

A Study of Anse Bundren in *As I Lay Dying* in Light of Perspectivism

Shiyu Zhang

Nanhu College, Jiaxing University, Jiaxing, Zhejiang Province, 314001, China

hybirdman@126.com

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Abstract: Since the advent of *As I Lay Dying*, approaches applied in its analysis vary radically. While brilliant research outcomes have been yielded successfully, and a considerable number of them focus on its modernistic characteristics, Anse Bundren Bundren's narrative especially, few literary critics and professionals have probed Anse's perspective from the vintage point of Nietzsche's theory of Perspectivism. Although Anse's narrative is tagged as Faulkner's "tour de force", which means in writing the work he has not changed a word of it and it undergoes little reexamination and has not suffered any editorial modification, and hailed one of his very best, generations of scholars and critics find it "subtly unreadable". This research believes that all this "unreadableness" is due to Faulkner's modernistic writing technique, and more importantly, with his philosophical thinking regarding Nietzsche's Perspectivism. Thus this research is to justify that Anse Bundren's perspective is Faulkner's literary expression of Nietzsche's critical thinking of Perspectivism. The research examines the burial of Addie Bundren in the novel from the perspective of Anse Bundren, the focal family member. The analysis over sense and force of Anse indicates that he has a unique sense of Addie Bundren's burial and his sense materializes under the influence of a peculiar force. The result of this research is that the narratives dedicated to Anse in *As I Lay Dying* is Faulkner's aesthetic articulation of his critical thinking of Perspectivism. This research is the very first endeavor to offer an insight into Anse Bundren in light of Nietzsche's Perspectivism.

1. Introduction

During the past decades critics and literary professionals have studied *As I Lay Dying* using the approaches of New Criticism, Marxism, Russian Formalism as well as Freudian and Brooksonian Psycho-Analysis. In the meantime, considerable works are dedicated to the novel's modernistic traits. Research outputs concerning *As I Lay Dying* in light of Cubism and Bakhtinian Heteroglossia are indeed a marvelous contribution. However, those studies merely try to approach the novel in light of its technical innovation instead of the philosophical thinking of Faulkner. Few of the studies present an analysis of the novel from the point of view of Nietzsche's philosophy of Perspectivism. Therefore, this thesis approaches *As I Lay Dying* from the unique perspective of each Bundren family member regarding the event of Addie Bundren's Burial. By analyzing the sense of Anse Bundren and the force which influences it and is presented by it, this thesis unearths Faulkner's philosophical thinking of Perspectivism and generates a whole new perspective on the novel.

2. Theoretic Framework

2.1 Nietzsche and Perspectivism

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche was a German philosopher, cultural critic, poet, and Latin and Greek Scholar. He wrote several critical texts on religion, morality, contemporary culture, philosophy, and science, displaying a fondness for metaphor and irony.

Like Dostoevsky, Nietzsche was a reactionary whose insights into the obscene hunger of the human soul strikingly prefigured the discoveries of Freud. The Brevity of Nietzsche's creative life stands in stark contrast to the books he wrote and the transformations of perspective it bears witness

to. Nietzsche is a thinker at once approachable and provocative, a writer by turns endearing, irritating, and challenging. He is nearly always complex: often when writing in terms that appear straightforward he turns out to be at his most subtle. He is a philosopher of stunning originality, which is not by any means to say that everything he has to say is to be agreed with. Since not long after his tragic mental collapse at the age of forty-four, Nietzsche has also been written about in industrial proportions, a fact that, given his views about mass culture, may well have amused and horrified him in equal measure. Indeed, so much Nietzsche literature exists that it would be impossible to summarize it even in books. Much of what has been claimed of him, for him, and against him, has usually been contested elsewhere.

Nietzsche's key ideas include Perspectivism, the Will to Power, Master-Slave Morality, the Death of God, and Eternal Recurrence. His influence remains particularly substantial in Post-Structuralism and Post-Modernism, whose major advocates such as Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari are to no small extent inheritors of Nietzsche's gem of thought. And Nietzsche's influence also seeps deep into the movement of Modernism. His influence upon Modernism is frequently spotted in the avant-garde men of letters who appeal to the Dionysian affirmation of life and those who wage wars against totalitarianism.

