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Faulkner's Cartographic Method: Producing the Land through Cognitive Mapping

Marc D. Baldwin, PhD

MANY OF WILLIAM FAULKNER'S CHARACTERS refer to the "land," a figure fraught with ideological implications. Fusing place and people, past and present, the "land" comprises both the soil and soul of the American South, inviting comparisons between its mythical and "real" history. America's very socio-economic system roots and grounds itself in the notion of the "land," both as an ideal rallying cry of national pride (or, as in this case of the South's demise, hubris) and as a real sign of the wealth, social position, and privilege accorded by the private ownership of property. Although throughout his fiction Faulkner and his characters struggle to define themselves in relation to this complex notion of the "land," theirs proves to be the great Lost Cause. For a number of reasons--the physical and psychic devastation of the Civil War; the "Original Sin" of slavery; the emancipation of the slaves; the deepening and festering wound of racism; miscegenation; the Jim Crow laws; the carpetbaggers; the industrial replacing the agrarian economy--the mythical "land" of the South is lost and gone forever.

Acutely sensitive to his heritage as a Southerner and the power of an artist as historiographer, Faulkner determined to produce, through both the fictional questing of his characters and the technical virtuosity of his narrative, a "land" as complex as his re/perceived history of the South. Edward Said posits that a conquered, colonized, or otherwise suppressed people must develop a "cartographic ... third nature" to recover their origins and authenticity from the larger, usurping culture or society that has enveloped them (79). Moreover, Fredric Jameson develops the concept of "cognitive mapping ... which seeks to endow the individual subject with a new heightened sense of its place in the [socio-economic] system." Through the "coordination of existential data (the empirical position of the subject) with un-lived, abstract conceptions of the geographic totality," the cognizant individual is able to effect "the reconquest of a sense of space ... which can be retained in memory" (Jameson, "Postmodernism" 92, 89, 90). Throughout his fictional enterprise, Faulkner "cognitively maps" the "land" through juxtaposed voice impressions, multiple perspectives that approach the South from all points on the compass, the clock, and the consciousness. In *Absalom, Absalom!* and other spatially organized texts that disrupt the chronology of time, Faulkner achieves that rare artistic fusion of form and content: his cartographic accumulation of contiguous meanings represents his recovery of the metonymic "land," that rubric which authorizes the numerous narrative voices, all contending for time and space, for their own private property within the text. The collective impression affirms that, for Faulkner, "it becomes clear that there can be no true maps" (Jameson, "Postmodernism" 90); that history is fiction, a problematic and plural combination of spoken and written his/stories.

In *Absalom*, for example, a quartet consisting of an alcoholic lawyer, Jason Compson III, his troubled son Quentin, Quentin's college roommate the Canadian Shreve, and the jilted old maid Rosa Coldfield, all combine their groping perceptions of the deep past, immediate past, introspective past, and present state of the Sutpen saga and legacy as it has evolved down the years from Scotland, throughout the South, to Haiti, back to Yoknapatawpha, and finally north to Harvard. The elder Compson muses how

you re-read, tedious and intent, poring, making sure that you
have forgotten nothing, made no miscalculation; you bring
them together again and again nothing happens: just the
words, the symbols, the shapes themselves, shadowy
inscrutable and serene, against that turgid background of a
horrible and bloody mischancing of human affairs. (80)

Seeking a sense of social relationships, Compson tries to coordinate the "existential data . . . with un-lived abstract conceptions" (Jameson, "Postmodernism" 89). Frustrated in his attempt to recover the origins of the Sutpen family, he concludes that Thomas Sutpen "*came out of nowhere*," a genealogical impossibility that Sutpen himself echoes: "he knew neither where he had come from nor where he was nor why. He was just there" (5, 184). In Yoknapatawpha County, "nowhere" does exist; it is a postmodern space beyond the margins of the map, in the cartographic imaginations of the narrators.

Much has been written about Faulkner's cognizance and contrivance of time; his Bergsonian conception of its fluidity--that the past is in the present, that there is no *was*--finds its expression in both his non-chronological narrative technique and his frequent apparent reversal of the cause/effect relationship between events. ¹ Not as much attention has been given, however, to Faulkner's concern for the other eternal verity of space: how the production, possession, and control of space--material, social, and psychological--informs and occupies the motivations and machinations of his characters. Robert Penn Warren notes that

no land in all fiction is more painstakingly analyzed from the sociological standpoint. . . . Nature and sociology, geography and human geography are scrupulously though effortlessly presented . . . [as] aspects of man's "doom." (110)

Unfortunately, this declaration serves as the extent of his examination into Faulkner's "human geography." Olga Vickery similarly notes that in Faulkner, every

man is fixed at birth by the specific coordinates of time and space, through which he comes to share in the history of his people and the geography of his land.... they are intimately related as a result of deep and abiding connections with a specific place. (240-41)

Having traveled far down this provocative path, the eminent geographer David Harvey recently called for

cross-disciplinary critical attention to be paid to the active construction and transformation of material environments (both physical and social).... the process of becoming through which people (and geographers) transform themselves through transforming both their natural and social milieus. (6)

This formulation suggests what Edward W. Soja terms a "spatialization of history, the making of history entwined with the social production of space." Crediting Michel Foucault's work on structuralism for informing his theories, Soja envisions history 'as a spatio-temporal configuration, simultaneously and interactively synchronic and diachronic' (Soja 18). Faulkner's fictional landscape yields a ripe harvest of *produce* for this geographical historical materialism. Although he expressed his intention to create "a cosmos in miniature" (FU 232), similar to Isaac McCaslin's description of his family's ledgers--"that chronicle which was the whole land in miniature, which multiplied and compounded was the entire South" (GDM 280)--Faulkner concedes that the South as a "land"--even if it *had* once existed--is "old since dead." The extinct South was

an indigenous dream of any given collection of men having something in common, be it only geography or climate, which shape their economic and spiritual aspirations into cities, into a pattern of houses or behavior. ("An Introduction" 142)

Ironically, this "dream" inherent in humankind's nature finds its material expression, according to Faulkner, when people are geographically (spatially) grouped and thus join together out of necessity as a community. "Economic and spiritual aspirations" harmoniously transform themselves into realized "shapes" of totalities," into cities, into a pattern of houses or behavior," into material and social space. According to Faulkner's own formulation--that the "collection of men" were "shape[d]" by their "having something in common"--this production of space into "patterns" for economic profit is determined by the sheer coincidence of geographical location.

