

**People's Democratic and Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Departement of English**



**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For a Master's Degree in English
Domaine: Lettres et Langues étrangères
Filière: Langue Anglaise
Spécialité: Littérature Générale et Comparée**

Title

**Life and Death in William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*
(1930) and Kamel Daoud's *Zabor ou les Psaumes* (2017)**

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Academic Year: 2019/2020

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Acknowledgements

First, we would like to express our special thanks and gratitude to our supervisor Dr. Fadhila BOUTOUCHENT for her guidance and encouragements, which helped us to complete and fulfil this work. We would like also to express our sincere gratitude to all our teachers, especially Pr. Dalila AREZKI, Pr. Amar GUENDOUI and Dr.Sadia SEDDIKI for their constant advice all along the two years of our Master studies.

Dedication

*We dedicate this work to our dear **parents**.*

Abstract

This dissertation attempts to depict the universal theme of “life and death” in William Faulkner’s *As I Lay Dying* (1930) and Kamel Daoud’s *Zabor ou les Psaumes* (2017). It studies how the two authors tackled this theme from different perspectives to refer to social, political and religious issues. The analysis in the study relied on some theoretical concepts, mainly Northrop Frye’s theory of Myth, discussed in *The Anatomy of Criticism* 1957, and Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalytic concept of the ‘Oedipus Complex’. This dissertation consists of three chapters. The first chapter explores the characters’ journey of life and death through both the physical quest of the Bundrens in *As I Lay Dying* and the spiritual quest of Zabor in *Zabor ou les Psaumes* using Frye’s “mythos of summer: Romance”. Both Faulkner and Daoud rely on myth to prove the eternity of texts. The second chapter deals with complex parents -son(s) relationships. In this part, we deduce that the characters of the two novels have complex relationships with their parents through exploring the themes of rivalry and jealousy using the Freudian concepts: “Oedipus complex and sibling rivalry” to show how the two authors displace the family problems to refer to the social problems of their communities. The last chapter highlights how the two authors have used irony to show the hypocrisy of many believers during the American Great Depression and the Algerian ‘Black Decade’, showing the gape between the characters’ appearances and behaviours and their deeds.

Key words:

Life, death, myth, parents-son relationships, faith.

I-General Introduction

Death is a major issue tackled by many writers and philosophers, and discovering the secrets of immortality to escape death has become a subject of many myths. According to the ancient Greeks, there are many theories about the origin of the world. However, many agreed that the chaos, which is a confused mass of shapeless elements, is the origin of the creation of the world.¹ These elements consolidated and resolved themselves into two extensively different materials. The first is the lighter part, which soared and hovered on high and shaped the sky while the second is a solid mass that is underneath the sky. As a consequent, the two first primeval deities of the Greeks, Uranus and Gaea came into existence.² Whereas Uranus is the personification of the light and air of heaven, Gaea represents the Goddess of the earth and the primal Greek Mother Goddess. They united in a marriage and gave birth to Oceanus, “the primordial Titan god of the great, earth-encircling River Okeanos, font of all of the earth's fresh-water - rivers, wells, springs and rain-clouds.”³ In addition to Gaea, Uranus has other consorts, such as Hestia, Nyx, Hemera and Clymene. In the Greek poetry, Nyx was the mother of everything mysterious and inexplicable, such as death, dreams and sleep.⁴ She gives birth to Thanatos and Hypnus. In ancient myths, Thanatos stands for the God of death in contrast to Phanes, who is the God of life.

According to the sacred books (Old Testament, New Testament and the Quran), God has created the Universe in seven days. Since God is the Creator of the Universe, people are supposed to worship him. Although people have faith in God, they commit sins that God has forbidden, “For by Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him”. (Colossian 1:6) Therefore, the admiration in God’s creation is among the ways of atonement. The Bible and the Quran are among the sacred books revealed by God for people’s redemption. The verses of the two holy books tell and describe how and why human

beings came into existence. God has created human beings to live, die, then to be judged in the resurrection day; hence, life and death are unavoidable. Death is defined as the separation of the soul from the earthly body.⁵ Both the Bible and the Quran speak about vice and virtue during life, and they also emphasise much more on life after death. Although death is the end of the human being's earthly journey, it is also the beginning of a much longer journey in the afterlife. There is an agreement about the general resurrection at the end of time when all souls will have to render an account of what they have done and will be rewarded with heaven or hell.⁶ In the bible, the sinners will be punished for their sins in hell while God's believers will be rewarded by an eternal life in heaven. In the Quran, the Surah Al-Zilzal Ayat 6-8 show that the person's deeds will determine whether God will reward or punish him. It says:

يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصْدُرُ النَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا لِّيُرَوْا أَعْمَالُهُمْ
فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ
وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ

On that day mankind will come out in broken bands to be shown their deeds. Whoever has done an infinitesimal weight of good shall see it, and whoever has done an infinitesimal weight of evil shall see it too.⁷

Many texts reveal the history of the humanity and the different periods in which it went through. The American Civil war was among the bloodiest periods in the History of the United States of America. The war launched between the north and the south in 1861 and ended in 1865. The American Great Depression was another period of time that engendered enormous victims. During this period, many banks announced their bankruptcy due to the fall of the shares price. The economic crisis caused many social, political and religious problems that many American modernist writers tried to reflect in their works. One of them is William Faulkner, the founder fathers of the modern American literature. His works successfully depict the cultural, social, religious and economic issues of the American South. He portrays the issues of the South through one of his masterpieces entitled *As I Lay Dying* 1930. More importantly, this novel deals with the issue of life and death through the journey of the

Bundren family, who moves from Mississippi to Jefferson to bury the corpse of the main character Addie. In another geographical setting, The Algerian writer Kamel Daoud in *Zabor ou les Psaumes* takes his reader in a mythical journey told by Ismael, also called Zabor. In Aboukir village, Zabor undergoes a spiritual quest that started with an accident that changed his life. Daoud's *Zabor ou les Psaumes* relies on a sacred book "Zabur" to narrate the story of the main character Zabor, whom the discovery of reading and writing has metamorphosed him from an orphan boy to a self-made man. The novel presents a journey of life and death struggle since God has endowed him with the gift of repelling death. Moreover, the novel reflects the issues of the Algerian society since the independence, such as the hypocrisy of the fundamentalists during the 'Black Decade', which led to the deterioration of the country's economy, politics and religion.

Myth is an important source in literature. For Faulkner and Daoud, it was a source and a literary material to reflect on the American Southern society and the Algerian one through the characters' quests of life and death.

Review of Literature

Many scholars have dealt with the theme of life and death from a philosophical and theological perspective. The socioeconomic conditions during the Great Depression in America and the Black Decade in Algeria pushed many authors to expose the issues of the two societies throughout their works. During these periods, William Faulkner and Kamel Daoud witnessed death and decay, which they reflect in their writings. Faulkner's work is one of the masterpieces of the American literature. It has been studied much more than Daoud's work.

From a psychological perspective, Butchart, Liam C wrote an article entitled "*Death, Mourning and Human Selfishness: Faulkner's As I Lay Dying through a Freudian Lens*" (2015). In this article, Butchart states that the Freudian theory is crucial for analysing the

minds of the characters in order to impart a message on the human experience.⁹ He adds that Addie and Darl are the most complex characters within the novel since Darl does not undergo a normal mourning process after the death of his mother. He adds that Darl shows a number of psychological nuances because of the failure of his defence mechanisms: repression and rationality. Darl is the most mystic character within the novel, and his death obsession is due to the Gillespie barn burning for which he has been sent to asylum. Liam Butchart uses Hyatt Waggoner's arguments to explain the reasons behind Darl's uncertain identity in the wake of Addie's death, and draws an existential contemplation "Darl is concerned to establish the line between being and not-being."¹⁰

Deng Yunfei discusses parents and children relationship in her article *Motherless Children in As I Lay Dying ---Darl, Dewey Dell and Vardaman*. This article shows the importance of the parents since they are responsible for the normal psychological development of their children. However, in the novel, the characters are alienated from each other, and each one of them treats the other as a stranger due to the weak parents-children relationships. Addie Bundren is affected by her father's nihilism and pessimism, and this lead to her communication failure with her children:

Faulkner attaches great importance to the influence of parents on their children in the family. The inertness and emotional paralysis of the Bundrens' children in *As I Lay Dying* is attributed to their mother's neglect to them.¹¹

She classifies the Bundren children into two groups. The first group includes Dewey Dell, Vardaman and Darl while the other group comprises Cash and Jewel. The mother has negatively influenced the characters' personalities of the first group. Unlike other characters, Darl holds a complex relationship with his mother since his birth. His mother has a harmonious relationship with Cash whereas she treated Darl with coldness, and even she thinks, "The birth of Darl is a curse from the outset."¹² Even Darl does not consider his mother as being his, "I haven't got ere one."¹³ and "I cannot love my mother because I have

no mother”.¹⁴ Despite the fact that Darl denies his mother, his emotions towards her are mixtures of love and hatred, “a suppression of jealousy and rejection.”¹⁵ and “His devouring eyes, full of jealousy and bitterness, often follow Jewel, Addie’s favourite child.”¹⁶ Jewel is another essential character within the novel. Unlike Darl, Addie loves Jewel so much that she called him Jewel, which is derived from the word jewellery.

