

ABSTRACT

Complex, a psychological term, refers to a group of mental factors that are unconsciously associated by the individual with a particular subject or connected by a recognizable theme and influence the individual's attitude and behavior. William Faulkner, a preeminent Southern writer, had deep Southern Complex. He created the "little postage stamp of native soil"—Yoknapatawpha County which is patterned after his real-life home in Oxford and Lafayette County and set many his works in this imaginary place. Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County novels crown nearly all aspects of the springheads of his Southern Complex. This paper analyzes William Faulkner's Southern Complex in his works. The paper first defines complex and presents William Faulkner's Southern Complex. It then elaborates four aspects of the embodiment of Faulkner's Southern Complex in the Yoknapatawpha County novels: writing style, language, characterization and the setting, Yoknapatawpha County. It finally analyzes the internal cause and external cause that shape William Faulkner's Southern Complex.

Keywords: Southern Complex; Southern gothic, language, characterization, Yoknapatawpha County

摘 要

情结是一个心理术语，指的是人的潜抑的一组相互关联的感觉和观念以及不自觉产生的复杂情绪体验。威廉·福克纳是美国著名的南方作家，有着深厚的南方情结。他以自己“邮票般大小的故土”为原型创建了约克纳帕塔法县，并以此作为自己作品的背景。福克纳的所有作品几乎都显现了他的南方情结。此篇论文分析了福克纳的南方情结在其作品中的体现。首先，这篇论文给“情结”和福克纳的“南方情结”下了定义。然后，论文从四方面来论证福克纳南方情结的体现：写作风格、语言、人物塑造和背景环境——约克纳帕塔法县。最后，论文分析了福克纳南方情结形成的内在原因和外在原因。

关键词:南方情结;歌特式风格; 语言;人物塑造;约克纳帕塔法县

Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Faulkner's Complex research	2
2. 1 Definition of Complex	2
2. 2 Southern Complex	2
3. Embodiment of Southern Complex	4
3.1 Southern Gothic	4
3.1.1 Gothic atmosphere	4
3. 1. 2 Gothic plot.....	5
3.1. 3 Gothic charaters	6
3.2 Language	6
3. 2.1 Southwest humor.....	7
3.2. 2 Dialect	8
3. 3 Characterization	9
3. 3. 1 Quentin Compson and Emily Grierson	10
3.3.2 Jason Compson.....	11
3.3. 3 Caddy Compson	12
3.4 Yoknapatawpha County	12
4. The causes for the shape of Southern Complex.....	14
4.1 Internal Causes	14
4. 2 External Causes	15
5. Conclusion.....	17
Acknowledgement	18
References	19

1. Introduction

The man himself never stood taller than five feet, six inches tall, but in the realm of American literature, William Faulkner is a giant. As one of the greatest writers of the 20th century, William Faulkner gains his reputation by novels, novellas and short stories. His most celebrated novels are *The Sound and the Fury*, *Light in August*, *As I lay dying*, and *Absalom, Absalom!* Faulkner is also a prolific writer of short stories, writing hundreds of stories, *A Rose for Emily*, *Dry September* included. Faulkner was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1949. Born and living in the southern state Mississippi, Faulkner cherishes a deep love for this land. 15 out of 19 novels and most of the short stories are set in his native state of Mississippi, and Faulkner is considered as one of the most important Southern writers. In his many novels and short stories, Faulkner transforms the American South into his own unique imaginary world. He creates the “little postage stamp of native soil”—Yoknapatawpha County—a mythical county in northern Mississippi. Faulkner’s apocryphal Yoknapatawpha County, setting for most of his fiction and patterned after his real-life home in Oxford and Lafayette County, Mississippi, is perhaps the most famous address in American literature. Yoknapatawpha County has 15,611 inhabitants who are scattered over 2,400 square miles. As the sole owner and proprietor of the county, Faulkner pours out his complicated feelings and emotions on the county about his native land, the South. Almost all of his novels deal with the landscape, people, events and history of the South, and nearly every page of his works in some way documents the details of ordinary life, above all the speech, its idioms and dialects, but also the dress, the manners, work, leisure, food, and countless other folk customs. [1] 80 Faulkner “wrote everything there is to say about the South” and echoes of his “southernness” are found in today’s literature. [2] 121 William Faulkner has a Southern Complex and he demonstrates the complex in his works. 文档为个人收集整理,来源于网络个人收集整理,勿做商业用途

2。 Faulkner's Southern Complex

William Faulkner's relation to the South resembles James Joyce's relation to Ireland. For each of them, his native culture, tradition and history provide the subject matter of his fiction. For Faulkner, he cherishes a deep love for this land and displays his feelings and emotions through his works。 All Faulkner's works is about the South: the southern values and code, the southern landscape, and the southern people. William Faulkner has a Southern Complex.