Faulkner's own choice of fictional setting and subject matter likewise seems to have been determined by the geographical and historical coincidence of his birth. "My life was established before I began to write," he said. "I'm a countryman. My life is farmland" (*Faulkner at Nagano 142*). Born and reared a Southerner, shaped by the "land," Faulkner discovered that his own "little postage stamp of native soil was worth writing about" (Stein 82). A curious metaphor, "postage stamp of native soil" enforces a union between cultural and natural, civilized and primitive, industrial and agrarian. ²

Like a postage stamp, the land has been squared and measured, zoned, demarcated, assigned a value and bartered. Like a postage stamp--made from the pulp of a tree taken from the land and supplemented with an official design (imprinted upon it by the state), a piece of artwork that completes the little space of paper, giving it its exchange value--the land has been produced to be transacted and negotiated, supplemented by crops harvested for their market value. Consequently, the landowner often seems to be owned by the land, evaluated by its value. As with Cass Edmonds, who has "one foot straddled into a farm and the other foot straddled into a bank" (GDM 240), many Faulknerian characters must ride their own land like an economic beast of burden, caught in the historical crossfire between freedom and necessity. Humankind is nearly split up the middle by the joint spaces of real estate and capital, for ownership of land depends upon the spacious resources of a financial institution.

Perhaps the awareness of such an abysmal fate awaiting those whose grasp overextends their reach at least partially motivated Faulkner in his strategy to produce a fictional space the modest size of one county. By limiting his market, remaining a small corporation, so to speak, he could consolidate, entrench his capital, and reinvest his profits, aiming to monopolize one territory rather than share many. "I realized there was a great deal of writing I wanted to do," said Faulkner, "and I could simplify, *economize* [italics mine], by picking out one country and putting enough people in it to keep me busy" (*Faulkner at Nagano 80*). A cartographic sign that Faulkner hoped to master his fictional space is the map of Yoknapatawpha County that he drew and included with the text of *Absalom*.

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The map--the geography of Faulkner's imagination--is horizontally enclosed on the north and south by two rivers that flow like time diachronically while the east and west borders seem non-existent, irrelevant, mere margins that fade into obscurity as if nothing lives beyond the periphery. Arrows direct us up the road north to Memphis Junction and down the road south to Mottstown but no arrows point to the east or west. The country is divided neatly into four quadrants split by roads that meet in of the town of Jefferson. There, at the junction of the four roads, lies the empowered embodiment of the *land*, the government courthouse. Arguably the two most "landed" figures in the county, Sutpen and Sartoris, live in the northwest quadrant, the distances of their homesteads measured twelve and four miles respectively from the courthouse. (No other landmarks or residences are accorded the privilege of having their exact positions duly recorded.)

A spatialization of history, fusing and freezing the synchronic and diachronic, the Yoknapatawpha map allows the human gaze to stare at the past in the present in the form of supplementary capsulizations (inscribed upon the topography) of the key events in the lives of the residents of Yoknapatawpha County. A material representation of cognitive mapping, the map verifies the abstract mental space of the imagination: Faulkner as author and we as readers are able to visualize, marked upon this once *tabula rasa*, the spatial relationships of a network of characters and stories. Because the map provides only the slightest linguistic references to the stories that populate our memories-- "Sutpen's Hundred," "Reverend Hightower's where Christmas was killed," "Varner's store, where Flem Snopes got his start," "Sartoris Plantation and Gin," "Bridge which washed away so Anse Bundren and his sons could not cross it with Addie's body," and so on--our imaginations are invited to fill the blank spaces, allowing us to participate in the cognition process of perception and memory. The brief descriptions of locations on the physical landscape are either simple designations of residence and ownership or landmarks of *plot* development; all refer to the production of socialized space, of nature reshaped into "land." They name *where* and *who* but not *how*, *why*, or *when*. They associate fictional characters with fictional *plots* of land, but since they are undated and non-inferential--studiously avoiding supposition, cause and effect, and motivation--they read like documented facts of the present day, unfettered by either time or authorial intrusion. A supplement to the greater portion of his creation, drawn and published in 1936, this map of Faulkner's "own little postage stamp of native soil," performs like a stamp of authenticity, an official certification of "reality." In another context Jameson appropriates Althusser's definition of

ideology--"the *Imaginary* relationship of individuals to their Real conditions of existence"--to posit that "this is exactly what the cognitive map is called upon to do ... to enable a situational representation on the part of the individual subject to the vaster and properly unrepresentable totality" ("Postmodernism" 90). The map allows us all--Faulkner, his characters as representative Southerners and the readers--to get our bearings and find our way through the maze that is History (time) and the South (space).