The central theme in Nietzsche's philosophy is his opposition to the complacent Victorian faith in progress through a rationalist reordering of society. He saw basic to human nature darker motives than his utilitarian contemporaries were willing to acknowledge, but he also saw the possibility of self-sacrifice and transcendence. These themes appear most strongly in his ecstatic tract, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, along with *The Joyful Wisdom* and *Beyond Good and Evil*.

The concept of Perspectivism is coined by Nietzsche in developing the philosophical view that all ideations take place from particular perspectives, and it is the philosophical position that one's access to the world through perception, reason and experience is possible only through one's own perspective. This means that there are as many perspectives as judgments of truth or value can be made. This is often taken to imply that no way of seeing the world can be taken as definitely true, but does not necessarily entail that all perspectives are equally valid.

In *Will to Power*, the very essence of Perspectivism is presented in the following passage:

In so far as the word "knowledge" has any meaning, the world is knowable, but it is interpretable otherwise, it has no meaning behind it, it has countless meanings. -"Perspectivism"[1].

It is in this vignette that the philosophy of Perspectivism is being introduced for the very first time. Here in contrast to metaphysical philosophy, the pathfinders of which seek to provide a universal and unified picture of knowledge, of reality, of truth, Nietzsche argues unflinchingly that all knowledge is bound to the particularity of one interpretation or another, of one perspective or another. Thus for Nietzsche, any perspective that claims to be timeless and universal condemns itself, for the world is such that it can always be understood differently.

Perspectivism rejects objective metaphysics as impossible, claiming that no evaluation of objectivity can transcend formations or subjective designations. Perspectivism claims that there are no objective facts, nor any knowledge of a thing-in-itself. Truth is separated from any particular vantage point, and so there are no ethical or epistemological absolutes. Rules are constantly reassessed according to the circumstances of individual perspectives. Truth is thus only created by integrating different vantage points together.

Thus Perspectivism is the critical way of thinking in which "a truth is something relative to a perspective and therefore reality is interpretable from many perspectives" [2], and more significantly, in his renunciation of totalitarianism (for instance, Christian moral tradition which denies life in the name of the absoluteness of an afterlife or Western rationalism which upholds truth with Platonic dialectical reasoning), he advocates that "[o]nly life experienced through multiple perspectives is authentic and joyful" [2], equating authenticity with and only with the idea of plurality.

Nietzsche's philosophy of Perspectivism is the joyful renouncement of any absolute truth or fact, and it puts into display miscellaneous interpretations of an event viewing from diverse angles. His interest lingers not on any perspective in particular or interpretation generated from that perspective,

but rather on the larger picture of all the concerning perspectives, all the interpretations, as a whole, as something extremely rich in its plurality and democracy of expression. So in Nietzsche's eyes, truth or fact is always fluid and plural judging from different perspectives. Here Nietzsche's philosophy coincides perfectly with Picasso's Cubist painting in that while Nietzsche strives to offer plural interpretations of a phenomenon Picasso's effort is to present the side-portrait and even back-portrait in coexistence with front-profile in one picture. It is in this way that Perspectivism resembles Cubism in Modernism, whose tenet is the simultaneous presentation of various angles in painting as well as writing.

What is also noticeable is Nietzsche's admiration for Fyodor Dostoevsky, whose titanic prestige as a trail-blazer of modernism and post-modernism dwarfs even the finest of the men of letters in both movements, and he called Dostoevsky after reading a French version of *Notes from the Underground* "the only psychologist from whom I have anything to learn". Here Nietzsche coincides with Dostoevsky in two aspects. They both are waging wars against the tyranny of reason. Perspectivism questions the hegemonic Platonic tradition of dialectical reasoning while Dostoevsky wrestles against the purely optimistic attitude towards reason and its grand narrative. Furthermore, both Nietzsche and Dostoevsky strongly favor plurality. Perspectivism celebrates its versatile interpretations of truth while Dostoevsky highlights the Fugue of human nature and upholds Dialogism against Monologism.

2.2 Interpretation

Interpretation is at the heart of the philosophy of Perspectivism. According to Nietzsche, "there are no moral facts or phenomena, but only a moral interpretation of phenomena; there are no illusions of knowledge, but knowledge itself is an illusion" [3]. For him, an absolute, all-covering truth simply does not exist. Instead, there are only interpretations of things and of phenomena generated from diverse perspectives. It is in this sense that Perspectivism is born revolving around the very act of interpretation. And his philosophy of Perspectivism is a total rejection of a point of view which is free from any perspective, free of any interpretation.

