few of these values, and they lack the background to match the community they endure. Give another character too many of those traditions, and their background expands so much they are unable to look forward to a future or, even, a present. By definition, thus, a community would seem to expect from its individuals just the right amount of past time. In fact, these socially established terms of what is acceptable and what is inappropriate are accessible to the reader by means of opposing the community's expectations to how the individual reacts towards these demands.

> *Light in August* is, in some respects, a bloody and violent pastoral. The plight of the lost sheep and of the black sheep can be given special point and meaning because there is still visible in the background a recognizable flock with its shepherds, its watchdogs, sometimes fierce and cruel, and its bellwethers. (Brooks 54)

But Faulkner does not tend to focus the narrative on any of the many communal voices. There are, of course, many exceptions to this rule, like the case of Cora in *As I Lay Dying*, but these representations are rare and scarce. In fact, they serve as pinpoints for the narrative to locate itself—to define its fictional world, as it

were, to expose its set of rules—as it progresses under the scope of the more eminent, detached, and aloof characters.

Since, indeed, Faulkner tends to provide his readers with a categorisation of the community where he sets the action by means of indirect definition—that is, by showing the opposing forces of the "average" subjects versus the more individualistic characters—, he, at the same time, promotes the idea that that which could be considered the standard might not be in fact so. The reader has access to social standards, but only through the eyes of a subject that, in spite of having to bear the weight of such standardisation, cannot avoid being removed from the communal sphere.

This technique of achieving similarity—or difference—by opposition does not only apply to the social versus the individual. In fact, it is also found on the contrasting differences which the text suggests between the main characters in *Light in August*. Both Lena and Joe, as it has been mentioned, could be considered characters with too little time. That is, their past backgrounds are not rich enough for them to be considered *theirs*. Undoubtedly, other characters such as Joanna and Hightower present such an excess of background that the effect achieved remains pretty much the same: their backgrounds, their past times, enclose so many contexts, events, and people that they hardly seem to be a faithful portrayal of themselves. As a consequence, none of them share a feeling of belonging regarding society; some due to a lack, others due to an overload.

Thus, the so-called standard society—the standard subject—seems to be something Faulkner addresses ubiquitously but indirectly. It would seem that he forces an anonymous social context into the narrative that can never be anonymously comprehended. Furthermore, those that cannot adhere themselves to such anonymity end up being forgotten, socially condemned, or privately obsessed with matters for which not even themselves are responsible. The degree to which a character is socially repudiated depends on the extent to which their nature contradicts the community.

> Lena and Joe Christmas, as everyone has seen, stand in obvious contrast to each other. Their very likeness stress their basic

> differences. Both are orphans; both escape from home by crawling out a window; both are betrayed by their first loves; both in the course of their wanderings come to Jefferson. But how different they are in relation to society! Every man's hand is sooner or later lifted against Joe Christmas; he demands that it be so. But Lena, heavy with child, on an obviously ridiculous quest to find the father of her child, leads a charmed life. Even the women who look upon her swollen body with evident disapproval press their small store of coins upon her, and the community in general rallies to help her. (Brooks 55)

To understand, nonetheless, why two characters so alike, despite their obvious differences, get two eminently contrary responses from the social compound, one must first assume that time—temporality, for it seems a more appropriate term to associate with the human psyche—becomes a key element in the relationship between the community and the individual. In yet another of his studies dedicated to Faulkner, Philip Weinstein explores the presence of time in modernist works and concludes that:

> Time's hostility to human projects is a recurrent theme of modernist literature in general, but it is one thing to thematize it and another to register time's assault at the level of narrative form itself. Faulkner's beginning novels still "do" time's damage thematically rather than formally. [...] Innovative forms appear only when Faulkner's rhetoric of subjectivity enters, so to speak, the force field of fractured time, resulting in dislocations that are simultaneously psychic and narrative. (Weinstein 2005, 144)

By means of expressing the temporal disruptions occurring within a character's psyche in a formal way, then, Faulkner expands those same disruptions to a whole new set of levels. That is to say, the narrative has become time's playground and, likewise, it embodies the individual's mind too. As a consequence of this, it is

more than usual to find characters such defined throughout Faulkner’s novels, in the sense of presenting various psychic depths dealing with the temporal disarrangement to a greater or lesser extent.

It is precisely this abundance of temporally driven—or, better, temporally influenced, either consciously or in subtler ways—characters what promotes the many similarities and cyclic paths one can observe within the Faulknerian corpus. Lena and Joe are an excellent example to illustrate this phenomenon. Despite their similarities, the reader can observe the opposing reactions the community maintains towards each of them. Undoubtedly, the actions of each of them play a major role with regard to what could be expected from the community. Nevertheless, there seems to be another element influencing this relationship between society and individual; and that is the extent to which their psychic world harmonises with the natural order of things.

In fact, the inclusion of the spatial world is effectively relevant in this work with regard to a correspondence between these two characters and the natural environment. Their psyches are essentially reflected on their bodies; which is the reason why their conflicts—Lena’s pregnancy and Joe’s racial crusade—are primarily linked to the spatial sphere.

> [S]he focuses on satisfying her desires to eat, to travel, to move freely in (male) public space. In a novel about individuals renegotiating their identities within the community and culture at large, Lena offers not only a more positive alternative to Joe’s violence, but also a reminder that we must not forget the body as we struggle against culturally imposed identities. (Jarvis 76)

In a way, one could tell that Lena moves throughout the world on a pointless quest to find the father of her child. However, she does so in such a *natural* way that her pace seems relentless and steady. She, alike nature, keeps moving and evolving, not feeling any temporal distress of her own. And, consequently, her journey eventually takes her back to the starting point. The narrative is opened and closed with Lena on the road. This circularity, however, is not exempt from a certain sense

of enlargement. She has given birth, her self has multiplied, and now she is not travelling alone. Additionally, she is ultimately exhibited to the reader under a dome of contempt and excitement, in contrast to the desperation or resentment one could expect to arise after being unable to locate her lover.

> Of and with and by: Lena is but another name for *natura naturans*. Her swollen body shows nature at work in the fecund field of female flesh[...]. Nothing can hurt her. No need even for her to fight to achieve her ends. Her ends are in her beginnings, the harvest is in the seed, it is all a matter of growing and ripening. Lena has just to wait, and her patience is inexhaustible. Unlike Joe Christmas's journey, her own is not a restless, aimless wandering, not is it a true quest. Her destiny bears her along, and she bears it within herself, like the child soon to be born. (Bleikasten 2017a, 276)

In fact, Lena seems to have obliterated time altogether. Her reflections on the moving wagon at the very beginning of the novel proves the reader so. She sees herself before, during and after, which adds up to saying that she is always and never at the same time. In a sense, she ignores time because she represents the allegory of Time itself. "Lena has just to wait," reminds Bleikasten, for "[h]ers is the realm of *immanence*: she is as safely inside space as she is inside time, cradled in its folds like the fetus in her womb" (Bleikasten 2017a, 276).

The union of Lena to both time and space, as Bleikasten accurately claims, might as well be seen as the union of Lena to the natural realm. She is never out of place nor out of time, but effortlessly moving forward. This joining with nature precipitates the community's response to her being. In a way, people surrounding her regard Lena under certain suspicion. They observe her as a naive girl whose quest is absurd. However, her natural radiance grants her the kindness and sympathy of the people of Jefferson, male and female alike.

People's initial reluctance towards her is unsurprising, since the reader must bear in mind that Lena represents the pure natural medium, whereas the inhabitants of Jefferson belong to a previously established social order. That is to say, nature and

society are forced to confront each other. Unquestionably, society feels somewhat disrupted by the presence of nature—society stands for family principles, whereas nature limits itself to the primal solitude of a pregnant woman—but, ultimately, the former gives way so that the latter may continue its journey. This confrontation, however, should not be regarded as a fight some of the components must win, but as a set of reactions which the social compound holds in regard to the representation of the natural medium which Lena stands for.

> Lena belongs to this pure mythic space prior to the fall into time, and as has often been pointed out, she turns out to be herself a mythic figure, a new avatar, in Faulkner's fiction, of the primal mother or earth goddess. Admittedly, she is a very earthy earth goddess, a deity mildly astonished at finding herself in the plump young body of a very ordinary mortal woman, yet in her absolute serenity she is assuredly Olympian. (Bleikasten 2017a, 277)

In short, Lena—named after Helen of Troy, etymologically related to the moon, Selene; and whose last name, Grove, also dwells within the natural world—contradicts the social medium by sheer *natural* opposition. Joe Christmas' antagonism to society, nonetheless, is a less organic one. Although he also contradicts the community, his convoluted relationship to the latter is a much less abstract one, as in the case of Lena. In contrast, Christmas' represents a much more individualistic struggle. *Light in August* keeps swinging the reader from the opposing forces of nature and society to the more obscure intertwinings of the social and the individualistic.

Temporality, for Lena, is as organic as the rest of the symbolism that surrounds her. In the case of Christmas, nonetheless, temporality represents an individual disruption of the character's identity. Lena tends to be described as out of time—she even gives the impression of contemplating time herself—, whereas Joe is stuck in a past he did not even shape. Consequently, his stream of thoughts repeatedly comes back to that past that prevents him from originating a robust

identity: he is not black nor white, he has no parents but he is not an orphan, and thus he keeps trying to find a spot within society but he is repeatedly rejected.

> It is just dawn, daylight: that gray and lonely suspension filled with the peaceful and tentative waking of birds. The air, inbreathed, is like spring water. He breathes deep and slow, feeling with each breath himself diffuse in the neutral grayness, becoming one with loneliness and quiet that has never known fury or despair. 'That was all I wanted,' he thinks, in a quiet and slow amazement. 'That was all, for thirty years. That didn't seem to be a whole lot to ask in thirty years.' (*LIA* 331)

While Joe's problematic relationship with society pretty much lingers within his being stuck in time, there are many other possibilities for a Faulknerian character to be captured—in one way or another—by temporality. There is some kind of deterministic approach in Faulkner's novels regarding the more primal relationships; that is, the ones originating within the family circle. Some characters are attributed a distant past that they have never known and for which they are by no means responsible. Nevertheless, they are somewhat entrusted with that temporal ancestry and, in the majority of cases, they end up merging with it—or, more appropriately, their ancestry ends up devouring them.

Faulknerian memory, resembling Bergson's approach to the joining of memory and psyche, permeates characters' identities, sometimes reaching the point of erasing any sense of present time. Most events in a Faulknerian work have already taken place, and it is only through the eyes of a character—who, usually, did not witness them—that the reader can access that extinct universe.

> Yet despite the pervasive influence of memory in Faulkner's novels, too little attention has been given to memory's over-arching role in elucidating such distinctively Faulknerian elements as disordered time, preoccupation with the past, the influence of the dead, and, most importantly, determinism. It is memory, with its disregard for

> chronological time and its idiosyncratic and highly personal chains of association, that pulls pieces of the past into the present, resurrects the dead, and remakes family history. And it is memory, the subjective and selective construction of a private past, that ultimately dooms Faulkner's characters to fates that in retrospect appear unavoidable. (Fennell 29)

Quite aptly, Fennell continues:

> Memory provides a useful template for understanding the disordered time sequences found in Faulkner's work. Time collapses for Faulkner's people: the past is conflated with the present, the dead share narrative space with the living, and childhood traumas lie just beneath the skin of the present moment. Likewise, memory itself eschews chronological time[...]. (Fennell 30)

The reshaping of the present moment which memory provides does, however, remain somewhat hidden. Undoubtedly, one can find a great amount of rhetoric and stylistic resources that promote the incursion of memorial recollections within the text. Still, it is not uncommon for the Faulknerian reader to be relocated into a different narrative time for paragraphs, pages, and sometimes even chapters, only to realise of this relocation when the narrative re-joins the present time once again. This amounts to saying that—just like Bergson's endorsement for a memorial recollection that takes place in an uninterrupted manner and, therefore, without the individual's realising of it most of the time—Faulkner mimics this very performance from beginning to end, quite literally.

In fact, this memorial path is not only attributed to major characters, but also to minor ones that only share a very few pages of the whole of a novel. In *Light in August*, one can find several characters trapped in their own memories to some extent. It is of no surprise that Joe, Joanna, and Hightower be among them; but it is however remarkable that Percy Grimm—who only appears at the very end of the book and very briefly—partakes of this same dispute regarding his identity. Fennell

draws attention towards Percy Grimm's memory, which does in fact resemble Hightower's in the sense that both characters present a blind compulsion regarding events none of them witnessed:

> The importance of memory in sealing Joe's fate becomes evident early in the book, when the narrative lapses into an extended flashback to Joe's childhood and youth that runs for over four chapters and occupies almost one-quarter of the novel. In this flashback, the reader gains access to the most tenacious and destructive of Joe's memories and finds the roots of his self-loathing and lack of racial identity. Because he cannot escape the force of these early memories, Joe aggressively seeks to fulfill the prophecy he is convinced they contain by flaunting his possibly mixed blood. He finally accomplishes his fate, with the help of Joanna Burden, a woman caught up in her own family legacy[...], and Percy Grimm, a young man doomed by the memory of a war in which he was too young to participate [...]. (Fennell 37)

The influence of memory can also be observed within the structure of the narrative in *Light in August*, which resembles a circular pattern that, nonetheless, maintains some kind of linearity. The novel begins and ends with Lena on the road, but within those two edges the character's memories break the linearity of the story, promoting a feeling of uneasy movement that, in spite of everything, ultimately returns to its starting point.

Lena and Joe serve as landmarks that guide the narrative between the already mentioned disruption of time—Joe's recurrent looking backwards to his past—and the circular fulfilling pattern—Lena's returning to the road—of the novel. The reason of this may as well be that these two characters' past is yet too recent and immature. They certainly hold some baggage in terms of past traumas, but these are not built upon the intervening of many generations prior to their own birth. Lena is just a naive pregnant woman with bad luck, and—while he maintains a more

truculent bearing—Joe simply represents the consequences of child abuse and the subsequent confusion that will accompany the man till his end.

The novel certainly does its best at maintaining more burdensome characters, such as Joanna or Hightower, aside. And it does so precisely because they represent the already digested past. Both of them depend upon some people's pasts and stories that are somewhat withdrawn from their own. Accordingly, these characters are presented in antithesis to Lena and Joe. Joanna and Hightower hold an excessive amount of past within themselves, but this excess is only presented to the reader as a product, not as something being produced. In contrast to *Light in August*, *Absalom, Absalom!* focuses more on the process of digesting such antique times. In a sense, while Joanna and Hightower are presented as the output of some now dormant ghosts, Quentin can be observed as he interacts and shapes his own set of personal shadows if not for the first time, then at least at a very early stage.

> *Absalom, Absalom!* is centrally concerned with the work of memory. The novel's only present action involves the reconstruction of the story of Thomas Sutpen and his son Charles Bon, both of whom have been dead for more than forty years at the time the novel begins. Thomas Sutpen, in turn, is driven and ultimately doomed by a very specific childhood memory—the memory of being turned away from the front door of a plantation house. Bon's downfall is likewise linked to his preoccupation with the past and his attempt to recover the memory of his lost father. Miss Rosa and Mr. Compson each show themselves to be strongly bound to their own personal conceptions of the past as they relate their versions of the story of Sutpen's life to Quentin. Quentin and Shreve, in turn, become obsessed with reconstructing these past events. (Fennell 38-39)

Moreover, Faulkner's introduction of memory into his novels cannot—and should not—be seen merely as just another classic Faulknerian topic. Memory in Faulkner, just as much as it is for Bergson or Heidegger, means everything; not only in the sense of it being some sort of inescapable feature that glues the narrative

together, but also in terms of it representing both the container and the contained. In Faulkner, then, memory represents the travel and the road, as it were. Without it, it would simply not make any sense to explore any of the temporal digressions which the characters suffer. In fact, memory inhabits the narrative to such an extent that it becomes the tool that fastens the multiple novels together. This can be observed in the mingling of *Absalom, Absalom!* and *The Sound and the Fury*, each of whose tragedies are irremediably connected by Quentin.

