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Diplomski studij engleskog jezika i književnosti i hrvatskog jezika i književnosti

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Myths and Stereotypes in Toni Morrison's *Beloved* and William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*

Diplomski rad

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Summary

This paper analyses the myths, archetypes, and stereotypes that occur in two novels by two American Nobel Prize winners, Toni Morrison's *Beloved* and William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*. Both writers are well known for their mythical method they use to resurface undercurrent ideas of the misinterpreted and misrepresented history. The theory of myth and the phenomenon of stereotypes are looked into as guidelines. The analysis brings to light which myths, archetypes, and stereotypes can be traced in the novels, and why the authors employed these phenomena. What has transpired is that certain myths, and archetypes, if in different circumstances, are interpreted as stereotypes. For the needs and limitations of this work, the myths of motherhood, the plantation myth/the Garden of Eden myth, including the tree myth, then the myth of rebirth, and finally, the trickster myth, have been devised. The most prominent stereotypes are the Southern belle versus the fallen woman, the cavalier stereotype, and the unavoidable dichotomy of Mammy/Jezebel. Both myths and stereotypes help us to explain and understand the world around us. The chaotic times we live in demand explanation, so we look back to history in order to find references and adapt the knowledge to our new era, "[f]or the myth is the foundation of life" (Mann 374).

Key words: Toni Morrison, *Beloved*, William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*, myth, archetype, stereotype

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Introduction

Myth and mythical thinking are ever present in the lives of people of every culture and civilization, whether considering themselves modern, contemporary, or traditional, and in the ways of the old. The revival and revisiting of the historical, archetypal paths of our ancestors are evident in popular culture of today. So are stereotypes, which are ever-present; they only change superficially while retaining the pattern, just like archetypes do.

This paper analyses myths, archetypes, and stereotypes that occur in two novels by two American Nobel Prize winners: Toni Morrison's *Beloved* and William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*. Both writers are well known for employing mythical methods and archetypal images in their writing only to resurface undercurrent ideas of the misinterpreted and misrepresented history.

In 1939 Faulkner's picture appeared on the cover of *TIME* magazine. “Below the portrait ran Faulkner's statement of his literary purpose: 'To make men stand on their hind legs and cast a shadow'” (Fargnoli, Golay, and Hamblin 13). This was the time of grave financial misfortune and strife for Faulkner, still the statement echoes with strength, which would bring him the Nobel Prize in years to come. The mention of the shadow, which so persistently appears in the Quentin section of his novel *The Sound and the Fury*, makes us inevitably think of Jung, the collective unconscious and archetypes. Faulkner is a writer steeped in mythology, using the mythic heritage, creating new mythological geography almost blurring the border between legend and myth, as his characters’ names and the names of places are borrowed from real people and places. In the interview conducted by Gwynn and Blotner, when answering the question on an original dust jacket of *The Sound and the Fury,* Faulkner brings the image to mind: “the symbolism was simply the powers of – of darkness and of light wrestling, struggling.” When one observes the mentioned dust jacket, one sees the shadowy figure grappling, obstructing the light figure, almost strangling it with its menace. According to *International Dictionary of Psychoanalysis,* the shadow is defined as follows:

> In Carl Gustav Jung's analytical psychology, the shadow as a concept comprises everything conscious personality experiences as negative. In dreams and fantasies the shadow appears with the characteristics of a personality of the same sex as the ego, but in a very different configuration. It is presented as the eternal antagonist of an individual or group, or the dark brother within, who always accompanies one, the way Mephistopheles accompanied Goethe’s Faust. (de Mijolla 1596)

The Sound and the Fury is Faulkner's fourth novel, the most troublesome, and the best loved in his own words. It started as a story “Twilight,” rather a picture of a girl up the tree with dirty

drawers, who is closely observed by her brothers, too feeble to climb the tree themselves. The name of the girl is Candace, Caddy, Compson; she is Faulkner's favourite character. She is in this scene a symbolic carrier of the axis of the story to be built around in the novel, which is about dismantling of one Southern family right down to its complete disaster. This idea of the shadow as a negative aspect of oneself that a person projects to another person in their vicinity, only to avoid looking at it straight and acknowledging it, is one of the mythic elements in this novel:

> On the one hand, it [the shadow] can project itself onto another person in one's immediate or distant circle, leading to serious conflicts among siblings, couples, or colleagues that have a tendency to recur and lead to lasting misunderstandings. (de Mijolla 1596)

We encounter conflicts and misunderstandings throughout *The Sound and the Fury,* not only among the siblings but all members of this old family. The roots of unrest lie deep in their unconscious, like in all of us. We are all susceptible to the unknown, to deep ripples of our common heritage, of simply being human.

Morrison's intention is more universal: she is trying to raise the history of black people, which is not that present in written form, and to incorporate it into the body of American writing. She gives the voice to the lost and unnamed, to the outcasts and unrecognised. In this, Morrison resembles Faulkner: he gives voice to a boy incapacitated by retardation. Morrison and Faulkner thus show us that history is always subjective, no matter how precise the evidence. We can have dates and numbers, but this does not bring closer the feeling what must have been like to be at a particular event, a perpetrator or a victim of historical occurrences: "And in the same way I wanted to show the reader what slavery *felt* like, rather than how it looked" says Morrison in an interview with Elissa Schappell for *the* PARIS REVIEW magazine.

The novel *Beloved* is published in 1987, six years before Morrison is awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature. The starting point of the story is a newspaper article about Margaret Garner, a slave woman who murders her child in order to prevent any of them being recaptured by slave hunters. This case sped up the abolitionist cause as it raised the question of what could make any mother do such a thing. Morrison does not retell the story; she weaves her own imagining of what, where, and why. The characters in *Beloved*, Sethe and Paul D, bring their account of horrors, which amplified, create history in want of voices to pass it on and thus reclaim it from oblivion. In her interview with Christopher Bollen, Morrison recounts how she came across the story. The disbelief of a reporter that Margaret Garner was not mad caught Morrison's attention:

> [T]he reporter was really quite shocked that Margaret Garner was not crazy. (. . . .) So I decided to look into this. (. . . .) Suppose she was rational and there was a reason. This was also at a time when feminists were very serious and aggressive about not being told that they had to have children. Part of liberation was not being forced into motherhood. Freedom was not having children, and I thought that, for this woman, it was just the opposite. Freedom for her was having children and being able to control them in some way—that they weren't cubs that somebody could just buy. (Bollen)

The absence of the signs of madness disconcerts the reporter of Margaret Garner case, but to Toni Morrison, this is exactly where she can raise questions of motherhood, madness, trauma, and memory. This process of recapturing history, the rememory in Morrison's words, entails using the tradition, and as slaves were forbidden education, oral tradition thrived. These people may have been denied their names and languages: "What Nan told her she had forgotten, along with the language she told it in. The same language her ma'am spoke, and which would never come back" (Morrison 62); but with storytelling they preserved the identity and proof of their origin. Using the elements of myth, both from the ancient world of her ancestors and the newly adopted symbols from Christian religion, Morrison helps us to rememorize the history.

In order to be able to face history, we need the help to understand, the help of storytellers to break the line into manageable portions, for compassion to take root. Without creating a face, and a story that goes with it, humans somehow skip the ability to relate. We are often witnesses that when bombarded by numerous horrors worldwide, it is hard not to lose interest, turn the blind eye, or plainly not to care. These stories help history to become alive and important again. The tool that captures imagination while delivering a strong message is the mythical method, which T. S. Eliot explains in "Ulysses, Order, and Myth" as follows: "Instead of narrative method, we may now use the mythical method. It is, I seriously believe, a step toward making the modern world possible for art." History is not about numbers but about individual stories made universal. Morrison and Faulkner bring them home, and we listen.

1. On Myths, Archetypes, and Stereotypes

There have been as numerous as diverse attempts to define myth, especially throughout the past two centuries. Approaches ranging from philosophy, anthropology, sociology, psychology, linguistics, and literature have yielded some lasting definitions which may be applied for different purposes.

Aristotle, whose *Poetics* is still a compulsory read for students of literature, uses the word *mythos* for plot, which he considers, as Frye says in his *Anatomy of Criticism*, the soul of literary works. During the first half of the twentieth century, with the rise of de Saussure's structuralism, anthropologist Lévi-Strauss also observed the problematics of myth, coming up with *The Structural Study of Myth*. He defines it as a part of speech: "myth *is* language . . . myth has to be told; it is a part of human speech" (430; emphasis Lévi-Strauss'). His view is shared by another structuralist Roland Barthes in his *Myhologies,* when he writes of myth as a "system of communication" and a "mode of signification, a form" (107). This leads us to understand myth as a mould which can be filled with a myriad of meanings. According to Frye in his "Myth, Fiction, and Displacement," it is a structure that can be used again and again: "A myth may be told and retold: it may be modified or elaborated, or different patterns may be discovered in it" (599).

There are several ways to approach the problematics of myth. As Robert A. Segal writes in his book *Theorizing about Myth*, one of the ways to ease the attempt of defining myth is to try and answer three questions on subject matter, origin, and function of myth. C.G. Jung is the only one who has given answers to all three questions: "Myths are original revelations of the preconscious psyche, involuntary statements about unconscious psychic happenings, and anything but allegories of physical process" (qtd. in Segal 67). The next most widespread definition of myth refers to myth as a sacred narrative that tells us about our own origin, which functions as the guard of institutions and social order, as well as the guide in human behaviour. Percy S. Cohen further sites seven different theories of myth in his article "Theories of Myth," namely:

> [T]hat which treats myth as a form of explanation and, in particular, a form which occurs at a certain stage in the development of human society and culture; that which treats myth as a form of symbolic statement which has the function, not of explanation, but of expression as an end in itself, and which reflects a particular type of thought, the mythopoeic; that which treats it as an expression of the unconscious; that which accounts for it in terms of function in creating and maintaining social solidarity, cohesion, etc.; that which stresses its function in legitimating social institutions and social practises; that which treats it as a form of symbolic statement

> about social structure, possibly linked with ritual; and finally, there is the structuralist theory. (338)

Finnish folklorist Honko Lauri, however, in "The Problem of Defining Myth" compiles twelve different approaches to myth used by different scientists from various disciplines. He devises four sub-groups from these approaches which are: historical, psychological, sociological, and structural; he, too, finds two points shared by most scholars:

> The first is that these theories in fact overlap and complement each other to some extent. The second is that myths are multidimensional: a myth can be approached from, shall we say, ten different angles, some of which may have greater relevance than others depending on the nature of the material being studied and the questions posed. (Lauri 46)

These amounting definitions, approaches, and methodologies in recognizing, defining, and interpretation of myths show the complexity of this phenomenon. It is also important to differentiate the form of myth from other forms of folklore like legend, fairy tale, saga, and so on. One of the most important distinctions is that myth is considered a fact, which happened in the beginning of time, unlike legend which does not reach as far into history. There is also a difference between characters of myth and characters of legend: mythic characters are deities, while heroes in legends are humans with extraordinary powers. Fairy tales do not have factual nature and are not considered as sacred and important as myths are for preserving the structure of society in the face of adversity. These differences are closely defined and explained in the article by William Bascom "The Forms of Folklore: Prose Narratives" in which myths are seen as "truthful accounts of what happened in the remote past . . . and as embodiment of dogma; they are usually sacred; and . . . often associated with theology and ritual" (4).

For Northrop Frye, myths are not as much historical as they are vessels of tradition which bring history forth in the form of narrative, an "imitation of actions near or at the conceivable limits of desire" (*Anatomy of Criticism* 52). Frye does not strictly differentiate myth from archetype; he highlights the form and content of these two phenomena: "Hence the myth is the archetype though it might be convenient to say myth only when referring to narrative, and archetype when speaking of significance" ("The Archetypes of Literature" 509). Most importantly, Frye sees myth as the structure that makes literature possible; it is its beginning and its end. Literature leaves myth only in order to be able to come back to it: "mythology as a total structure, defining as it does a society's religious beliefs, historical tradition, and cosmological speculations - in short, the whole range of its verbal expressiveness – is the matrix of literature,

and major poetry keeps returning to it" (*Anatomy of Criticism* 600).