The "land" represented on the map signifies the conjunction of what Nicos Poulantzas terms the spatial and temporal matrices of "territory and tradition" (97). Compson's Mile, for instance, a *territory* which had been acquired from Ikkemotubbe for a racehorse (a *tradition*), was sold piece-meal to pay for the mortgage on the remainder, to hold onto the *tradition* of the Compsons as owners of *territory*. Jason III eventually sold

the last of the property, except that fragment containing the house and the kitchen garden and the collapsing stable and one servant's cabin in which Dilsey's family lived, to a golf club for the ready money with which his daughter Candace could have her fine wedding in April and his son Quentin could finish one year at Harvard.... (SF 334)

For the traditions of a wedding and a Harvard education--imaginary social spaces--the land, the *territory* was sacrificed. Years later, after he committed Benjy to the social space for displaced minds, the State Asylum in Jackson, Jason IV "sold the house to a countryman who operated it as a boarding house." The eventual fate of Compson's Mile, that *territory* so rich in dubious *tradition*, was to become "row after row of small crowded jerrybuilt individually owned demiurban bungalows" (SF 335). Quentin had prophesied this "revenge" of the land turned wasteland: "It's [the land] going to turn and destroy us all someday, whether our name happens to be Sutpen or Coldfield or not" (AA 7).

The Uncles Buck and Buddy McCaslin are also aware of this violent relationship between humankind and the land, believing

that land did not belong to people but that people belonged to land and that the earth would permit them to live on and out of it and use it only long as they behaved and that if they did not behave right, it would shake them off just like a dog getting rid of fleas. (U 251)

Years later, while reading the family ledgers, Ike McCaslin intuits and laments the inevitable futility and waste of his ancestors' exploitation, for economic profit, of the land

bought with white man's money from the wild men whose grandfathers without guns hunted it, and tamed and ordered or believed he had tamed and ordered it for the reason that the human beings he held in bondage and in the power of life and death had removed the forest from it and in their sweat scratched the surface of it ... in order to grow something out of it which had not been there before and which could be translated back into money he who believed he had bought it had had to pay to get it and hold it and a reasonable profit too.... (GDM 243-44)

The ledgers become the scenes of several stages of interpretation. Buck and Buddy, Ike, Faulkner, and we as readers all gaze upon the past from our present vantage point. Richard King notes that by "working backwards," "we read and interpret Faulkner's attempt to read and interpret Ike's reading and interpretation of his ancestors' chronicle" (King, "Memory" 150). Such a process constitutes cognitive mapping: using his memory and perception, Ike attempts to re/cover the human geography of his origin, an area of his beloved land that was once a magnificent Delta forest:

Now a man drove two hundred miles from Jefferson before he found wilderness to hunt in. Now the land lay open . . . the land in which neon flashed past them.. on the broad plumb-ruled highways.... land, across which there came now no scream of panther but instead the long hooting of locomotives.... This Delta. *This land which man has deswamped and denuded and derived in two generations so that white man can own plantations....* (GDM 324-25; 347)

Transformed by the profit motive into a commodity, the land, to appropriate Georg Lukacs's theory, has been reified. No longer connected, free-flowing or organic, the land has been objectified and alienated, treated as a lifeless, quantifiable "thing" or Other to be exploited by the economic machine. The timeless land has been produced into plots and spaces: fragmented, stripped, and processed for sale.

This image of rape--of the violation and penetration of virgin land--finds its sexual symbol in Caddy Compson. John Irwin notes that Quentin's obsession

to avenge his sister's lost virginity (proving thereby that it had once existed) and maintain the family honor is an attempt to maintain ... the possibility of the existence of a virgin space within which one can still be first, within which one can have authority through originality. (Irwin 111)

Joe Christmas also violates this "virgin space," this white man's exclusive white property and territory, by his affair with Joanna Burden. These two examples symbolize the curse on the land of the South--slavery, miscegenation, and incest--and conflate these images of possession and domination, of ownership and property, of self and other. Such images raise the questions of identity and human geography: who owns the rights to the Others of this land? Because white men own the land, they have also claimed ownership of the blacks and women. This Southern white male culture of domination perceives Other people, as reified objects in space, there to be staked and claimed, obsessively possessed to work upon the land.

The land--both the physical earth and the growing market economy hungry for its harvest--demands workers in the fields, people to supplement nature and produce more goods at a faster rate. Friedrich Engels noted the causal relationship between the domination of nature and the domination of the worker: "Mastery over nature began with the development of the hand, with labour" (253). The landowners found in slavery the answer to their real business problem of a labor shortage:

As the sun rose on capitalism, this progressive mastery of nature moved up a gear; for the first time historically, economic growth in the form of capital accumulation became an absolute social necessity, and the continual expansion of the domination of nature became equally necessary. But capital, and the bourgeois society which nurtures it, usher in not just a quantitative but a qualitative change in the relation with nature. Capitalism inherits a global world market--a system of commodity exchange and circulation--which it digests then, regurgitates as the world capitalist system, a system of production. To achieve this, human labour power itself is converted into a commodity, produced like any other commodity according to specific capitalist social relations. (Neil Smith 61)

Smith's concise explanation for the dynamics behind the rise and perceived necessity of slavery in the South finds its fictional expression not only in the Sutpens and Sartorises and Compsons but also in the Indians and poor white farmers such as the Bundrens. Few landowners in this cotton economy remain uncorrupted by the profit motive. When Issetibbeha became "proprietor of the land and of the quintupled herd of blacks for which he had no use at all," he held a "conclave over the Negro question," finally deciding to "do as the white men do":

"Raise more Negroes by clearing more land to make corn to feed them, then sell them. We will clear the land and plant it with food and raise Negroes and sell them to the white men for money."

"But what will we do with this money?" a third said.
They thought for a while.
"We will see," the first said. They squatted, profound, grave.
(CS 319)

The "Indians" have learned from the white men to perceive Negroes as an/other commodity to be produced for exchange in the market place. This "tradition of human exploitation," argues Gunnar Myrdal, "and now not only of Negroes has remained from slavery as a chief determinant of the entire structure of the South's economic life" (220).