> But the influence of the memory of Sutpen is still not finished; it presumably continues to work on Quentin's mind, interweaving itself with Quentin's own troubling memories of Caddy as he moves closer and closer to suicide. When we next see Quentin, in *The Sound and the Fury*, he is inescapably caught in memory's stranglehold and has already decided to kill himself. His thoughts on his last day are heavily dominated by memories of his sister Caddy; he is unable to keep his mind in the present moment for more than brief intervals before succumbing to memory's intrusion again. (Fennell 39)

Lee Anne Fennell observes the presence of memory in Faulknerian works as both the bricks, as it were, used to build a house and the land where it is erected. In a sense, Faulknerian novels do not deal with memory; they *are* memory just as much as any individual *is* their own memory. A subject does not deal with their own memory on a more or less regular basis, they simply embody the consequence of that given set of recollections that evolve organically with time. It would be absurd, then, not to attribute the same mechanism that takes place within each Yoknapatawpha novel to a major picture where multiple novels are interwoven with one another. This, in fact, is the reason why the "resurrection," as it were, of Quentin in *Absalom, Absalom!* holds such a significance with respect to a major reading of the character beyond the events of *The Sound and the Fury*:

> Quentin is torn apart by grief over his sister, and his mind runs in grooved channels as he wanders aimlessly around Cambridge. He recalls past scenes over and over, examining them from every angle, as if to extract a final measure of torment from each one. Although the reader is made privy to Quentin's thoughts for only that final day, it is clear that Quentin has been agonizing over these same remembered sequences for months. (Fennell 39)

And, in fact, it is seven years after Quentin's suicide—with the publication of *Absalom, Absalom!*—when the reader gets a broader perspective on Quentin's inner schemes and the origins of his obsessions. Interestingly, Fennell explores temporally driven characters as individuals deeply rooted in the past; either purposefully or involuntarily. According to her, the tendency to maintain the past somewhat closer to the immanent present arises in the nature of the disruption which a given identity experiences. That is to say, the individual faces a paradoxical encounter between a past identity and the present one in terms of opposition and not of integration. Fennell explains this problematic rendezvous by focusing on the temporal aspect of grieving:

> It is important to recognize that grief, like all forms of memory, exists in the remembering mind at the present moment. While it is common to think of a person consumed by grief as "living in the past," this is not quite true. Instead, a grieving person is painfully rooted in a present which no longer contains the absent loved one. Memory looks to the past to measure the magnitude of the present loss, but the past does not exist as an independent "place" to which one may retreat (or from which one may escape). (Fennell 40)

Quite similarly to music, time without memory is simply irrelevant. The same, however, cannot be said about memory without time, which is eminently the basis of Benjy's recollections. The Yoknapatawpha universe exhibits characters that own too much time and others that do not have such deep roots in the past.

Nevertheless, Benjy is not as easily categorised as Quentin or Christmas are. Benjy's struggles do not attempt to bring back a distant past nor do they appear to be fleeing from an unbearable present. In fact, those two are the scenarios one might logically conclude can be attributed to this character if, and only if, memory is taken out of the question.

Benjy's unique memorial process originates in a mind where no past, present or future can be discerned. In fact, calling it a "memorial process" might indeed be misleading and confusing, so the reader may instead focus on the absence of such a recollection mechanism. For, in truth, Benjy does not recall at all.

> The Benjy section represents extreme objectivity, a condition impossible to the ordinary mind and far in excess of even the most naturalistic fiction. In their sections Quentin and Jason are extremely subjective, each imposing a distorted view on experience, in exact contrast to Benjy, who can abstract no order at all. (Kartiganer 2014, 351)

The figure of Benjy is notwithstanding unique within the Faulknerian cosmos. Benjy introduces himself as a sort of static camera that will keep recording the events happening around him no matter what. In fact, that was the interpretation which many critics maintained of him for several years. He was not considered a subject—for he showed no subjectivity whatsoever in the views he has of the world —, but an object; some kind of a system of measurement that presented to the reader the sterilised and unabridged version of the Compson story. Donald M. Kartiganer concludes that "[t]he Benjy section comes first in the novel for the simple reason that Benjy, of all the narrators, cannot lie, which is to say he cannot create. Being an idiot, Benjy is perception prior to consciousness, prior to the human need to abstract from events an intelligible order" (Kartiganer 2014, 351).

Whereas this view of the character is all the more justified, given the exact conditions that surround not only his section but the multiple allusions to Benjy in the other chapters of the novel, it still gives the feeling of being stuck around the

concept of idiocy. Benjy, “the idiot,” has been understood as an empty vessel for no reason other than his lack of traditional memorial path.

> Time as duration—Bergsonian time—is what Faulkner is alluding to here; and it is this sense of time that Benjy, by virtue of his idiocy, has abandoned. Memory does not serve him as it serves the normal mind, becoming part of the mind and integral to the stream of constantly created perception that makes it up[...]. Benjy does not recall, and therefore cannot interpret, the past from the perspective of the present; nor does the past help to determine that perspective. Instead of past and present being a continuum, each influencing the meaning of the other, they have no temporal dimension at all. They are isolated, autonomous moments that do not come “before” or “after.” (Kartiganer 2014, 352)

Whereas Kartiganer justifiably observes Benjy’s inability to unify his past and present moments, he may hold a view on Benjy perhaps too drastic. It is certainly true that Benjy does not partake of Bergsonian time in the sense of hoarding events in terms of their temporal arrangement and interconnection. This still proves to be true independently of this arrangement being a linear one of a more abstract continuum—preferred by Bergson—where past, present, and future interact and modify one another relentlessly. In contrast, Benjy’s lack of arrangement forces him to wander through past and present events without being able to discern the temporal belonging—their label, as it were—of any of them. This inability to categorise, nonetheless, does not entail an inability to instil some sort of subjectivity to these events. As Truchan-Tataryn points out, “[o]nce again these analyses fail to challenge the erroneous association of intellectual disability with a mental, emotional and social emptiness” (Truchan-Tataryn 516).

Now, along with the various assumptions of Benjy’s capacities comes the problematic scenario which some fallacious views on the character have outlined. Benjy is undoubtedly unable to experience any abstract thinking—he does prove so himself—, but this is not a consequence of the temporal circumstances that surround

the character. Certainly, the impossibility to unify a set of temporal experiences does contribute to the handicapped version of the character that has been promoted throughout the years. Nevertheless, the non-temporal constitution of Benjy's nature should not transform him into a mere vessel.

Certainly, he does not show any ordering system according to which he locates events within his psyche other than a very primitive technique of association by similitude. Benjy's "memory" keeps scrolling lived experiences and jumping among one another by a mere pairing of resembling notions. When studying more in depth these notions, it is observed that, on the one hand, they refer to quite primitive concepts—such as the presence of water, darkness, certain smells, or even pain—, and, on the other hand, the associations being made among them are enhanced by synaesthetic pathways.

These correlations, nonetheless, do not serve any purpose to the character. In a sense, they substitute whatever associations an average mind could make in order to present the reader a memorial path of events. In the case of Benjy, however, there is a primitive but limited path for the only purpose of showing the reader there is actually no path at all. Indeed, instead of a path, it should be called a wandering, for the character does show that there is nothing to learn or to be extracted from it. Events, for Benjy, are dissociated from one another, and so he is unable to extract any meaning that could be applied to any other circumstance beyond that particular "recollection."

This disengagement of experiences is made visible several times within the novel. Some of them allude to Benjy's inability to comprehend very basic physical changes taking in the place in the world, like water turning into ice: "'It's froze.' Caddy said. 'Look.' She broke the top of the water and held a piece of it against my face. 'Ice. That means how cold it is[...]'" (*SF* 9). Others show more clearly how disengaged Benjy's times are from one another, since he does not observe any sequence between fire and light. That is, for him, light is not a consequence of building a fire, and, therefore, only an extension of the latter: "The fire came behind me and I went to the fire and sat on the floor, holding the slipper. The fire went higher. It went onto the cushion in Mother's chair" (*SF* 41).

Nevertheless, whereas Benjy is unable to build any relation of cause and effect, his recollections guide the reader through a path that is forged by utter association. For instance, the latter excerpt where Benjy observes the light of the fire projected on Mrs. Compson's cushion leads to a past event when fire was also the central presence for Benjy:

> *Versh set me down and we went into Mother's room. There was a fire. It was rising and falling on the walls. There was another fire in the mirror. I could smell the sickness. It was on a cloth folded on Mother's head. Her hair was on the pillow. The fire didn't reach it, but it shone on her hand, where her rings were jumping.* (*SF* 41)

One could argue that Mrs. Compson serves here also as another figure that joins the two moments together in Benjy's mind. However, her presence within Benjy's psyche always seems to be rather coincidental. Moreover, fire is a favourite of Benjy's. In fact, this idea leads the present study to a sort of rebellion against some previous observations on the character. Whereas it is definitely true that Benjy is presented to the reader, and acts like, a sort of camera—that is, he seems to be monitoring whatever happens around him rather than living in that world—, he just cannot be deprived of his subjectivity. For, in fact, Benjy has favourites, like Caddy, or fire, or flowers.

The problem of this character's objectification has to do with the assumption that an identity that has been deprived of any consecutiveness whatsoever should be likewise dispossessed of any subjectivity or intentionality at all. This discussion is by no means straightforward but rather abstruse, since one could argue that whatever that makes a subject themselves is no more than a product, unconditionally, of their memory. And, since that ever-evolving identity that grows with each experience by linking the present moment to past events and future expectations is just not present in Benjy, his subjectivity has been a theme of debate for decades.

> This freedom from time makes Benjy a unique character indeed. He does not perceive reality but is at one with it; he does not need to create his life but rather possesses it with a striking immediacy. There is a timelessness in the scenes Benjy relives, but it is not the timelessness of art, abstracting time into meaning. It is the absence of the need for art. (Kartiganer 2014, 352)

However, the assumption that Benjy possesses no subjectivity and merely represents a figure of absolute truth within the narrative seems to deprive Benjy of all the complexity which he, in fact, exhibits throughout the Compson story. Kartiganer masterfully dissects Benjy in terms of his temporal inability. He is in fact detached from any temporal consecutiveness that glues his lived experiences into an orthodox memory. And he does, indeed, relive every past "recollection" as if it were the present moment. Due to this lack of interdependence, his memories do not influence each other and thus do not deteriorate.

Nevertheless, the conceptualisation of Benjy as, and only as, a camera due to his temporal disarray results in a somewhat constrained view on the character. Kartiganer's conclusion that Benjy's timelessness "is the absence of the need for art" (Kartiganer 2014, 352) does not seem to harmonise with all the bellowing and the distress which Benjy suffers as a reaction to certain stimuli. In fact, Benjy's agony is to some extent alleviated either by the sympathy of some characters—Caddy and Dilsey being the most, if not the only, prominent ones—and by mundane entities such as flowers or the contemplation of fire. That is to say, from all of the family members, Benjy is the one Compson *par excellence* who does need art, in spite of the latter's simplicity.

Kartiganer, however, establishes that art, whatever its form, depends to some extent on the subject's interpretative act. And, given that Benjy cannot supposedly interpret due to the lack of connection between lived experiences, all he provides the reader with must be truth, not art:

> Spoken with the awareness that time is always present, and thus missing that sense of consecutiveness necessary to our quick

> understanding, Benjy's monologue is difficult; yet the cause of that difficulty persuades us that this is truth, not art. The irony, however, and the reason why the novel does not simply end with this section, is that while Benjy is not himself formulating an interpretation, his succession of lived images passes over into *our* interpretation, becomes a temporal fiction of Compson history that is so clear it is unbelievable. Benjy's scenes, despite fractured chronology and abrupt transitions, meld into a set of clear and consistent character portraits—two dimensional figures with the sharpness of allegorical signposts that elicit from us simplistic evaluations empty of deep moral insight. (Kartiganer 2014, 353)

It must be pointed out, nonetheless, an issue that should be taken into account when evaluating Benjy's abilities. Whereas the canonical studies on the character have always led to observing him as a vessel that only serves to present an unadulterated story to the reader, there is actually no way of confirming whether this is in fact what may be happening inside his consciousness. In other words, the view of Benjy as a character who is unable to melt his past experiences into each other has always been supported by the fact that he presents past and present moments as an indiscernible single ever-present experience. The inability to differentiate between past, present, and future—and, thus, of ordering events chronologically—, does not necessarily entail that the totality of these lived experiences be forever static.

Certainly, the more straightforward reasoning seems to be pointing at the fact that, without any sort of temporal distinction among them, there is a high probability that the individual's experiences be dissociated from one another. Nevertheless, this should be regarded only as, precisely, the most probable result and not the only possibility. First, because if the individual is unaware of the movement of time, they would only be likewise unaware of the ever-growing number of experiences added to the totality of their recollections. And, secondly, because there is actually no plausible way to discern if the contents of Benjy's monologue—the wanderings of Benjy's mind on a specific day—are in fact a collection of unabridged reproductions of lived experiences—that is, a reliving of the original experience as it

once happened. Indeed, the materials of Benjy's memory may have been deteriorated independently of the temporal (dis)array of the character's psyche.

The complexity of Benjy's identity resides precisely in the same uncertainty that brings it to life and shapes it. In a way, every individual should look themselves in the mirror and see Benjy to a certain extent. The only difference is that they choose to ignore the damage that time imposes on their own memories and, consequently, on their identity. Benjy, in contrast, is not free to choose. Now, the fact that he is unable to differentiate between a before and an after does not deprive him of subjectivity. He even shows that this is the case throughout his entire monologue. Not only should his reactions to words, sounds, and smells—among many other stimuli—raise some doubts regarding his utter objectivity. This conception of the character should, in fact, be erased when taking into account one of his most memorable incidents. For once, Benjy was "trying to say:"

> I could hear them talking. I went out the door and I couldn't hear them, and I went down to the gate, where the girls passed with their booksatchels. They looked at me, walking fast, with their heads turned. I tried to say, but they went on, and I went along the fence, trying to say, and they went faster. Then they were running and I came to the corner of the fence and I couldn't go any further, and I held to the fence, looking after them and trying to say. (*SF* 35)

Certainly, the understanding of Benjy as a source of absolute truth is quite compelling. Not only because many, if not most, of the character's features point to that conclusion, but also because the first section serves as a perfect counterpart to the following two agonisingly individualistic Compson monologues. That, together with the fact that William Faulkner himself highlighted that Benjy does not, strictly speaking, remember, initiated the camera-man theory.

Take, for instance, the actual transcript of Benjy's stream of consciousness. Not only does the lack of linguistic ornamentation support the "bearer of truth" view of the character, but so do subtler techniques like the length of sentences or even

punctuation. For example, there is an absolute lack of the vocative comma in Benjy's "recollections" of conversations with the members of his family:

> "All right." Caddy said. "Mother's not coming in tonight." she said. "So we still have to mind me."
> "Yes." Dilsey said. "Go to sleep, now."
> "Mother's sick." Caddy said. "She and Damuddy are both sick."
> "Hush." Dilsey said. "You go to sleep."
> [...]
> "Is Mother very sick." Caddy said.
> "No." Father said. "Are you going to take good care of Maury."
> "Yes." Caddy said. (*SF* 50)[26]

Not only does he eliminate the vocative comma completely, but he also seems to substitute it for a full stop. The use of the full stop, nonetheless, does not imply that Benjy capitalise the next word, unless, interestingly, the next word is someone's name: "'Mother's not coming in tonight.' she said." (*SF* 50). This accounts to saying that the discussion on whether Benjy is a source of pure truth, a mere supplier of re-enactments that do not lose any quality over time, is not only somewhat justified. Also, it remains quite an interesting counterpart to a more organic view of this one Compson member.

Perhaps the ultimate reason that triggers the objectification of Benjy is the (un)conscious comparison which readers and critics have executed between the youngest of the Compsons and Quentin—whose section, to make things even more interesting, comes right after Benjy's. It is certainly hard to avoid categorising Benjy as, and only as, a spectator when the text itself experiences such dramatic and sudden changes in nature from Benjy's vacuumed use of language to his older brother's opening scene:

> When the shadow of the sash appeared on the curtains it was between seven and eight oclock and then I was in time again,

26 As an additional fact to the previous quote, but unrelated to Benjy's subjectivity, notice that Mr. Compson does not refer to his youngest son as Benjy, but as Maury.

> hearing the watch. It was Grandfather's and when Father gave it to me he said I give you the mausoleum of all hope and desire; it's rather excruciating-ly[...] apt that you will use it to gain the reducto absurdum[...] of all human experience which can fit your individual needs no better than it fitted his or his father's. I give it to you not that you may remember time, but that you might forget it now and then for a moment and not spend all your breath trying to conquer it. Because no battle is ever won he said. They are not even fought. The field only reveals to man his own folly and despair, and victory is an illusion of philosophers and fools. (*SF* 50)

As Kartiganer points out, Quentin's monologue revolves around the influence of Mr. Compson. "Quentin's need to alter an unbearable reality through language owes much to the teachings of his father" (Kartiganer 2014, 356). Nevertheless, and even though "Mr. Compson's theme has been the futility of human action" (Kartiganer 2014, 357), Quentin's life is an attempt to rebel against his father's views on the world. While the theme of Benjy was the constancy of nature, the theme of Quentin is the constancy of time.

