

**THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN OBSOLESCENCE AND NOVELTY IN
WILLIAM FAULKNER'S "ROSE FOR EMILY" (ON THE EXAMPLE OF
NORTH AND SOUTH TRADITIONS)**

Umrzaqov Islomjon Isroilovich*

*Doctoral Student,
Namangan State University,
UZBEKISTAN

Email id: islom.umrzakov@mail.ru

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ABSTRACT

In his story, William Faulkner tries to masterfully portray the period of the Civil War and the post-war events that took place in the southern states of America. This article provides an artistic analysis of the reflection of the struggle between North and South through the depiction of characters and episodes of the story.

KEYWORDS: *Symbol, The South, Obsolescence And The Novelty, New Society, Traditions Of The Past, The South's Past, Contradictions Between North And South, Figurative, An Allegorical Title, A Sacred Concept*

INTRODUCTION

In his story "Rose for Emily", Faulkner describes the struggle between the old and new regimes of the South. The story was published in 1930, and the events in it took place in Mississippi, a South that was experiencing change at that time. The story begins with the death of Miss Emily, and here the writer likens her to a "fallen goddess." This description is also a clear indication that Miss Emily is a symbol of the South's past. Even in later episodes of the story, the past of the South is always reminded of the reader. For example:

And now Miss Emily had gone to join the representatives of those august names where they lay in the cedar-bemused cemetery among the ranked and anonymous graves of Union and Confederate soldiers who fell at the battle of Jefferson [1, p119].

In the example above, the author points out that the last representative of the old society was also sent to those who fought for the traditions and way of life of the South, which indicates the beginning of a new era. The next sentence in the story sounds like a continuation of the same current thought:

Alive, Miss Emily had been a tradition, a duty, and a care;...[1, p.119].

From almost every line of the story one can see the contrasts between the obsolescence and the novelty:

When the next generation, with its more modern ideas, became mayors and aldermen, this arrangement created some little dissatisfaction [1, p.120].

As can be seen from the passage above, the city is now ruled by the people of the new era. They live in a new society, based on new procedures. However, there are still stubborn people who are stuck in their shells, unwilling to accept the news, firmly attached to the events and traditions of the past. This is clearly seen from the conversation of the employees of the city municipality with Miss Emily:

Her voice was dry and cold. "I have no taxes in Jefferson. Colonel Sartoris explained it to me. Perhaps one of you can gain access to the city records and satisfy yourselves."

–"But we have. We are the city authorities, Miss Emily. Didn't you get a notice from the sheriff, signed by him?"

–"I received a paper, yes," Miss Emily said. "Perhaps he considers himself the sheriff ... I have no taxes in Jefferson."

– "But there is nothing on the books to show that, you see. We must go by the..."

–"See Colonel Sartoris. I have no taxes in Jefferson."

*"See Colonel Sartoris." (Colonel Sartoris had been dead almost ten years.)***[1, p.121].**

In the story, Colonel Sartoris is a symbol of the South's past lifestyle, rules, society, and traditions. At the end of the dialogue, the writer notes as a reminder to readers that it has been at least a decade since these rules and regulations were abolished. However, people like Miss Emily, who still did not want to admit defeat in the war from the North, and who did not give up the old traditions of the South, continued to ignore the outdated rules of the past. Although, Miss Emily is well aware that it has been years since Colonel Sartoris died, Miss Emily is urging city officials to contact him.

The contradictions between North and South are reflected as a major issue from the beginning to the end of the story. In the story, Miss Emily, a stubborn, old-fashioned supporter of the South, is confronted with a new society, as well as a yankee from the North, Homer Barron. **[2]** The fact that the southerners ignored and hated the northerners at that time can also be seen from the content of some passages. For example:

*... "Of course a Grierson would not think seriously of a Northerner, a day laborer" **[1, p.124].***

The main idea of the story is that, Emily Grierson can't accept the news and her inability to adapt to change. **[3]** Miss Emily, left with her old views in the past, living in her own fantasy world, did not want to admit the changes:

–"But we have. We are the city authorities, Miss Emily. Didn't you get a notice from the sheriff, signed by him?"

*–"I received a paper, yes," Miss Emily said. "Perhaps he considers himself the sheriff ... I have no taxes in Jefferson" **[1, p.121].***

As can be seen from the passage, Ms. Emily even demonstrates that she does not recognize the law enforcement officer - the sheriff, and at the same time ignores the representatives from the city municipality. She also refuses to pay taxes in defiance of the laws of the new society. **[4]**

However, it would be wrong to say that Faulkner completely rejected the old views. As the name of the work suggests, the writer is in a sense bowing to Emily Grierson, who remained faithful to

the traditions of the South and did not give up his views and beliefs. The author points out that the name of the story is figurative. "The title was an allegorical title; the meaning was, here was a woman who has had a tragedy, an irrevocable tragedy and nothing could be done about it, and I pitied her and this was a salute ... to a woman you would hand a rose". [5]

Miss Emily's tragedy was greater than the tragedy of the individual - the tragedy of society. The beliefs and traditions she practices have been a way of life formed in the southern American states for centuries, and the complex process of abandoning such views, infused with ancestral teachings and upbringing, is inevitable. [6]

Her stubbornness in not giving the body to people for a few days after his father's death is also somewhat figurative, describing his inability to break away from the old traditions in the image of the father:

She did that for three days, with the ministers calling on her, and the doctors, trying to persuade her to let them dispose of the body. Just as they were about to resort to law and force, she broke down, and they buried her father quickly [1, p.123-124].

But the rules of the new society, the spiritual life, were not in a state of praise either. [7] While the image of Homer Barron depicts the spiritual life of the northerners, in several places the work depicts his lack of passion for traditions and beliefs:

When she had first begun to be seen with Homer Barron, we had said, "She will marry him." Then we said, "She will persuade him yet," because Homer himself had remarked he liked men, and it was known that he drank with the younger men in the Elks 'Club that he was not a marrying man [1, p.126].

The passage shows that for Homer Barron, unlike Emily Grierson, family is not a sacred concept. Although there was a feeling of love between Homer and Emily, their mere meetings were not an acceptable option for Emily. [8] This is mainly because; the customs of the South did not allow it. Despite the construction of a new society, the elders were still adherents of old traditions and customs:

...older people, who said that even grief could not cause a real lady to forget noblesse oblige without calling it noblesse oblige, ...[1, p.124-125].

They thought that the issue of Miss Emily's dignity should be above all else. [9] With the beginning of a new era, the spiritual and moral rules of the South were the mainstays of society:

... some of the ladies began to say that it was a disgrace to the town and a bad example to the young people[1, p.126].

This process was also known to Emily. That is why he takes the issue of marriage seriously:

... that Miss Emily had been to the jeweler's and ordered aman's toilet set in silver, with the letters H. B. on each piece. Two days later we learned that she had bought a complete outfit of men's clothing, including a nightshirt...[1, p.127].

In conclusion, William Faulkner always reminds the reader of the past of the South in this story, that is, in the words of the author, the protagonist of this story is the image of a woman loyal to the beliefs and traditions formed over the centuries in the southern states of America. [10] The

rejection of any renewal in society brought about by the northerners after the Civil War was a social tragedy in the image of this heroic woman.

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