It could be argued that the white landowners (and some of their "Indian" mimics) of Faulkner's South are slaves to their own colonial past. Exacting its own revenge, the land, as Peabody muses in *As I Lay Dying*, is "violent; shaping *and creating* [italics mine] the life of man in its implacable and brooding image" (45). The South, having integrated slaves so thoroughly and dependently into its land, economy, and ideology (if not its white society), had colonized itself, becoming what Allen Tate called "Uncle Sam's Other Province" (146). With a vast population of enslaved Africans, treated as sub-human servants of the warden state, the South transformed itself, its own land, into a foreign territory governed by white masters determined to control and exploit "their Negroes," who by extrapolation had, in effect, become the savage natives of the colonial South. With Jefferson as a fort and the plantations as outposts, Yoknapatawpha County is indeed a "cosmos in miniature," a microcosm of the occupied colony that the South had become. The map of Yoknapatawpha pinpoints the once imposing domain of the imperial Thomas Sutpen, who, like Ozymandias, once wore a "sneer of cold command" but now decomposes in the very land upon which his slaves once labored.

Paradoxically (a fitting poetic justice), in their lust to own the land and all Others who venture into their spatial influence, the white men like Sutpen and the McCaslins, as Ike so eloquently laments, have alienated themselves from their own so-called possessions. The dependence for social status upon the ownership of private property produced a narcissism and paranoia among the landed. Laboring under the popular perception that the ownership of land confers power and position in society, white property owners stripped of their land would be considered little different than poor white trash or slaves. The young white field hand, V. K. Suratt, confides this bitter sentiment to his drinking buddy, the landed Bayard Sartofis:

I swo' then, come what mought, I wouldn't never plant nothin'
in the ground, soon's I could he'p myself. It's all right fer folks
that owns the land, but folks like my folks was don't never
own no land, and ever' time we made a furrow,
we was scratchin' dirt fer somebody else. (SAR 141)

The great irony and tragedy of such a class consciousness is that if any human beings can be said to really "own the land" (in ideal terms, at any rate) they are those who work on it, who are physically close to it, who produce its harvest, not the white masters and owners removed from the *produce* of the land, alienated from the means of their own wealth. Grounded in the "land," embedded in the earth, in the toil of slavery, is the past in the present, time itself frozen and materialized in the real space of farm and field, in the unshakable shame of the sweat and scars, work and lives, handprints and footprints, of generations of black slaves whose countless backbreaking hours and years of tilling the soil, conceiving their babies on the land brown and black as themselves, belonging to them as they worked it, bound "for life them who made the cotton to the land their sweat fell on ..." (GDM 281).

Upon his return from Harvard, Quentin Compson notices this permeation of black man into the land:

there was a nigger on a mule in the middle of the stiff ruts,
waiting for the train to move. How long he had been there I
didn't know, but he sat straddle of the mule, his head wrapped
in a piece of blanket, as if they had been built there with the
fence and the road, or with the hill, carved out of the hill itself,
like a sign put there saying you are home again. (SF 86-87)

To counter this impression of the black man as one with the landscape, the myth makers of Southern history desperately attempted to whitewash in one conflated counter-image the dual notions of the "land" as private property and the "land" as a benevolent plantation society of white aristocratic landed gentry. In fact, the American Dream insists upon this inscribed ideology that America is its land, landowners are America, and that the ownership of private property differentiates true Americans, those with a stake in the land, from all the others outside the Dream. Repressed in that image of the benevolent "landed" class--much as the democratic ideals of harmony and equality repress the reifying effects of capitalism's exploitation and competition--was the reality that the private property of the "land" had become the scene and currency of the inequality between the planters (with the police state mentality that their legal entitlements accorded them) and a huge, widespread population of workers confined to hard labor in the dirt.

In the twentieth century, the South became split into "two forms of agrarianism": hard working farmers and leisured planters. ⁴ Myra Jehlen argues that Faulkner's ambivalence over this division between the "Jeffersonian yeomen, upright tillers of the soil" and the planter aristocracy necessary "to forward the course of civilization... was surely one of the most creative any writer ever suffered from" (21, 23). Faulkner fused the "two forms" into the Bundren family, a bizarre hybridization of the lazy patriarch, his repressive, violent wife, and their subservient sons and daughter.

A macabre tale of a poor white family, its members enslaved each to his and her own material master, need, or *lack*--from Anse's futile desire for admission into the privileged aristocracy to his son Darl's desire for an identity beyond his father's land--*As I Lay Dying* consolidates and defamiliarizes the colonial landscape so well that few discussions of race, slavery, class, or the "Negro Question" in Faulkner have devoted much time to it. ⁵ While it is true that blacks enjoy a very limited presence in the text--confined to the one incident when Jewel curses a black who comments upon the awful smell coming from the coffin--their glaring absence metamorphosed into the shape of a depressed rural economy and its underclass family of workers. Although (or perhaps because) the Bundrens are landowners, Anse considers his sons and daughter little more than workers in the fields. Southern society may have cast off the chains of slavery but it remains shackled by the material and mental bonds of servitude, from which the workers struggle to be free. For the man of the house, old habits of the homestead, or, as Foucault puts it, "little tactics of the habitat" (149), diehard.

The solitary landowner with machinations of establishing a mock plantation, Anse himself is enslaved by an economic state that dictates his desire. Himself a small-scale materialization of the *land* itself, Anse sought a wife to produce and oversee the children requisite to *territory* and *tradition*. In Addie, he found a woman motivated by the same material desires. When they first met, Addie asked him why his "womenfolks" did not make him cut his hair. Anse replied that he had no womenfolks: "Then he said suddenly, driving his eyes at me like two hounds in a strange yard: 'That's what I come to see you about'" (171). The trespasser within the territory of his watchdog gaze, Addie coveted Anse's property: "They tell me you've got a house and a good farm. . . . Are you going to get Married?" (171). Their courtship was a business negotiation, devoid of romance, each wanting not the other but what the other owned or could provide. Addie acquired her own land and Anse acquired a woman to rule with an iron hand over the children. A sadistic schoolteacher, Addie

would look forward to the times when they [students] faulted, so I could whip them. When the switch fell I could feel it upon my flesh; when it welted and ridged it was my blood that ran, and I would think with each blow of the switch: Now you are aware of me! Now I am something in your secret and selfish life, who have marked your blood with my own forever and ever. (170)