For Quentin, however, his resistance to that continuity of time is also surrounded by the search of meaning and the inevitably fragmentation which time brings along. The search of meaning for Quentin, however, is effectively seen as the search for his private delusions and fantasies. His section reflects "the slow uncovering of a denied self-understanding, in which meanings for Quentin's experiences contrary to the ones he consciously intends gradually emerge from beneath his evasions and rationalizations" (Zender 747). It is noteworthy saying that, after Quentin reflects on the watch at the very beginning of his section, he ends up twisting its hands. This gesture is eminently relevant for Quentin, since he finally distances himself from the significance which time—and everything it entails—holds for him as an individual.

> On June 2, Quentin's watch becomes a functional symbol of his family's double bind. Given to him as the treasured legacy of his

> legendary grandfather[...] the watch alternatively communicates and metacommunicates, and oscillates in its meaning from a sign of the family's past grandeur to a concrete representation of human fragmentation and destruction. [...] [P]aradoxically, the watch represents both hope and the futility of desire. The watch, then, both legitimizes Quentin's effort and signifies the futility of any action, since all life must end in death. Furthermore, the symbol is meant by his father to be both observed and ignored[...]. (Storhoff 244)

Quentin is, nonetheless, both unable to observe it—he ends up breaking the watch's hands—and unable to ignore it—he still decides to bring the watch with him on that fateful day. The fact that he decides, however, to break its hands on that precise day is exceedingly conclusive, for it *marks* Quentin's decision to kill himself. On a first reading, logically, one is pretty much unable to discern how symbolic this gesture really is. By breaking—or twisting—the hands, Quentin acknowledges he is no longer able to remain in the past; the watch keeps ticking, after all. Yet, this should not be interpreted as a surrender to time's continuity. Quentin loses to time, but he is still unwilling to follow its rules. Consequently, he decides to kill himself.

> So it is that Quentin cannot throw the watch away, or leave it in his room, or in any other way dispose of it: He must at once keep it and repudiate it. In accordance with his father's nihilism (the metacommunication in his father's gift), Quentin is compelled to acknowledge its emptiness by resisting its significance in his life, so he breaks off the hands, as if to assert literally its pointlessness. (Storhoff 244)

As a counterpart to Quentin's, Benjy's tragedy depends not so much on time passing by, since he's oblivious to it, but on the mutability of the world surrounding him. Of course, this is accentuated—as it is for each of the three Compson brothers—in the figure of Caddy and, specifically, her sexual maturity. Quentin's agony, on the other hand, is directly linked with the moving forward of time. His narrative is

disturbingly full of watches, clocks, ticking, bells, growing shadows—as day slowly turns into night—, and reflections, which of course allude to the meaninglessness Mr. Compson once tried to delegate to him.

In a way, Benjy tries to substitute language with life while being oblivious of life's changing nature, whereas Quentin tries to substitute life with language while being painfully aware of the relentlessness of time.

> The deliberate flight from fact that dominates Quentin's monologue reverses the effect of Benjy's monologue that precedes it. Benjy has made us aware of the distortions of the *literal*; his language is exact, free of bias. It is truth, not metaphor. Yet this exaggerated objectivism results in the most simplistic of moral designs. Quentin, on the other hand, has plunged into metaphor; but in doing so he reduces subjectivism to an art of decadence[...]. (Kartiganer 2014, 357)

There is, however, a magnificent observation which James M. Mellard brings forward, which is that even though Quentin is usually understood as a much more verbally driven character, one should not forget that he remains silent during most of his monologue. Certainly, so happens to every Compson brother, but whereas it is clear that Benjy does not articulate a single word and that Jason, in contrast, maybe says too much, it is not so clear whether Quentin surrounds himself with words or images. This has not so much to do with the fact that they do or do not articulate as characters in a narration, but with the *shape* which their discourses hold in their minds.

> Although Quentin obviously represents a stage of verbal development beyond Benjy's, he still remains quite inarticulate in many ways; while Benjy is pre-verbal, Quentin in real sense is pre-discursive, for his interest is generally, like Benjy's, in the image, rather than in the word *per se*, and his interest in words is usually in their lyrical sounds and associations. (Mellard 223-224)

The actual articulation component is rather interesting when it comes to the two Compson brothers who can, indeed, articulate. Faulkner clearly surrounds Jason with the verbal presence which lacks in Quentin's monologue. And, to do so, he appropriately places these two characters in a more social sphere, in the case of Jason, or a more individualistic one, in the case of Quentin.

Consequently, Jason is never alone, while Quentin hardly ever interacts with anyone and, furthermore, the only character who really keeps him company—the little girl he encounters during his wandering—turns out to not speak at all. "Faulkner places him outside the trivia of human interaction (when he needs physical help, Shreve does his talking for him) so that his interior monologue can grow in strength" (Wagner-Martin 2002a, 268). This choice of surrounding leads to Quentin's interior world of shadows, reflections, and echoes which conform his personal imagery. On the other hand, in Jason's section, "even when he thinks to himself, someone (in the store, the street, his home) is near. Most of Jason's thoughts come to us as fragments of dialogue: by the nature of his life Jason is usually involved with someone" (Wagner-Martin 2002a, 268).

Perhaps it could be stated that Jason is as surrounded by people as Quentin is by watches and clocks and bells ticking. The very physicality of the world around them does reflect the inner workings of their private consciousness. Accordingly, in Jason's setting, a much more domestic feeling pervades the narrative. He is either at home or at work, and any deviation from those two points seems ends up making him late for something else. Jason's oral quality, besides responding to the many people he encounters, also answers to his urgent need to preserve the Compson *name*.

In short, then, while Benjy and Quentin are faced by the constancy of nature and time—respectively—, Jason is faced by the constancy of family and social values.

> Everything Jason does stems from his desperately need to put up a front, to keep the Compson name—such as it is now—intact. It is Jason, not Quentin, who speaks again and again of responsibilities of

> one's own flesh and blood, of the ancestry of the family. Jason is proud of being a Compson. But he can be proud only if he protects the family name—from poverty, from slander. [...] Jason fights irrationally to preserve that family name. It is all he has. (Wagner-Martin 2002a, 261).

In a sense, Quentin is the most tragic of the three Compson brothers, not only for obvious reasons—he commits suicide—, but for a simpler truth surrounding him. While each of the Compson brothers has their own cage, Quentin is the only one who is plainly aware of it and still willing to embrace his own imprisonment. There is, of course, no possible way to discern this character in depth unless *Absalom, Absalom!* is taken into consideration as well. First, because the events described in *The Sound and the Fury* are no more than the logical result from those contained in *Absalom*. And, second, because Quentin's story—like many other Faulknerian character's—is cyclic. He is the consequence of others' stories and obsessions, just as Mr. Compson uncannily foretold readers seven years prior to the publication of the origins of Quentin's drama:

> And Father said it's because you are a virgin: dont you see? Women are never virgins. Purity is a negative state and therefore contrary to nature. It's nature is hurting you not Caddy and I said That's just words and he said So is virginity and I said you dont know. You cant know and he said Yes. On the instant when we come to realise that tragedy is second-hand. (*SF* 77)

Quentin's tragedy is second-hand, that is, it has already been owned by someone else. The publication of *Absalom, Absalom!* puts an end to the circular path followed by Quentin and that cannot be foreseen by only reading *The Sound and the Fury*. In that sense, those words uttered by Mr. Compson can be considered as part of a most marvellous scheme; whether Faulkner intended it to be deliberate or it just happened to be accidental. Moreover, one should not ignore the fact that second-hand —especially taking into account the linguistic style and punctuation used in

Quentin's section—could be likewise alluding to the second hand on a clock used to mark the passing seconds.

Time, in the second monologue of *The Sound and the Fury*, is more than just a presence. It seems to be the very medium through which Quentin moves and orders his existence. It serves as an echoing chamber where memory arises to impersonate the present to the extent of erasing it almost completely. Memory, somehow, also predicts Quentin's imminent death:

> The hour began to strike. The sparrow quit swapping eyes and watched me steadily with the same one until the chimes ceased, as if he were listening too. Then he flicked off the ledge and was gone. It was a while before the last stroke ceased vibrating. It stayed in the air, more felt than heard, for a long time. Like all the bells that ever rang still ringing in the long dying light-rays [...]. If things just finished themselves. Nobody else there but her and me. If we could just have done something so dreadful that they would have fled hell except us. [...] Father said That's sad too people cannot do anything that dreadful they cannot do anything very dreadful at all they cannot even remember tomorrow what seemed dreadful today and I said, You can shirk all things and he said, Ah can you. And I will look down and see my murmuring bones and the deep water like wind, like a roof of wind, and after a long time they cannot distinguish even bones upon the lonely and inviolate sand. (*SF* 52-53)

Strictly speaking, this foreseeing of Quentin's death is only a prediction in the eyes of the reader. For Quentin, nonetheless, this could be no foreseeing at all, but merely one of the many convoluted thoughts he is mixing up at that specific moment while he looks out the window and listens to the bells. In no other Faulknerian character is memory so flawlessly brought to life since, whereas Quentin's overall story is definitely circular, his more instantaneous and urgent deliberations are shaped as an agitated cataclysm. His mind is definitely in distress, and it keeps coming back to past moments—or perhaps only past thoughts that have

never abandoned him but that never actually took place—to erase some part of the present agony.

Since he is the most eminent character when it comes to representing the stream of consciousness, he undoubtedly upholds to the duality of being both a spectator and an agent of his own tragedy at the same time. William James, philosopher and psychologist, introduces the (im)personal nature of consciousness and thinking, especially in relation to time:

> The first and foremost concrete fact which everyone will affirm to belong to his inner experience is the fact that *consciousness of some sort goes on. 'States of mind' succeed each other in him*. If we could say in English 'it thinks,' as we say 'it rains' or 'it blows,' we should be stating the fact most simply and with the minimum of assumption. As we cannot, we must simply say that *thought goes on*. (James 297)

In a sense, Quentin is both the victim and the executioner. That should, however, be of no surprise to the reader at this point, since the present text has extensively discussed and maintained that the individual is somewhat accidental. With no intention of directing the argument towards hard determinism, the present study must, nonetheless, remind that most of the features that shape the identity of the individual are in no extent under the latter's control. Events, genetics, culture and the randomness of *when* certain experiences are lived determine who one *is*. Nevertheless, the sense of control is an overall illusion, just as the feeling that one's consciousness is, essentially, continuous.

> Within each personal consciousness, thought is sensibly continuous.[27] I can only define 'continuous' as that which is without break, crack, or division. The only breaches that can well be conceived to occur within the limits of a single mind would either be *interruptions, time-gaps* during which the consciousness wen out; or

27 This sentence appeared in bold formatting in its original source, which has been erased here for purposes of cohesion with the rest of the quotations.

> they would be breaks in the content of the thought, so abrupt that what followed had no connection whatever with what went before. The proposition that consciousness feels continuous, means two things:
>
> a. That even where there is a time-gap the consciousness after it feels as if it belonged together with the consciousness before it, as another part of the same self;
>
> b. That the changes from one moment to another in the quality of the consciousness are never absolutely abrupt. (James 299)

In short, James is defining that consciousness is continuous only if two premises are met. On the one hand, the small gaps within consciousness must not interrupt a feeling of belonging, of still recognising oneself as one's self after a period of unconsciousness. And, on the other hand, the nature of a given consciousness must not vary abruptly. That is, the features that make an individual themselves must be somewhat maintained for a prolonged period so that two different consciousnesses belonging to the same subject, but picked from two separate moments in time, be, to some extent, consistent.

These two premises turn out to be rather interesting when applied to the figure of Quentin since Faulkner seems to be deeply upsetting those exact two pillars. To begin with, Quentin's monologue starts, quite logically, right after he wakes up from sleep—that is, from one of those time-gaps in consciousness. And, in the second place, the reader is provided with the retelling of the day when Quentin deliberately intends to kill himself. Thus, Faulkner decides to introduce Quentin's consciousness in a rather obscure way: Quentin's consciousness has just been brought back from the void of sleep and, furthermore, takes the leads towards a much more obscure emptiness. While the author emphasises the absolute lack of continuity of Quentin's consciousness, it rather feels as if this proposition could be applied to any consciousness in general.

In other words, nothing escapes the everlasting influence of time—lest of all, memory—and the gaps which it inevitably introduces within consciousness. Not even time does, for what once was reshaped will undoubtedly be redefined *later on*.

In fact, there is not even a before or an after, for—as the publishing dates of *The Sound and the Fury* and *Absalom, Absalom!* prove—Quentin's dispositions in the former novel are re-examined in the latter, after his death, given rise to a temporal compendium of disarray. Of course, the present text does not intend to demonstrate that such a narrative organisation be unclear or bizarre, but it is nonetheless noteworthy of consideration for this particular collection of narrations dealing with time itself. When it comes to characters dealing with the nature of time and memory, and the influence which these terms maintain over themselves, it is all the more necessary taking into account the manner in which these works are interrelated to one another.

Quentin's story cannot be easily defined and classified, for not only does it embody a convoluted disarray of temporality and memory in itself, but it is likewise presented to the reader in the same unorderly fashion. This should, by no means, be categorised as a rare exception, for it can be extrapolated to multiple characters within the Faulknerian narrative. The texts show a multiplicity of temporal and reminiscent confusion as the basis of their narrative pattern, not as an anomaly.

> Both the narcissistic origin of doubling and the scenario of madness leading to the suicidal murder of the double help to illuminate the internal narrative of Quentin Compson's last day given in *The Sound and the Fury* and in turn to illuminate the story he tells in *Absalom*. In the fictive time of the novels, Quentin and Shreve's joint narration, which occupies the last half of *Absalom*, takes place in January 1910, and Quentin's suicide occurs six months later on June 2, 1910, but the account of that suicide is given in a novel that appeared seven years before *Absalom*. Since we already know Quentin's end when we observe his attempt in *Absalom* to explain the reason for Bon's murder, we not only participate in that effort but also engage at the same time in an analogous effort of our own to explain Quentin's murder of himself. And it is only when we see in the murder of Bon by Henry what Quentin saw in it—that Quentin's

> own situation appears to be a repetition of the earlier story—that we begin to understand the reason for Quentin's suicide. (Irwin 35)

The readings which the county of Yoknapatawpha provides give rise to all and nothing, since not even the stories collected through the texts are easily ordered or explained. Certainly, some of the appendixes help to illuminate this so-called reorganisation which many readers crave for, both within a single text as within multiple ones. Such is the case of the appendix giving a deeper insight into the Compson family. However, it was not included in the first publication of *The Sound and the Fury*, but it was written for *The Portable Faulkner* instead. The untiming of text and appendix, together with the fact that what some expected to be a clear reorganisation of the story resulted to be more lyrical and less factual, removes any possibility to recover an unbiased report from the author. As much as any of his characters, Faulkner never hinted to be in possession of a clean development of the events the readers have access to.

Accordingly, Quentin's story is never static. His is a story that does not develop nor aspires to a complete temporal disorder, but it still is not presented in—nor is it fond of—a linear fashion either. Neither the character nor the author show such inclination. As such, his story is so deteriorated and deprived of its originality, given the numerous external influences it circles around, that Quentin's very identity is doomed to oppose itself. This antagonism of selves does not only answer to Quentin's individual concerns, but, also, to a conglomerate that has been imposed to him:

> We noted first of all that Quentin's failure to kill Candace's seducer and thus fulfill the role of protective brother has its reverse image in Henry's murder of Bon to safeguard the honor of their sister. Also, Quentin's incestuous love for Candace is mirrored by Bon's love for Judith. That Quentin identifies with both Henry, the brother as protector, and Bon, the brother as seducer, is not extraordinary, for in Quentin's narrative they are not so much two separate figures as two aspects of the same figure. (Irwin 28)

The presence of gaps within Quentin's identity, among other characters, is not fortuitous. In contrast, Dilsey is free from any temporal obsessions—any obsessions in general, if one is not to take religion into account. She succeeds at restoring natural time within the Compson household even when "[t]he Compsons' eventual degeneration renders even the clock in their kitchen unable to record time accurately" (Bollinger 58). Dilsey's narrative comes last for multiple reasons, but perhaps the most eminent of them is that hers is a full narrative with either no gaps or where no consideration is given to them.

> Of the characters in *The Sound and the Fury*, only Dilsey and a few other black characters are able to live up to this necessary imperative [of living one day at a time]. All the other characters are obsessed with the bright ungraspable phantoms they glimpse in the dead past or the stillborn future. (Chappell 214)

It is noteworthy, however, that Dilsey does not have a narrative entirely of her own. Her voice is borrowed to present a decentralised discourse which, in the end, feels as if it belonged to her. It, nonetheless, does not. Had Dilsey been included as a fourth narrator, there would be no possible way to order, as it were, the narrative. The fourth chapter would need, in that case, to be placed alongside the three first monologues, and it would therefore offer no superior truth.