2。 1 Definition of Complex

Complex is a psychological term。 Theodor Ziehen coined the term in 1898. Merriam—Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines complex as a group of repressed desires and memories that exerts a dominating influence upon the personality。 While in psychology a complex is a group of mental factors that are unconsciously associated by the individual with a particular subject or connected by a recognizable theme and influence the individual's attitude and behavior。 In its original significance, as used by Carl Jung, the term "complex" referred to experience belonging to the unconscious which, though inaccessible to consciousness, is yet capable of influencing thought and conduct. It is especially useful where we are seeking for the explanation of a specific mental manifestation such as a phobia, a fugue, a specific anxiety, a specific feature of a dream, or a specific affection. ☺

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2.2 Southern Complex

William Faulkner has a specific affection toward the South。 Born into a typical Mississippi family in 1897, Faulkner has a Southern heritage which he integrates into his works。 He is eager to describe the diverse aspects of the South, trying hard to tell the southern culture, religion, morality and other characteristics, such as its gothic tradition, its Southwest humor and its dialect。 William Faulkner's obvious

love to the South can be concluded as “Southern Complex”. The Southern Complex is a group of largely unconscious ideas and feelings which centre on the American South. Faulkner's Southern Complex is based on his knowledge of the South, his sympathy for the South and his deep attachment to the South. Southern Complex has influenced Faulkner's thought and attitude and been illustrated in each of his works. Faulkner creates Yoknapatawpha County that mirrors Faulkner's hometown Lafayette County whose people, events and history bear strong resemblance to those of the fictional region. Faulkner not only uses his fiction to document his observations of his people and their land, he also is at work probing the South's past, challenging the foundation of the southern society, raising disturbing questions and trying to evoke the Southerners' consciousness. [3]17 Faulkner delivers his mixed feelings of pride and scorn toward the South by the language he uses, characters he creates, and themes he adopts of his works, which earns Faulkner's writing a reputation that as “Southern as Bourbon whiskey.” 本文为互联网收集，请勿用作商业用途

3. Embodiment of Southern Complex

William Faulkner's Southern Complex can be traced in every line, every word of his works。 Faulkner sets many of his works in the imaginary Yoknapatawpha County, a microcosm of the postbellum South. He explores and displays the South in his Yoknapatawpha system as the Yoknapatawpha County novels have crowned nearly all aspects of Faulkner's Southern Complex. I will decode Faulkner's complex feelings towards his southern native land by analyzing the writing style, language, characterization and setting of his works。 个人收集整理，勿做商业用途文档为个人收集整理，来源于网络

3.1 Southern Gothic

Southern Gothic is a Subgenre of the Gothic writing style, unique to American literature。 It relies on supernatural, ironic, or unusual events to guide the plot and uses these tools but to explore social issues and reveal the cultural character of the American South。 One of the most notable features of the Southern Gothic is “the grotesque” — this includes situations, places, or stock characters that often possess some cringe—inducing qualities, typically racial bigotry and egotistical self-righteousness. Southern Gothic authors commonly use deeply flawed, grotesque characters for greater narrative range and more opportunities to highlight unpleasant aspects of southern culture, without being too literal or appearing to be overly moralistic. (Wikipedia) Faulkner is a Southern writer, and he is put in the category of a writer of Southern Gothic. Most of his works have “themes of evil and corruption bearing Southern Gothic tones。” (Wikipedia) Southern Gothic and Southern grotesque are used in most of Faulkner's works, especially in *A Rose for Emily*, *Absalom, Absalom!* and *As I lay Dying*. I will analyze Faulkner's gothic novels and stories by three major elements: gothic atmosphere, gothic plot and gothic characters。 文档为个人收集整理，来源于网络本文为互联网收集，请勿用作商业用途