According to him, each interpretation is generated from a unique perspective, and there are as many interpretations as existing perspectives. Thus interpretation and Perspectivism should take this plurality into account as a thing or a phenomenon is always interpreted as sometimes this and sometimes that. As Gilles Deleuze, the French philosopher and literary critic, who is also a protégée of Nietzsche, argues in his monumental work *Nietzsche and Philosophy* that "philosophy's highest art [is] that of interpretation" [4]. Here what Deleuze is saying is his open celebration of this essence of plurality in Perspectivism and more specifically in this act of interpretation.

In the same book Deleuze makes an analogy for the act of interpretation, which is weighing. He sees Nietzschean interpretation as meticulously delicate, offering further insight into interpretation, "To interpret is to determine the force which gives sense to a thing" [4]. Here interpretation is defined as the weighing of the inter-relationship between sense and force, which are more crucial concepts pertinent to Perspectivism.

2.3 Sense and Force

According to Deleuze, Nietzsche's greatest achievement is "the introduction of the concepts of sense and value into philosophy" [4]. Here the "concept of sense" is Nietzsche's art of interpretation, the weighing of force which renders sense to a phenomenon. Nietzsche in introducing sense and force into the realm of philosophy is actually presenting Perspectivism as an alternative to the metaphysical tradition of dialectical reasoning long since Plato. With the concept of sense and force, Perspectivism is a bold challenge to the traditional philosophy of binary opposition and a new critique with plurality as its cornerstone. Thus sense and value is, in Deleuze's eyes, "Nietzsche's most general project" [4] amidst all the grandeur and splendor he has ever presented us.

Sense is in no way the simple response to a thing, but rather it is more like the perception of it. According to Deleuze, sense is a plural notion as "[t]he same object, the same phenomenon, changes sense depending on the force which appropriates it" [4]. However, sense itself is not identifiable if "we do not know the force which appropriates the thing, which exploits it, which takes possession

of it or is expressed in it” [4]. Thus sense and force should never be understood separately, they are, so to speak, an organic unity.

Force “takes possession of” a thing and therefore influences our expression of it and the sense we make out of this thing is consequently differentiated. In this way, sense is always already predefined by force. And Deleuze insightfully locates this predetermination in their relationship: “A thing has as many senses as there are forces capable of taking possession of it”[4]. Accordingly, force is also “expressed” in a thing as we make sense out of it. In this way, force is what comes into being when sense is in articulation.

Briefly speaking, Perspectivism is the philosophy of viewing one object or phenomenon from plural perspectives, of making correlations between each sense and force from every unique perspective. Force influences and determines our sense of an object or a phenomenon, and sense in articulation presents force. Interpretation is the figuring out of force which gives sense to a thing. Each interpretation is generated from a unique perspective. And sense, force, interpretation, they are all plural in essence.

3. Anse’s Perspective of Self-Centeredness

Anse Bundren, the father and the nominal head of the Bundrens, is self-centered from the beginning till the end throughout the journey of Addie Bundren’s burial. And he is the only one among the whole family who ends up in Jefferson, the final destination of the long trek, to have actually achieved something without suffering the slightest loss.

Anse’s sense of the event of Addie’s burial is that of a perfect opportunity to gain something, a set of false teeth in minimum and a new wife in maximum. His sense of the burial as a means to satisfy his desire for the set of false teeth is best disclosed in the novel as Anse famously says, “But now I can get them teeth”[5]. Here the journey has already begun, and the Bundrens are at the Samson residence, far from their final destination. Anse, the co-enforcer of the trek (another enforcer is Addie, though dead already) sees the journey not in itself a means to bring Addie, his wife, to rest peacefully in the ground but blatantly he claims it as an excuse to buy himself a set of false teeth which he long covets. And we can see that Anse’s mind is tenaciously set on it, and it is verifiable to say that Anse has always longed for it, as he mutters to himself in the same passage “But it’s a long wait, seems like. It’s bad that a fellow must earn the reward of his right-doing by flouting himself and his dead” [5]98. Anse’s perception of the journey is thus centered on the reward he can acquire. Now that Addie is to be buried far away, and Anse has the trek as his perfect excuse for securing his false teeth, which is only available in town, and Addie in her will has made her burial a convenience for him.