Her section, in contrast, not being really hers, offers the reader a grasp from which some sense of omniscient authority can be extracted. The irony, however, dwells in the fact that whereas the fourth section cannot be said to belong to a subjective narrator *per se*, it still does not render any resolution regarding the previous sections. "The fourth narrator does not resolve them but instead demonstrates, in conjunction with them, the impossibility of an omniscient point of view" (Burton 497). No restoration is ever achieved.

In short, the many ways in which Faulknerian memory is depicted remains a vital component in order to understand and to extract some order from this corpus of texts. However, convoluted memory tends to represent the individual as a

fragmentation and not as a unity, for it actually cannot do otherwise. The origin of this fragmentation, nonetheless, seems to arise within the character's tendency to a more or less temporally oriented setting within their psyche.

Thus, characters who are integrated within the motion of life are conceived as in harmony with either nature or the community. They present no major conflict with regard to their identity. This is certainly the case of Lena, who, by being in imminent opposition to the figure of Joe Christmas, is attributed even some godly or mythic notions. She is not at odds with time, but somewhat even represents time herself. Paradoxically, Lena and Christmas share the same lack of background, but the latter embodies the ultimate conflict against his body and, thus, against nature. Joe's memory is not in conflict with past events, as Joanna's or Hightower's, but it still remains undefined. His is yet another example of the many shapes and incongruities in which memory can be depicted throughout this literature.

Eventually, memory is observed as inevitably filled with gaps that derive into the greater problem of the continuity of consciousness. The process by which a subject comes to be themselves, although obscure, represents an issue that certainly preoccupies Faulknerian works and it is personified as a major motif of these narratives. Either by emphasising its dissociation—as in the case of Benjy—, its disarray—in the case of Quentin—or its unwillingness to progress—in the case of Joanna or Hightower—, the character's memorial path cannot be restored. In fact, Faulknerian memory entails the never-ending conflict which each consciousness must face regarding the fragmentation of psychic time. The arrangement of each character's memory does illustrate their conflict by exhibiting a specific pattern of discontinuity, whatever the nature of this conflict may be.

8/ Inherited Doom and the Ancestry of Identity

The problematic scenario of temporal disarray that arises in many characters, only most clearly in Quentin, leads to a notion that will define many of Faulkner's later novels: memory is not self-contained. The successful attempts on building a memorial source emanating from a given character are likewise present in later works, but it ends up portraying different motivations. As such, *Light in August* serves as the ideal transition from the pure and unconfined consciousness found in *The Sound and the Fury* or *As I Lay Dying* to the more restrained and collapsing consciousness found in *Absalom, Absalom!* or *Go Down, Moses*.

The reason for this transition dwells in the fact that *Light in August* presents its major and minor characters as more intertwined. Undoubtedly, there is an individualistic component that still remains within the text—as it does for *Absalom* and *Moses*—, but characters are not that detached from one another as they used to be, paradoxically, in the Compson and the Bundren families.

The conception of memory as not self-contained has been explored by this study both philosophically and literary, but it is especially in *Absalom* and *Moses* that

this notion regains a different quality. There is no point in denying that both Compsons and Bundrens still partake of the multidimensional aspect of memory, which can never be the result of the individual alone. Nevertheless, there is a special emphasis on the true ownership of memory as such in later works. Certainly, the individual is always forced to face themselves as somewhat foreign in Faulknerian literature, but *Light in August* introduces a fatal sense of predetermined course to its characters.

Light in August, since it somehow embodies the transitional text placed between these two arrangements of memory, is still able to present the reader with an ending that promotes some sense of future. Whereas *The Sound and the Fury*'s end is depicted in a somewhat cyclic manner, *As I Lay Dying* commits entirely to a comic ending that opens a new chapter for the Bundren family. In a sense, *Light in August* is a mixture of these two, since Lena is finally placed again on the road *and* there is certainly a feeling of the narrative looking towards the future and not the past.

Absalom and *Moses*, however, do not follow this pattern. These two texts look predominantly to the past and offer no certainty at all regarding a possible future. They are grounded in the stories of people long dead and do, to some extent, even ignore the present. As already introduced, this is achieved by means of redirecting the memorial recollection. Memory is not as attached to the individual in these two works as it was regarding previous characters and events. Characters from *Absalom* and *Moses* face a strong sense of inescapable fate. This is, in particular, clearly observed in Quentin's demise, which originates in the events pertaining to the Sutpen family:

> As Quentin and Shreve re-examine Sutpen's identity, or, more accurately, his attempt to create, to design an identity for himself as father and grandfather, Quentin broods over the way his own identity has been determined through the inheritance of his father and grandfather. He broods over the letter [which Mr. Compson sent him]. He resists the appropriation it represents to him. (Krause 277)

Absalom, Absalom! deals with multiple temporal lines, but it focuses on three main paths: the past story of the Sutpen family, the recent past where Miss Rosa tells Quentin about the Sutpen story, and the present moment where Quentin, in his turn, retells the story to Shreve. The novel, however, tricks the reader into believing the present moments serve as points to let the past story rest for a bit, as if to distance from past events for a while. This excerpt—more linguistically relaxed—suggests so at the beginning of Chapter 6:

> There was snow on Shreve's overcoat sleeve, his ungloved blond square hand red and raw with cold, vanishing. Then on the table before Quentin, lying on the open text book beneath the lamp, the white oblong of envelope, the familiar blurred mechanical *Jefferson Jan 10 1910 Miss* and then, opened, the *My dear son* in his father's sloped fine hand[.] (*AA* 141)

The text even insists on making harsh comparisons between the two locations where Quentin is placed; Mississippi and Massachusetts:

> [T]hat dead dusty summer where he had prepared for Harvard so that his father's hand could lie on a strange lamplit table in Cambridge; that dead summer twilight—the wistaria, the cigar-smell, the fireflies—attenuated up from Mississippi and into this strange room, across this strange iron New England snow[.] (*AA* 141)

Soon enough, nonetheless, the text demonstrates that this juxtaposition not only represents the antagonistic forces of the past against those of the present, but also that the temporal line dealing with the present is in no way a relaxing point for the narrative. Indeed, notice that there is absolutely no place within the narrative where the text could be said to be aiming at some sense of future. In fact, one does already know what awaits Quentin less than five months in time upon the receiving of that letter.

All of the story's convulsion does happen in the present, concretely in the room which Quentin and Shreve share in Harvard. There is no direct extract of any of the Sutpens. Everything the reader know is what Quentin knows. The only "original" source is Miss Rosa, and soon enough the reader learns she did not presence the majority of the events she describes and, furthermore, she does not show impartiality while describing them. This is withal applicable to Quentin, who seems to be as willing, although less credited, as Miss Rosa is to borrow the story as his own. In a way, her retelling feels an impartial but natural one, since she either took a role during some of the events or was close enough to the Sutpen family for the reader to trust her.

Quentin, however, shows a more convoluted digestion—or, better, indigestion—of the Sutpens. Concretely, of the story concerning Charles Bon and the two Sutpen siblings; Henry and Judith. Their story, of course, mirrors Quentin and Caddy's incestuous—if one is to believe Quentin's will—relationship. The present text has already drawn attention towards this matter and how Quentin decides to remain silent at key moments of the narrative while Shreve reflects on the incest surrounding Henry, Judith, and Charles Bon.

Although difficult, it is nonetheless possible to deviate Quentin's reinterpretation of the Sutpen siblings in order to find out that the incest was probably not even a crucial component of that specific storyline. Take the next excerpt as example:

> *—He cannot marry her, Henry.*
>
> Now Henry speaks.
>
> —You said that before. I told you then, And now, and now it wont be much longer now and then we wont have anything left: honor nor pride nor God since God quit us four years ago only He never thought it necessary to tell us; no shoes nor clothes and no need for them; not only no land to make food but no need for the food and when you dont have God and honor and pride, nothing matters except that there is the old mindless meat that dont even care if it was defeat or victory, that wont even die, that will be out in the

> woods and fields, grubbing up roots and weeds.—Yes. I have decided. Brother or not, I have decided. I will. I will.
>
> —He must not marry her, Henry.
>
> —Yes. I said Yes at first, but I was not decided then. I didn't let him. But now I have had four years to decide in. I will. I am going to.
>
> —He must not marry her, Henry. His mother's father told me that her mother had been a Spanish woman. I believed him; it was not until after he was born that I found out that his mother was part negro. (*AA* 283)

All of this, of course, only takes place in Quentin's mind. Either Quentin's or Shreve's, but since Shreve is paradoxically doing most of the talking in that Harvard room, it somehow feels more appropriate that it belong to Quentin's (un)conscious wanderings. In fact, that excerpt belongs to a fragment that is deliberately in italics and that comes right after one of Shreve's pauses. The fragment ends—as the text abandons italics and goes back to regular type—, indeed, as Shreve resumes the talking. Consequently, and although it cannot be proved nor disproved, it is rather sensible to attribute it to Quentin, especially taking its motifs into account.

There are, as a matter of fact, multiple similarities between that imaginary conversation between Thomas and Henry Sutpen and the many fragments of conversation maintained between Quentin and his father, both in *The Sound and the Fury* and *Absalom, Absalom!*. Not to mention the convoluted and tortuous manner in which Henry—Quentin—speaks. If there is, in fact, any doubt that this took place in Quentin's mind, it has to do with the fact that Quentin is so unreliable that not even his unreliability can be determined for good.

Indeed, it is precisely Quentin who indirectly gives away that he has more information—probably provided by Miss Rosa—than he has been able, or willing, to communicate. Still, Quentin lets Shreve ponder several scenarios where Henry tries to validate a supposedly incestuous relationship between Judith and Charles:

> [A]nd maybe it would be two or three days, then Henry said suddenly, cried suddenly: 'But kings have done it! Even dukes! There was that Lorraine duke named John something that married his sister. The Pope excommunicated him but it didn't hurt! It didn't hurt! They were still husband and wife. They were still alive. They still loved!' then again, loud, fast: 'But you will have to wait! You will have to give me time! Maybe the war will settle it and we wont need to!' (*AA* 273)

Quentin, however, remains silent throughout Shreve's rambling, only to give away a single line a few pages later, hidden among the incest narrative: "*So it's the miscegenation, not the incest, which you cant bear*" (*AA* 285). This, again imaginary, is supposedly uttered by Charles Bon while confronting Henry's decision not to allow the marriage to take place after, yet again, the imaginary conversation held with Thomas Sutpen.

While the incest motif seems too much appropriate to the situation, even though it does feel rather amplified due to Quentin's personal inclinations, the miscegenation motif does not seem to arise from Quentin's mind. In contrast, it seems it might have been part of the information provided by Miss Rosa and that, due to Quentin's predisposition, was never transmitted or highlighted in his retelling to Shreve.

Now, while this might look like a fortuitous act, it is of utmost relevance regarding the inherited—usually destructive—fate which characters experience in *Absalom* and *Moses*. Even though some of Faulkner's works might be considered as part of the southern gothic genre—*As I Lay Dying* and, to some extent, *Absalom, Absalom!*—, there is no expression of the paranormal within them, except, of course, Addie's monologue. As such, one might as well expand that argument and discuss that, consequently, fate and destiny should not embed a mystic force either within the novels.

It could be thoroughly argued whether fate exists as a force that shapes Faulknerian characters' lives and doings. On the one hand, the texts follow, as it has been shown, rather circular structures, not only regarding their singleness as

independent pieces of work, but also in relation to the conglomerate of novels. In short, Yoknapatawpha stories work as jointly as gears in a machinery. This arrangement, logically, gives the impression that some higher force *must* be in charge of placing components "each in its ordered place" (*SF* 209). Yoknapatawpha stories feel too much accomplished and integral to one another to simply not think of this world and its characters as being ruled by something else in charge.

On the other hand, one must set this tempting interpretation aside, for there really are no hints whatsoever of such superior—or, even, parallel—force. Therefore, the previous remark should be brought forward at this point. Quentin did indeed learn of Thomas Sutpen's disapproval of miscegenation, quite certainly from Miss Rosa—although Mr. Compson could have also been the source of information—, and he decided to set this piece of the puzzle aside. Whether this was done consciously or unconsciously, one could never tell, probably not even Quentin could. That action, though, is relevant inasmuch as it proves, to some extent, that Quentin is the one reshaping the past.

This should not come as a surprise at this point of the present study, for it is all Quentin ever does: "character after character appears to be reinventing the past in order to create a sense of identity" (Gray 2002, 401-402). He reshapes and relives his and others' stories to accommodate within the past as a whole his personal obsessions. It happened, most eminently, in relation to Caddy's loss of virginity, where he kept seeing it as an affront to his sister instead of Caddy's consensual sexual awakening. And, indeed, it kept happening again during his involvement with Miss Rosa and the Sutpens story.

In other words, Faulknerian characters, the ones that seem doomed and condemned to repeat the same mistakes from the past, can be argued to actually be doing so freely. This, however, does not mean voluntarily and mindfully. In fact, they always do so either without realising of the repetition of the past or feeling like they themselves are an instrument of fate. It is not that their identity is no longer theirs, because it never has been fully so, but rather that their identity has been, quite earnestly in some cases, sacrificed to the past. This is the case of Hightower, who is arguably just as much, if not even more so, obsessed with the past as Quentin is.

Only the former shows a more selfish resolution, since Hightower lets his obsession consume those around him, instead of letting it consume himself.

> Thinking is running too heavily now; he should know it, sense it. Still the vehicle is unaware of what it is approaching. ‘And after that, I have paid. I have bought my ghost, even though I did pay for it with my life. And who can forbid me doing that? It is any man’s privilege to destroy himself, so long as he does not injure anyone else, so long as he lives to and of himself——’ He stops suddenly. Motionless, unbreathing, there comes upon him a consternation which is about to be actual horror. He is aware of the sand now; with the realization of it he feels within himself a gathering as though for some tremendous effort. Progress now is still progress, yet it is now indistinguishable from the recent past like the already traversed inches of sand which cling to the turning wheel, raining back with a dry hiss that before this should have warned him: ‘.......revealed to my wife my hunger, my ego.......instrument of her despair and shame.......’ (*LIA* 490)

That is the exact moment of realisation when Hightower comes to terms not only with the consequences which his own choices have had for him, but also for his wife and her tragic death. This is one of the greatest depictions of thought and memory at work which Faulkner ever wrote. For Hightower, he decided to shape the workings of his mind as some sort of vehicle, of wheel or machine, whose tiny components get trapped by the interference of correlated thinking or are rushed and agitated by the torments of memory. After his epiphany, as it were, Hightower’s restlessness is somewhat unburdened, and so is the grasp of memory:

> The wheel, released, seems to rush on with a long sighing sound. He sits motionless in its aftermath, in his cooling sweat, while the sweat pours and pours. The wheel whirls on. It is going fast and smooth now, because it is freed now of burden, of vehicle, axle, all. In the

> lambent suspension of August into which night is about to fully come, it seems to engender and surround itself with a faint glow like a halo. The halo is full of faces. The faces are not shaped with suffering, not shaped with anything: not horror, pain, not even reproach. They are peaceful, as though they have escaped into an apotheosis; his own among them. (*LIA* 491)

And still, that chapter dedicated entirely to Hightower coming to terms with himself, finishes as follows: "[y]et, leaning forward in the window, his bandaged head huge and without depth above the twin blobs of his hands upon the ledge, it seems to him that he still hears them: the wild bugles and the clashing sabres and the dying thunder of hooves" (*LIA* 493). He willingly refuses to let go of his grandfather's ghost, being killed every night in his memory. It is even hard to tell whether he is willing to accept the responsibility of his wife's demise or if he merely acknowledges it. He is clearly tormented by it, only he cannot escape the ever-returning shadow of the grandfather. He is not even interested in finding a legitimate and truthful version of this episode: "[c]onsistency being as inconsequential as fact, Hightower is not bothered by the contrary versions he has heard of his grandfather's death" (Kartiganer 2002, 19).

Hightower's outcome, however, feels rather conclusive compared to some of his town fellows. Take Christmas, for instance, the king of undecipherable identities if there was ever one. Compared to Hightower, Christmas' development seems a much more apprehensive and distressed one. Hightower decides to give up his life, he voluntarily sacrifices his freedom so as to come back every night to that single past moment that does not even belong to him. His identity, therefore, is somewhat built by him. He made awful choices, but it could be said it was him who made them. Christmas, on the other hand, has been thrown to the world with too little inheritance. In fact, he has never been given the choice to at least decide for himself; his identity has been consequently suffering bruises and fractures inflicted by others —his biological grandfather and adoptive parents, among others.