3.1. 1 Gothic atmosphere

Gothic atmosphere is a basic element. “a gothic tale usually takes place in an antiquated or seemingly antiquated space—be it a castle, a foreign palace, an abbey... a large house or theatre.” (Hoyle, 2002:2) [4]17 Malcolm Cowley placed *Absalom, Absalom!* “in the realm of Gothic romances, with Sutpen’s Hundred taking the place of the haunted castle on the Rhine.” The beginning of *Absalom, Absalom!* sets a gloomy keynote of the whole novel by bringing us to an old gothic southern house: “a dim hot airless room with the blinds all closed and fastened for forty—three summers,” (Faulkner, 1990: 1) and “there would be the dim coffin—smelling gloom sweet with the twice—bloomed wisteria against the outer wall by the savage September sun.” (Faulkner, 1990:2) In Quentin’s eyes, the air in the house “was even hotter than outside, as if there were prisoned in it like in a tomb all the suspiration of slow heat—laden time.” (Faulkner, 1990:6) *Absalom, Absalom!* has a prevailing atmosphere of terror and mystery which is the very feature of Southern Gothic. In *A Rose for Emily*, Miss Emily’s house is as decaying as the waning southern society in the aftermath of the civil war: “Only Miss Emily’s house was left, lifting its stubborn and coquettish decay above the cotton wagons and the gasoline pumps—an eye sore among eyesores” (130, paragraph 2). The interior of her house is becoming eerie along with the exterior: it was dim and “It smelled of dust and disuse—a close, dank smell...It was furnished in heavy, leather-covered furniture...they could see that the leather was cracked; and when they sat down, a faint dust rose sluggishly about their thighs, spinning with slow motes in the single sun-ray” (131, paragraph 5). The morbid atmosphere is helpful in supporting the gothic theme of the story. 本文为互联网收集，请勿用作商业用途 本文为互联网收集，请勿用作商业用途

3.1.2 Gothic plot

Gothic plot is important in Southern Gothic. Gothic plot is often full of mystery and violence. In *A Rose for Emily*, Faulkner has revealed a looming family secret in a truly gothic fashion. At the end of story, the long lost Homer Barron is found dead and decaying in Miss Emily’s attic bedroom. Emily poisons her lover to death with arsenic and keeps his corpse for more than forty years. What is more gothic is that “Then we noticed that in the second pillow was the indentation of a head. One of us lifted something from it, and leaning forward, that faint and invisible dust dry and acrid in the nostrils, we saw a long strand of iron—gray hair” (135, paragraph

60). A picture of Miss Emily sleeping next to the deceased Homer Barron or even having sex with him comes into readers' minds. In *Absalom, Absalom!* there are altogether eight people who are dead unnaturally. One person (Rosa Coldfield) died of imprisonment, one person died of suicide, two people (Clytie and Henry Sutpen) burnt themselves to death, and the other four people (including Sutpen) were murdered by others. This plot can embody the gothic nature of the novel. 个人收集整理, 勿做商业用途

3.1. 3 Gothic character

Gothic character is another crucial element of Southern Gothic. The hero or heroine is always a “villain/ hero, the charismatic yet terrifying figure.” (Weinstein, 2000:129) Miss Emily Greirson, in *A Rose for Emily* is a stereotypical Southern Gothic character. As the last descendant of the Greirsons who once stood among the elite of the South, Miss Emily insisted on placing high value to “honor and pride” to which the old South pays homage. Although times are changing, Miss Emily is not. She always sticks to being held at a higher rank than everyone else. Moreover, after her beloved father passes away and her Yankee lover “leaves”, Miss Emily slips into a life of seclusion, escaping from the reality and never leaves her home. When the aldermen entered her decrepit parlor to collect her taxes, Miss Emily insisted that the aldermen discuss the tax situation with a man who had been dead for a decade. She said “See Colonel Sartoris. I have no taxes in Jefferson” (131, paragraph 12). At that time, Miss Emily was described as looking “...bloated, like a body long submerged in motionless water, and of that pallid hue.” For fear of her lover, Homer Barron's abandon, Miss Emily takes the offensive by poisoning him with arsenic and keeps his corpse in her attic bedroom for more than forty years. Only after her death has the secret been revealed. The murder makes her a monster in readers' eyes. The discovery of a strand of her hair on the pillow next to the rotting corpse suggests that she slept with the cadaver or, even worse, had sex with it. What Miss Emily has done to Homer Barron exactly shows the Gothic nature of the story in that Gothic novels and stories also often include unnatural combinations of sex and death. In her later years, Miss Emily was “a small, fat woman in black...leaning on an ebony cane with a tarnished gold heart” (131, paragraph 6). Emily Greirson is a typical decaying, morbid character of a Southern Gothic story. 个人收集整理, 勿做商业用途