The teeth is, as a matter of fact, not only an object which Anse seeks to secure as his reward after all the obstacles of the journey (not Anse’s, so to speak, but his children’s and neighbors’), but also an indispensable symbol intimately relating to his perception of the entire journey. The teeth is meant to chew, to grind, to eat up food, and just like the teeth, Anse bites on and devours anything and everything he comes across. In radical opposition to the role of father, whose duty is to provide for the family, Anse is the father who parasitically lives on his family as well as his neighbors, and he alone profits from the burial. While Cash loses his leg, Darl his sanity, Jewel his horse, Dewey Dell her money for abortion and her only opportunity to rid the fetus off her, Vardaman his mother and brother, Anse alone gets his long coveted set of false teeth with no suffering.

The journey, as it goes on, in Anse’s eyes, is thus an event in which he could have a taste of what he longs to bite. And in *As I Lay Dying*, a set of false teeth is far from Anse’s sole reward because he also seeks a replacement of Addie, as Anse closes the novel with a skull-crushing finale: “Meet Mrs. Bundren” [5]. Here Anse is introducing his newly-acquired wife to Cash, Jewel, Dewey Dell and Vardaman as they are preparing for their journey home at the end of the novel. And Addie, the children’s mother, has just been buried in the ground. This finale of *As I Lay Dying* alone illustrates that the journey, or more specifically, Anse’s perception of the journey, is not essentially about Addie, and it further justifies the argument about Anse’s sense of Addie’s burial. To Anse, Addie is primarily his Mrs. Bundren, a woman to give birth to his children, then an individual of her

uniqueness. As long as there is a Mrs. Bundren, Addie or no Addie, it does not matter. The moment Addie is buried is the moment Anse erases her out of his life.

Furthermore, Anse's lack of hesitation in borrowing spades to dig Addie's grave drastically contrasts his paralysis. Earlier in the novel, Anse shows a profound inertness and a strong indecisiveness in action, which correlates his own philosophy of life in which something as stasis and paralyzed as a tree or a man is favored over the mobile and flexible:

Durn that road...When [the Lord] 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 [5].

However, in the spade-borrowing scene, Anse displays, perhaps even unconscious to himself, a swiftness in action and resoluteness in decision, as even when Jewel is willing to fetch the spade for him Anse is motivated to get them without suffering one second to be wasted, and in Cash's narration, "[b]ut pa didn't stop. 'I reckon we can get a spade,' he said. 'I reckon there are Christians here'" [5]. It is based on Anse's abnormally quickness and willingness of action that Elizabeth M. Kerr points out, "[T]he bride was an object of the quest, not just a happy coincidence" [6]. It is thus justifiable to say that even before the Bundrens hit the road Anse's mind is already set on getting himself a new wife, as Addie lies dying on her bed and someone must replace her once she dies because Anse needs a Mrs. Bundren who would cook food for him to consume. Though literally Anse does fulfill his promise to bury Addie in Jefferson with her people, to Anse, there is no emotional bond between them. And the journey is not only an excuse for his getting a set of false teeth but more importantly an occasion in which he could secure a surrogate for Addie.

Before the journey even begins, Anse mutters to Darl and Jewel that their mom would not wait for them and that "[s]he'll want to start right away. I know her. I promised her I'd keep the team here and ready, and she's counting on it" [5]14. As a matter of fact, it is Anse who cannot wait to start the trek to Jefferson, and it is actually Anse, not Addie, who is counting on the journey, as Anse is counting on the prizes the journey promises him. Similarly when the Bundrens are crossing the ford, as Vernon Tull, the neighbor who confesses that he has already helped Anse too much to quit, suggests that they must circumvent the land in order to get across the tiding water, Anse mumbles, "It ain't no luck in turning back" [5]. Here again Anse could not wait, not even for the sake of the safety of the entire crew, as Tull observes that Anse is "[b]ent on it" [5]. Anse stands where he is, so close to what he seeks, and so sure that he could stand no further delay of the journey to to his rewards.

From the above analysis, Anse's sense of the burial of Addie is centered neither on Addie nor on his role as father in the Bundren family. He perceives it as a perfect means by which he could secure something of use only to himself. And apart from the set of false teeth he covets not only does Anse successfully replace Addie with a nameless surrogate but also he, in order to get what he covets more quickly, even shows profound reluctance to threaten the journey with the slightest delay. Thus Anse, through the articulation of his sense of the journey, reveals himself as, according to Edmonde L. Volpe, "a self-centered, callous person" [7], who is totally immune to the death of his own wife, as all he cares about is himself and himself alone.