> Indeed, if Joe Christmas could understand his own identity as past-inflected but *present-enacted* performance rather than as the timeless (yet unknown) essence of inherited blood, if he could accommodate his sense of self to the moment-by-moment enacting of self that his creator actually depicts, he would[...] cease to be Joe Christmas. [...] Identity is posited as singular and inalterable essence. It is deranging him that he is not sure who he is—i.e., who he was born as and must die as. Faulkner leaves *that* identity blank while showing, page after page, his performative one. (Weinstein 2005, 189)

Christmas, unlike Quentin, for instance, cannot be said to willingly remain within a past framework surrendered to him by his predecessors, because there are no predecessors to begin with. His demise, rather than being inherited or obtained is decided by and within the community. Philip Weinstein observes that Christmas not only lacks memories but he also lacks speaking. There are not many times when he does, indeed, talk. And this does not only seem to originate within the community's intention to keep the stray ones quiet, but also in his utter lack of interest to express himself since there are no certainties to be expressed in the first place.

> The speaking person presses toward self-possession, toward a critical grasp of the structure of values — the implicit ideology — lurking in his discourse. But Joe Christmas is spoken, he does not speak, and by not speaking he can in no way revise the culture's assumptions wrought into the language by which he confused knows himself. Rather, all that is unworkable in that discourse and those assumptions surfaces in his disaster. His final bodily annihilation maps the failure of the whole scene of unconscious training[.] (Weinstein 2008, 107)

The subject in *Light in August* must face not only an acquired set of integrity components to cope with one's self; they also must create a correlation between their inherited identity system and what the community's sentiments are on that matter.

Characters who fail to make that correlation function are, in the best cases, set aside from the community, but they still are somewhat accepted by it, as long as they remain within a peripheral margin. Such is the case of Hightower, of course, but also of Joanna Burden—her last name by no means accidental—, who, clearest of them all, is unable to unite her "private" inherited personal doom and whatever society needs to make out of it.

> They got married the day she got here and two years later I was born and father named me Joanna after Calvin's mother. [...] The only time I can remember him as somebody, a person, was when he took me and showed me Calvin's and grandpa's graves. [...] I remember how I didn't want to go, without even knowing where it was that we were going. [...] I think it was something about father, something that came from the cedar grove to me, through him. A something that I felt that he had put on the cedar grove, and that when I went into it, the grove would put on me so that I would never be able to forget it." (*LIA* 252)

Joanna's case is, even though sombre, extremely straightforward to portray. Her father quite literally inflicted a doom on her as a very young child and she was consequently never able to escape such framework. She could even, as it is shown in the last quote, feel there was something emanating from her father that longed to crawl along to her. She was somehow "predestined" to partake of such condemnation.

> 'Remember this. Your grandfather and brother are lying there, murdered not by one white man but by the curse which God put on a whole race before your grandfather or your brother or me or you were even thought of. A race doomed and cursed to be forever and ever a part of the white race's doom and curse for its sins. Remember that. His doom and his curse. Forever and ever. Mine. Your mother's. Yours, even though you are a child. The curse of every white child

> that ever was born and that ever will be born. None can escape it.' And I said, 'Not even me?' and he said, 'Not even you. Least of all, you.' (*LIA* 252-253)

Joanna is a great example to illustrate the character that somewhat takes responsibility for his ancestry and simply embraces whatever his family entrusts her with, as well as accepts whatever means by which the community opposes it. Curiously, she is the only character dealing with this double-sided identity problem in the novel who is able to unite these two fragments. Such a union, however, never gets to please the community enough due to her heritage. Thus, she still, even though not contradicting her own wishes, gets rejected and is consigned to solitude.

She is, however, not bitter about it in the least, and gladly accepts however her life must be as a foreign inhabitant of a land that cannot, and will not, be sympathetic to her. To Joanna, this is no surprise or a source of distress, but as natural a process as breathing or the Sun rising in the East. She, of course, does know what her identity is. She knows who she was born as, remembers the moment her father's doom encircled her, and still embraces her own self. Pragmatically, she cannot and has no reason to do otherwise, just as her father had no reason shooting Colonel Sartoris after the latter killed Joanna's brother and grandfather:

> "I thought about that," she said. "It was all over then. The killing in uniform and with flags, and the killing without uniform and flags. And none of it doing or did any good. None of it. And we were foreigners, strangers, that thought differently from the people whose country we had come into without being asked or wanted. And he [Joanna's father] was French, half of him. Enough French to respect anybody's love for the land where he and his people were born and to understand that a man would have to act as the land where he was born had trained him to act. I think that was it." (*LIA* 255)

In *Light in August* and *Absalom, Absalom!*, however, there is a tendency to explore the inherited doom motif from either the perspective of multiple stray

characters or from the premise of inheriting that which does not belong to one's bloodline. That is to say, *Light in August* focuses on how discriminated characters deal with a specific setting that has either been given to them or, in contrast, to which they have warmly opened their identity. And *Absalom*, on the other hand, prefers to explore the scope which this sort of inheritance can traverse not only throughout time for the individual as such, but jumping from one family to another. In one sense, the former work explores the extreme oppositions between individuals and the community, whereas the latter dissects the frontiers where these two components meet and coexist.

Go Down, Moses, in its turn, operates with a more convoluted set of characters, in the sense that it forces them to explore the limits of what family stands for. And, at the same time, they are made to witness how those same limits influence people's lives throughout multiple generations. Even though the narrative is not completely chronological nor linear, the fact that it is written as short stories instead of a single novel promotes a sense of disengagement between characters and episodes.

> Through the tangled threads of the white, mixed-race, patrilineal and matrilineal, legitimate and illegitimate descendants of Lucius Quintus Carothers McCaslin, the founding ancestor, Faulkner resumes his questioning of the "curse" of the South. The constitutive illegitimacy of Southern order;, the perpetuation of violence and injustice; the transmission of shame, guilt, and resentment within families; the burden of legacy [...] and the bitterness of dispossession [...] are the major themes. Even more than *Absalom, Absalom!*, which *Go Down, Moses* rereads and rewrites in more ways than one, Faulkner undertakes to untangle the web of interracial relations. (Bleikasten 2017b, 309-310)

This novel embodies the topic of inheritance *par excellence*. The presence of memory, however, takes a different form in *Go Down, Moses*, since the reader will not encounter as many fragments dealing with the stream of consciousness as they

usually would in any of the texts covered by the present study. There is, nonetheless, a strong presence of this technique, and it is by no means less relevant than it is in any of the mentioned works. The narrative in *Go Down, Moses*, though, is shattered enough due to its form to include too many obscure excerpts. Although not completely, it could be said that *Go Down, Moses* is built more out of timelines and not so much of storylines. Unlike, for instance, *Light in August*, most characters in *Go Down, Moses* meet repeatedly throughout the various temporal periods covered. There is a feeling of compression and not of expansion. The narrative of the McCaslins, resembling the natural environment of Yoknapatawpha in that novel, is diminishing and collapsing.

> *Light in August* in particular plays out this early Faulknerian technique of competing storylines, as the twin tales of Joe Christmas and Lena Grove parallel and intersect one another but do not face each other, except in the mind of the reader. (Urgo 295)

Unlike Urgo's observation regarding the branching and separation of stories in *Light in August*, the narrations in *Go Down, Moses* give the impression of compressing upon each other instead of expanding. This is the one Faulknerian work that certainly feels like a puzzle and—whereas all Faulknerian works deserve, at least, a second reading—*Go Down, Moses* considerably benefits from a second or even a third reading. Memory is scattered in so many ways that it even attempts to impersonate, to some extent, nature itself. While all previous texts have dealt with the problems of unifying a more personal memory with a more alien or social one—be that a representation of the family or the community—, this collection of stories focuses more on the confrontation of the old times and the new ones. And, in order to do so, the text forces characters to face other than simply the community. This time, characters need to face nature so as to come to terms with a world that advances perhaps too fast and in a such a brutal and destructive way.

Time, just as memory, is reproduced differently here too. Temporal shifts are not that frequent nor that harsh, and, again just like memory, time is located more into the characters' backgrounds as such and less into their mind wanderings.

Correspondingly, genealogy becomes of great relevance when it comes to understanding certain characters. Significantly, the inheritance component is as present as it is conceivable for the narration.

> He thought, and not for the first time: *I am not only looking at a face* [Lucas'] *older than mine and which has seen and winnowed more, but at a man most of whose blood was pure then thousand years when my own anonymous beginnings became mixed enough to produce me*. (*GDM* 69)

The temporal aspect does not only progress insofar as it brings destruction and erosion to the family line. One could argue that two specific characters tend to be described and compared to the one ancestor—Carothers McCaslin—of the family; or, rather, families. These two characters are, on the one hand, Lucas Beauchamp—descendant of the family line engendered as the result of Old Carothers' incest and miscegenation—, and, on the other, Isaac McCaslin—acknowledged heir of the McCaslin dynasty. They, besides becoming in time the oldest members of the genealogy, somehow embody some sort of enhancing compared to Old Carothers and, especially, to the Edmond line of the family.

> "Lucas Beauchamp" is a new signified here. He has become a prism upon time itself, a departed time of heroes, of honorably crafted materials, of valuable bequests given in recognition of sustained service and worn talismanically. The first Lucas Beauchamp was a shrewd black man maneuvering on a largely contemporary stage, the second Lucas Beauchamp — time-immersed — is constructed as an extension into the 1940s of a set of nineteenth-century practices signifying honor, integrity, and determination. Time's mark on him has become his glory, not his scar. The representation of Lucas signals the degree to which *Go Down, Moses* has invested its energies in the survival — often critical but more deeply celebratory

> — of older modes of being and doing within a diminished present. (Weinstein 2008, 70)

The moral improvement which Lucas and Isaac embody leads to emphasise the feeling that time, for once or at least momentarily, does not represent a source of agony. The passing of time is here reckoned as something inevitable, and the major concern for Isaac does not deal so much with going back to a past time than with rejecting the changing of values. Nature, as has been mentioned, pervades the entire narrative as a reminder of "the old times." Needless to say, the text, from a chronological and genealogical perspective, is filled with Carothers, Edmonds, Beauchamps, and McCaslins. This does not only continue Faulkner's tendency to play with his characters' names, but it also promotes the confusion inherent to mixing different time periods.

It is not fortuitous that the heir to the McCaslin family be Isaac—Uncle Ike —, "past seventy and nearer eighty than he ever corroborated anymore, a widower now and uncle to half a county and father to no one" (*GDM* 5). Isaac's childless status is enunciated in the first sentence of the novel and afterwards reiterated as something that does not happen to be accidental, but of which Isaac is deliberately aware. In fact, this seems to be a shared tendency to which both his father and uncle tried to ascribe.

> The assiduousness with which Buck and Buddy act to avoid perpetuating the McCaslin line suggests that they already have some inkling of the curse that seems destined to pursue Carothers McCaslin's offspring, biblically visiting the sins of the father upon the sons and future generations. (N. Watson 200)

Thus, the fact that Uncle Ike be childless is by no means unintentional. His refusal to inherit the land represents the one conflict around which the inheritance motif circles in the novel:

> [T]hen he was twenty-one. He could say it, himself and his cousin juxtaposed not against the wilderness but against the tamed land which was to have ben his heritage, the land which old Carothers McCaslin his grandfather had bought with white man's money from the wild men whose grandfathers without guns hunted it, and tamed and ordered or believed he had tamed and ordered it for the reason that the human beings he held in bondage and in the power of life and death had removed the forest from it and in their sweat scratched the surface of it to a depth of perhaps fourteen inches in order to grow something out of it which had not been there before and which could be translated back into the money he who believed he had bought it had had to pay to get it and hold it and a reasonable profit too: and for which reason old Carothers McCaslin, knowing better, could raise his children, his descendants and heirs, to believe the land was his to hold (*GDM* 241)[28]

Isaac McCaslin embodies the conflict between the older times when nature somehow reigned over man and the present day—moment at which the text both starts and finishes—when old values have been just perverted. The motif of the old values should not, however, be understood as dealing with a change in the moral premises, but as a loss of conjunction with nature as the result of technological progress. In fact, the conflict with technology was prominently suggested by Faulkner in *As I Lay Dying* or in Jason's headaches being the result of the smell of gasoline. In *Moses*, nonetheless, it is mostly illustrated rather visually in the unstoppable transformation of the natural medium.

The movement of the novel as a whole, though, feels extremely linear, in the sense that, even though the timelines are disordered and combined multiple times, temporality always progresses from past to present. In fact, in *Go Down, Moses*, time

---

28 Further on in that passage, it is mentioned that Thomas Sutpen originally bought the land where he would later build Sutpen's Hundred: "just as Ikkemotubbe, the Chickasaw chief from whom Thomas Sutpen had had the fragment for money or rum or whatever it was, knew in his turn that not even a fragment of it had been his to relinquish or sell" (*GDM* 241). This is all the more intriguing regarding the motif of inherited doom which affects both the McCaslins and the Sutpens.

does not limit itself to a present from which no sense of future can be extracted, as in *Absalom, Absalom!*.

Throughout the many short stories, time is constantly pushing characters to move forward, independently of what may be awaiting them further away. And, coexisting with that urgent need to evolve, Isaac is relentlessly pulled back to the same ancient times from which the narrative tries to move away. Accordingly, Isaac McCaslin is both the beginning and the end of the text. He is, in fact, both Isaac McCaslin and Uncle Ike. And, even though it does not seem to be any incoherence within this fact, it shows that Isaac is at the centre of those two opposing forces.

André Bleikasten discusses cyclic time as a resource that triggers timelessness in a narrative. He observes that most of the *still*ness found in Faulknerian works are a consequence of such a feature. For *Light in August*, he establishes that the circularity of the novel is by no means fixed, but moving. So, even though its circular narrative makes it hard to distinguish some sense of progress, the story definitely advances; only there is no way to tell what the destination is.

> All the signs inscribed on its circumference reappear with each new rotation; all meanings produced in the text are both activated by its spin and contained by its rim. The circle controls the text's turbulences, binds its fragments, erases its differences, and rounds off its contradictions. Its closure, however, offers nothing but the blank space of indeterminacy, for whatever the circle is made to mean is at once canceled out by its opposite. If it emblematizes time as the continuous and invariable succession of identical instants, it also stands for the round of eternal becoming and eternal return which disorients time and deprives it of all destination. (Bleikasten 2017a, 350)

It appears to be a duality reigning over the five texts included in the present study. Each of these novels either presents a circularity or a linearity regarding both

their structure and how temporality is depicted in the overall story. None of the five outcomes resulting from the combination of those two factors is ever repeated.

From all of the five novels, only three of them present a clear circular narrative. These are *The Sound and the Fury*, *Light in August*, and *Absalom, Absalom!*. *Light in August*, not dealing directly with the demise of any great dynasty or family, excels at embodying a sense of absolute timelessness. Of the three, it is the one text where the already mentioned circularity is most clearly seen, in spite of the fact that the narrative is presented as split in two different main courses: the one of Lena's, and the one of Joe's. Still, its essence is not time as a repetition—that is, time repeated once and again as it exalts the anonymity of its stories and characters—, but the timelessness of the very own structure of the narration.

> *Light in August* points to the ancient and universal concept of cyclic time, a concept very close to the timelessness underlying mythic vision and therefore poles apart from time and history as we have understood them in the West since the advent of Christianity. Here is a world in which events, whether fortunate or disastrous, repeat themselves over and over again, and their repetition does not occur *in* time, in relation to a beginning, an origin, and a goal, a *telos*; repetition is time's absolute essence, the essence of a nonoriginal and nonoriginating *now* containing and dissolving all pasts and all futures. (Bleikasten 2017a, 350)

Certainly, the circularity of *Light in August* owes such a clear demarcation to the fact that its agents are, on the one hand, somewhat anonymous, and, on the other, not tied to anything bigger than themselves. Thus, not being linked to a community—being, in fact, rejected by it—, Lena, and Joe, and Hightower, and Joanna, and even Byron Bunch, to some extent, acquire some sort of mythical or allegorical connotation. This, clearly, is most discernible in Lena and Joe, for reasons already explained of having virtually no real background to burden them.

Still, even though the novel does not point to a beginning or an end, there is certainly some sense of prospect illuminating the ending. Yes, Lena is—quite

literally—exactly where she was at the opening of the story, and, certainly, Joe came from no past and therefore could not expect any future. No destination has been reached, Lena did not find the father of her child and Joe was unable to come to terms with his very identity.