A product of the tradition of exploitation, Addie's violence is the legacy of dominant white men who often brutally enforced the submission of their female and black property. Her father "used to say that the reason for living as to get ready to stay dead a long time" (169). Consequently, Addie did not spare the whip with her own children. Darl says that Jewel "is a head taller than any of the rest of us, always was. I told them that's why ma always whipped him and petted him more. Because he was always peakling around the house more" (17-18). No one confides that Anse has beaten Addie, but in her cognitive mapping of the past--of the days after school when she "would go down the hill to the spring where I could be quiet and hate them [her students]," and of her musing upon when she "used to

be a virgin"--and of her hating her father "for ever having planted " her (169,173, 170), she exhibits the classic symptoms of a repressive personality avenging her pain through repetition.

After her first son, Cash, was born something went wrong for Addie; the marriage experienced a rift in communication, some unmentioned deed or series of events (perhaps the violence of the whip) that led to her despair over the ultimate split between signifier and signified: "I learned that words are no good; that words dont ever fit even what they are trying to say at . . . that we had to use one another by words" (171-72). Anse apparently remains oblivious to her mounting discontent, since she says that "He had a word, too. Love, he called it. But I had been used to words for a long time. I knew that that word was like the others: just a shape to fill a lack" (172). The exact source of her intense anger with the school children and Anse is unspecified but she expresses it in spatial terms: "My aloneness had been violated and then made whole by the violation: time, Anse, love, what you will, outside the circle" (172). She had been a self-sufficient virgin space, an independent wilderness with the boundaries of integrity and closure, but formerly, as a schoolteacher, and now as a wife and mother, she is a dependent part of a larger entity, no longer "sole owner" of herself. Yet, paradoxically, as she herself admits, the violation of her aloneness, her circle was necessary in order for her to be "made whole." Penetrated and impregnated, she loses her sanctity and isolation but gains motherhood and a family. This formulation echoes what Mr. Compson says in *Absalom*: "virginity must be destroyed in order to have existed at all" (77). For Addie, the only way to commingle is to suffer and bleed, to be beaten and violated like the land and its once fertile female slave mothers themselves. ⁶ As she "hear[s] the land that was now of [her] blood" (173), Addie concludes that the only reason for the suffering, for life, for remaining alive, was the "duty to the alive, to the terrible blood, the red bitter flood boiling through the land" (I 74). Here again, in the "terrible blood," is the absent presence of the past: Addie unconsciously fears that she has reproduced the *land*.

An image of workers welded to their work finds perhaps its most powerful expression in *Intruder in the Dust*. At the end of the novel, as the white Charles Mallison rushes to save the black Lucas Beauchamp, he muses upon a sight he sees from his car window:

[T]he land's living symbol--a formal group of ritual almost mystic significance identical and monotonous as milestones tying the county-seat to the county's ultimate rim as milestones would: the beast the plow and the man integrated in one foundationed into the frozen wave of their furrow tremendous with effort yet at the same time vacant of progress, ponderable immovable and immobile like groups of wrestling statuary set against the land's immensity ... (147)

The man that Charles sees in the field is black but the men in the Bundrens' fields are white, their own sons, so that when Anse and Addie look through the eyes of Southern tradition at their own sons, they cannot help but see forms of reconstituted slaves. Yet they seemingly have no choice in the matter of reproduction. Survival upon the land demands that a poor farm family put hands in the fields. This necessity for growing crops and engaging in the market exchange of property and services dictates that neither Addie, the Bundren family, nor the South is free to be totally independent from one another, society, the community, the North, or the town of Jefferson.

Dependent upon this economy of the land, the Bundrens, despite owning their farm, must struggle to survive, subsisting on cotton and hauling timber for \$3 a load. In effect, they have made themselves one with the land, inseparable from what Hegel calls a "second nature . . . nature produced by human activity. ⁷ Foregrounded in the first monologue, Darl maps a section of the farm, noting as he walks "up from the field" all the products of the family's labor, "first nature" transformed into the assets of their industrious little space: "the cottonhouse," "the path ... straight as a plumb line," "the green rows of laidby cotton," "the cottonhouse . . . of rough logs" (3-4). At "the top," by the house, just outside Addie's window, Cash is sawing, making the coffin, producing from the raw materials of "first nature" a "second nature" space to carry Addie's corpse to Jefferson and beyond to eternity. "A good carpenter, Cash is," says Darl. "A good carpenter. Addie Bundren could not want a better one, a better box to lie in" (4-5). In a later observation of Cash at work on the coffin, Darl comments on this seemingly seamless conjunction of form and content, man and machine, first and second nature: "as though the stroking of the saw illuminated its own motion, board and saw engendered" (48). The violent process of transforming the living tree into the dead box inversely corresponds to the death struggle itself: the human being, upon conception and at birth a

creation of first nature as simple and artless as an ear of corn, grows into a second nature shaped by its affiliation with the "land" and human society, only to die and reassume its first nature, an empty "shape to fill a lack," "a handful of rotten bones" (49), a skeletal space devoid of the absurd trappings and artifice of cognition and intention, necessity and desire. When Addie dies, Cash and Darl gaze "down at her peaceful, rigid face fading into the dusk as though darkness were a precursor of the ultimate earth, until at last the face seems to float detached upon it, lightly as the reflection of a dead leaf" (50). Free of time and space, "peaceful" for the only time in the novel, Addie will soon rest in her own private property, a plot within the spacious "ultimate earth." Her death itself is, argues Eric J. Sundquist, "an act of temporal and spatial disembodiment" (30).