And Anse's sense of the journey as a perfect opportunity to secure something as his rewards is profoundly influenced and determined by his self-centeredness, which magnificently illustrates itself throughout *As I Lay Dying*, for instance, early at the very beginning of his first interior monologue: "I do the best I can, much as I can get my mind on anything, but darn them boys" [5]. Here Anse is justifying his deeds and at the same time condemning the impotence of his children. It is how Anse sees of himself, of his children, and because this statement of his is addressed to no other person other than himself, it seems he really believes what he is saying. Later in the book, when Cash breaks his leg when crossing the river, Anse again justifies himself at the first chance he gets, "Fore God, I do the best that ere a man"[5]. Ironically, Anse does not do the best, as Darl says that he never sees a sweat stain on Anse's shirt, which means seldom does Anse work at all. Anse, in his constant self-justification, displays his unwillingness to take any blame or responsibility upon himself. In other words, Anse sees himself as always right, and if there is someone to blame,

whoever it is, that person is definitely not him. Here, immune not only to the death of his wife but also to the slightest blame or responsibility, Anse's selfishness surfaces. Anse's declaration of his potency goes side by side with him voicing his independence, refusing all offers of food and shelter made along the road to Jefferson, as he never misses an opportunity to insist that he would not discommode his neighbors or be beholden to them. And according to Dewey Dell, "[Anse] has always been too busy letting neighbors do for him and find out" [5], and we also hear from Vernon Tull, "Like most folks around here, I done help him so much already I can't quit now" [5]. Thus, in contrast to Professor Volpe's point that "[Anse] displays an independence and fortitude that surprise his neighbors" [7], "Anse is the selfish man who has a lifetime habit of leaning on other people" [8]. Anse's independence is only a sense of honor which he enjoys, because he knows that it would not cost him a dime, and he has his children and neighbors do everything for him. Thus Anse's independence is, as how he perceives the burial of his wife, built on what he could gain (a feeling of supremacy) and what it would cost him (nothing). It is from his self-centeredness, from his approaching everything from an emperor-like position in which he alone is always justifiable and in which everything is measured by costs and gains that Anse, in his repetition of mumblings and mutterings, gives us an outcry of his potency and independence. Anse is selfish to such an extent that not only he sees to his rewards but also he suffers literally nothing that costs him.

When Addie is dying on her sickbed, Anse silently begrudges her for "[m]aking [him] pay for" [5] Dr. Peabody's treating. And according to Darl it is because "[p]a didn't want to spend the money without it was needful" [5]. Once it does cost Anse, he shows profound reluctance and starts his ineffectual mumblings. Later when the Bundrens are finally in Jefferson prepared to bury Addie, Anse would not even buy a spade, because it surely would cost him. And he definitely begrudges Addie for the trouble, as Darl taunts him "Do you begrudge her it?" [5]. It is out of self-centeredness that Anse states his potency and independence and it is also out of his selfishness that he denies the treatment from Dr. Peabody and even the cost of a spade.

However, Anse's self-centeredness is best pictured in the scenes where, in raging cruelty, he steals from his children, devouring whatever it is left of them. After crossing the churning water, Anse, in the name of getting a new team, trades his children's belongings with Flem Snope, and he does it without even consulting his kids. First he uses up Cash's money, which Cash aims to buy the talking machine. At the same time, he trades Jewel's beloved horse, and before he tells Jewel about it, he has already begun to justify himself, "I thought that if I could go without food, my sons could do without riding" [5]. Here Anse sacrifices his children (the money and the horse are all that Cash and Jewel have) and instead of feeling the slightest guilt he conveniently denies any blame or responsibility upon himself. And we should always keep in mind that the reason he needs a new team of wagon and mules so badly is not so much in bringing Addie to rest in peace but rather in getting his false teeth and new wife. So Anse, to get what he wants, would consume anything and everything on his path, even his own blood. And just when Samson tries to offer some timely help, Anse replies with his declaration of independence. Here Anse radically contradicts himself, as at the very same moment he steals from his children and he still believes he is, in his own words, "beholden to no one".