> And if time is destinationless, if nothing ever happens that has not happened before and will not happen again, the very notion of unique events befalling unique individuals and determining unique destinies becomes inconceivable. [...] Nothing is ever gained or lost, for there are neither final victories nor irreparable disasters. And if the actors change, the repertoire is always the same. (Bleikasten 2017a, 350)

However, the lack of destination is overridden by an overall sense of progression. Unquestionably, it is an unidentified and dislocated progression, but progression after all. Still and all, one should not overlook the last paragraphs of the book:

> "'Saulsbury, Tennessee' and I looked back and saw her face. And it was like it was already fixed and waiting to be surprised, and that she knew that when the surprise come, she was going to enjoy it. And it did come and it did suit her. Because she said,
>
> "'My, my. A body does get around. Here we aint been coming from Alabama but two months, and now it's already Tennessee.'" (*LIA* 507)

Absalom, Absalom! does, nonetheless, bring forward a clear destination. The novel uses a different discourse to support this destination, as abstract as this one may be in the end. The reader has been presented with the demise of a family that deeply resonates within the incoming collapse of Quentin's family. Nevertheless, temporality is in this case much more personal and the text presents psychic deviations in a more *familiar* way for the experienced Faulknerian reader.

Even though it resonates, *Absalom* does advocate for a rather irrevocable sense of closure. Quentin's demise had been long established in *The Sound and the Fury*, and, by the time the novel ends, his revival feels like a momentary extension he has been granted; a delay of the inevitable ending. In a way, then, *Absalom* is self-conclusive without being self-contained at all. Moreover, this imitates the psychic state of its characters: everyone reaches their end, but this end is not only theirs. As such, the narration purposefully blends Quentin and Henry and Charles and Judith and Shreve, until there is nothing left of their *selves* in them, until no originality can be discerned from the resulting amalgamation.

There is no way to establish whether Quentin saw his own obsession with incest reflected in the Sutpen siblings or, in contrast, if such obsession was triggered by his hearing and being haunted by Miss Rosa's retelling. Be it as it may, the novel points towards a higher understanding, towards a more aware—but more meaningless too—recognition of the self. Still, Bleikasten reminds that "[n]either outside nor inside the circle can the reader find a fixed point from which to read the whole as a whole, and this holds true of the circle of Faulkner's text as much as of the circle of his fictive world" (Bleikasten 2017a, 351).

Similarly to the structure in *Absalom*, *The Sound and the Fury* presents the notion of circularity virtually everywhere. Not only do the Compson brothers circle around the individual conception which each of them maintains of their sister Caddy, but three of the novel's episodes take place during Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter. Thus, the structure whirls around the notions of death, burial, and resurrection. The narration both starts and ends with Benjy. However, while the cyclic movement of the book is not presented in such a literal way as it was in *Light in August*—that is, Benjy's physical location, unlike Lena's, is not the same at the beginning and at the end—, the last paragraph of the book is self-explanatory:

> Ben's voice roared and roared. Queenie moved again, her feet began to clop-clop steadily again, and at once Ben hushed. Luster looked quickly back over his shoulder, then he drove on. The broken flower drooped over Ben's fist and his eyes were empty and blue and serene again as cornice and façade flowed smoothly once more from left to

> right, post and tree, window and doorway and signboard each in its ordered place. (*SF* 209)

The story becomes, in the end, inexhaustible, as if it was never to end and everything that was just seen would be about to be performed once again. And, to a great extent, this is exactly what happens in Benjy's consciousness. He is a figure of perpetuity,[29] as detached and uncorrupted from the rest of the character's anger, obsessions, and yearnings that he almost represents a godlike and imperturbable *presence*, enduring through time by personifying time itself.

The remaining two works, nonetheless, exhibit a rather linear structure. Both *As I Lay Dying* and *Go Down, Moses* distance themselves from the strong circularity that pervades the other three works. For each of the circular texts there is a different outcome: the ending where some prospect of future can be extracted, the one that shows a firm closure, and the one that displays utter repetition. The two linear ones, nonetheless, offer more flexibility when it comes to the arrangement of their conclusions.

To begin with, both of them present problems with the pureness of their "linearity," which, in fact, is not as strong as it might seem. *As I Lay Dying* certainly shows a chronological ordering of events and, moreover, the motif of the journey encompasses the whole narration. However, there are gaps and breaches in space—literally—which blurs to some extent its categorisation as a linear story by definition. Paradoxically, the breakage of space promotes the disordering of time. Not to mention, in addition, that Addie gets to speak once dead.

The ordering of *Go Down, Moses* is slightly more chaotic, especially due to the fact that the reader has to deal with multiple short stories that influence one another. The whole of the story is divided between three different family lines which are, in fact, one, and it presents multiple but subtle variations of the same name alluding to the original ancestor of the dynasty.[30] And, yet, it feels extremely chronological. Pretty much resembling the Bundrens, the McCaslin, Beauchamp, and

29 There is no coincidence in the fact that Benjy's birthday takes place on Holy Saturday, the day between the death and the resurrection of Christ. Nor is it accidental either that, at the time the novel takes place, he turns exactly thirty-three years old.

30 Which was later probably to influence Gabriel García Márquez.

Edmond stories are involuntarily—almost instinctively and effortlessly—put together.

Accordingly, the purpose of these two novels does not seem to deal again with timelessness as it was dealt in other works. Rather, time is here exalted by sheer antagonism and opposition: the past against a present that only thinks of the future. Instead of being merged as a tumultuous compound of temporal disorder, time is here laid out and dissected. Thus, *As I Lay Dying* ends with Addie being unceremoniously replaced, and *Go Down, Moses* finally unifies all lineages of Carothers McCaslin into one:

> Now he understood what it was she had brought into the tent with her, [...]the pale lips, the skin pallid and dead-looking yet not ill, the dark and tragic and foreknowing eyes. [...]
>
> "Yes," she said. "James Beauchamp—you called him Tennie's Jim though he had a name—was my grandfather. I said you were Uncle Isaac." [...]
>
> "Wait:" although she had not turned, still stooping, and he put out his hand. But, sitting, he could not complete the reach until she moved her hand, the single hand which held the money, until he touched it. He didn't grasp it, he merely touched it—the gnarled, bloodless, bone-light bone-dry old man's fingers touching for a second the smooth young flesh where the strong old blood ran after its long lost journey back to home. (*GDM* 343-344)

These are pseudo-positive outcomes to some extent: suddenly, the Bundrens have a fresh replacement for Addie and the birth of a new baby continues the lineage and also graciously unifies all branches derived from Old Carothers. Nevertheless, these outcomes do not necessarily entail an open and forward-looking conclusion. That is to say, Addie is still dead and that baby is not, actually, a McCaslin but a descendant of the incestuous line of the family. Still, both perspectives, although antagonistic, prove to be equally true. In other words, both *As I Lay Dying* and *Go Down, Moses* could be said to present either a final verdict that looks into the future:

a new addition to the Bundren family, a new baby to continue the McCaslin story to some extent. Or, in contrast, their endings can be observed as being categorically definite: Addie dies and, hence, she is buried and “quickly” disposed of, and Uncle Ike, heir to the McCaslin family, voluntarily refuses to accept his inheritance and puts an end to the McCaslin offspring.

It is nonetheless interesting to compare these two linear cases to the three circular ones. In fact, it is somewhat surprising that the works presenting a circular structure show such well-defined outcomes, whereas the ones that display a linear arrangement end up producing a wider variety of possible resolutions. The novels displaying a linear structure insist on pushing the story forward—they do not, in spite of some of their characters’ will, look back or try to incorporate the past in any way —, and so they do not present a story that whirls around a close or distant past. They merely acknowledge that past as something already done, and thus leave behind the strong sense of timelessness around which the circular structures rotate. In fact, *Moses* shows in multiple occasions that the past is, above all, deceiving.

> Section 4 also contains a fine episode having to do with Ike’s inheritance from his mother’s brother, Hubert Beauchamp, who at his nephew’s birth filled a silver cup with gold pieces against his coming of age. But his feckless uncle, through the years, borrowed back the gold pieces, leaving IOU’s in their place, and finally had substituted for the silver cup itself a tin coffee pot. So when Isaac, at twenty-one, opens the package, he finds that the fabulous inheritance, so carefully preserved, temptingly shaken so many times in the past that his child’s ear might hear the jingle, has dwindled into a cheap piece of tin filled with worthless paper. It is a nice commentary on inheritances and one that would not be lost in this particular inheritor, already preparing to renounce his patrimony. (Brooks 267)

The episode of the tin coffee pot resembles what the past in *Go Down, Moses* is supposed to represent: a distant, closed and finished reality that not only

opposes the present but, when doing so, reveals it is not as bright as it was assumed to have been. In fact, Isaac's relation with the past is systematically deceiving. Such betrayal is portrayed in the tin coffee pot fragment, indeed, but the climax of the deception is reached when he decides to check the ledgers which his father and uncle —Uncle Buck and Uncle Buddy, respectively—carefully filled and kept throughout the years concerning the family's farm and plantation.

The fact that Isaac's family's story is *written* in those ledgers is as relevant as the disappearing gold pieces and the tin coffee pot. He approaches those two vessels of the past as if they were impossible to disturb, apparently immovable and immutable even to his presence:

> As a child [...] he would look up at the scarred and cracked backs and ends but with no particular desire to open them, and though he intended to examine them someday because he realised that they probably contained a chronological and much more comprehensive though doubtless tedious record than he would ever get from any other source, not alone of his own flesh and blood but of all his people, not only the whites but the black ones too, who were as much a part of his ancestry as his white progenitors, and of the land which they had all held and used in common and fed from and on and would continue to use in common without regard to color or titular ownership, it would only be on some idle day when he was old and perhaps even bored a little since what the old books contained would be after all these years fixed immutably, finished, unalterable, harmless. (*GDM* 254-255)

It is that same linearity the one that encloses the past and places it somewhere out of the character's reach. In the end, the linear arrangement pushes everything to the future and commands everything to keep moving. There is, however, a force balancing this ever going forward that brings Isaac closer to the contained and forgotten past. Only after disturbing it does the enclosed timelessness quit resting. The narrative, for a moment, loses some of its single-directional quality

and explodes in multiple temporal discourses entangled among each other: i.e. Isaac's reading the ledgers, the presence of the bear as an exaltation of forgotten nature, Addie's last and only intrusion, Darl's trespassing people's consciousness, and so forth.

All of these transgressions shake the narrative's arrangement for a more or less prolonged period of time. And, while it never reaches a point of distinct circularity, the confinement where temporality is awaiting eventually breaks. It could not be otherwise, for in each of these five novels it is precisely through temporality which the major events of the story are provided. "The essence of time is that it has its being by always becoming, it *is* by always ceasing to be, it is the same by always being different" (Irwin 81).

Whether circular or linear, literal or figurative, clear or abstract, temporality and memory are inseparable from Faulknerian narrative. In some cases, they *are* and embody the very narration. Even more so, they merge multiple novels and stories and characters beyond the self-containment of each work so as to shape a world that always seems to be confined in the past. Nothing ever happens in these books; everything is already done, and fulfilled, and, in my cases, forgotten. But it is precisely the anguish of nothing ever happening what demands the self to look back.

CONCLUSIONS

The present study's main objectives focused on establishing a correlation between the identity of the individual and the many components through which the subject's consciousness is produced and shaped. To that end, an initial framework through which these premises should be primarily observed was necessarily introduced. By analysing the works of, eminently, Bergson and Heidegger on time, space, and the memory of the individual, the present text structured the foundation upon which the literary criticism regarding the subject's consciousness would be later assembled.

In that respect, the individual is conceived as a fragmented being, not only regarding their dual relationship between the private and the social spheres, but also in relation to a more essential fracture which the self of the subject experiences as a whole. From a Bergsonian point of view, the dichotomy on the matter ultimately becomes an opposition of the material world and the spiritual realm. The French philosopher's theories on time maintain a clear vision between the notions of pure duration—or the indivisible temporal aspect of consciousness—and the vulgar time experienced in the physical world.

Thus, the worlds of the homogeneous and the heterogeneous are explored as, respectively, the realm of pure quality where no separation—hence, no measure—can be established and the realm of quantities and spatial dimensions. This division

entails the primary exclusion of time from space, and vice versa. In other words, Bergson observes the consciousness of the individual as essentially partaking of these two spheres and, correspondingly, as eminently embodying an opposition of the temporal and the spatial natures. His depiction of the cone-shaped figure clearly illustrates this dual aspect of the self.

These two realms are also studied as either the originator of a sense of relentless continuity regarding the individual's consciousness or, in contrast, as the *place* from which division and measures emerge. Therefore, Bergson establishes that consciousness encompasses a pure succession of states of the mind that do not succeed each other in a sequential way, but present themselves as an inseparable whole where no components can be identified. He maintains that it is only through the influence of the spatial world—since the subject eminently em*bodies* a spatial being—that the pure quality of consciousness is disrupted and subsequently divided into smaller parts.

Heidegger shows a fairly similar view on the temporal mechanism which the consciousness of the subject demonstrates. But, on the other hand, he advocates for a more organic association of the temporal and the spatial components. In fact, he does not relate time and space in a hierarchical fashion, but he places them on the same level. To him, the incursion of time in space and space in time is not an act of aggression but the natural order of the world. Notwithstanding, he still observes the same problems concerning the continuity and fragmentation of consciousness.

Since consciousness cannot be placed at either of these ends—that is, the realm of pure duration or the spatial sphere—, it must be in the intermingling of space and time where consciousness arises. Spatially understood time and temporally understood space—or both—arrange and disorder the ego of the self. Both Heidegger and Bergson conclude that consciousness is unable to draw a line that separates time from space, for it perpetually partakes of both without ever abandoning any of them.

As a consequence, consciousness is the product of the merging of both worlds. It does interpret itself on spatial terms and, thus, is able to separate its inner components. And, simultaneously, the deepest levels of consciousness usually tend to be examined as a conglomerate where no differentiation between past, present, and

future selves can be withdrawn. The unification of these two readings promotes the perception of the individual's identity as an eminently unstable entity.

This fragmentation of the self certainly preoccupies the corpus of Faulknerian literature, in particular the five works contained in and analysed by the present study. Curiously enough, the presence of the temporal aspect of consciousness within the characters' minds does also emphasise the interest which these texts show towards space. Space is, every so often, even more present within the narrative than time is, including the fragments where the narration absolutely embraces the stream of consciousness. It could seem that, although more inclined towards the temporal aspect, Faulkner's novels hardly ever forget to introduce space, especially at key moments when time is in exaltation. However, the present study concludes that this is not the result of sheer accident. Faulknerian literature simply cannot be oblivious to space, for it rests on space as much as it rests on time.

Three main approaches to the psyche of the individual are incorporated within Faulknerian literature. First, the prominently temporally driven character, usually also deeply concerned with the nature of language and the influence which it maintains with regard to the subject's identity. Secondly, the spatially driven character, who, in contrast, tends to surround themselves with social constructs and the community, where their preoccupations primarily lie. And, third, a combination of the previous two or, even more intriguing, the absence of both.

The personal motivations, obsessions, and, above all, the use of language establish what the character's tendencies are regarding the inner workings of their psyche. These tendencies do not only relate to the temporal and spatial spheres, but also to the more private or, in contrast, the more social features of the subject. The consciousness represents, to a greater or lesser extent, a constant battle between the individual and the community. This is not an insignificant conflict, for the individual struggles between achieving a more social sense of self—by surrounding themselves and engaging in that which the community expects from them—or a more private one that, irrevocably, isolates them even more.

In spite of the many relationships in which time, space, and language are associated, the present study concludes that consciousness is, above all, the result of the intertwining of memory and psychic life. That is, the identity of the subject

combines the particular process by which recollections are brought to the present moment and the awareness which the individual shows of their surroundings at the present situation. It is through this convoluted process which one can observe the temporal (dis)arrangements of Faulknerian characters and their linguistic manifestations.

Language cannot ever be ignored by a consciousness that partakes of linguistic realities, for language is an inherent feature to the arising of consciousness. One must keep in mind, nonetheless, that the stream of consciousness found in the fictional works covered by this study should not be seen as a literal reproduction of the character's mind. On the contrary, all the reader has access to is, rather, a translation; a sort of transcript that puts into words the wanderings of the mind. The extent to which a character can be said to *think* in words depends, on the one hand, on their personal inclinations, and, on the other, on the given situation that triggers the stream of consciousness.

Thus, characters like Quentin, who are eminently driven by the temporal conglomerate, are frequently also dominated by words. They are unable to dissociate the past from the present and, correspondingly, their streams of consciousness are far more disordered, confused, and, in some cases, rushed than other characters' are. In fact, these characters present a less chronological arrangement of events and circumstances; their stories jump from past to present, sometimes in a whimsical manner, other times by creating some association among experiences.

