William Faulkner: Overview Of Life Periods

About Author and his early life:

Americans have given the world great people among every field of life. American soil is full of talents from all walks of life. If we look at the history of America we see that there are great novel writers, story writers, poets, actors, sportsmen or politicians. These peoples inspired the world by their brilliant works in their respective fields. One of these great men was William Faulkner. William Cuthbert Faulkner was born on American soil on 25th September; 1897. He was born in New Albany. He was eldest among his brothers and his parents were Murry Cuthbert Falkner and Maud Butler. His great grandfather was in the army and he grew up listening to the stories of his great grandfather and the wrath of slavery and war. After a year of his birth the family moved to Ripley. When he was five years old his family moved to Oxford where he lived for the rest of his life. His family and most particularly his mother and his nanny were fond of his brilliant imagination. They tried to teach him a visual language as both were painters as well as photographers. His mother valued education a lot and encouraged all of his sons to read and learn.

Much of the great thinkers and philosopher believe that the beast education and manners a man can get is through his mother. What a man learns from his mother remains with him throughout his entire life. Same was the case with William Faulkner. As his mother taught him to read even before going to school. Thus he was a bright student in his early age but later on his interest in studies reduced and he ended up never graduating. During his teenage period he enjoyed drawing. He also found a pleasure in reading and writing. He also mimicked some actors when he was 12. He spent his early age listening to the stories of slavery and wars. He was also told stories of his great grandfather who was a great businessman and civil war hero. Moreover he was also a writer. So being a writer was in the genes of William Faulkner. At the age of seventeen he met a man who was his inspiration to write and influenced his wittings. That man was Philip Stone. William Faulkner was a gifted writer and he impressed Stone by his poetry at the beginning of his career. He encouraged William a lot. Stone was mentor to Faulkner. He pointed out his mistakes and helped him to correct them. He also introduced Faulkner to the efforts of greater writer and helped him a lot towards the path of great glory.

When he was 20 years old he started writing poems and short stories but that were rejected when stone sent them for being published. That was the moment when Faulkner learnt that great glory comes after failure and failures are always a beginning of triumphs. Failure always gave a important lesson. He spent most of his life in Mississippi. He was a perfect blend of many arts. He was a great novel writer. His screenplays mesmerized people. His poetry always left marks on people’s heart. His essays were full of great endings. . He was also enrolled in Ole Miss in Oxford but was dropped out. As he skipped classes he often received a D grade in English. But he continued to write his poems in the university and was much appreciated and some of his poems were able to make themselves to the campus publications. He is always famous for his novels and short stories. These novels and short stories were written in fictional Yoknapatawpha County. Yoknapatawpha is derived from two different words Yocona and petopha which mean split land. This based on a Mississippi County which was Lafayette County. Faulkner was very proud of his County so he often referred to it as “my apocryphal

county". Besides his novels "A Fable, Pylon and The Wild Palms", all other novels were set in this county. More than 50 of his stories were included in this county. Faulkner admitted in his speech at Virginia that the idea of Yoknapatawpha word came in his mind from the actual Yocona River. His work published in 1919. This was very early but yet his work was admired throughout the entire American land.

The peak of his era was during 1920s and 1930s. Mississippi had produced a great number of people which worked for the betterment of nation but no one got a Nobel Prize. In 1949 due to his extraordinary efforts in the field of literature, William Faulkner was the first man born in Mississippi to be awarded Nobel Prize. This was the era when William Faulkner became famous throughout the world and his work was admired around the globe. After then, he started to win other prizes like in 1954 he won Pulitzer Prize for Fiction on his novels "A Fable" and "The Reivers". These two novels were considered to be a mastercalss of fiction. "The sound and the fury" was another great novel written by William Faulkner. It gained popularity among the novel readers. So by the Modern Library this novel was ranked sixth among the list of hundred best novels of English language of the twentieth century. A man is deeply affected by the environment he lives in, so was Faulkner. Faulkner was influenced by the history of America and the culture of black and white races. Due to his height he was not suitable for US Army.