Frye is the leading literary critic who established the school of criticism today referred to as Mythical Criticism or Archetypal Criticism. In the vast body of contemporary literary criticism, this school of thought is sided and almost neglected. Its critics argue that it examines only the variations of myths, rather than observing the individual traits of writers and their writings. It may be argued that there is a shy but sure change in that attitude, as postmodernist criticism is allowing archetypal criticism to have its say once again. After revisiting Frye's writing, Darrell Dobson in his appeal "Archetypal Literary Theory in the Postmodern Era" manages to clear some terminological inconsistencies that may have influenced the critics to disregard it for some time. Dobson clears the difference between archetype and archetype image, which Jung clearly distinguishes, thus explaining the problem Frye encounters when faced with fierce postmodernist criticism: "Without the nuanced aspect of Jungian thought that distinguishes between archetype and archetypal image, Frye's archetypal literary theory has not been able to respond to its postmodern critics" (7). Archetypal criticism developed thanks to the discoveries and theories of the Swiss psychoanalyst, and Freud's close associate, Carl Gustav Jung. Due to different views on archetypes and the collective unconscious, the two great psychologists went separate ways:

> A more or less superficial layer of the unconscious is undoubtedly personal. I call it the *personal unconscious*. But this personal unconscious rests upon deeper layer, which does not derive from personal experience and is not a personal acquisition but is inborn. This deeper layer I call the *collective unconscious.* I have chosen the term "collective" because this part of the unconscious is not individual but universal. (Jung, *The Archetypes* 3)

In his book *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, Jung discusses several archetypes, and the complexes the major ones create. Some of them are: the mother archetype, the child archetype, the rebirth, the Kore or the maiden, and the Trickster-figure. He also clarifies the difference between the archetype and myth. The archetype is the form, empty of meaning, which the consciousness will fill with pictures and associations, thus creating myth, fairy tales, legends and stories:

> Another well-known expression of the archetypes is myth and fairytale. But here too we are dealing with forms that have received a specific stamp and have been handed down through long periods of time. . . .The archetype is essentially an unconscious content that is altered by becoming conscious and by being perceived, and it takes its colour from the individual consciousness in which it happens to

> appear. (Jung 5)

For Jung, myth and archetype are clearly different occurrences. Jung considers myth the representation of the deeply unconscious archetypes, myths are "first and foremost psychic phenomena that reveal the nature of the soul" (*The Archetypes* 6).

Archetypes are inextricably linked to myth and fairy tales, often they are interchangeable in theory, yet it is important to understand the hierarchical order of these phenomena. In the archaeological layers of psyche, archetype is the deepest, unconscious content: "unknowable and irrepresentable; it is merely a shared impulse to create pattern" (Dobson 6-7). This content becomes apparent if, and when, they reach the conscious level in the form of dreams and visions, acquiring personal traits of an individual psyche on the way. The interpretative matter of archetype representation, in the form of archetype image, leads us again to myth. While Jung considers archetype void of meaning, comparing it to the structure of crystal, the Structuralists, like Lévi-Strauss and Barthes, state that myth is a structure without meaning. Barthes, a semiotician, sees myth as a sign, ready to be filled with any meaning available, completely arbitrary, just as de Saussure sees language as a system of signs. Thus for Barthes myth can be anything. If this idea of structure continues to be pushed forward, from archetype, over myth, it will inevitably lead to stereotype. The question is whether stereotype is a form, without its own meaning, open to arbitrary content and interpretation.

Stereotypes are firmly set beliefs within one group of another based on certain differences. If they are considered unchangeable, their power grows, especially when connected to gender or ethnicity. That is why stereotyping is one of the ideological tools helping to keep the power in place:

> Stereotyping is the sign of power or a bid for that power. The forms of representation it deals with provide support for existing structures of power, relations of elimination and oppression, and inequalities of resources and opportunity. (Ritzer and Ryan 616)

In the patriarchal ideology gender stereotyping is particularly evident. Female role in a society is conducted and maintained through language. It is transferred through generations and pooled as common knowledge: "Because the language is culturally shared, it provides an ideal means of collectively defining and preserving stereotype beliefs" (Maas and Arcuri 194). If closely observed, all stereotype definitions echo the definitions of archetypes and myth. All of them are passed from generation to generation; kept as sacred knowledge within a cultural group, held as facts and venerated as such.

Stereotypes are cultural and psychological phenomena that get represented in literature, as literature mirrors the dynamics of societies and historical fluctuations. Similar to some definitions of myth, stereotypes help us understand the world around us. Social psychology offers three views on this occurrence: "a) stereotypes are aid to explanation, b) stereotypes are energy-saving devices, and c) stereotypes are shared group beliefs" (McGarty, Yzerbyt, and Spears 2).

The use of stereotypes mirrors the cultural struggle for power; it also shows how a particular society functions from within. It is natural for the members of a group or tribe to conform to some general belief, and thus gain equality within the same group; this is possibly how stereotypes occurred in the first place:

> [Stereotypes] are shared by members of the group not just through the coincidence of common experience or the existence of shared knowledge within society, but because the members of groups act to coordinate their behaviour. (McGarty, Yzerbyt, and Spears 6)

Today stereotypes are mostly derogatory. They highlight the differences we find more visible in others than ourselves. We find them in outcries against nations, peoples, different races. They are very much alive in the political life where we again witness the exile of certain groups of people, only for their different way of life, or their looks, or religious beliefs. We find them in the characters of women who are either idealized as mothers or virgins; or despised as harlots, dangerous demons threatening men, both their masculinity and their hierarchical power. We find them in tortured, murdered, ostracised people whose lives are sacrificed on the altar of stereotyping gone wild. Just as there are countless variations of archetypes and myths, so there are of stereotypes, that do change, but the principle, the pattern remains the same. As the structure of our societies is not likely to change radically, these patterns remain visible, especially in the works of literature, which always reflects and recreates reality.

2. Myths in *Beloved* and *The Sound and the Fury*

2.1 The Motherhood Myth

In *The Sound and the Fury,* Faulkner mystifies and mythologizes women through his

characters' words and actions. The roots of this process are to be sought in his childhood and youth. Faulkner was a weak baby who was exhausting his mother with his dependency. This probably brought on his blind and legendary devotion to his mother, as well as his lasting adoration and affection for his Mammy Caroline Barr. In the novel, Mr Compson transfers some of Faulkner's own perplexity over the otherness of women:

> Because women so delicate so mysterious Father said. Delicate equilibrium of periodical filth between two moons balanced. Moons he said full and yellow as harvest moons her hips thighs. Outside of them always but. Yellow. Feet soles with walking like. Then know that some man that all those mysterious and imperious concealed. With all that inside of them shapes an outward suavity waiting for a touch to. (Faulkner 109)

Three women figures in *The Sound and the Fury* fit in the myth of motherhood, each in their own way and right. Caroline Compson is a frustrated, unhappy woman, a mother of three boys and a girl, of which she only relates and feels for one, Jason, whom she thinks, takes after her family. The next mother in the row is Caroline Compson's daughter Candace, Caddy, who is the complete opposite to her mother. Even though her moral values are questionable in her relationship with men, she is much more of a mother to Benjy, the retarded boy, than their mother ever manages to be. The character of Dilsey is the family's rock, Mammy, the figure everyone can rely on and find comfort in. She is soft, warm, and full of understanding and forgiveness. She is fierce and courageous in her defending of the innocent, a mother figure par excellence. Yet, her role, fulfilled and exemplary, raises a different kind of question, most importantly that of her position of a black woman.

Caroline Compson, who marries out of her own league and spends her life with the chip on her shoulder because of it: "*I know you look down on my people but is that any reason for teaching my own children I suffered for to have no respect*" (Faulkner 80; emphasis Faulkner's), does not manage to be mother to any of her children. She deeply suffers because of that. It is not obvious, but under the surface this is the reason behind her bad health and the air of despair spreading around her like a smell of a stuffy room: "I was raised to believe that people would deny themselves for their own flesh and blood. It's my fault" (Faulkner 223). Her suffering is rooted in her upbringing, when she is taught the sacred roles of women: to be obedient daughters, ladies, perfect wives, and mothers. When she is not able to transfer from her role of a Southern belle who is expected to marry respectably, which she more than succeeds, to the role of a mother, the schism in her soul happens. Caroline Compson retrieves, regresses back to her youth, to the

territory she knows better, and where she feels safer: “these are the only roles Mrs. Compson can play – premarital coquetry or postmaternal grief” (Weinstein 68). Faulkner examines this cultural heritage through the character of Mrs Compson: the idea a woman should shield and venerate her virginity, and yet sacrifice it in order to have children. This inevitably leads to neurosis, the trauma of losing one’s own most precious possession:

> We touch here upon the source of her failure as a mother. Deformed by her social training – a training shaped by class and race to the requirements of virginity – she abandons her own flesh and blood upon the loss of that virginity. She has outlived her image of herself. Simultaneously rushing forward to death and backward to childhood, she repeats herself and takes to black. (Weinstein 70)

The actual childbirth is a nasty, dirty business, not to mention the pain, as if women are punished, and indeed they are, according to Christianity, due to Eve's sinful stain on humanity: “One does not give birth in pain, one gives birth to pain: the child represents it and henceforth it settles in, it is continuous . . . mother is always branded by pain, she yields to it (Kristeva 167). It is not surprising that Caroline cannot face motherhood. Her children are the cause to her suffering, and she mourns over her lost virginity, by wrapping herself up in black and preparing to die, death seeming to her as delivery from the limbo she finds herself in. This limbo, marriage where Caroline finds herself stranded in, is possible to endure only if the mother role is skipped and transferred onto whoever is near. Fortunately, the social structure affords her the Mammy, Dilsey, who almost single-handedly does this difficult task, even though Caddy is a collateral victim, taking over the affectionate role for Benjy and partly for Quentin, who unavoidably misreads it.

Each of her children reacts to Mrs Compson's lack of ability to mother them, to give them the essential love – saplings need to become big, strong trees – in a different way. Quentin, her first-born, finds her so constrictive that he seeks the way out of life to get away from her and her suffocating influence. He is Mrs Compson's first failure. Mrs Compson's inability to be a mother has numerous effects on Quentin. He grows up into an unusually sensitive, but also a sensuous man. Although he never experiences[1] any sexual closeness to another woman, Quentin deeply feels the world around him, especially smells. The sense of smell has a powerful connection to sexuality for Quentin, something overbearing which he cannot stand. The smell of

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1 If we disregard his unsuccessful attempts with Caddy, and a kiss with a neighbour girl he gets slapped by Caddy for.

honeysuckle bears serious sexual connotations for Quentin, how he feels about both his mother and his sister: "*A face reproachful tearful an odor of camphor and of tears a voice weeping steadily and softly beyond the twilit door the twilight-colored smell of honeysuckle*" (Faulkner 130; emphasis Faulkner's). Throughout the Quentin section in the novel, he is hounded by this smell: "damn that honeysuckle I wish it would stop" (129). Due to the lack of motherly affection and any physical contact with his mother, her first-born is devoid of understanding pleasure in the sense of touch, just as he is disconcerted with visual teases Caddy affords him:

> [S]he was lying in the water her head on the sand spit the water flowing about her hips there was a little more light in the water her skirt half saturated flopped along her flanks to the waters motion in heavy ripples going nowhere renewed themselves of their own movement I stood on the bank I could smell the honeysuckle on the water gap the air seemed to drizzle with honeysuckle. (Faulkner 126)

After the wedding of his precious sister, whose honour Quentin could not save, despite a try at outrageous lie to his father that they committed incest, his sole purpose of living is gone. He inherits this obsession about honour and lady-ship from his mother who always pines about it. Quentin firmly focuses on it, all of his childhood and youth, thus creating his own fatal flaw, and inevitably fails. Despite all of his efforts to face up hordes of Caddy's lovers swarming like bees around honeysuckle, he is not capable to save her; his only sister. Without a possibility of acquiring love in any way, Quentin is doomed: "The relationship with the mother is a mad desire, because it is the 'dark continent' *par excellence*. It remains in the shadows of our culture; it is its night and its hell" (Irigaray 414). His only way of getting wrapped up in something motherly is to find water deep enough to embrace him. C. G. Jung in his book *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* writes of numerous ways the mother archetype can be represented:

> It can be attached to a rock, a cave, a tree, a spring, a deep well . . . Evil symbols are the witch, the dragon (or any devouring and entwining animal, such as a large fish or a serpent), the grave, the sarcophagus, deep water, death. (156-157)

On the final day of his life, Quentin travels to a nearby place looking for a right spot to leave for good. He finds not only a deep, welcoming river, but a trout in it, a veteran which cannot be caught. This fish may be a symbol of eternity, but also of a companion which will show Quentin the way. It may be a whale to Quentin's Jonah, the bridge to his transformation. Standing on that bridge he may have imagined himself being the frail mayfly, whose life spans from sunrise to sunset that gets lipped by this elegant, kind, formidable trout, and transported to some

other existence where love is fulfillable:

> Where the shadow of the bridge fell I could see down for a long way, but not as far as the bottom . . . I could not see the bottom, but I could see a long way into the motion of the water before the eye gave out, and then I saw a shadow hanging like a fat arrow stemming into the current. Mayflies skimmed in and out of the shadow of the bridge just above the surface. *If it could just be a hell beyond that: the clean flame the two of us more than dead. Then you will have only me then only me then the two of us amid the pointing and the horror beyond the clean flame* The arrow increased without motion, then in a quick swirl the trout lipped a fly beneath the surface with that sort of gigantic delicacy of an elephant picking up a peanut. (Faulkner 97-98; emphasis Faulkner's)

Caroline Compson sees Benjy, the retarded third child, as the ultimate punishment for the sins completely unknown to her: “what have I done to have been given children like these Benjamin was punishment enough” (Faulkner 85-86). She is so injured and bewildered by the fact she brings such a defenceless creature to the world that in an act of final despair she has her son's name altered in order to change the course of destiny. If that is done for Mrs Compson's own sake, or for the appearances, it is not quite clear. Caroline tries to harbour some feelings toward her unfortunate son, but it seems it is only out of Christian duty rather than true affection: “'Come here and kiss Mother, Benjamin.' Caddy took me to Mother's chair and Mother took my face in her hands and then she held me against her. 'My poor baby.' she said. She let me go” (Faulkner 5). That is also a probable cause behind her changing his name from her brother’s name to a Biblical name of Benjamin. Because mother is not that apparent in his life, and Benjy has this narrowed, incomprehensible view of the world, his basic need for affection turns to the ones present, mostly Caddy, and she takes all the space there is. She is the one who puts her arms around him, not Mother: “Caddy knelt and put her arms around me and her cold bright face against mine. She smelled like trees” (Faulkner 6). Not even Dilsey is registered in his world. All others disappear in oblivion of his limited consciousness. When Caddy leaves, he is inconsolable and holds on to one thing left to him, her slipper. The smell is gone, which comforted him, and the name upsets him, as the golfers call out for their caddies, he cannot know it is not his Caddy, his loved one, his only one. “As both a presence and absence, Caddy's maternity determines the fate of the Compson family” (Clarke 22).

The youngest child, Jason, who is in Mrs Compson’s eyes the only one worthwhile, is just as damaged by the lack of real motherly love, as the rest of his siblings: “A cold, selfish,

complaining woman, she neglects all of her children, including her later favorite, Jason, who cries every night when he can no longer sleep with his grandmother" (Clarke 30). He grows up into a bitter, cynical man whose only anchor becomes the money he is working so hard to earn and save or obtain in any other way possible. By the way of scheming and cheating, as Clarke writes in her book *Robbing the Mother*, he is robbing his mother in order to gain control. The only way to manage this manipulative woman is to keep her play the role of the Southern lady who is not supposed to know anything to do with business:

> One of the more obvious ways Jason seeks to control the power of the mother is by assuming an overtly protective relation to his own mother. He constantly reminds himself of the need to protect her, almost revelling in her helplessness. (Clarke 28)

Despite not having the model to look up to, either that of a mother or of a father, Jason takes up the role of a father for Quentin, his niece. It is the remnant of propriety inherited from his mother that takes him down that path. However, he finds the way to twist it to serve his purpose. His role empowers him to play games with Caddy, whom he holds responsible for his demise. Jason's destiny gets sealed, when Caddy is discarded by her husband, thus a possibility of Jason's employment in the bank disappears with it, which further emasculates him. In Jason's case, the displaced mother complex transpires in a way of his avoiding serious relationships and forming a family of his own. His destitution is only partly to blame for his inability to love anything or anyone: "a mother-complex . . . in the son . . . injures the masculine instinct through an unnatural sexualisation" (Jung 86). His little secret is his occasional coupling with the prostitute from Memphis. This is as far as Jason's sexuality gets developed. He feels safe with the prostitute because he pays her, it is a business and he never expects any emotions out of it:

> Last time I gave her forty dollars. Gave it to her. I never promise a woman anything nor let her know what I'm going to give her. That's the only way to manage them. . . . I make it a rule never to keep a scrap of paper bearing a woman's hand, and I never write them at all. (Faulkner 164)

Caddy, the only daughter of the Compson family, is a character riddled with contradictions. Caddy goes the opposite way from her mother. She is promiscuous, brings shame to the family by having a baby out of the wedlock, then abandons her child and disappears completely from their lives. She is a rebel who does not embrace her girlhood easily, being more of a tomboy: "*You know what I'd do if I were King?* she never was a queen or a fairy she was always a king or a giant or a general" (Faulkner 146; emphasis Faulkner's). Being the only female sibling,

she takes over the needed role of a mother. Unlike to her mother, motherhood comes quite naturally to her. According to Jung, the mother complex apparent in daughters either brings out the mother instinct or it banishes it altogether:

> Only in the daughter is the mother-complex clear and uncomplicated. Here we have to do either with an overdevelopment of feminine instincts indirectly caused by the mother, or with a weakening of them to the point of complete extinction. In the first case, the preponderance of instinct makes the daughter unconscious of her own personality; in the latter, the instincts are projected upon the mother. (*The Archetypes* 85-86)

The mother complex reflects her rebellious feelings against the strict programme Caroline tries to put her through. Caddy never has an intention of becoming a lady. As soon as she is sexually awaken she prowls for a mate. The only person she is looking up to is her father, who is no authority in the house, and has a soft spot for her: "You have Father's name: do you think I'd have to ask him twice? once, even?" (Faulkner 178). For an old aristocrat of the South, his views on women and virginity are fairly liberal. Under that impression, Caddy grows into this dangerous, wild, and inevitably, auto destructive force, claiming not only her own happiness but the happiness of all her brothers to a different degree. Benjy gets castrated when grabbing a girl desperately trying to bring the comfort of Caddy back into his life. Quentin commits suicide after her wedding, not being able to face the loss of virginity he cherished more than Caddy did herself. Faulkner writes of it in his Appendix to *The Sound and the Fury*:

> [A]ccepting the fact that he must value above all not her but the virginity of which she was custodian and on which she placed no value whatever: the frail physical stricture which to her was no more than a hangnail would have been. (367)

Caddy's dual role as a good mother and then an unsuccessful mother shows the fragmented vision of motherhood the Western civilization holds. Nevertheless, she fights the obstacles, and keeps sending money to her daughter. She tries to see her in a heart-rending scene when Jason plays the cruellest trick on her. This shows that her mother instinct is very much alive:

> I told Mink to drive close to the walk and when I said Go on, to give the team a bat. Then I took the raincoat off of her and held her to the window and Caddy saw her and sort of jumped forward. "Hit 'em, Mink!" I says (. . . .) "Now get on that train like you promised," I says. I could see her running after us through the back window. "Hit 'em again," I says. "Let's get on home." When we turned the corner she was still running. (Faulkner 174)

The loss of her virginity leads to death, in other words Caddy disappears from the family, and her name is not to be spoken again.

Dilsey, on the other hand, may be considered a role model of a mother, although Faulkner plays with her part as Mammy to tackle deeper questions and feelings. She is the warm, reliable mother figure to the Compson children, yet, her own children do not have luxury to bask in that warmth. She is rather brusque with them, even with her grandson Luster. One of rare moments we can catch a glimpse of her motherly feelings towards her own is when she tries to protect Luster from being hurt by Jason's sadistic games and get him the money for a ticket:

> "Hush, Luster," Dilsey says. She jerked him back. "Go on," she says. "Drop hit in. Go on. Git hit over with." "You can have it for a nickel," I says. "Go on," Dilsey says. "He aint got no nickel. Go on. Drop hit in." "All right," I says. I dropped it in and Dilsey shut the stove."A big growed man like you," she says. "Git on outen my kitchen. Hush," she says to Luster. "Dont you git Benjy started. I'll git you a quarter fum Frony tonight and you kin go tomorrow night. Hush up, now." (Faulkner 217)

Faulkner uses the myth of motherhood to show the reality of maternity for African American women. Dilsey is taken for granted, appreciated by neither the children nor by Mrs Compson. The South is deeply marked by the cult of the mother. The ladies are brought up to the ideal which is impossible to follow due to the virginal myth, and the Mammies and wet nurses, who nurse both white children and their own, do not get recognition for their sacrifices. Their children often get malnourished as the white children have the primacy. Still she has endless patience and affection for Benjy; she deeply empathises with Caddy, and looks out for Caddy's daughter Quentin. Despite Quentin's offensive behaviour, Dilsey is stepping in her defence without flinching, when Jason comes storming after her. Dilsey may be tired of it all in the end, like Baby Suggs in *Beloved*, when all the life's misfortune gets to her, yet she takes it all in, fortified with her faith that there must be a reason behind all that suffering. In this quiet, willing acceptance of all blows life affords, Dilsey comes the closest to this sanctified ideal of mother: "In the midst of the voices and the hands Ben sat, rapt in his sweet blue gaze. Dilsey sat bolt upright beside, crying rigidly and quietly in the annealment and the blood of the remembered Lamb" (Faulkner 252). In this way, through her, Faulkner makes amends, and empowers this black woman, who is standing for so many other, nameless surrogate mothers to the white Southerners. She is the Queen, the mother of them all: "'Ef I dont worry bout y'all, I dont know who is,' Dilsey said" (Faulkner 179).

In *Beloved*, Toni Morrison also questions the mythical image of mother. Here we first encounter the non-mother, someone who murders her own for no matter what reason. Sethe, like Faulkner's Caddy, is a natural mother. She does not find it daunting, the instinct is strong. She is driven. And yet, because of slavery and due to experiences it yielded it was not advisable for slave women to love their own children:

> "Your love is too thick," he said . . . "Too thick?" she said . . . "Love is or it ain't. Thin love ain't love at all." "Yeah. It didn't work, did it? Did it work?" he asked. "It worked," she said. "How? Your boys gone you don't know where. One girl dead, the other won't leave the yard. How did it work?" (Morrison 164-65)

Paul D tries to understand this kind of motherhood he has never come across before. But Sethe is not retreating; she knows it was the only way. She has evolved one step further. Her mother, whom Sethe barely remembers, had killed all of her children, except Sethe. These children were the results of rape during the Middle Passage: "It was not uncommon for slave women to do that" (Bollen), says Morrison in an interview. What Morrison does with myth is to face the trauma of history: "Myth acts, within this relationship, as a subtle articulation of a communal response to a profoundly traumatic event" (qtd. in Hunte 59). Although Sethe is a perpetrator of an unimaginable crime, even for her own people, she is not mad. She is calm and collected. After the prison sentence served, she continues with her daily routine, working, cooking and taking care of her remaining family. It is clearly evident that the extreme measure she has undertaken in order to save her family is not something planned or foreseen. It just had to be done, and if she was not stopped, they would have all been together on the other side, as Sethe desperately tries to explain to Beloved:

> [H]ow could she have left her? And Sethe cried, saying she never did, or meant to – that she had to get them out, away . . . That her plan was always that they would all be together on the other side, forever. (Morrison 241)

The journey from the fortunate young girl who chooses whom to love, through bearing and holding on to her own children for an unusually long time, to lucky escape, right down to the outrage that defeated her mother-in-law, transforms Sethe. All this experience sees the changes from sanctity to an outcast, all in one person, and then back again to acceptance and forgiveness, through the love and kindness of her remaining daughter, the community and the man who finds the strength to place his history next to Sethe's: "Her story was bearable because it was his as well – to tell, to refine and tell again" (Morrison 99). Morrison opens the window of opportunity in this character for what few of slave women ever had, thus creating the uplifting air of hope,

of facing the horror and surviving it to a life worth living. The message is always love. As all the images of mothers down through ages are laden with this healing emotion, so the writer offers the cure for broken history, and untold grief to be laid to rest:

> INTERVIEWER: Do you ever write out of anger or any other emotion? MORRISON: No. Anger is a very intense but tiny emotion, you know. It doesn't last. It doesn't produce anything. It's not creative...I don't trust that stuff anyway. I don't like those little quick emotions. (Schappell)

Unlike Caroline Compson, who never manages to ease into the mother role, Sethe does not find it daunting at all. It can be observed by the effect her behaviour has on her remaining children. Even though her sons, Howard and Buglar eventually flee the haunted house, they leave because of the ghost, and not because their mother makes them feel fear for their lives. Denver stays on, and Sethe in an unconscious attempt to make time stand still, keeps her little girl little as long as possible. When Paul D mentions that Denver has grown, Sethe does not want to face the facts:

> She's grown. [Paul D] I don't care what she is. Grown don't mean nothing to a mother. A child is a child. They get bigger, older, but grown? What's that supposed to mean? In my heart it don't mean a thing. (Morrison 45)

This woman sees her long gone sons, in her mind's eye, still as little boys, she imagines parts of their bodies she liked most. There is much genuine tenderness in these imaginings. This is Sethe's redeeming quality, and that is why Denver is worried she might lose her to Beloved, and feels threatened in the end by the overpowering, demonic features of her sister. Sethe's character has certain similarities with the mythic figure of Asaase Ya, the mother of the trickster, who had a sword that would fight by itself and obeyed Aberewa's commands: “When she ordered the sword to fight, it slaughtered everyone it encountered. When she commanded the sword to stop fighting, it did” (Lynch and Roberts 12). Sethe's tool of both defence and the symbol of desperate destruction was a saw; it even has certain similarities homophonically to a sword. She is also the mother of a trickster, as it will be shown later. Morrison uses African mythology to retrace the origin of ancestors, and to fortify the sense of identity in African Americans, especially women. In African tribal life and beliefs, the mother figure is one of the most powerful characters. It is the one that gives life, but the one that can obliterate it just the same. Since slavery strips people of any sense of power over their lives, this extreme measure was exercised many times, especially during the Middle Passage, just as suicide was the solution, and a getaway for many souls. Morrison uses her fiction in a systematic political struggle for

empowerment of her people, and especially women.