Chronology and linearity can be said, to some extent, to emerge from the necessity of the individual to order. Quentin, pretty much like Benjy, but in a different fashion, is unable to order his experiences, for the vast majority of them are not even his to begin with. He strives to go back to an illusory moment that not only does not exist any longer, but never really existed in the first place. These characters, therefore, have to deal with the increasing feeling of isolation inherent to any insightful consciousness, but they also must face the fact that their identity is a compendium of fantasies and meaningless conceptions.

Their identity is not theirs, but a collection of fragments that "originally" belonged to someone else. This, in addition, is usually explored rather dramatically,

and hence characters like Addie, Quentin, Joe, Darl, or Isaac always circle around some sort of existential agony, visible in their use of language.

The incorporation of the impersonal as the personal—that is, basing one's identity in foreign events and people that, furthermore, lived long ago—is somewhat introduced by Deleuze with his concept of simulacrum. The notion of simulacrum applies eminently to the compound of memories stored in the psyche of an individual. As such, all memories of a subject—or the qualities associated with them that lead to their joining and mixing—lose some of their original nature and become simulacra. In Faulknerian literature, everything eventually becomes simulacra, and so it becomes impossible to discern if some pillars of a subject's consciousness are the reason or the consequence of the emphasis attributed to a particular external event. Everything within the individual's memory *is*, independently of its origin, which makes difficult to ascertain the progression of the subject as an enduring self.

In particular, the impossibility to locate the origin of a simulacrum is clearly seen in Quentin's issue with incest. In *The Sound and the Fury*, the reader is presented with this obsession as a central concern of Quentin's identity. Not only does it define his self and his actions, but it is also presented as dominating the consciousness of the character throughout his entire monologue. There seems to be an unfinished business regarding Caddy to which Quentin's mind keeps returning. In *Absalom, Absalom!*, in contrast, the reader learns that Quentin's story pretty much mimics the Sutpen siblings' story concerning Charles Bon. As the present text explored, this opens up a discussion on whether Quentin was originally dominated by the incest notion and only afterwards sees it reflected and reinforced on Henry, Judith, and Bon. Or, on the contrary, whether Quentin's obsession emerges the moment he is acquainted with the Sutpen story.

The impossibility to discern between causes and consequences is also found in several more characters, but it is extrapolated as well to the novels as a whole. That is to say, there is a temporal indeterminacy among the novels—among Yoknapatawpha—that grants them a quality of remembrance rather than of fact. These novels are essentially located in the past, and, consequently, provide with virtually no significant event occurring in the present. Since Yoknapatawpha is the

realm of memory, its characters partake of the ambiguities and anxiety which the presence of time encompasses.

Whether by focusing on time, space, or language, Faulkner's concern with writing the human heart in conflict with itself remains constant throughout these stories and characters, whatever their inclinations may be. However, this so-called conflict must be primarily addressed through and within time, for it is in time that the individual becomes and ceases to become, hence changing their identity relentlessly. As a consequence, one cannot just distance from one's past—or, in fact, from others' pasts. Faulkner imbues the past into the present not by chance, but by necessity.

Paradoxically, these stories still provide with some sense of continuity. They are not entirely past events, fixed and immutable. Certainly, by influencing the present moment they somehow materialise once again. However, this pattern is not only observed within the margins of a single book. The sense of continuity expands beyond the pages of the one manuscript, either by adding genealogies years after a work was published or by revisiting characters, places, and events in a work that were once "terminated" in another.

All of these features lead to the utmost motif explored in the books: the past's reluctance to die. This reluctance is definitely observed within the background of Yoknapatawpha as a fictional county. This world is always looking backwards and, by doing so, it materialises in the present. The exact same process takes place within the identity of the characters, which can only be grasped in the present by acknowledging their fragmentation in the past. These works are a combination of breaking and mending, of creating and destroying. Consequently, finding a sequential flow within the narrative is rather infrequent.

The temporal disruptions of the narration are shown by means of the (dis)arrangement of language. One of the most representative examples of Faulknerian language deals with extremely long sentences without much, if any, punctuation. These long sentences can expand for pages—almost chapters, in some cases—, and they usually present multiple changes in the narrator and the temporal setting. This technique contributes to the scattering of times and voices that permeate the characters' minds. In fact, this use of language is usually attributed to characters grounded within a less superficial aspect of psychic life or simply more driven

towards the past. It is for these characters that language tends to dissolve and disappear—represented by the mentioned abnormal forms it takes—, for one is not supposed to encounter words but the profound levels of consciousness intervening.

In fact, this representation of language is concluded to mirror the use of language which the nonsense genre exhibits, where meaning and true form are notions denied from the very beginning. For nonsense, as for Modernism, language's ultimate purpose is to erase itself, thus allowing the privacy of the individual to arise and take over. Consequently, silence is inserted within the narration so as to counteract relentless articulation. Silence is represented by the absence of language —which, paradoxically, is still expressed through language—which the character experiences in deep introspection. This paradox becomes utmost in Addie's monologue.

In fact, language-driven characters, in the sense that they realise of the demise imposed by words on the individual or of the futility of language in general, tend to be displaced from the centre of the narration. Therefore, Addie gets to talk only once she is dead, and, similarly, the reader is never provided with an account directly extracted from Mr. Compson. He is only observed through a filter, through the eyes and interpretation and compulsions of his son, Quentin. These characters are somewhat allowed to observe the dissolution of the self, but they are, in the case of Mr. Compson, clearly excluded from the narrative. Or, in the case of Addie, they are surrounded by a dreamlike and immaterial context that imposes an evident barrier between character and reader.

Nevertheless, the main conflict which language entails regards the inflexibility imposed on the natural world. Many characters—if not all, to some extent—partake of this inner conflict. Addie despises words and longs to achieve some sort of true connection with the environment and other individuals. Quentin needs to arrest words so as to arrest time and, thus, avoid the corruption of his fictitious world. Benjy's intolerance of the mutability of the natural environment—and those deeply associated with it, like Caddy—is present both in his words and his temporal conception of events. Jason, in contrast, willingly aspires to partake of the rigid margins imposed by the community, at the cost of sacrificing his individuality.

While each of these characters shows a tendency towards utter immobility or, on the contrary, towards evolving mutability, none of them are free from the constraints which the one or the other realm imposes. This, once again, refers to the endless conflict between the individual and the community, the natural and the fabricated, temporality and vulgar time, the voice of the psyche and the voice that *speaks*.

All of these notions, however, point to a concept from which identity truly emerges: the memory of the individual. Faulknerian texts show that memory is inseparable from the notion of temporality. And, paradoxically, memory greatly depends on the spatial aspect of the physical world, for its ordering usually mimics a chronology or a line where experiences can be *placed* alongside one another. Above all, memory relies on the conglomerate of inherited data which constitutes the subject.

The influence of the past is paramount in order to shape Faulknerian memory, as Quentin certainly proves. Being the product of multiple characters and events, the texts points to some universality of themes and concerns regarding the individual's inner conflicts. Every reader is, to some extent, Quentin; just as Quentin is, to some extent, Henry. This is especially emphasised by incorporating pseudo-omniscient narrators that are related to each other beyond family relations or similar motivations. Shreve, in fact, serves this purpose masterfully in *Absalom, Absalom!*. He—a Canadian—is as immersed in the Mississippian turmoil that took place forty years ago as Quentin, Mr. Compson, or Miss Rosa are.

Indeed, Shreve does represent the reader to a greater extent. He is presented with a set of events rather foreign to him and, yet, he ends up becoming the leading narrator of those episodes. Furthermore, his voice does not only become unidentifiable from the rest of the voices in the narrative—quite literally at some points—, but it also dissolves within the text as equivalent to them, not as either superior or inferior. The narration blurs, voices are decentralised, myth becomes indiscernible from fact, and the temporal convulsion even makes it difficult to distinguish among one's past and present selves. There is no possibility to ascertain any separation between a me-*was* from a me-*is*.

However, no stability can be even found within the present self. Least of all, perhaps, within the *present* self. One could conclude that the present representation of a given consciousness sums up every aspect of that individual's identity: who they are, who they were, what has influenced them throughout time, et cetera. However, the present consciousness should not be seen as a more or less definite product of these notions, for it even presents a discrepancy between its psychic and mimetic voices—as Vardaman illustrates.

This amounts to saying that the self of the subject is not only impossible to grasp due to its ever-increasing multiplicity, but also due to the many incongruities upon which one's identity is founded. Faulknerian literature, nonetheless, represents the wanderings of consciousness while at the same time depicting its many inconsistencies. These texts do not aim at explaining, but at displaying. In fact, the discrepancies between mimetic and psychic voice are sometimes regarded as depriving the text of its credibility. This, furthermore, illustrates how profusely one tends to reject the conception of one's self as an accumulation of multiplicities instead of as a definite and unambiguously well-defined consciousness. However, this is an unsurprising conclusion, for understanding consciousness as a heterogeneity unquestionably exalts the individual's lack of control regarding themselves and the motion of life.

These stories both arrest and trigger the motion of life by imbuing temporal digressions and linguistic disruptions into the narrative. They prove that the management of time is inseparable from the management of language, even more so when dealing with the nature of identity and the arising of the subject's memory. Indeed, the arrangement and disarrangement of these terms offer no definite answer to the question of the subject's consciousness, but they provide with a starting point from which to approach such inquiries that is, still today, pretty much unchanged.

The consciousness of the individual—one's identity—does not seem to offer true continuity, but merely the *sense* of cohesion and progress. Yoknapatawpha presents a set of characters who, occasionally, become aware of the fact that consciousness has no real continuity and that it, in the contrary, is merely the product of a fabricated continuum of multiple elements. It is by acknowledging this lack of natural continuity regarding the self that some characters rebel against this illusory

process. Unavoidably, they end up rejecting the continuum of the natural medium as well.

They are trapped by time and, thus, they are inevitably doomed. The torment regarding one's ancestry—or inherited doom—expands beyond the bloodlines of families and dynasties. In the end, Yoknapatawpha embodies a compendium of places, characters, events, families, and struggles, but none of these elements can be ever separated, even remotely, from the whole. Quentin's tragedy is fundamentally derived from the Sutpens' disaster, and not from the Compsons'. Whereas genealogy is extremely present within these works—since the narratives are grounded in the different family lines—, it is also exceedingly absent in some characters' denial and repudiation of their ancestries.

In short, these texts aim at portraying a rather unyielding sense of timelessness. However, in order to do so, they need to establish a circularity among their narratives and their stories that emphasises the cyclic aspect of time. In a way, it is only through repetition that the novels achieve some sort of temporal sameness. Appropriately, only by repeating the same mistakes of the past and by inserting a preoccupation with a time long concluded does Faulkner inculcate mobility to a world that should, in principle, remain still.

Regardless of their *name*, Compsons, Bundrens, Sutpens, McCaslins, and Beauchamps—among many others—exhibit an assortment of agonies and torments that interrelates them to one another throughout the time and space of Yoknapatawpha. Whenever they repudiate their inherited agonies, the land forces them to encounter the same struggles in a different shape. Their identity can never surpass the limits of Yoknapatawpha, as Quentin proves in a dorm room in Massachusetts. After all, their difference is in name only, and any name presents the self with a conflict.

Whereas these texts insert the notion of memory as primarily related to the individual, they still offer some sense of a broader memory. A collective memory, as it were, permeates the backgrounds of Yoknapatawpha. Faulknerian fiction blurs the boundaries between memory and history. After all, these narratives originate within the trauma of the Civil War. Their places, their customs and their characters are direct descendants of that one historical narration.

The memory of the individual, however, becomes the primary medium through which one accesses Faulknerian fiction. Inevitably, then, the memory of the subject is observed in disagreement with the collective memory that haunts the region. In fact, this represents the fundamental pattern that is repeated throughout Faulkner's works. The individual cannot ever match the product of their memory with the memory of the land, as these narrations insist on illustrating: "Why do you hate the South?" (*AA* 303). And yet, the subject's memory directly derives from it.

Therefore, the boundary between memories and historical facts is here obscured and liquefied. The opposition between fact and fiction is embodied by some characters with regard to certain circumstances. Still, one cannot but question the factuality of those facts. Faulkner's fiction is imbued within the narration of the Civil War. However, these texts promote a sense of myth far more than they promote a sense of history, meaning that they ascribe to the mythical discourse of contradictory narratives.

History, then, is relegated to a secondary background. If these texts deal with the fictitious nature of memory, they must, supposedly, leave the factual quality of history aside. In short, it could be concluded that they must choose between history or stories—or so it would seem. This argument, nonetheless, is rather deceiving and depends on the conceptualisation of history as a superior truth immaterially constituted, somewhat constructed out of objective truths. This understanding of history proves to be fallacious and simplistic. Although the present text incorporates the opposition between the memory of the individual and that of the collectivity, it does not consider the arising of the collective memory *per se*.

However, such an investigation would be extremely relevant to the questions examined in this study, for the matters of history and its conformation deal directly with the Faulknerian rationale. Whereas the memory of the individual is inseparable—in form and theme—from these narrations, the historical component could be likewise incorporated into such a discourse. Although deviating from the analysis of a private identity, the merging of memory, myth and history would offer an insightful view on the constitution and the structure of communal identities. Or, in other words, questioning the conformation of history would examine the array of traditional narratives that explain the world as it is.

In fact, a thorough contrasting of the notions of myth and history would necessarily need a temporal argumentation from which to abstract an order of narratives. Myth is not only disregarded as that which is fictitious and foreign to history, but also as inevitably located before the historical chronicle. Consequently, a temporal reconsideration of these matters seems all the more appropriate with regard to the history presented by the Faulknerian corpus of texts. A reordering of myth and history must focus on establishing the process by which history becomes myth and the nature of such differentiation.

The assumption of myth as a fictitious and indefinite version of history resembles the understanding of the subject's memory as independent and self-contained, which the present study firmly rejects. Thus, if myth and history are not different in nature, a whole new set of collective narratives should be identified, as well as the contradictions and incongruities that establish them. For, in the end, Faulknerian memory offers the space and time to question whether history is actually prior to the individual.

WORKS CITED

Adams, Richard P. *Faulkner: Myth and Motion*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968.

Bedient, Calvin. “Pride and Nakedness: *As I Lay Dying*.” *AILD*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2010, 262-275.

Bergson, Henri. *Matter and Memory*. Kent: Solis Press, 2014.

———. *Time and Free Will, an Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*. Miami: HardPress Publishing, 2013.

Blaine, Diana York. “The Abjection of Addie and Other Myths of the Maternal in *As I Lay Dying*.” *Six Decades of Criticism*, edited by Linda Wagner-Martin, Michigan State University Press, 2002, 83-103.

Bleikasten, André. *The Ink of Melancholy: Faulkner’s Novels from* The Sound and the Fury *to* Light in August. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017a.

———. “The Setting.” *AILD*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2010, 276-285.

———. *William Faulkner: A Life through Novels*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017b.

Bollinger, Laurel. “Narrating Racial Identity and Transgression in Faulkner’s ‘That Evening Sun.’” *College Literature* 39.2 (2012): 53-72.

Brooks, Cleanth. *William Faulkner: The Yoknapatawpha Country*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990.

Bunselmeyer, J. E. “Faulkner’s Narrative Styles.” *Six Decades of Criticism*, edited by Linda Wagner-Martin, Michigan State University Press, 2002, 313-331.

Burton, Stacy. “Rereading Faulkner: Authority, Criticism, and *The Sound and the Fury*.” *SF*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2014, 494-509.

Chappell, Fred. “The Comic Structure of *The Sound and the Fury*.” *Six Decades of Criticism*, edited by Linda Wagner-Martin, Michigan State University Press, 2002, 213-218.

Clarke, Deborah. “Gender, Race, and Language in *Light in August*.” *American Literature* 61.3 (1989): 398-413.

——————. *Robbing the Mother: Women in Faulkner*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1994. SF *&* AILD, edited by Nicolas Tredell, Columbia University Press, 1999, 146-173.

Cowley, Malcolm, and William Faulkner. *The Portable Faulkner*. New York: Penguin Books, 2003.

Davis, Thadious M. “Faulkner’s ‘Negro’ in *The Sound and the Fury*.” *SF*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2014, 393-409.

Deleuze, Gilles. *Difference and Repetition*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.

Faulkner, William. *Absalom, Absalom!* New York: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, Inc., 1990.

——————. “Address Upon Receiving the Nobel Prize for Literature.” *The Portable Faulkner*, edited by Malcolm Cowley, Penguin Books, 2003a, 649-650.

——————. *As I Lay Dying*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2010.

———————. *Go Down, Moses*. New York: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, Inc., 1990.

———————. *Light in August*. New York: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, Inc., 1990.

———————. *The Sound and the Fury*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014 [3rd Edition].

———————. "Yoknapatawpha Map." *The Portable Faulkner*, edited by Malcolm Cowley, Penguin Books, 2003b, ii.