Death and the coffin, the reclamation of her first nature, facilitate Addie's union with "the red bitter flood boiling through the land.... the dark land talking the voiceless speech" (174-75). Before she dies, Addie exacts a promise from Anse "to take me back to Jefferson when I died," back to the second nature city state, seat of industry and order, her original space on the map (173). It could be argued that this burial journey of the Bundren family carrying their dead mother in a coffin on a wagon across forty miles of Yoknapatawpha county--a journey that Lynn Levins (103) has compared to the Israelites fleeing Egypt for the Promised Land--represents the death of the "dark land," the transition of the psychological and geographical center of the South from farm to town.

The hub of a wheel, Jefferson sends its emissarial spokes of roads to the outlying space, relentlessly consolidating distance by shortening travel time. In the image of the road, Faulkner expresses his ambivalence over "progress" and the ever--increasing speed with which it is occurring in his South. Anse hates the road that runs by his house, "A-laying there, right up to my door, where every bad luck that comes and goes is bound to find it" (31). Like a living agent of movement, the road brings the outside world, the "bad luck" of historical development and change. After all, a road brought Anse to Addie: "I saw him pass the school house three or four times," she muses in her monologue, "before I learned that he was driving four miles out of his way to do it.... He would pass the school house ... until he went around the curve and out of sight" (170). However, as "bad luck" does, Arise returned because, as he declares,

The Lord puts roads for travelling: why He laid them down flat on the earth. When He aims for something to be always a-moving, He makes it long ways, like a road or a horse or a wagon, but when He aims for something to stay put, He makes it up-and-down ways, like a tree or a man. (35-36)

This humorously eccentric theory about roads and men confuses first nature creations (horse and tree and man) of the supernatural "Lord" with second nature productions (roads and wagons) of industrial technology. Such a conflation of God and government underscores how well marketed has been the ideological merger of church and state. At the crossroads of "longways" and "up-and-down ways" lies Jefferson, the intersection of both religion and commerce, just one of the text's several metaphoric/metonymic axes. Synchronic and ritualistic based on unwavering faith and ageless tradition; religion operates like metaphor, creating parables that assign to events and experiences positions within the grand design. Diachronic and business-like, based on skepticism and dated contracts, commerce acts like metonymy, producing goods and services that generate competition to produce ever more and better goods and services. Serving both "God and Caesar," the county roads facilitate the attendance of the distant citizenry at both church and market. However, since Anse surely knows the attraction of the path of least resistance--content with his status quo as head of an isolated household—he rightly fears that the metonymic road will lure Darl down its path away from his metaphoric private property:

he's got his eyes full of the land all the time. I says to them, he was all right at first, with his eyes full of the land, because the land laid up-and-down ways then; it wasn't till that ere road come and switched the land around longways and his eyes still full of the land, that they begun to threaten me out of him.... (36-37)

The road has altered Anse's land from an enclosed space to a contiguous mass resolutely connected to the "they" of community and state. Ironically, it was only a matter of time before Anse's space would be violated by the road because it is that same state and its legal arm that sanctions his ownership of private property in the first place: "the

state is distinguished firstly by the grouping of its members on a territorial basis" (Engels 179). The state's allowance of private property acts at once as a mechanism of differentiation (metonymy) and equalization (metaphor): the division of the "land" into parcels for public consumption and individual control accords each owner the illusion of difference while equalizing him under the law. 8

"Him" is the key word in the previous sentence, for the concept of private ownership of property has wrought upon Humankind the male patriarchal system of dominance and colonization of his family. 9 Since a man could inherit private property only through patrilinear family relations, the man who took control of his family and produced male offspring assured himself of his own little kingdom, his own "cosmos in miniature" with himself as the "sole proprietor and owner," as it were. Engels argues that this state-sanctioned system of private property ownership by the head of the household hastened and insured

the world-historical defeat of the female sex. The man took command in the home also; the woman was degraded and reduced to servitude; she became the slave of his lust and a mere instrument for the production of children. (121)

Such a characterization is consistent with Anse's perception of Addie's role in the family and could account for her despair and early death." Evidently, they had agreed not to produce any more children because after she "had Darl," Addie wanted to kill Anse, feeling that he had "tricked" her. Regardless, Anse asserts his ownership of her body, declaring that "you and me aint nigh done chapping yet, with just two" (173).

As a result of her exploitation, from Darl's birth on, Addie considers Anse dead. "He did not know that he was dead, then. Sometimes I would lie by him in the dark, hearing the land that was now of my blood and flesh . . ." (173). Imagining herself a seer-like medium of the South's ghostly past, Addie repents through her haunted hatred the sins of her fathers and forefathers, of her husband and herself:

He did not know he was dead. I would he by him in the dark, hearing the dark land talking of God's love and His beauty and His sin; hearing the dark voicelessness in which the words are the deeds, and the other words that are not deeds, that are just the gaps in people's lacks, coming down like the cries of the geese out of the wild darkness in the old terrible nights (174)

Having set a violent precedent, slavery has produced a "dark land" that has taken its ultimate revenge: white women whip their own children. By sleeping with Anse and having his children, she has been penetrated by the legacy of ancestral sins, violated by the land itself. The slave master, by raping his female property--a subject Faulkner judiciously avoids--fertilized the black soil, producing more workers but thereby also brutalizing and reducing himself, making a mockery of his mythic honor and chivalry, and dooming his colonial project. In fact, "the space of the slave," argues Poulantzas, "is the same as that of the master" (101). Anse's colonization and penetration of Addie--transforming her body into a fetus factory--reproduces the loveless union between master and slave, industry and agriculture. Together, the white man and the act of sex and the ownership of the "dark land" reproduce the timeless scenes of unspeakable shame. The "dark land" has imbedded in its soil, in its past and present space, in its very bloodstream, the warring cells of hegemony and resistance.