Baby Suggs, similarly to Dilsey, is a paramount figure, whose age adds to the nobility of the mother image. Baby Suggs is a deeply tragic woman who loses all her children – and is deprived of almost all information of their whereabouts and well-being. She, however, finds the way to heal and survive. The only child she has been allowed to keep buys her out of slavery and she is able to find hope in that late turn of destiny. Baby Suggs becomes a preacher; she mothers all the freed slaves that happen to come along her path. She pours out her affection onto her daughter-in-law, upon her arrival, and bathes her in sections, as if to repair her, part by part. Morrison describes her with such deep rhythm; we can follow and imagine her slow, determinate moves, as she works the magic of hands:

> She led Sethe to the keeping room and, by the light of a spirit lamp, bathed her in sections, starting with her face. Then, while waiting for another pan of heated water, she sat next to her and stitched gray cotton. Sethe dozed and woke to the washing of her hands and arms. After each bathing, Baby covered her with a quilt and put another pan on in the kitchen. (Morrison 93)

She is like the mother goddess of the old, like Ama, the Nigerian deity, the personification of Earth: "Ama was compared to a potter. Much as a potter builds up a pot with strips of clay, Ama created the human body by building it up bone by bone" (Lynch and Roberts 7). The presence of Baby Suggs is relished and desired, by both her granddaughter Denver, and by her daughter-in-law Sethe. Even after her death she is vivid in their memories and still passes on advice, beyond the grave; that being the unquestionable sign of greatness and the everlasting motherly love. Baby Suggs represents the ancestor, the elder, the presence of much importance in the lives of black people. Morrison writes of their importance in her essay "Rootedness," of the importance of their presence in writing and for writers, the necessary connectedness to the origin and the blueprint of identity:

> There is always an elder there. And these ancestors are not just parents, they are sort of timeless people whose relationships to the characters are benevolent, instructive, and protective, and they provide a certain kind of wisdom. . . . It was the absence of an ancestor that was frightening, that was threatening, and it caused huge destruction and disarray in the work itself. (343)

Beloved regains her physical body only when Baby Suggs is long gone; then she can arrive and start her real reign of terror only with the wise, motherly figure out of the way. In order to bring some kind of order in dismantled life that established itself with the arrival of Beloved,

Denver seeks advice from her grandmother who urges her to go into the world. Denver's venturing into the world brings the spirit of ancestors back, as the community gets active in the preservation of life again:

> She did not see the women approaching, accumulating slowly in groups of twos and threes from the left. (. . . .) Some brought what they could and what they believed would work. (. . . .) and then Ella hollered. Instantly the kneelers and the standers joined her. They stopped praying and took a step back to the beginning. In the beginning there were no words. In the beginning was the sound, and they all knew what that sound sounded like. (Morrison 257-59)

This causes Beloved to disappear, vanish, and only show herself in the footprints on occasion. Through Baby Suggs, Morrison wants to teach people to cherish the old and the wise, the kind, and comforting mothers, who have the answers even from beyond the grave; she urges and reminds not to forget and undermine the importance of the community, which is in all societies held together by women, who are mothers.

2.2 The Plantation Myth/The Garden of Eden Myth

What sets the plantation Sweet Home in *Beloved* from the others is its resemblance to the Garden of Eden. The slaves, who live and work there, are called and considered men, not boys, the only female slave, Sethe, is allowed to choose whom she will marry, and the children are not sold off for profit:

> Sethe had the amazing luck of six whole years of marriage to that “somebody” son who had fathered every one of her children. A blessing she was reckless enough to take for granted, lean on, as though Sweet Home really was one. As though a handful of myrtle stuck in the handle of a pressing iron propped against the door

> in a whitewoman's kitchen could make it hers. As though mint sprig in the mouth changed the breath as well as its odor. A bigger fool never lived. (Morrison 22-23)

Up to a certain point, the slaves on Sweet Home are not considered chattel, like on other plantations. Also, they are not abused, either physically or mentally. Therefore, from the point of view of less fortunate slaves on other farms, this plantation seems a paradise. Yet, while on other plantations slaves are used for creating even more wealth, where they are forcefully coupled, the Sweet Home men are kept in place by imposed celibacy, except the lucky one – Halle. The men cannot leave the farm, and Sixo, the wise one, realizes that this is no paradise, at least not his. He is the first character to leave the Garden of Eden, to find his own bliss, even before the disaster hits:

> For twenty years they had all lived in that cradle, until Baby left, Sethe came, and Halle took her. He made a family with her, and Sixo was hell-bent to make one with the Thirty-Mile Woman. When Paul D waved goodbye to his oldest brother, the boss was dead, the mistress nervous and the cradle already split. (Morrison 219)

On the arrival of Schoolteacher and his nephews, this paradise changes its nature almost overnight. It is as if the demons have overtaken paradise. The memory main characters have of Sweet Home is of a sort of paradise, a safe haven lost to them. It is a memory of a loss; of something that was never meant for them to have. Morrison elaborates the idea of the fragility of our concepts of paradise, bliss, and freedom, most of all, as she speaks through the character of Denver: “How come everybody run off from Sweet Home can't stop talking about it? Look like if it was so sweet you would have stayed” (13). The plantation myth is developed and groomed in the Southern fiction. The idea of gentry living happily surrounded by nature, wealth, and grateful, faithful slaves is a concept both the South and the North needed. The Southerners needed it to find comfort and remedy for wounded sense of morale and identity, while the Northerners needed it due to the feeling that the South is a place apart: “Plantation fiction before and after the Civil War, was at its core propaganda designed to promote a white southern racist vision of the past” (MacKethan 651). If we take the concept of heaven as a place inhabited with the innocents, then Sweet Home is heavenly only partially, especially from the perspective of Sethe. Even though she has seen death before, her stay on the farm, where she creates a family, is a shielded living of childhood and innocence. She is not a classical Eve, or Lilith, (she may have had some of the effect on the men, though), and her tree of knowledge together with its hated fruit, comes in the form of a man, Schoolteacher. He is the bringer of bigger truths, and

Sethe is on the horizon of understanding what Sixo always knew:

> It was a book about us but we didn't know that right away. We just thought it was his manner to ask us questions. He commenced to carry round a notebook and write down what we said. I still think it was them questions that tore Sixo up. Tore him up for all time. (Morrison 37)

By eating an apple from the tree of knowledge, Eve obtained the knowledge that made her mortal. Schoolteacher adds more features to this knowledge. Sethe, as a very strong, independent mind, does not accept the notions of the animal nature ascribed to them by Schoolteacher. This knowledge drives all the heavenly appeal out of Sweet Home for her. Even when they meet once again, Schoolteacher, in the face of tragedy, sees the confirmation of his deduction: "see what happened when you overbeat creatures God had given you the responsibility of – the trouble it was, and the loss . . . you just can't mishandle creatures and expect success" (Morrison 150).

The house 124 on Bluestone Road may be seen as another perspective of heaven, promised freedom. It is the heaven of eternal return, Mircea Eliade speaks about in his book of the same name: "eternal return were above all appreciated [by] . . . and especially consoled those who directly suffered the pressure of history" (147). Sethe has crossed the river of life, and arrived to the new haven, where they will all be safe. The cyclical nature of time is accentuated by Morrison's repetition of 28 days. Sethe and her children had 28 days in heaven. It is the approximate time of the menstrual cycle in women:

> Those twenty-eight happy days were followed by eighteen years of disapproval and a solitary life. Then a few months of the sun splashed life that the shadows holding hands on the road promised her; tentative greetings from other colored people in Paul D's company; a bed life for herself. Except for Denver's friend, every bit of it had disappeared. Was that the pattern? she wondered. Every eighteen or twenty years her unlivable life would be interrupted by a short-lived glory? (Morrison 173)

In *The Sound and the Fury* the plantation myth is not all that pronounced at first glance. There is a big house run by an elderly help Dilsey and her family. There are no whips, runaway slaves, no brutality. Actually, brutality is turned inward, into the family itself. The roles are partly changed. Nevertheless, Mrs Compson lives locked up in the past of her Southern Belle mode, and Quentin dies for the honour of his sister and family. Jason also suffers for the appearances. It is the variation of the plantation myth, the late one, getting close to the exit of the social scene. Like Mark Twain, Faulkner launches his criticism against the remnants of this myth, still very much alive during his living years. When he portrays Dilsey, pestered by Mrs

Compson, the tension and pressure of history is clearly palpable:

> "Are you going to wake him up just to dress him?" she said. Dilsey stopped. With her foot lifted to the next step she stood there, her hand against the wall and the gray splash of the window behind her, motionless and shapeless she loomed. "He aint awake den?" she said. "He wasn't when I looked in," Mrs Compson said. "But it's past his time. He never does sleep after half past seven. You know he doesn't." Dilsey said nothing. She made no further move, but though she could not see her save as a blobby shape without depth, Mrs Compson knew that she had lowered her face a little and that she stood now like cows do in the rain, holding the empty water bottle by its neck. (Faulkner 295)

Dilsey's absent children tell a story of the Great Migration, when there was a surge of the freedmen leaving the South and its slave holding history, and flooding the North looking for ways to sustain themselves and their families they were lucky to reunite with. Richard Godden analyses the peculiar position the freedmen found themselves after the Abolition:

> The applicability of Hegel's "Lordship and Bondage" to Faulkner's major plantation fiction (*The Sound and the Fury* [1929], *Absalom, Absalom!* [1936], and *Go Down, Moses* [1942]) derives from a continuity of labor use within the Southern economy, a continuity bridging the ante- and postbellum periods. (12)

Godden quotes historian Jay Mandel stating that slaves in that particular period found themselves in the position where they were neither free nor bound. This is how we find Dilsey when Mrs Compson complains that she is too slow and that she will ask Jason to lay her off. Faulkner raises the reader's awareness of the unfortunate position ex-slaves endure as house servants in the same households they were previously held as chattel.

When Faulkner talks of his first visions of the book and the little girl with muddy drawers sitting on the branch in the tree, the Biblical connotations are clear. It is not her brothers who climb the tree but the only daughter of the Compson family. The descendant of Eve climbs the tree of knowledge and encounters death, even though she still does not know what it is. In the book *The Sound and the Fury in the Garden of Eden*, John P. Anderson brings the parallels closer:

> Faulkner uses the same set of characters in his novel. The Compson daughters are potent sexually and break the rules . . . The Compson sons are impotent sexually, and . . . stay at home emotionally and physically. The Compson parents give only conditional love. The seducers are legion. (17)

Faulkner pines over the loss of Eden through his characters' loss of innocence in the

multifaceted vision of one story. Caddy, the epitome of a highly sexualized female, is portrayed only through the lenses of her three brothers. We get this three-dimensional picture by rotating through three different lenses. The first one is Benjy's; his perspective is at the same time innocent, straightforward, and potently complex in his synesthetic affect. We see, smell, and feel Caddy through Benjy's impression of his beloved sister. The journey Caddy takes from a wilful tomboyish girl, through her flirting with incest, and finally to her classically tragic motherhood in absence, bears Biblical symbolism throughout. She is the descendant of Eve, the rebellious spirit who brings the seed of disaster upon her family. Quentin's lens is painted in dangerous, forbidden sexual colours that lead him to self- punishment. He neither manages to shield his sister's honour, nor does he manage to achieve sexual fulfilment, either with Caddy, as one sort of forbidden fruit or with his room-mate at Harvard, as another sort. Quentin is in deep clutches of deviant behaviour: we follow his demise, from puppy love for Caddy, to a chivalric youthful carry on with her lovers, to a playful gait with Shrieve, his "husband", all the way to shady befriending of a little Italian girl. It is not surprising that he searches, and desires, cleansing through hellish fire, for both himself and Caddy, whom he feels so responsible for: "*If it could just be a hell beyond that: the clean flame the two of us more than dead. Then you will have only me then only me then the two of us amid the pointing and the horror beyond the clean flame"* (Faulkner 131; emphasis Faulkner's).