A master dissertation presented by Tarafi Adel entitled, “*Zabor ou les Psaumes de Kamel Daoud, une Ecriture à l’Intersection du Sacré et du Profane*” suggests that “an intertextual study of the text” is vital for studying Daoud’s novel. Therefore, he appeals to Julia Kristeva’s intertextuality that she defined, “Any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another.”¹⁷ It aims to analyse the interaction between “le sacré” and “le profane” since it raises the possibility of producing a literary text from God’s holy books. This research relies on the comparative method that will draw a parallel between the intertextual elements adduced in “*Zabor ou les Psaumes*”, and comparing them to the Prophet’s stories cited in God’s books. This dissertation analyses also trauma in the novel. First, through the various definitions given to the word trauma; then, through the analysis of the characters’ psychological trauma, which he explains:

Un traumatisme psychologique est par définition le résultat d’un événement choquant sur le psychisme. De nombreux types d’événements peuvent induire un choc émotionnel et perturber la personne qui les vit.¹⁸

The above quote shows that a psychological trauma is the result of a shocking event on the psyche. Many events can cause emotional shock and upset the person who is experiencing them. The researcher further explains that the reasons of such traumatism are due to events involving physical damage, which have mental effects. These effects make this person involuntarily relive almost the same emotions he witnessed.

Another critic of kamel Daoud’s *Zabor ou les Psaumes* (2017) presented by Ouali Fatima entitled “*Zabor ou les Psaumes de Kamel Daoud, une Réécriture des Mille et Une Nuits.*”

shows the similarities and the differences between Daoud's novel and *One Thousand and One Nights*. Throughout this study, the researcher highlights the most interrelated aspects between Scheherazade and Zabor. Relying on the intertextual relationship between the two, she explains that both characters possess a particular capacity of repelling death. While Zabor has a gift of repelling death via writing, Scheherazade also repels death through narration, "And if writing came into the world so universally, it is because it was a powerful means against death".¹⁹

Issue and Working Hypothesis

A large number of books, articles and thesis have explored Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* from different perspectives, whereas Kamel Daoud's *Zabor ou les Psaumes* is a recent work that received less criticism and less academic works. However, when reading some Algerian writers, we notice some affinities with some American authors. As Literature is an effective way to address the reader and denounce many social issues, we consider that Faulkner' and Daoud' selected works strikingly reflect the resistance of the Southerners and the Algerians against the social, political and religious problems of the American of the Great Depression and the Algerian 'Black Decade'. If Faulkner's literary reputation is well established, Daoud is struggling to establish it. Faulkner's novel has been widely compared to many Algerian Canons. However, this dissertation aims to compare Faulkner as one of the American literary canons to modern Algerian writer Kamel Daoud. This comparative study tries to show the struggle of the Algerian writer using universal themes to address both local and international audiences. The theme of life and death will be explored in both narratives and show how Daoud in *Zabor ou les Psaume*, like Faulkner in *As I Lay Dying*, takes his reader in a journey struggle against death to eternal life. Both authors use myth to denounce the issues of their societies and state the eternity of the texts and their authors through writing. Therefore, it is important to decipher whether death is the end of life or the beginning of life in the

afterworld. It is vital to highlight how kamel Daoud reappropriates the American style to discuss the universal theme of “life and death” to reflect the social, economic and religious issues of his society.

Methodological Outline

This dissertation studies Life and death in William Faulkner’s *As I Lay Dying* (1930) and kamel Daoud’s *Zabor ou les Psaumes* (2017). In order to explore this universal and philosophical theme in these novels, this dissertation is divided into four sections. The first will be devoted to a general introduction, which gives an overview about the issue raised and the second section will introduce the methods, such as Northrop Frye’s *Archetypal Criticism: The Mythos of Summer* developed in his book *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) and Sigmund Freud’s Psychoanalysis Concept of Oedipus Complex. The materials part will provide the summaries and the historical background of the two novels under study. The third section states the results of the research study. The discussion section contains three chapters. In the first chapter, we will explore the characters journey of life till death and from death to life in both works. The second chapter will study Parents - Son Relationships. The third chapter will analyse faith and religion from a historical perspective. Then we will conclude with a general conclusion to sum up the main points of the work.