Faulkner, William and Unknown Cartographer. *Jefferson, Yoknapatawpha CO*. 1951. *Absalom, Absalom!*'s Modern Library Map. *Digital Yoknapatawpha*: Special Collections, University of Virginia, www.faulkner.iath.virginia.edu/media/resources/MANUSCRIPTS/WFMAP12.html. Accessed 19 August 2020.

Fennell, Lee Anne. "Unquiet Ghosts: Memory and Determinism in Faulkner." *Six Decades of Criticism*, edited by Linda Wagner-Martin, Michigan State University Press, 2002, 29-44.

Foucault, Michel and Jay Miskowiek. "Of Other Spaces." *Diacritis* 16.1 (1986): 22-27.

Fowler, Doreen. "'Little Sister Death': *The Sound and the Fury* and the Denied Unconscious." *SF*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2014, 456-470.

———————. "Matricide and the Mother's Revenge: *As I Lay Dying*." *AILD*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2010, 315-328.

Godden, Richard. "'Trying to Say': Benjamin Compson, Forming Thoughts, and the Crucible of Race." *SF*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2014, 470-483.

Gorra, Michael E. and William Faulkner. *As I Lay Dying: Authoritative Text, Backgrounds and Contexts, Criticism*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2010.

Gorra, Michael E. and William Faulkner. *The Sound and the Fury: An Authoritative Text, Backgrounds and Contexts, Criticism*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014 [3rd Edition].

Gray, Richard. "A Southern Carnival." *AILD*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2010, 336-347.

———————. "From Oxford: The Novels of William Faulkner." *Six Decades of Criticism*, edited by Linda Wagner-Martin, Michigan State University Press, 2002, 397-414.

Gwin, Minrose C. "Hearing Caddy's Voice." *SF*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2014, 423-431.

———————. "(Re) Reading Faulkner as Father and Daughter of His Own Text." *Six Decades of Criticism*, edited by Linda Wagner-Martin, Michigan State University Press, 2002, 153-171.

Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010.

Irwin, John T. *Doubling & Incest / Repetition & Revenge: A Speculative Reading of Faulkner*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980.

James, William. "The Stream of Consciousness." *SF*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2014, 297-302.

Jarvis, Christina. "'Like a lady I et': Faulkner, Food, and Femininity." *Six Decades of Criticism*, edited by Linda Wagner-Martin, Michigan State University Press, 2002, 59-80.

Karademir, Aret. "Heidegger and Foucault: On the Relation Between the *Anxiety-Engendering-Truth* and *Being-Towards-Freedom*." *Springer* 36 (2013): 375-392.

Kartiganer, Donald M. "'By It I Would Stand or Fall': Life and Death in *As I Lay Dying*." *A Companion to William Faulkner*, edited by Richard C. Moreland, Blackwell Publishing, 2007, 429-444.

———————. “The Meaning of Form in *The Sound and the Fury*.” *SF*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2014, 350-365.

———————. “‘So I, Who Never Had a War...’: William Faulkner, War, and the Modern Imagination.” *Six Decades of Criticism*, edited by Linda Wagner-Martin, Michigan State University Press, 2002, 3-28.

———————. “*The Sound and the Fury* and Faulkner’s Quest for Form.” *ELH* 37.4 (1970): 613-639.

Krause, David. “Opening Pandora’s Box: Re-reading Compson’s Letter and Faulkner’s *Absalom, Absalom!*” *Six Decades of Criticism*, edited by Linda Wagner-Martin, Michigan State University Press, 2002, 271-292.

Lecercle, Jean-Jacques. *Philosophy of Nonsense: The Intuitions of Victorian Nonsense Literature*. London & New York: Routledge, 1994.

Limon, John. “Addie in No Man’s Land.” *AILD*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2010, 348-362.

Matthews, John T. “Dialect and Modernism in *The Sound and the Fury*.” *SF*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2014, 483-493.

———————. “The Marriage of Speaking and Hearing in *Absalom, Absalom!*” *ELH* 47.3 (1980): 575-594.

Mellard, James. M. “Faulkner’s *Commedia*: Synecdoche and Anagogic Symbolism in *The Sound and the Fury*.” *Six Decades of Criticism*, edited by Linda Wagner-Martin, Michigan State University Press, 2002, 219-233.

Moore, F. C. T. *Bergson: Thinking Backwards*. Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Moreland, Richard C. *A Companion to William Faulkner*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2007.

O’Donnell, Patrick. “Between the Family and the State: Nomadism and Authority in *As I Lay Dying*.” *AILD*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2010, 329-335.

Pilkington, Anthony E. *Bergson and His Influence: A Reassessment*. Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976.

Polk, Noel. "Trying Not to Say: A Primer on the Language of *The Sound and the Fury*." *SF*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2014, 444-456.

Ricoeur, Paul. *Time and Narrative*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990.

Rio-Jelliffe, R. *Obscurity's Myriad Components: The Theory and Practice of William Faulkner*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press Associated University Presses, 2001.

Ross, Stephen M. *Fiction's Inexhaustible Voice: Speech & Writing in Faulkner*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1989.

Sartre, Jean-Paul. "On *The Sound and the Fury*: Time in the Work of Faulkner." *SF*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2014, 316-324.

Schneidau, Herbert N. *Waking Giants: The Presence of the Past in Modernism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Slaughter, Carolyn Norman. "*As I Lay Dying*: Demise of Vision." *American Literature* 61.1 (1989): 16-30.

Storhoff, Gary. "Faulkner's Family Dilemma: Quentin's Crucible." *Six Decades of Criticism*, edited by Linda Wagner-Martin, Michigan State University Press, 2002, 235-252.

Sugarman, Helen Lynne. "'He was getting it involved with himself': Identity and Reflexivity in William Faulkner's *Light in August* and *Absalom, Absalom!*" *Six Decades of Criticism*, edited by Linda Wagner-Martin, Michigan State University Press, 2002, 45-58.

Sundquist, Eric. "Death, Grief, Analogous Form: *As I Lay Dying*." *AILD*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2010, 286-304.

———. "The Myth of *The Sound and the Fury*." *SF*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2014, 381-393.

Tebbetts, Terrell L. "Discourse and Identity in Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* and Swift's *Last Orders*." *The Faulkner Journal* 25.2 (2010): 69-89.

Tredell, Nicolas. *William Faulkner:* The Sound and the Fury *and* As I Lay Dying */ Essays, Articles, Reviews*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.

Truchan-Tataryn, Maria. "Textual Abuse: Faulkner's Benjy." *SF*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2014, 509-520.

Urgo, Joseph. "*Absalom, Absalom!*: The Movie." *Six Decades of Criticism*, edited by Linda Wagner-Martin, Michigan State University Press, 2002, 293-310.

Vickery, Olga W. "The Dimensions of Consciousness." *AILD*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2010, 236-248.

———————. "*The Sound and the Fury*: A Study in Perspective." *SF*, edited by Michael E. Gorra, W. W. Norton & Company, 2014, 324-335.

Wagner-Martin, Linda. "Jason Compson: The Demands of Honor." *Six Decades of Criticism*, edited by Linda Wagner-Martin, Michigan State University Press, 2002a, 253-270.

———————. *William Faulkner: Six Decades of Criticism*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2002b.

Watson, Neil. "The 'Incredibly Loud…. Miss-fire': A Sexual Reading of *Go Down, Moses*." *Six Decades of Criticism*, edited by Linda Wagner-Martin, Michigan State University Press, 2002, 199-210.

Weinstein, Philip M. *Faulkner's Subject: A Cosmos No One Owns*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

———————. *Simply Faulkner*. New York: Simply Charly, 2016.

———————. *Unknowing: The Work of Modernist Fiction*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005.

Zender, Karl F. "Faulkner and the Politics of Incest." *American Literature* 70.4 (1998): 739-765.

List of Figures

Figure 1
/ Bergson's Cone of Memory ………………………………… 31

Figure 2
/ Addie's Casket ……………………………………………… 202, 203

Figure 3
/ Mottson's Electric Eye ……………………………….... 205, 206

Figure 4
/ Yoknapatawpha Map: *Absalom, Absalom!*
In Appendix ……………………………………………………….. 309

Figure 5
/ Yoknapatawpha Map: *The Portable Faulkner*
In Appendix ………………………………………………………... 311

APPENDIX: THE MAPS OF YOKNAPATAWPHA

William Faulkner drew two maps of Yoknapatawpha. The first was included in the first edition of *Absalom, Absalom!* in 1936. The second was requested by Malcolm Cowley in late 1945 to include it in *The Portable Faulkner*. Both maps would be later redrawn by professional cartographers. Random House had Faulkner's 1936 map redrawn for the publication of *Absalom, Absalom!* in the Modern Library in 1951. In his turn, Cowley decided to had Faulkner's 1945 map redrawn as well, fearing that Faulkner's handwriting was not very legible.

Concretely, the maps included in the following pages are the revised version published by Random House in 1951 and the one eventually included by Cowley in the *Portable* in 1946. Note, however, that the author of the present text has mildly edited them to enhance their digital quality.

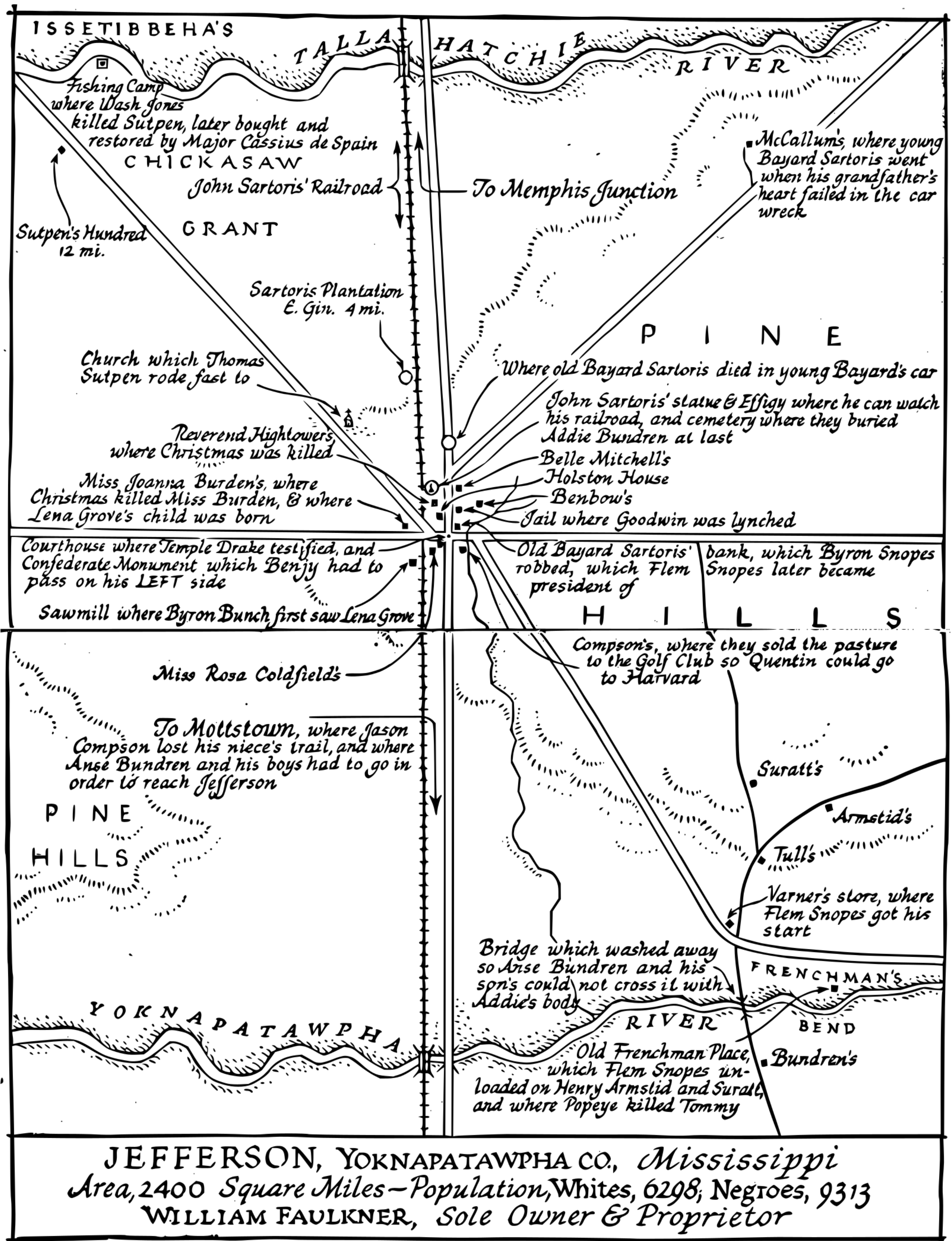


Fig. 4 (Faulkner 1951, “Modern Library Map”)

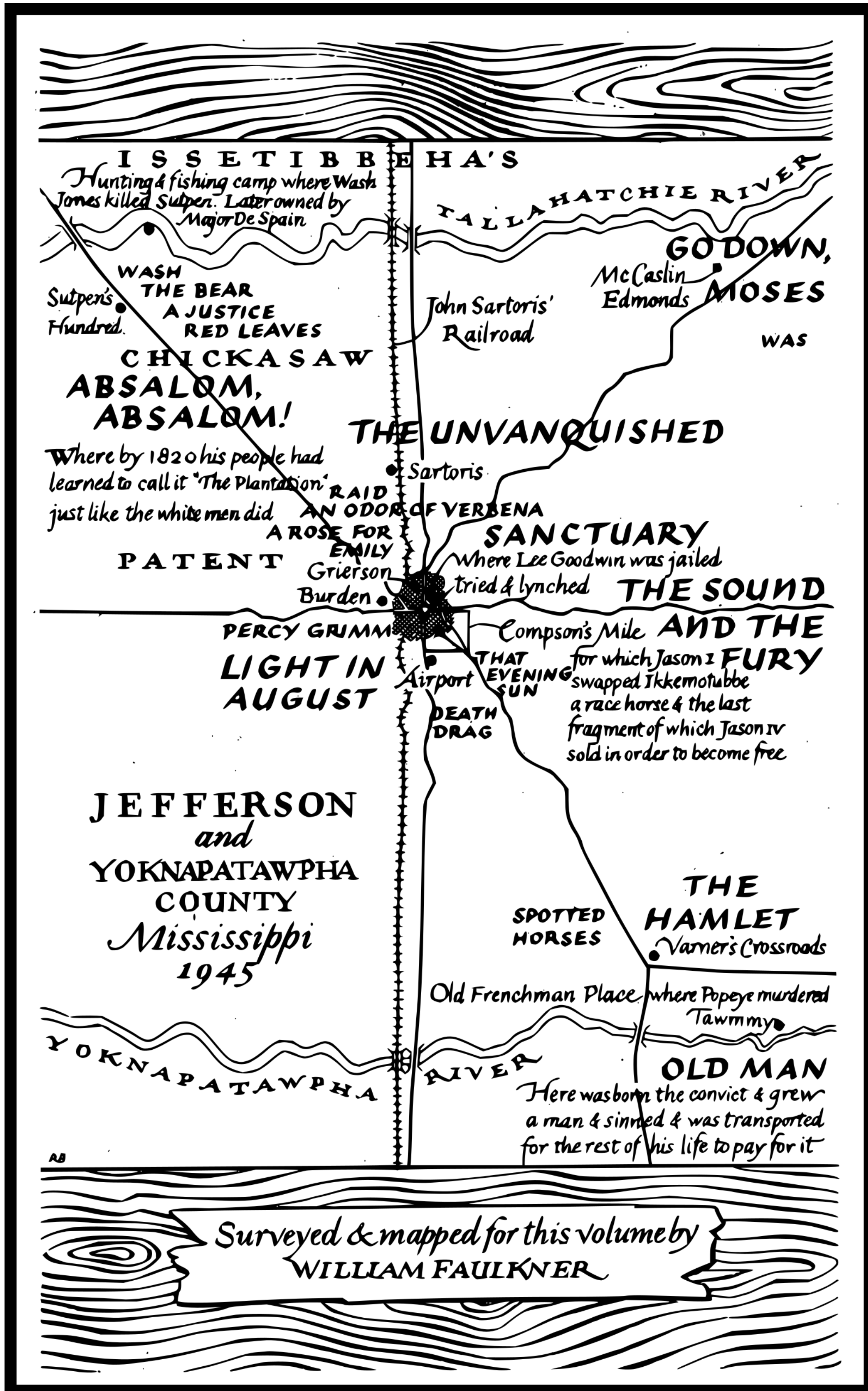


Fig. 5 (Faulkner 2003b, ii)