As a cold, bitter, rational facet of the three-dimensional portraiture of Caddy, Jason is at the receiving end of the sinful atmosphere in his family home. Yet, he is just as tainted as the rest of the siblings. Becoming destitute is the most painful experience for a materialistic soul as Jason's. It warps his character into this caricature, void of any emotion, but greed and contempt. There is this vague, latent whiff of sexual force behind his brutality towards his niece Miss Quentin. He, who is supposed to role- play a father figure, turns into this sad satyr chasing the nymph Quentin on her love trips, hiding in the woods and cursing his faith of an unlovable creature no one takes seriously:

> Like I say it's not that I object to so much; maybe she cant help that, it's because she hasn't even got enough consideration for her own family to have any discretion. I'm afraid all the time I'll run into them right in the middle of the street or under a wagon on the square, like a couple of dogs. (. . . .) let her lay out all day and all night with everthing in town that wears pants, what do I care. (. . . .) I says you'll have one hell of a time in heaven, without anybody's business to meddle in only dont you ever let me catch you at it I says. (Faulkner 262-3)

The punishment for Eve's/Caddy's sexuality and sin is overall and none of the siblings escapes free of charge. Benjy ends up castrated even though he is unaware of the sexual maturity his body reaches, the sexual maturity his mind could never follow. Quentin offers his sacrifice voluntarily in a desperate appeal to even the bill, while Jason is robbed of both material and emotional comfort, and fulfilment in his life. Caddy herself is separated from her only child, and is banished from family memory altogether. One insolent act and its fruit bring on the avalanche of consequences. In the midst of the howling storm the silence covers one family, its memory, history, and possible, subsequent future. Still, there is always the father's kindness, the author's tender concern; which in this story is brought about by the warmest character and by the God's favourite – Dilsey. In this statuesque figure, Faulkner brings hope and comfort. Even though she has seen "de first and de last" (Faulkner 252) of the Compsons, the Shegog's sermon during the Easter mass brings the vision of the promised heavenly land for the weary and the penitent. Thus the circle is complete; the order of things is yet again established.

2.2.1 The Tree Myth

The tree myth is at the core of the Garden of Eden myth. The gullible wilfulness of Eve to taste the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, but not even consider the Tree of Life, still carries its consequences for the most of the Western civilization. While the Tree of Life stands for the cradle of humanity, and is the source not only of life but of immortality, the main prize to strive for, The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil represents a very poignant symbol and message, that of knowledge as a source of mortality. The fruit of this tree carries the seed of mortality within it. In the Book of Genesis, when YHWH finds out his order is disobeyed the immediate punishment follows. Adam and Eve are banished from the Garden of Eden, before they pluck up the courage to eat fruit from the other forbidden tree:

> And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the

> garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.
> (3. 22-24)

Creating Yoknapatawpha County, Faulkner created not only a genealogy of one family, so we can follow one family tree, but several trees in parallel. The author is a creator himself and is aware what dangers the knowledge brings forth. Yet, he is the one to send his favourite character right up the tree to pick the seed of mortality, then and there, immediately. When Caddy, as a little restless girl, climbs the tree to prove the point that white people do not have funerals and finds the exact opposite, she is marred, contaminated with the death virus. This she dutifully brings down to her own brothers. They are, at the same time, exposed to a similar virus, that of petite mort, while looking up and observing her dirty, muddy drawers. The Compson's pear tree, just like the Tree of Knowledge in the Garden of Eden, is prohibited for a climb. Father's orders are yet again disobeyed, and the Eve's curse continues. We even witness the two separate occasions of this occurrence in the novel: Caddy's and her daughter Quentin's disobedience. Everything about Caddy, the sinful, the blackguard as her brother Quentin calls her, is connected to the tree. Benjy associates the smell of trees with Caddy. This is not surprising if she climbs the tree fearlessly and regularly; although the smell significantly disappears with Caddy's loss of innocence. This is where the innocent Benjy smells death where before there was life. With inheritance of her mother's rebellious nature, Miss Quentin also uses the tree as a fire escape to freedom from her vicious uncle. The tree is at the same time the bringer of life and the symbol of inevitability of death, the symbol of demise of a great family. The fractal beauty of trees, with their branches and roots, is interchangeable: “with an upland rise of branches/repeating the pattern of a nether thirst”, as the poet Ivan Lalić depicts them in a poem “What Any Tree Can Tell You”. It tells us the story where the branches reach for the heaven, symbolising freedom, while roots are seated ever deeper into the soil, dust we return to, and what we become cyclically. Still, the images may easily be mixed, misinterpreted: the roots may become the stairway to freedom, while branches the descent to the Hades. Despite being the result of her mother's sin, soiled from the very conception, Miss Quentin reaches freedom against all odds, while the obedient uncle does not get his reward, and is stuck in a limbo with twisted sense of morality and justice. This ironic blender Faulkner puts his characters through yields a poignant, stubborn and proud realisation that blind obedience does not make history, and that fearsome, childish following is not innate to a man who will prevail, who is immortal only when defiant

and unflinching.

In *Beloved*, we come across an array of trees, they grow in reality, and in flesh; they are real and imagined; they act as a guide, as a comforter, a silent witness, a victim, a jailer, a grave, a piece of art, and writing. The trees accompany us from the days of yore, making a tour around the globe, leaving the story seedlings along the way. Morrison taps into the deep source of one whole continent of myths and tales, and brings them closer to the people forcefully separated from their heritage, as a lifeline. In interweaving the African mythology lines with those of religious and classical ones, the effect on the reading population becomes universal. The author demands reader's participation, thus enforcing the project of revisiting, and rereading the past. While in *The Sound and the Fury* the tree is the Tree of Knowledge, in *Beloved* the tree is more of the Tree of Life symbol:

> The scar on Sethe's back tells its own story which Paul D reads as if he were deciphering braille . . .Sethe's . . . body constitutes the text on which history is written. . . . By reading the scar as a tree – a symbol of human attachment and growth – rather than a symbol of defeat, Amy Denver, Sethe, and Paul D collectively assert themselves as writers rather than as blank pages passively waiting to be written upon. (Heller 137)

If we follow the idea of a tree as a cradle of humanity, and of gods for that matter, when Amy reads the chokecherry tree in blossom on Sethe's back, by the riverside, as another symbol of life, the author signals us all will be well, that the child will live, as the line must continue. The chokecherry tree on Sethe's back yields life despite all odds. Heavily whipped and exhausted, a runaway slave in the final stage of pregnancy, is saved by a white girl. The story in itself grows to mythic proportions, and is possible only if the ancestral power of symbols barges in to help. The tree can also represent a vessel of one's soul: "A tree may play a vital part in the life of a primitive, apparently possessing for him its own soul and voice, and the man concerned will feel that he shares its fate" (Jung, *Man and His Symbols* 45). Sethe's tree grows a protective bark around her trauma, her stolen milk, her scathed femininity, helps in the transformation when all is lost. The art-piece of horror, "like the decorative work of an ironsmith too passionate for display" (Morrison 17), forged by a whip, tells the story of the unnamed, the silenced, and the denied. For daydreaming, confused Denver, torn between her mother and dead sister's ghost, whose blood she drank with the milk mother offered her on the fated day, the boxwood trees build a haven:

> [F]ive boxwood bushes, planted in a ring, had started stretching toward each other

> four feet off the ground to form a round, empty room seven feet high, its walls fifty inches of murmuring leaves. . . . once there she could stand all the way up in emerald light. (. . . .) a refuge . . . closed off from the hurt of the hurt world. (Morrison 28)

Another enclosure, a natural altar, an offering of trees, is the clearing where Baby Suggs preaches and elevates suffering her people endured. Sixo turns to trees as to ancestors and goes dancing among them. Paul D has a distinctive, continuous relationship with trees, starting with the Brother, his favourite tree at Sweet Home, to the blossoming trees that lead him to freedom, away from the traumatizing experience of Alfred, Georgia:

> [T]rees were inviting; things you could trust and be near; talk to if you wanted to as he frequently did since way back when he took the midday meal in the fields of Sweet Home. Always in the same place if he could, and choosing the place had been hard because Sweet Home had more pretty trees than any farm around. (Morrison 21)

Never forgetting his origin, nor connection to nature, Sixo goes "among trees at night. . . to keep his bloodlines open" (Morrison 25). The trees stand as an example of strength and defiance, pride and elegance sustained even when faced with the worse, "the lowest yet" (Morrison 256).

2.3 The Myth of Rebirth

In the book *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, Jung elaborates on the phenomena of rebirth, and like other numerous archetypes, this concept is apparent throughout diverse population: "Rebirth is an affirmation that must be counted among the primordial affirmations of mankind. These primordial affirmations are based on what I call archetypes" (116). According to Jung, there are five forms of rebirth, namely metempsychosis, reincarnation, resurrection, rebirth, and participation in the process of transformation.

The immediate association with the concept of rebirth in *The Sound and the Fury* is the time most of the book refers to – Easter. The resurrection of Christ, the rebirth of nature in spring is the message Faulkner tries to convey. It is absolutely necessary to kill off the old year, the old king in order for the nature to renew itself; for the new kingdom to establish itself and reign, as is described in Frazer's *The Golden Bough*. The old establishment of the plantation owners, the fossilized order of things is faced with defeat, loss of the world they understand: "Their class had been devastated – physically, economically and psychologically . . . The loss

of the planters' slaves and life savings . . . wiped out the inheritance of generations" (Foner qtd. in Godden 9). Only now can a new world order set in, with slaves free to take control over their lives and remember freedom. Frazer describes the phenomenon in *The Golden Bough*, when the natural process continues its circular journey personified in deities like Oziris, Demeter, and Persephone.

In *The Sound and the Fury* the first occurrence of rebirth is presented to us by Faulkner in the magical rite of changing the name of the afflicted Compson's child. When the inevitable becomes too embarrassingly obvious, Mrs Compson decides to change the child's name from Maury to Benjy, Maury being her beloved brother's name: "*His name's Benjy now, Caddy said. How come it is, Dilsey said. He aint wore out the name he was born with yet, is he. Benjamin came out of the bible, Caddy said. It's a better name for him than Maury was"* (Faulkner 70; emphasis Faulkner's). This act is Faulkner's evocation of old, pagan forces, which would absolutely horrify Mrs Compson if she only knew what it was all about. In primitive societies, if a member is ill, one of the ways to deceive the evil spirits is to change the patient's name so that the spirits cannot recognize him any more:

> For instance, a man is ill and consequently needs to be "renewed." The renewal must "happen" to him from outside, and to bring this about, he is pulled through a hole in the wall at the head of his sick-bed, and now he is reborn; or he is given another name and thereby another soul, and then the demons no longer recognize him. (*The Archetypes* 129)

Faulkner combines the old and the new, taking the ironic jab at Christianity and its use of mythological and magical practices of the old. It sure cannot be bad; the name comes from the Bible, so that shall certainly help. A similar rite to induce rebirth is naming a child after the ancestor, which we read in Caddy's naming of her little daughter after her brother Quentin: "Not only are ancestral spirits supposed to be reincarnated in children, but an attempt is made to implant them into the child by naming him after an ancestor" (*The Archetypes* 124-5). It could be speculated whether Quentin's suicide is also an attempt of rebirth, something like Sylvia Plath's attempts in "Lady Lazarus":

> Dying
> is an art, like everything else.
> I do it exceptionally well (. . . .)
> It's the theatrical
> Comeback in broad day

To the same place, the same face, the same brute

Amused shout:

'A miracle!'

That knocks me out.