3. 2 Language

William Faulkner's Southern Complex is expected in every aspect and the feature of the Southern language can never be ignored. Southwest (Frontier) humor is a unique feature in the South which Faulkner is good at using. As Malcolm Cowley points out in *The Portable Faulkner* (Intro.), Faulkner has an astonishing humor, what Cowley calls “a sort of homely and sober—sided frontier humor that is seldom achieved in contemporary writing.” A dialect is a variety of language that is characteristic of a certain area. The way people speak says a lot about where they are from, who they are and what they care about. Southern dialect is recognizable in Faulkner's works. Through the Southern dialect, Faulkner shows us Southerners' identities and ways of life.

3.2.1 Southwest humor

Folk humor is a distinctive feature in American culture. It is divided into two types: one is the “Down East type”, which is popular in the North; the other is “Southwest humor”, or “frontier humor”, which is spread in the South. Southwest humor is the name given to a tradition of regional sketches and tales based in the “old South—West”: Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, and Arkansas. Humor is found everywhere in Faulkner's work and his comic achievement owes much to nineteenth-century frontier (Southwest) humor. Relying on his own experience and the tradition he is a part of, Faulkner's heritage is also the abundant riches of Southwestern humor. Using his own region and his own local or rural people, the very speech and behavior of these people will in itself function as a comic element. Faulkner exaggerates wildly, uses inversion of roles or practices for comic purpose, invests wit and cunning in the presumed lower races, and even in the purported weaker sex, uses different levels of styles e.g. in direct speech so as to juxtapose them and make fun of one or the other, dependent on the perspective; and many of his backwoods people are comic characters if they are not plainly grotesque. [5]83

In *As I Lay Dying*, after Addie Bundren's death, her husband, daughter and four sons take her corpse to the grave. During the whole process, they meet a lot of difficulties, such as fire and flood. The entire “adventure” is just like a comedy.

During the adventure, many of the details are exaggerating and absurd, such as curing the broken leg with cement, and marrying a woman who looks like a duck. These are the typical embodiments of Southwest humor.

The Hamlet best demonstrates Faulkner's use of southwest humor. Examples of Faulkner's use of comic effects in *The Hamlet* can be found in the description of the reactions of the members of the Varner family when Eula has become pregnant:

"Hold him till I get a stick of stove wood," she gasped. "I'll fix him. I'll fix both of them. Turning up pregnant and yelling and cursing here in the house when I am trying to take a nap! "

Old man Varner, Will, was smarter than his wife and son, and had no plans of revenge or punishment:

"You mean you aint going to do nothing? " Jody said. "Not anything?"
"Do what? " Varner said. "To who? Dont you know them damn tomcats are halfway to Texas now? Where would you be about now, if it was you? . . ." . . . "Now you go on out to the barn and set down until you cool off. Make Sam dig you some worms and go fishing. If this family needs any head-holding—up done, I'll tend to it myself." . . . "Hell and damnation, all this hullabaloo and uproar because one confounded running bitch finally foxed herself. What did you expect — that she would spend the rest of her life just running water through it? "

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3. 2.2 Dialect

Southern Complex in Faulkner's works is presented by a special and important feature: the common characteristics of Southern speech. In his works, Faulkner displays an excellent sample of the Southern language, including linguistic qualities of both black and white speech. Faulkner establishes a unique literary voice which was recognizable due to variances from standard English in vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammatical form. Faulkner creates a literary dialect which is consistent throughout his works. A literary dialect is best defined as an "author's attempt to represent in writing a speech that is restricted regionally, socially, or both". [6]

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