Another fine example is when Anse takes away Dewey Dell's abortion money which Lefe, her beau, gives her. When Dewey Dell, in dire desperation, tells her father, "If you take it you are a thief", Anse cries out: "I have fed you and sheltered you. I give you love and care, yet my own daughter, the daughter of my dead wife, calls me a thief over her mother's grave"[5]. Here Anse upgrades from stealing directly to robbing, and like always, he covers it with perfect self-justification. In order to get something of use only to himself, not only does he sacrifice his children, but also at the very same time shielding himself from any possible accusations, and he does it even in the name of his dead wife, Addie. Therefore, if it does not do justice to Anse in saying that "[he] is one of Faulkner's most accomplished villains" [8], it absolutely does if we say that he is one of the most self-centered characters created by Faulkner. Also, judging from his thickness of skin in his using the name of his not-long-ago dead wife to shield himself from blame as well as guilt, it is justifiable to say that he belongs to the most hypocritical characters under the

pen of Faulkner.

In the end of *As I Lay Dying*, Anse, in denying his responsibility and blame on the event of burning Gillespie's barn, even prefers sending Darl to an asylum than dealing with the law suit and paying for the damaged property. Throughout the novel, as is argued by William H. Rueckert, "[Anse] neither sweats nor suffers" [9], he alone gets what he covets, by stealing from and robbing his own blood. Returning, he gets a new set of teeth and a new wife to cook food for him to consume. As for his kids, Cash has to live with his leg sawed off, with no money to purchase his talking machine; Jewel separated from his horse; Darl deprived of his freedom and sanity; Vardaman taken away from both his mother and brother for the rest of his life; and Dewey Dell confiscated of her abortion money. Anse, the father whose duty is to provide, taking an interest only upon himself, devours everything that is left of his children, and by the end of *As I Lay Dying* he actually has already consumed all that is precious to his children. In this sense, Anse renders Addie's revenge, which is the very promise to bury her in Jefferson she inflicted upon him, utterly ineffectual, as Anse should be the prime victim of her vengeance. Anse is, in Addie's comment, "a significant shape profoundly without life like an empty doorframe" [5], because "he is faithful only to the literal word" [9], not deeds. It is under the literal promise that the journey of the burial is undertaken and continued, and it is shrouded perfectly in mere words, built solidly upon his self-centeredness in its most extreme manifestation, that Anse participates in this trek: his eagerness to reach the destination (in the name of Addie), his unwillingness to pay for any costs (with excuses), his declaration of potency (with self-justification) and refusing of timely help (in boasting his independence), evens sacrificing his own children.

From the above analysis, Anse's self-centeredness, together with his hypocrisy which frequently goes hand in hand with it, is not only expressed through his sense of the burial of Addie Bundren, which according to him is a perfect timing to secure his own rewards, as is illustrated by how his mind tenaciously sets on himself and something of use only to him, but also, in the realm of Nietzschean Perspectivism, it is the force which appropriates every event and object he comes across in *As I Lay Dying*. Anse's self-centeredness is thus the force "which appropriates..., which exploits..., which takes possession..." [4] of his sense of the burial of Addie, as it is precisely based on his self-centeredness that Anse perceives the reality of Addie's burial as concerning exclusively to his own gains as well as the evaded costs. Anse from his unique perspective makes his interpretation of the reality of Addie's burial, which is his sense of it as a hunting trip aimed for his long coveted prizes rendered by the force of extreme self-centeredness.

4. Conclusion

This research has presented Anse Bundren's perspective on the event of Addie Bundren's death and burial. Anse, under his perspective, makes an interpretation of the event in which the force that appropriates the event determines his sense of it: Anse's is that of a task to get over with which is determined by self-centeredness; As Nietzsche's Perspectivism upholds each version of truth in the eyes of every potential interpreter, Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* legalizes all its characters' sense of the burying journey of Addie Bundren. More significantly, Faulkner, in his simultaneity of various narrative consciousnesses, further discloses "the absurd and the distorted in the supposedly normal" [2]. While Nietzsche, in reevaluation of existing values, wages war against "the 'slave mentality' which is Philistine, resentful, uncreative" [2], Faulkner mercilessly thrashes the philistine personified by Anse in the old southern convention. Therefore, this research concludes that Anse's perspective in *As I Lay Dying* is Faulkner's literary reflection of his philosophical stance upon the critical thinking of Perspectivism. As no perspective in *As I Lay Dying* is superior or inferior than any of the others, not even one that is as self-centeredness and philistine as that of Anse's.

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