Quentin fantasizes of him and Caddy together cleansed in the fires of hell, thus some kind of rebirth is on his mind in final moments. He does not want to return the time, but deny it with his removal of the hands on the watch. He makes his own time when he chooses the time of his own death, and in that way he is taking over the power from an entity outside himself.

Jason is another one who has his ancestors implanted in him, being the fourth Jason in the Compson family. It is the heirloom he can neither live up to nor bear. His meanness and lack of human decency and empathy portray him as a possessed individual. His life is reared by all sorts of fateful interventions, that of being the last of the children who is left with next to nothing in property, and all the responsibility for their mother. He has also an illegitimate daughter of his despised sister pressed upon him, as well as the care for servants he cannot see the purpose of: "'I feed a whole dam kitchen full of niggers to follow around after him, but if I want an automobile tire changed, I have to do it myself" (Faulkner 206). It is not surprising he turns into a bitter, spiteful spirit himself.

Beloved revolves around the idea of rebirth, of transformation, body and soul. Not only the character of Beloved is an obvious poltergeist, she is also being renamed, a magic act of protection. Her mother, Sethe, who causes her death as an extreme expression of love, never lets us know the baby's real name. She is aware that the baby will come back and demand justice. In addition, the burial place and the gravestone are obtained by Sethe's further debasement:

> Who would have thought that a little old baby could harbor so much rage? Rutting among the stones under the eyes of the engraver's son was not enough. Not only did she have to live out her years in a house palsied by the baby's fury at having its throat cut, but those ten minutes she spent pressed up against dawn-colored stone studded with star chips, her knees wide open as the grave, were longer than life, more alive, more pulsating than the baby blood that soaked her fingers like oil. (Morrison 5)

By never revealing her child's real name, Sethe shields it from evil spirits, despite being aware

that the child itself is going to become one. The house 124 is haunted by a baby spirit, it is “full of baby's venom” (Morrison 3). The poltergeist and the reincarnation in the body of a young woman torment the inhabitants of the house 124, to the point of distraction. Denver's brothers leave when they cannot deal with the spitefulness of their dead sister any longer. In her article on the subject of conjure in *The Toni Morrison Encyclopedia,* Kelly Norman Ellis explains that the myth of a vengeful child spirit comes from Yoruba mythology: “In the language of the Yoruba, Beloved is an *abiku*, a spirit child who is fated to a cycle of early death and rebirth to the same mother. These spirits are said to be souls who are seeking to torment their parents by repeatedly returning” (90). Beloved emerges from water fully dressed, with such fine, new skin there are no lines on her palms. All symptoms she bears evoke birth: “A FULLY DRESSED woman walked out of the water. Everything hurt but her lungs most of all. Sopping wet and breathing shallow she spent those hours trying to negotiate the weight of her eyelids” (Morrison 50; emphasis Morrison's). She carries signs witnessing her otherworldly origin: “She had new skin, lineless and smooth, including the knuckles of her hands.(…)Sethe saw that her feet were like her hands, soft and new” (Morrison 50-52). When Sethe sees Beloved for the first time, sitting on the tree stump before the house 124, she is overwhelmed with urge to urinate, as if her water broke, another sign of giving birth. The transformation of Beloved from the poltergeist, haunting the house, to the fully formed young woman may have been brought upon by Sethe's unwillingness, and inability, to face up to the past and memory. The re-experience of giving birth to her lost daughter creates the opportunity for Sethe herself to be born again. Beloved takes Sethe on a slow, painful spiral down to near death. In order to rise again, Sethe needs to die first. Then, when her will for life almost completely seeps out, the community steps in and brings her back in a magical ritual with repetitive sounds, conjuring life forces:

> Denver saw lowered heads, but could not hear the lead prayer – only the earnest syllables of agreement that backed it: Yes, yes, yes, oh yes. Hear me. Hear me. Do it, Maker, do it. Yes. (. . . .) and then Ella hollered. Instantly the kneelers and the standers joined her. They stopped praying and took a step back to the beginning. In the beginning there were no words. In the beginning was the sound, and they all knew what that sound sounded like. (Morrison 258-9)

With the community acting as a conduit, the midwife, Sethe is brought to life again with the act of forgiveness:

> [T]he voices of women searched for the right combination, the key, the code, the sound that broke the back of words. Building voice upon voice until they found it,

> and when they did it was a wave of sound wide enough to sound deep water and knock the pods off chestnut trees. It broke over Sethe and she trembled like the baptized in its wash. (Morrison 261)

2.4 The Trickster Myth

As its name implies, Trickster is a figure still escaping definition. It is bad, yet good, profane and sacred, intelligent and naïve, female and male. According to Anne Doueini in her essay "Trickster: On Inhabiting the Space between Discourse and Story," Trickster presents a real problem to Western scholarship in that "a figure apparently so secular and at times almost evil should constitute part of a sacred mythological tradition" (283). Jung considers this evasive character "a forerunner of the saviour" who is ruled by the unconscious and thus represents the shadow, the term this psychoanalyst coined having Trickster-figure characteristics in mind. It has been long noted that Toni Morrison imports the knowledge and heritage of African mythology into her novels. The figure of Trickster is tightly interwoven in her narrative as both the helper in endurance of the unendurable, and the narrator's tool of weaving the story. Cynthia Whitney Hallett calls Morrison a trickster-figure herself in her article on Trickster in *The Toni Morrison Encyclopedia.* Indeed, Morrison weaves her stories, twists the expected, tricks us, teaches us, and shifts our vision, just like the figure of Ananse does: "The works of Toni Morrison reflect more than her mastery of folkloric figures, most especially that of the trickster; her stories also exhibit her ultimate skill of author as trickster" (Hallett 355). Ananse is the trickster-figure of spider in African mythology that buys all the stories from Nyame the Sky God through her wit and cunning.

Beloved is inhabited by the trickster-figure bearing numerous characteristics like shape shifting, gluttony, selfishness, jealousy, malevolence and the other base feelings one's shadow could project. Yet, the character of Beloved is also the conduit that brings the community together, teaches the forgotten lore of forgiveness, kindness, and humanity. She saves Sethe in making her to face the past, she pries Paul D's tobacco tin open thus opening him to love; she pushes Denver out of the door, making her find her own courage to be herself. In Jung's words a figure like that is both "subhuman and superhuman, a bestial and divine being" (*The Archetypes* 263), and the "confirmation of the mythological truth that the wounded wounder is the agent of healing, and that the sufferer takes away suffering" (*The Archetypes* 256). Beloved is childish and naïve to start with. She is the poltergeist at first, the revenant full of anger which she abundantly exercises on the inhabitants of the house 124 in Bluestone Road: "the baby's spirit picked up Here Boy and slammed him into the wall hard enough to break two of his legs and dislocate his eye, so hard he went into convulsions and chewed up his tongue" (Morrison 12). When she changes shape and emerges from the water fully clad as a young woman, her reign of terror is yet to come. By that time, Sethe's sons Buglar and Howard are long gone, and she only remembers parts of their bodies as they were when small. Sethe's mother-in-law Baby Suggs is also long gone. There is no one to shield the home hearth from what is to come. Despite, or maybe exactly because of, Paul D's arrival, Beloved goes through a transformation, leaves the baby pranks, and establishes herself in the household as essential, to both Sethe and Denver. She soon starts exercising her power over Paul D by relocating him, in stages, to the cold house where the final act of seduction is going to happen. The trickster learns her new trick from another trickster figure – that of a turtle. Beloved learns the power of sex from a couple of turtles in the river:

> It took a moment for her to drag her eyes from the spectacle of Beloved's head to see what she was staring at. A turtle inched along the edge, turned and climbed to dry ground. Not far behind it was another one, headed in the same direction (. . .) The impregnable strength of him – earthing his feet near her shoulders. The embracing necks – hers stretching up toward his bending down, the pat pat pat of their touching heads. The gravity of their shields, clashing, countered and mocked the floating heads touching. (Morrison 105)

Denver is at first besotted by Beloved; she is not alone any more, and she immediately recognizes her older sister in the young woman. Still, after some time, the girl learns she is even lonelier, and that her mother's affection has found another estuary. She starts to see Beloved for what she really is, and is forced to leave the house despite her horror, driven by the base human need

for food. Thus Beloved saves the girl, the charmed one from birth. In the same manner, Beloved saves Sethe. Cleverly snuggling in the arms, moulded for embrace of the lost one, the trickster-figure nudges the woman, numbed from the horror in her past, to face it for once. She asks after the earrings, sings the lullaby only Sethe knows, brings the breath of milk close to her mother's nostrils, and in that way acts as a therapist who forces the patient to look straight into the void of personal horror. With all her power, and all her menace, Beloved yields only the good. She brings the community together, the women lost in their righteousness, who get united against the otherworldly child beating its mother:

> "But, Ella –" "But nothing. What's fair ain't necessarily right." "You can't just up and kill your children." "No, and the children can't just up and kill the mama." It was Ella more than anyone who convinced the others that rescue was in order. She was a practical woman who believed there was a root either to chew or avoid for every ailment. (Morrison 256)

It is this unresolved transition, so characteristic of the trickster-figure, that Beloved displays so overtly, this change from the tormentor to the saviour, that causes various analyses. Although we do not see this change in her *per se*, all the people are affected by Beloved's presence and actions. Nobody gets hurt but herself in the end, as it often happens in trickster stories. The moral is conveyed to the community, some new truths and humility are installed: "Every trickster, regardless of any type of distinction, exposes norms, ideology, and categorization as static, and therefore flawed, arbitrary human constructs" (Hallett 354). Toni Morrison, as the ultimate trickster, uses this mythological figure in her story-telling to challenge the standard, established ways of thinking, to question authority, rules and roles imposed by the ones behind written history:

> The most common trait among trickster figures is that each is a model of nonconformity used to outwit, disrupt, or comment on conformity and the agents of conformity. The kind of verbal labyrinth created by the trickster figure, both as character and as storyteller, is a primary, cultural defense against such racial and human problems as have been inflicted on African Americans since the first event of slavery. (Hallett 354)

The Sound and the Fury is not all that an obvious place to trace and find the trickster and its tricks. In Harold Bloom's book on this novel, Jeffrey J. Folks writes about Deacon "emulating the trickster-figure of African American tradition" (203). This character's name, derived from the ancient Greek word *diakonos*, means "servant," yet again it bears the signs of

Faulkner's ironic, playful manner. We are witnesses that nothing is a matter of chance, all has its purpose. Thus this character of a waiting man under the guise of the African mythological figure of trickster is turning the world of order upside down. Faulkner's way of launching criticism against the order of things finds a perfect conduit in this mythical figure that does it with the usual grace of dry humour:

> That was the Deacon, all over. Talk about your natural psychologists. They said he hadn't missed a train at the beginning of school in forty years (. . . .)He had a regular uniform he met trains in, a sort of Uncle Tom's cabin outfit, patches and all . . . taking your bags. . . .Whereupon a moving mountain of luggage would edge up, revealing a white boy of about fifteen, and the Deacon would hang another bag on him somehow and drive him off. "Now, den, dont you drap hit. Yes, suh, young marster, jes give de old nigger yo room number, and hit'll be done got cold dar when you arrives." From then on until he had you completely subjugated he was always in or out of your room, ubiquitous and garrulous, though his manner gradually moved northward as his raiment improved, until at last when he had bled you until you began to learn better he was calling you Quentin or whatever. (Faulkner 110 -11)

Another character that could be read as having trickster characteristics is Faulkner's darling Caddy. On closer inspection, recalling the traits of a rebellious, nonconforming, sexually charged, challenging, and unpredictable trickster, Caddy fits in quite well. Her actions are ruled by her instinct, and like the mythological figure she is a "primitive 'cosmic' being of *divine-animal* nature, . . . superior to man because of . . . superhuman qualities, and . . .inferior . . . because of . . . [her] unreason and unconsciousness" (*The Archetypes* 264) as Jung puts it. In contrast to Deacon, Caddy is more tragic than amusing. Her self-destructive mode is full-blown. She is on collision course taking no hostages. Her brothers are destroyed, consequently, one by one. Each by what is most difficult to do without. She exempts herself from their lives and they suffer. Her mother endures the blow to her Southern induced vanity, as well as Jason and his dream of grandeur. Her unfortunate daughter spirals down the same road of self-debasement, and a too predictably sad defiance. This is how Caddy's trickster traits reshape history: by defying the imposed social order and female roles, she offers a glance at the future to come. Then, how could we possibly find Caddy's character as one of the saviour, when she causes such havoc by just an act of bringing a fatherless child into the world with strictly imposed moral rules. As in the myth of rebirth, only by completely destroying one world there is a hope for a new, better,

one. This is exactly what Caddy causes. She creates fertile volcanic ashes, a new mythological nest for a Phoenix to rise and bring about the possibility of betterment:

> If, at the end of the trickster myth, the saviour is hinted at, this comforting premonition or hope means that some calamity or other has happened and been consciously understood. Only out of disaster can the longing for the saviour arise – in other words, the recognition and unavoidable integration of the shadow create such a harrowing situation that nobody but a saviour can undo the tangled web of fate. (Jung, *The Archetypes* 271)

3. Stereotypes in *Beloved* and *The Sound and the Fury*

Both Toni Morrison and William Faulkner question the given history through their novels. Methods they use in their probing are the mythical method, the use of archetypal undercurrent patterns leading up to myths, and the de-construction of stereotypes evident in inherited discourses of their environment.