Henri LeFebvre could have had Anse in mind when he warned that commodity production and exchange and the consequent exploitation of land results in an abstraction of space that "crushes time by reducing differences to repetitions or circularities." Such a violation of space (that both Anse and Addie feel) accounts for a discourse of oppression "where violence is cloaked in rationality and a rationality of unification is used to justify violence" (23, 282). Addie's confession that she carried on the violent tradition of the lash with her students at once metaphorically substitutes for and represses an admission of the violence that has torn her own family asunder. (In another act of metaphoric repression and substitution, Vardaman chops up a fish even as he asserts that his mother is a fish.) Addie understands the repressive function of words, how they inflict violence upon reality, 'how words go straight up in a thin line, quick and harmless, and how terribly doing goes along the earth, clinging to it, so that after a while the two tines are too far apart for the same person to straddle from one to the other" (173). "Doing," like a road,

"goes along the earth," along the metonymic axis of the land, an ever-present discourse of deeds, of "first nature" raw material, while "second nature" words, like men and their desired status quo, "go straight up in a thin line," along the metaphoric axis, passively frozen in some past perception. Inevitably, according to Addie, words travel a different path than that of what they are supposed to signify.

Such recognition of the inherent fluidity and undecidability of signification manifests itself in Faulkner's spatiauzation of his narrative. Like the land itself, Faulkner's prose follows a metonymic chain of signification where meaning is endlessly displaced by numerous narrators questing and inquiring for an elusive, non-existent truth. Several critics have noted Darl's "Cubistic Vision"--how spatial representation emphasizes difference and form, forcing the reader to see the parts of the narrative arranged together in a moment of time rather than as a sequence." Alienated by a loveless mother and domineering father, Darl cognitively maps, actively producing of the Bundren farm a landscape consisting of "geometrical patterns of juxtaposed forms, multiple points of view, collages, emphasis on two- dimensional surface rather than three-dimensional depth, and dislocation and disorientation of forms in space"(Branch 48). Such active rearrangement of forms in space suggests a mind desperately constructing a place of its own within the colonial discourse of imperial parents.

In fact, the entire novel, all fifty-nine sections of interior monologue by fifteen different speakers, maps the tortured trail, "the movement and the formation of consciousness" (Friedman 461), of the disintegrating Bundren family as they transport their decomposing center to her grave in the cemetery near the center of town. They have become so bonded to their land--in whatever shape they perceive it--so dependent upon it, that when they must venture out beyond its borders, they are like fish out of water. For such simple people of the sod, the road opens the unnatural doors of perception into a twilight zone where time and space melt into one another:

We go on, with a motion so soporific, so dreamlike as to be uninferant of progress, as though time and not space were decreasing between us and it.
It turns off at right angles.... It wheels up like a motionless hand lifted above the profound desolation of the ocean; beyond it the red road lies like a spoke of which Addie Bundren is the rim. (107-08)

As they get closer to the river, the road disappears under water, washed away by the flood, "as if the road too had been soaked free of earth and floated upward, to leave in its spectral tracing a monument to a still more profound desolation than this above which we now sit" (143). Mapping their way by landmarks and trees, they finally reach the river. A classic symbol of the unconscious, this river is, "the thick dark current . . . [that] talks up to us in a murmur . . . as though just beneath the surface something huge and alive waked for a moment of lazy alertness out of and into light slumber again" (141). They all wonder how to negotiate a crossing of this fluid space. Ever moving, ever transporting, the river affects Darl's perception, "as though the space between us were time: an irrevocable quality. It is as though time, no longer running straight before us in a diminishing line, now runs parallel between us like a looping string" (146). **12** The river separates Anse, his youngest son Vardaman, his daughter Dewey Dell, and his neighbor Vemon Tull, from the three grown sons Cash, Jewel, and Darl. Such "transformations of the socio-temporal matrices," states Poulantzas,

refer to the materiality of the social division of labour, of the structure of the State, and of the practices and techniques of capitalist economic political and ideological power; they are the real substratum of mythical, religious, philosophical or 'experiential' representations of space-time. (26)

Anse has politicized the space between himself and the other potentially dominant males by assigning himself a safe place on the riverbank while the others do the dirty work of attempting to cross with Addie's coffin. Hearing the story later from her husband, Cora shows disgust over Anse's distance: "'His place was there,' Cora said. 'If he had been a man, he would a been there instead of making his sons do what he doesn't'" (153). They would have made it across safely, however, had it not been for a stray agent of fate, an untamed piece of "first nature," a log that "*surged up out of the water and stood for an instant upright upon that surging and heaving desolation like Christ.... Upon the end of it a long gout of foam hangs like the beard of an old man*" (148). An "upright," vertical metaphor, Darl

perceives the log to be a "religious . . . representation of space-time": the "up-and-down ways" log—recalling Anse's notion that the Lord wants men "to stay put" and not travel—prevents the Bundrens from defying the forces of nature. When Tull affirms to Cora that the log was to blame for their demise, she scoffs: "Log, fiddlesticks.... It was the hand of God" (153). Thus, according to both Darl and Cora, and presumably Tull, who does not disagree with his wife, the synechdochic intervention of the supernatural ("the hand of God") preserved the integrity of nature by sending a message that the river (of the unconscious, where space and time commingle in cognition) is not to be violated nor is a man to abandon his "place."