Publications:

In 1925 after much effort he wrote his first novel Soldiers Pay. In the year 1927 Flags in the Dust was written by him and was the first novel to make to his Yoknapatawpha County. The novel heavily cast a light on his youth as it was based on the rituals and culture of south. Faulkner was very happy after the publication of this novel as he believed it to be a major success after his first two novels. At the first attempt the novel was rejected by the publishers but later on after some editing in the novel done by Ben Wasson the novel was finally published. This was the time when Faulkner learnt that great victory comes after failures and there is always a lesson to be learnt behind every failure. The original version of the novel was issued later on in 1973. Many great writers were influenced by his work as his quality of work was great. The depth of his poetry also influenced people. He also said that his writing in the beginning were shaped on romantic era which was in the 18th and early 19th century in the beautiful country if England. In the year 1928 Faulkner began to write his novels in a more experimental way because of the rejection of Flags in the Dust. He started writing The Sound And the Fury. When he finished writing of this novel he was much confident about his work and he stopped Ben Wasson from any kind of editing.

When Faulkner worked as a clerk he met Estelle. At that time Estelle was very popular and beautiful. Faulkner was attracted towards Estelle. So he proposed Estelle after her first marriage failed and she was divorced. He married Estelle Oldham in 1929. He hoped to do best for his family as a writer as Estelle had two children from her previous wedding. He then started writing "As I Lay Dying" which was published in 1930. Now he changed his writing style a bit, from novels to short stories. Short stories were also popular among people living in the country. He began to send them to some of the magazines. These short stories were published and much appreciated across the entire country. As these stories provided him with good money, these publications helped Faulkner to strengthen his financial status and he was able to buy a house in Oxford. In 1931, he wrote a great novel "Sanctuary". This novel gained fame and was reviewed widely but at the same time it had some critics in the South. But William was a brave

man who encouraged criticisms as he knew that everybody do not think at his level.

Life at Hollywood:

In 1932 because of the fact that Faulkner needed money he accepted an offer to work as a screenwriter in Hollywood. So he went to California in 1932. In the California he had the privilege to work with some of the great people of the field. One of them was the director Howard Hawks. His relations with Howard Hawks strengthen as the days passed by. They spend much of their time in each other's company. During the next two decades till 1950s Faulkner was able to find enough work to fulfill his needs. In 1957 Faulkner served as Writer-In-Residence at the University of Virginia.

Philosophy of his work:

Faulkner's work attracted many people. Many people from all walks of life examined his work. Also there were many critics which examined his work from a wide range of perspectives. Critics looked into his work by psychoanalytic methods as well as feminist. It was obvious from his work that Faulkner was influenced by the Fiction of Latin America. Claude Simon who was a French novelist and also a Nobel Laureate In literature was also influenced by the work of William Faulkner. Most of the Novels written by Faulkner are on the standards of the ones living in southern part. He was a brave man who was never afraid of criticizing aspects of south. Some of the novels are a criticism of the aristocracy of south and a criticism of the people living on hills because he considered them to be ignorant as the lack the ability to give value to life. As it is obvious that this idea faced much criticism by a large number of people but at the same time it was admired by many. In the Yoknapatawpha County he used a mythological approach. Much of the remaining Faulkner's work took place in this county. The creation of this imaginary county was much appreciated and was valued a lot as it was considered to be a great success. He used a variety of ways to enlighten the capability and position of man in the modern era. In the beginning, he considered man to be fragile incapable of rising above his desires which were selfish. Later on his stance changed and he started to mention man as mentally and potentially great. In many of his writings, he dug deep into motivations based on psychology for man's action and the dilemma in which a modern man finds himself in. As a short story writer the philosophy used by William Faulkner was to plot character and devise a theme of his story, then setting the entire drama, places, and landscapes to give reader a strong sense of visualization. After that he lines up series of events that were going to happen in his story. Then he plots the efforts and struggles among the characters to achieve the main goal of the story. He always kept in mind the mentality level of the reader so he shaped the style and tone of his writings according to that. That's why he had a large number of readers and admirers from a wide class of peoples. He became popular because many people think of him as a faithful writer who honestly dictated the southern. He casted light on many issues that were left blank by the other American writer. Some of these issues were slavery and southern aristocracies. He also published stories that focused the issues of raping and kidnapping. It was a shock to some of the readers but was masterpiece of his extraordinary work. The work he did in the Hollywood was entirely done to fulfill his financial needs. He was not much inspired by the work. Even though his work was also appreciated there.

Death:

Every beginning has an ending. Everyone who is born must have to taste death. In January 1961, William Faulkner wrote his will. In his will he gave all of his manuscripts and papers to William Faulkner Foundation. On 6TH July 1962 William Faulkner had a heart attack. He was taken to the hospital but he couldn’t survive and died. He was given second Pulitzer in 1963 for The Reivers.

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