William Faulkner writes *The Sound and the Fury* in the late twenties of the twentieth century; the novel is published in 1929. By that time the biggest changes in his South are as obvious as they are irreversible. Faulkner's life spans from the childhood filled with stories by veterans' of the Civil War, (his own great-grandfather was one of those veterans), through the stages of regret over the losses his elders endured, and through the effects of the Great Migration, which deeply changed the nature of interracial relationships: “many critics, including African American scholars and writers, perceive . . . Faulkner's demythologizing of Southern stereotypes concerning race and relationships between the races in the South” (McHaney 152). Also, the consequences of the WWI, especially the sexual and financial liberation of women, raised the author's interest, thus resulting in his creating of rebellious, powerful women, who threaten the established codes of behaviour. The effect this liberation has on already emasculated male population of the South is one of the themes Faulkner closely looks into.

Toni Morrison enters the writing scene with her novel *The Bluest Eye* in 1970. This is the time when the racial laws are changed; the feminist movement is strong as well. Still, as a female African American writer Morrison sees things are askew in continuum. The racism goes

underground; it is not vanquished; just as misogyny is rife despite the effort of the feminist movement. More importantly, the strife of black feminists is only to be acknowledged:

> This was also at a time when feminists were very serious and aggressive about not being told that they had to have children. (. . . .) and I thought that, for this woman, [Garner] it was just the opposite. Freedom for her was having children and being able to control them in some way—that they weren't cubs that somebody could just buy. I used to complain bitterly because white feminists were always having very important meetings, but they were leaving their maids behind! (Bollen)

In these circumstances, Morrison devises her strategy of revisiting history, taking it apart, and putting the jigsaw together with enough free space left for further interpretation and investigation. Her novels introduce us to characters we cannot easily categorize, they defy easy identification. They defy definitions of good and bad, and we as readers are made to participate, become active in acknowledging the past and its horrors, the horrors that are still vivid in the presence.

3.1 Southern Belle/Southern Lady/Fallen Woman

This stereotype is brought from England, is further polished in the South under somewhat different circumstances and climate, and adapted to particular needs of the Southern gentry. The original ideal of Victorian angel in the house turns into this rather coquettish beauty whose education boils down to obtain all necessary qualities for finding herself a husband. While Victorian ladies used to be educated in accountancy and practical knowledge they were then never allowed to put to use, a Southern belle was not necessarily made literate. The accent was on the beauty, elegance, ladylike manners, immaculate purity, to an extent that she could barely be considered a being of this world. This patriarchal idealism was made possible by the slave holding business which enabled the sexual vent for men elsewhere, the institutionalized rape of slave women, and their use as wet nurses for white children. In this way, patriarchy exercises power over female body in both cases, the belle who is seen as almost bodiless, and the female slave who is a sex object without spiritual potential: “the dichotomy under which women of both races suffered: the white woman relegated to spirituality, the black one to sexuality, neither a fully human creature of body and soul” (Langland).

The Southern belle stereotype in *The Sound and the Fury* appears in a variety of ways. We encounter it in the character of Mrs Compson who regresses into the role of a naïve, coquettish woman, when in company with her daughter's suitor:

> Unless I do what I am tempted to and take you instead I dont think Mr Compson could overtake the car. Ah Herbert Candace do you hear that She wouldn't look at

> me soft stubborn jaw-angle not back-looking You needn't be jealous though it's just an old woman he's flattering a grown married daughter I cant believe it. Nonsense you look like a girl you are lots younger than Candace color in your cheeks like a girl. (Faulkner 109)

Caroline Compson is not capable of entering the role of the mother, which is the other side of the stereotype. Instead, she exhibits the signs of hypochondria, and hysteria, which were the ills accompanying the false, forced lives these women were taught to live. It is the only way she can keep the attention: "the society's emphasis on the beauty of the belle can produce a selfishness and narcissism that cause her to ignore the development of positive aspects of her personality" (Seidel 32). By witnessing the destructive powers of this role, Caroline's daughter Caddy rebels and tries to find her own way to establish herself. To her despair, there is nothing much she can be or do; the diametrically opposite character to the belle is the one of the fallen woman: "Ironically, rebellion against the code is as self-destructive as conforming to it" (Seidel 114). Creating Caddy, Faulkner touches upon so many focal points of the Southern societal structure and history that she serves as an example of how superfluous their values have become. In one character, we read the fallen Southern belle, who is at the same time capable of affection and motherly feelings, unlike aloof nature of her mother. Caddy, and consequently her own daughter Quentin, forebode the rise of the new belle, coming along with financial independence and education brought on by the WWI; they are assertive, hypersexual, fearless, and all but submissive: "in Faulkner's work we discover a complex critique of the vacuousness of the southern values and an identification of the forces that led to the degeneration of southern ideals" (Seidel 97). Caddy's disregard for the patriarchal ideal of a woman starts early on. Even as a girl she is not burdened with propriety. First she is a tomboy, then she willingly helps her uncle in perpetuating an adulterous relationship with a neighbour's wife Mrs Patterson, until she turns into a young woman with predatory appetites: "*What did you let him for kiss kiss I didn't let him I made him*" (Faulkner 150; emphasis Faulkner's). Running away from the repression Caddy hits another wall, and by all possibility does not successfully escape the code (according to Faulkner's Appendix from 1949), and this failure "usually implied some kind of punishment – hysteria, madness, rape, losing social privileges, or death" (Oklopčić).

In her novel *Beloved*, Toni Morrison does not linger much on the stereotype of the Southern belle, or the Southern lady. Through the character of Mrs Garner, Morrison investigates patriarchal politics behind women's utter dependency on male rule, help and support. Despite her efficacy in running the plantation along her husband, where she works as hard as Sethe does to keep things afloat, Mrs Garner is still left completely helpless after her husband's sudden death. The

implementation of another male figure as soon as possible is not only unavoidable due to her illness, but also due to impropriety of being a white woman, alone on the farm: “Four Sweet Home men and she still believed she needed her brother-in-law and two boys 'cause people said she shouldn't be alone out there with nothing but Negroes” (Morrison 197). Morrison highlights Mrs Garner's helplessness with her illness that robs her of her voice: “I told Mrs. Garner on em. She had that lump and couldn't speak but her eyes rolled out tears” (16). The Southern lady is expected to work hard and comply with the code of behaviour that also entails she is not to speak or think, let alone act on her rare interracial compassion, which is just as well tarnished with being patronizing:

> Even though Southern upper class women had many reasons for abolition of slavery – sexual transgressions of their fiancées, husbands, fathers and brothers, isolation on plantations, problems in managing slaves and servants, supervision of agricultural production, dealing with slave insurrections in absence of their husbands, fathers or brothers, and were, on the other hand, attributed chastity, gentleness, compassion – virtues that corresponded to abolitionist rather than proslavery movement, they did not rebel, they did not subvert or transgress the prescribed codes of behavior. They remained loyal to the institution of slavery and Southern social system and, as a consequence, 'earned' the pedestal they were put on. (Oklopčić)

Despite being kind, and even generous with Sethe, she is just as patronizing when the question of marriage comes along. Slaves are not to be officially married, and Mrs Garner does not give it a second thought.

3.2 Cavalier

The concept of the Cavalier bears the same origin as that of the Southern belle. The ideal of a gentle, educated, materially unconcerned aristocrat, whose position in the world is all due to the right of birth was seriously put to test during the Civil War. And then it regained its former power, it "was given a new lease on life and, in North, probably enjoyed greater popularity and evoked more interest than at any other time" (Taylor 144). This interest is evident in literature, and its issue is one of the key concerns in Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*. The author describes how impossible it is for a young man, like Quentin Compson, to follow the disintegrated, fragmented historical picture of such an ideal, especially when having a disillusioned figure for a father like Jason Compson III. When we first encounter Jason Compson III, he is a soft spoken, well- educated Southerner, who is gentle and forgiving with his children, he is a model of a cavalier. Yet, in the Quentin's section, the reader is exposed to the resigned, nihilistic figure "whose misfortune it was to come of age amid the desolation of the post-Reconstruction era, [and who] has lost all hope of finding a purpose to life" (Singal 84). This disillusioned man does not see the purpose of passing on the "aristocratic ethos" in the surroundings of new arising "materialistic reductionism" in Singal's words. He has come to a conclusion that "a man is the sum of his misfortunes," and "[a] problem in impure properties carried tediously to an unvarying nil: stalemate of dust and desire" (Faulkner 118, 139). The remnants from the old ideal left to obtain, honour and reputation are not at all easy to keep safe, especially when both Compson brothers have a sister who does not obediently follow the same ideal herself. For Quentin, it becomes his fixation on Caddy's innocence, despite his father explaining him it is a figment of men's mind: "He said it was men invented virginity not women. Father said it's like death: only a state in which the others are left" (Faulkner

91). The reason behind Faulkner's interest in these powers tearing the Southern young apart is that he, had it not been for the " contemporary literature, which had provided him with a vital arena for exploring new cultural possibilities" (Singal 86), would have suffered the same psychological shut-down as Quentin. The interconnection of myths and stereotypes becomes evident in the vacuousness of the Cavalier ideal, where "virtues it might once have embodied . . . [have] become a mythic construct almost completely abstracted from the flow of experience" (Singal 92). Burdened by the expectations, his own and one of the faded history, Quentin has got only one way out, which is to literally extricate himself from life itself.

The other brother, Jason, however, embraces the new ideology of materialism, yet unsuccessfully. William R. Taylor devises in his analysis "Cavalier and Yankee: Synthetic Stereotypes" that by the mid nineteenth century the Southerners were divided in their beliefs and alliances. They have developed a multiple personality where they "finally could not believe their own original ideals or those of the country as a whole," and where "they too, came to measure the achievement by financial success" (Taylor 140). Jason is not well equipped for this transition, despite his stern intent to succeed. The cotton market for him becomes the epitome of his father's disillusionment: "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" (Faulkner 89). Jason loses all his moral fibre through this drive to succeed, thus being one of the new generations disempowering the idea of gentleman planter who "became increasingly a symbol of Lost Cause" (Taylor 140). Instead, Jason becomes this unscrupulous, petty go-between of two cultures that are more similar than they would be ready to admit:

> [T]he South in 1860 sought some kind of redemption in separateness, only to set up a Confederate government which was not essentially different, even in its constitutional details form the federal republic from which it had just seceded. (Taylor 140)

Just as Quentin "will never be the sort of personality that gives rise to governors and generals" (Singal 86), so too Jason will never learn the game of market and capital, thus forging an impotent dislike for "fellows that sit up there in New York and trim the sucker gamblers", despite quite contradictorily feeling American: "'I'm an American, all right.' 'So am I,' I says. 'Not many of us left'" (Faulkner 212).