Of all the people on the Yoknapawpha map, the Bundrens live the farthest from Jefferson, both in mental and physical distance; they alone reside south of the river, nearly off the privileged space. To return their center and source to her original and final space, they must cross the unstable river (the figuration of Darl's impending insanity), a metonymic, diachronic "road" that proves to be an eerily appropriate representation of what Jameson refers to as a "postmodernist space," one that

involves the suppression of distance . . . and the relentless saturation of any remaining voids and empty places . . . a perpetual barrage of immediacy from which all sheltering layers and intervening mediations have been removed . . . simultaneously homogeneous and fragmented . . . the peculiar disorientation of saturated space . . . ("Cognitive" 350-51)

When they leave the "sheltering layers" of their land and their farm lives, the "perpetual barrage of immediacy" overwhelms them and they suffer in the "simultaneously homogeneous and fragmented" river a penetration and "relentless saturation of any remaining voids and empty places" in the coffin, their bodies, and their psyches. A family of rural farmers on the outskirts of twentieth-century life, the Bundrens are representations of "the unequal development of a landscape that integrates poverty with wealth, industrial urbanization with agricultural diminishment." ¹³ Ill-equipped to cope with the modern world beyond their land, their wagon nearly overturns, Cash breaks his leg trying to save the coffin from sinking, the mules drown, and Jewel ends up having to trade his horse for a new team to pull the wagon. Once across the river, violence greets them at every turn. A knife-wielding "goddamn town fellow" nearly kills Jewel over a perceived insult and a drugstore clerk dupes and rapes Dewey Dell, who looks to him "like a pretty hot mamma, for a country girl" (242).

Ultimately, Darl's development is the most uneven, his fate the worst. Darl differs from the rest of his family in that he has no "intervening mediation" for the trip; no material desire drives him toward Jefferson. Although no one but Anse, the landowner, gets what he or she came to [Jefferson for, they all have their own reason to travel up the road, their own metaphoric substitutions of both the trip's purpose and their mother's absent presence: Vardaman dreams of the toy train he will purchase; Dewey Dell seeks a magic pill to rid her of her pregnancy; Anse looks forward to a new set of teeth; Cash wants a "talking machine"; and Jewel enjoys the ride on his new horse. Darl alone has no selfish material reasons for making the trip. Addie's most-hated second son, the character at once most rooted—"he's got his eyes full of the land all the time," says Anse (36)-- and rootless—a World War I veteran who pathetically muses how "our lives ravel out into the no-wind, no-sound, the weary gestures wearily

recapitulant: echoes of old compulsions with no-hand on no-strings" (207)--Darl cannot endure the presence of his dead mother's stinking corpse and the indignant response of those outside the family circle. In trying to burn the corpse, he burn's down Gillespie's barn. The voice of rational authority, Cash says that "there just aint nothing justifies the deliberate destruction of what a man has built with his own sweat and stored the fruit of his sweat into" (238). For this destruction of private property, of capitalizing space, he is judged insane and sent away on the train to the same repressive, state run space that Jason IV shipped Benjy—the asylum in Jackson.

Darl's violent end and Anse's subsequent actions signify the defeat of the rebellious worker and the restoration of colonial authority over the land. Anse symbolically sacrifices his son to the law of the land when (as Peabody reports) he throws Darl, "that poor devil down in the public street and handcuff [s] him like a damn murderer" (240). In dispensing justice by dispatching his troublesome son, in taking Dewey Dell's ten dollars, in getting his new teeth and a new wife whom he introduces as "Mrs. Bundren"—Anse demonstrates what Huggan calls "colonial discursive practices." Anse asserts the dominance of his own cognitive map, controlling his private property, the space of his family, through the same

key rhetorical strategies implemented in the production of the map, such as reinscription, enclosure and hierarchization of space, which provide an analogue for the accumulation, management and reinforcement of colonial power. (115)

University of South Florida

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Footnotes

1. Ross, Nadeau, Perles, Hemenway, Church (235-37), and Swiggart (109, 123) are among the many who discuss time in Faulkner's work.
2. The "land" of the South is just that—its fertile earth. Yet, although Faulkner stakes a claim to the place that he calls his "native soil," the historical fact remains that the North American South of earth and soil was first seized in bloody confrontations from the actual "native" Americans, the indigenous people whom the invading Europeans enclosed in the social spaces of reservations. The racial misnomer "Indians" and the stereotype, "savages," linguistically justified the Europeans in their eradication of these subhuman Others. (Faulkner documents the dispossession of Native Americans in such stories as "Red Leaves," "A Justice," and "The Bear," and the novel *Requiem for a Nun*. See Kerr [79-84] for a fine discussion of this topic.) Once the "land" was theirs, the Europeans imported and enslaved Africans to work it. The owners of this private property made their wealth and asserted their social status and reign of privilege on the profits from cotton, tobacco, and other crops harvested from the toil of slaves.
3. The following comments quickly survey the map of Yoknapatawpha County for elements that illuminate the concept of the *land*. For a more thorough study of the map, see Duvert.
4. For a discussion of Southern agrarianism see Woodward and Henry Nash Smith.
5. Useful discussions of this subject in Faulkner include Davis, Jenkins, Nilon, Seiden, and Tischler.
6. The metaphor of woman as land, as mother earth, is developed by Neil Smith (13-14), and Morris, who argues that Addie represents a "feminization of the land" from which Darl retreats and which Anse attempts to master (157-64).
7. I am indebted to Neil Smith (19,44-47) for assembling and sorting out the various contributions of Hegel and Marx to this concept.
8. Neil Smith (99-119) discusses the workings of differentiation and equalization in capitalist economies.
9. Neil Smith (41-42) elaborates upon the connection between private property and the dynamics of the family.
10. Anse not only takes command and degrades her, he also, as Minter argues, "spends his life trying to get other people to do things for him. Part hypochondriac and part con man, part parasite and part vulture, he manipulates language and people (children, friends, and strangers alike) so that he can devote himself to elaborate inactivity" (118). "The modernist economy of control and manipulation," notes Morris, "is at the base of the struggle between Addie and Anse" (166).
11. "For discussions of Faulkner's cubistic techniques see Branch, Broughton, and Tucker.
12. The Bundrens, argues Reed, "are no longer separated by the distance which the river puts between them but by the irrational time it will take to cross that distance.... The river is a distortion of distance into time" (105).
13. "Said's reference (78) is informed by Neil Smith, Soja, and Mandel, who posits that "unequal development . . . is the very essence of capitalism" (43).