Morrison puts the emphasis on the issue of masculinity in black male population, and the effects of emasculation slavery caused during hundreds of years of its practice. More importantly, "Morrison always recognizes that masculinity is not a biological given but a social invention, as is

race" (Magill 202). In *Beloved*, the author's main concern is with black people and their response to the effects of white society and rule, thus a reader does not encounter many white characters, many of whom are not named at all. White male characters apparent in *Beloved* do not readily fit in the Cavalier stereotype. Mr Garner has a different view of running a plantation. He does not use brutal force, nor does he exploit his slaves, still they remain enslaved, and ruled by the emotional tie of gratefulness. The men, the Pauls, Sixo, and Sethe, the only female slave on the plantation, are not allowed to leave the premises, nor are they allowed to marry in a traditional white sense of the word. Thus Mr Garner draws on the characteristic gentleness, honour, and certain eccentricity that are part of the Cavalier or plantation gentleman make up. The control exercised over the slaves is subtle but profound, and the ideal could not be possible without the element of slavery. The patriarchal rule is implemented through paternalism of both the men and Sethe. Despite being allowed to be men and not being called boys on Mr Garner's plantation, they are not permitted to roam freely, not to get protected from other, less benevolent plantation owners, but to keep them subdued. Despite his gentleness, Mr Garner is a real plantation owner; he is not concerned with the emotional needs of his slaves or the impact his buying has on his *men.* He buys them and raises them just as he would a good race horse:

> "Y'all got boys," he told them. "Young boys, old boys, picky boys, stroppin boys. Now at Sweet Home, my niggers is men everyone of em. Bought em thataway, raised em thataway. Men everyone." "Beg to differ, Garner. Ain't no nigger men." "Not if you scared, they ain't." Garner's smile was wide. "But if you a man yourself, you'll want your niggers to be men too." (Morrison 10)

This is an example of how Morrison takes a stereotype, dismantles it, makes us closely observe the mechanics of it, and then puts it back together. Yet, the concept cannot be seen or read in the same way anymore, now that the reader knows how it works. In that respect, apart from restraining from brute force, Mr Garner does not differ much from Schoolteacher, whose arrival changed history of the Sweet Home plantation. Although *Beloved* is placed in the time of the abolitionist movement and the free slaves are a fact, Schoolteacher still lives the olden way of the South: "Talked soft and spit in handkerchiefs. Gentle in a lot of ways. You know, the kind who know Jesus by His first name but out of politeness never use it even to His face" (Morrison 37). This way of life, the ideology and culture endured well into the twentieth century: "The close of the war did not mean, certainly, that some kind of aristocratic ideal ceased to form a part of Southern thinking, nor did it mean, once Reconstruction was over, that some kind of planter class ceased to dominate Southern politics. Quite the contrary" (Taylor 144). Thus the character of Schoolteacher could not have foreseen that slaves

would be freed and recognized as human beings: “The century had virtually ended before the old dominant groups in the South and their business allies received any substantial challenge from the majority of Southerners” (Taylor 144). Through Schoolteacher, Morrison brings to reader's attention the durability of ideas, which are still apparent in the society, deeply rooted, fed and supported by religious system, teachings, and politics: “Morrison thus critiques both the racist patriarchy . . . and the individual men who accept such patriarchal definitions of manhood and use them to evade communal responsibility . . . [together with] white definitions of manhood she portrays as individualist, competitive, misogynist, and destructive” (Magill 203).

3.3 Mammy/Jezebel

The stereotypes of Mammy and Jezebel would not exist without slavery. When the slave trade started and Europeans encountered tribes in Africa for the first time, they inevitably misread their way of life, adapted to hot climate, to the lewdness and lascivious behaviour. These accounts are described in the book *Ar'n't I a Woman* by Deborah Gray White: “The travel accounts of Europeans contained superficial analyses of African life and spurious conclusions about the character of black women” (29). Furthermore, this image was fuelled by the women slaves working, as some were barely clothed, “especially on large plantations of absentee owners where the dress of slaves was particularly ragged” (White 32). The contrast with the overdressed white women, who could not show any part of their body, where even an ankle would be considered an outrage, unsurprisingly sealed the destiny of slave women as oversexed and vulgar. This shows that both images are interdependent, the one of the Southern belle, and the other of Jezebel, the predatory female with no moral scruples or consideration for propriety. Without each other to play upon, these stereotypes would not take root in Southern mentality to such extent. The patriarchal supreme rule over both white, highly dependent women, and black women with no power to protect themselves, is clearly evident through history. It is also poignant that the black women found themselves in an impossible position where “[i]f she is rescued from the myth of the Negro, the myth of woman traps her. If she escapes the myth of woman, the myth of the Negro still ensnares her” (White 28), resulting in their long battle to become free, literally and from the stereotypes.

When the concern over miscegenation was raised up to a point that the white plantation owners and their children were in danger, the opposite image to Jezebel emerged, that of Mammy. She was asexual, pious, and impeccable in every way, a real home angel, echoing the ideals of the Victorian era: “Mammy was the woman who could do anything, and do it better than anyone else.

Because of her expertise in all domestic matters, she was the premier house servant and all others were her subordinates" (White 47). However, just as the image of Jezebel does not correspond to reality, so too is the Mammy image removed from the truth. Often, the case would be that these two images would merge and we get an alloy coined aggressive wet nurse. These women, due to opportunity to be closer to some kind of education, and yet exposed to enclosed areas of the house, where a lewd "Master" could exercise his power, would not take the attempts lightly, but fight back; as in the case of Linda Brent and her *Incidents in a Life of a Slave Girl*. These women would resist, yet even their resistance is eventually stereotyped to this day.

William Faulkner dedicates one whole section of his *The Sound and the Fury* to Dilsey. It is even known as the Dilsey section, yet he resists stereotyping, as Bleikasten claims in "An Easter without Resurrection?": "Faulkner's treatment of blacks in *The Sound and the Fury,* albeit not free of stereotypes, is never tritely sentimental, testifying to a tact and intelligence seldom found among white southern novelists" (65). It would be too easy to put a mammy brand on Dilsey.

The actual character displaying the characteristic alloy of both Mammy and Jezebel stereotypes is, yet again, Caddy. She is a strong female who is "always around to humor and protect" (White 47). That is before her alter ego Jezebel takes over. While still pubescent, she is a real mother figure to all her brothers, she helps and readily takes care of Benjy, who is the neediest of them all. Then with the natural change, Jezebel arrives with her insatiable appetite, reckless and entirely volatile. She leaves her mother, the Southern belle, bewildered with shame, together with the last token of her uncontrollable femininity – her daughter Quentin. Inverting the roles like this, and putting a white woman in a position of the black, ex-slave, female is Faulkner's way to deconstruct the stereotyping so innate to the South. John N. Duvall in his book *Race and White Identity in Southern Fiction* presents this idea of racially inverted characters "performing cultural blackness" (x). Caddy is highly assertive and masculine in her love affairs, and her brother Quentin confronts her: "Why must you do like nigger women do in the pasture the ditches the dark woods hot hidden furious in the dark woods" (Faulkner 106). By blurring the lines of race, and gender for that matter, Faulkner creates a possibility of redemption for his native South, if they take the hint, and thus he catapults himself into the postmodern perspective, rather than remaining another Modernist writer and thinker.

Morrison works her subversive magic in *Beloved* as she reveals the facts of Mammy/Jezebel image. Her character Baby Suggs takes us through the emotional ride of "the nastiness of life" as a domestic slave, where "nobody stopped playing checkers just because the pieces included her children" (Morrison 23). The stereotype of mammy imposes the romantic imagery of a woman who

is not exposed to a hard work in the field; however, what is not discussed is the almost complete denial of the private life or emotions. Their emotions and every waking thought are supposed to be reared towards their masters and their children. Not only were the black women bred in order to make their owners even wealthier, but their emotions were bridled. Their children were sold away, while these women nursed white children. No bond was to be made between a slave mother and her child. In the character of Beloved, Morrison thus shows that the mothering is of utmost importance for any woman. Sethe is one of the lucky ones to have her children for such a long time; she has the opportunity to bond with her children and let the love flourish. Nevertheless, slavery still comes with a vengeance, for its bill has to be paid. Sethe would not listen and her love became "too thick," as Paul D says. The result is devastating. What Morrison does with employing the image of mammy is to enquire what happens to a human being, a woman, a mother, who needs to shut down her emotions in order to survive, and yet find a way to preserve one's own humanity. Madness would often overcome a slave woman giving rise to the image of aggressive wet nurse, or the woman would drift away as Baby Suggs "to think about the colors of things" (Morrison 177). Both Morrison and Faulkner are concerned with the effects the Southern tradition has on people, black and white, how their lives intertwine and become interdependent and indistinguishable a picture without sharp outlines. By using stereotypes and then applying them differently than prescribed, they issue rethinking of the meaning of stereotypes, in order to show they become rendered of their meaning in modern setting, with the rise of the new world, with its new order.

Conclusion

Two novels, *Beloved* and *The Sound and the Fury*, represent two aspects and approaches to history, and one method – the mythical method, to tell the story. The mythical method, as defined by T.S. Eliot, is used by both Toni Morrison and by William Faulkner to spin a yarn, like the old ones used to do. Both writers have grown up surrounded by storytellers; they experience history, both of their families and their people through these stories, of courage and endurance: "Black lore, black music, black language, and all the myths and rituals of black culture were the most prominent elements in the early life of Toni Morrison" (McKay 3). In his interview for *the* PARIS REVIEW, Faulkner describes his revelation of the power the mythical method wields when released in writing:

> I discovered that my own little postage stamp of native soil was worth writing about . . . and that by sublimating the actual into the apocryphal I would have complete liberty to use whatever talent I might have. It opened up a gold mine of other people, so I created a cosmos of my own. (Stein)

This discovered liberty creates opportunity to view history unobscured, unburdened. Storytelling helps to look sternly over the facts and convey them to the readers in continuum. In her Nobel Prize speech, Toni Morrison speaks of language and its power to give or take life, its power as life: "We die. That may be the meaning of life. But we do language. That may be the measure of our lives." Myth as a sacred story of gods, which we read as a divine source of our existence, which makes us creators of our world and everything in it, is a logical tool these two writers take up to investigate the human condition. Lévi-Strauss' and Barthes' idea about the myth void of any meaning, its nature as form, a pattern that ripples through human history, provides the platform for new input, the adaptation of old images to the modern world and our experience of it: "Everything then can be a myth? Yes. I believe this for the universe is infinitely fertile in suggestion" (Barthes 107). By building his own world and its mythology, William Faulkner creates an already postmodernist view of the world where the borders between fiction and reality are not as clear, and they are not as

important. If a writer can bring us truth by using fiction, then that is the tool he will use: “Most of the Yoknapatawpha fiction was written or at least planned before the approach to literature as myth was well established in modern criticism; Faulkner contributed more to that approach than he was influenced by it” (Kerr 86).

Toni Morrison's magic realism and her use of the mythical method also create the worlds that teach us not to take gender roles, or images we consider innate, for granted. Her male characters are full of gentleness verging on feminine, motherly images, while women can be fierce, aggressive, and downright predatory. *Beloved* teaches us possibly different readings of the motherhood myth, just as the Mammy/Jezebel stereotypes are revisited and re-examined. The effects of slavery, and the still difficult to accept holocaust of black people throughout the slave history of both Europe and America, are brought to Morrison's readers by using African mythology, and the writing of African-Americans as weft, thus reinstating her people's identity: “Morrison herself has implied that the proper context for reading and studying her must be found primarily in African-American women writers” (Bloom 7).

The analysis of myths and stereotypes in the novels of *Beloved* and *The Sound and the Fury* shows that these two phenomena interact and act similarly. Both have their source in archetypes, the pattern hidden away in the unconscious that becomes visible through the individual colouring of these impulses. They can be created out of any given material. Myths can create new godlike beings that are sanctified in this chaotic world of ours. Stereotypes are not as straightforward as we are used to them. As archetypes, myths of the South also meet the modern world of the twentieth century, where the values of the old world do not apply, they inevitably lose their original meaning, change their value and may converge into stereotypes as Gabriela Dumbrava suggests in “From Archetype to Stereotype: A Postmodern Re-reading of the American South”: “source of Southern mythology with its two archetypal dimensions - the acute sense of the native place and the identification of the individual with the community and its history . . . mark both the trajectory from history to myth and, eventually, from myth to stereotype, when they wear out under the pressure of reality.” Still, this does not mean myths disappear through this conversion, they simply acquire new values. Both myths and stereotypes help us to explain and understand the world around us. The time we live in is no less baffling to us than it must have been for a primitive human in the caves. The chaos of the twentieth century, the acceleration of technology, descended upon us creating a new form and aspect of art, as these new experiences demanded explanation in order to become somehow acceptable. Humans had to learn how to cope, and the way is to always look back to history, finding references, finding similar situations in order to adapt the knowledge to a new era:

> The Spanish scholar Ortega y Gasset puts it that the man of antiquity, before he did anything, took a step backwards, like the bull-fighter who leaps back to deliver the mortal thrust. He searched the past for a pattern into which he might slip as into a diving-bell, and being thus at once disguised and protected might rush into his present problem. Thus his life was in a sense a reanimation, an archaizing attitude. But it is just this life as reanimation that is the life as myth. (Mann 375)

Toni Morrison and William Faulkner are the shamans of the new world, bringing the ancient tool, subverting its core in an attempt to create new references for the future, thus making the world around us manageable and possible to inhabit.

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