End Notes

¹ Berens, *Myths and Legends of Ancient Greece and Rome* , 05.

² Ibid., 6.

³ Unknown, *Okeanos*. <https://www.theoi.com/Titan/TitanOkeanos.html>.

⁴ Berens, *Myths and Legends of Ancient Greece and Rome* , 120.

⁵ Terence, Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Maulawi Sher Ali,(translation versión of) Al Quran surah Az-Zilzal 99:6-8. 744.

⁸ Thomas C. Brickhouse and Lewis & Clark College, *A Matter of Life and Death in Socratic philosophy*, 155.

⁹ Butchart, Death, Mourning and Human Narcissism: Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* Through a Freudian Lens.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Deng Yunfei, *Motherless Children in As I Lay Dying ---Darl, Dewey Dell and Vardaman*, 75.

¹² Ibid., 76.

¹³ Ibid., 67.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Tarafi, *Zabor ou les psaumes* de Kamel Daoud, une écriture à l'intersection du sacré et du profane, 07.

¹⁸ Ibid., 20.

¹⁹ Fatima Ouali, *Zabor ou les psaumes* de Kamel Daoud, une Réécriture *des Mille et Une Nuits*, 43.

II. Methods and Materials

1-Theoretical Framework:

In order to analyse the theme of life and death in Faulkner's *As Lay Dying* and Daoud's *Zabor ou les Psaumes*, we are going to rely on Northrop Frye's theory of Myth to study the myth-quest of the characters. In addition, we are going to enhance our study through using the psychoanalysis theory by the Austrian neurologist Sigmund Freud.

1-a Northrop Frye's Theory of Myth

Many scholars have given different definitions to the word "Myth". The word myth comes from the Greek *mythos*, which means story or word. William Bascom's article "*The Forms of Folklore: Prose Narratives*" gives the definition of myth, "tales believed as true, usually sacred, set in the distant past or other worlds or parts of the world, and with extra-human, inhuman, or heroic characters. Such myths, often described as "cosmogonic," or "origin" myths, function to provide order or cosmology, based on "cosmic" from the Greek *kosmos* meaning order."¹ In 1890, the Scottish anthropologist James Frazer wrote a book entitled "*The Golden Bough*" in which he explained that fertility rites, human sacrifice, the dying god, and the scapegoat are common elements between the religious belief and the scientific thought. Moreover, he defines myth as, "A mistaken explanations of phenomena, whether of human life or of external nature."² The Golden Bough is among the first books that discussed myths. It has also influenced many literary critics, such as the Canadian scholar Northrop Frye.

Frye's book *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) contains four essays: "Historical Criticism," "Ethical Criticism," "Archetypal Criticism" and "Rhetorical Criticism." The theory of Myth is cited in the third essay of *The Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) under the title of *Archetypal Criticism: Theory of Myth*. Northrop Frye explains that all narratives are derived from myth and contain images that mirror the world. Archetype is a symbol, usually an image, which

recurs often enough in literature to be recognised as an element of one's literary experience as a whole.³ In the third essay, he explains that there are "two fundamental movements of narratives: a cyclical movement within the order of nature and the dialectical movement from that order into the apocalyptic world above."⁴

The word myth comes from the Greek *mythos*, which means a "tale, story". He identifies four types of mythos: "the mythos of spring", "the mythos of summer", "the mythos of autumn" and "the mythos of winter". Each mythos consists of six phases. It shares three stages with both the preceding mythos and the succeeding ones. This means that The first three phases of one mythos are always related to the first three of an adjacent mythos, but the relation is seen as occurring only within opposing halves of the major dialectic while the relation between the last three phases of any two mythoi occurs only within the same half of the innocence-experience dichotomy. In the third chapter of his essay, Frye introduces "the mythos of summer" also called "Romance", which is described as, "The romance is nearest of all literary forms to the wish-fulfillment dream, and for that reason it has socially a curiously paradoxical role."⁵ In addition, Frye further explains that plot is the most crucial element in analyzing the event sequence in romance:

The essential element of plot in romance is adventure, which means that romance is naturally a sequential and processional form, hence we know it better from fiction than from drama. At its most naive it is an endless form in which a central character who never develops or ages goes through one adventure after another until the author himself collapses.⁶

In Frye's theory, the hero goes in an adventure in order to achieve a specific purpose. He experiences many "minor ventures", which will construct the major adventure at the end of the journey. According to Frye, this main or climacteric adventure is the element that gives literary form to the romance, the quest.⁷ In the mythos of romance, Frye explains that the hero undergoes many phases in a long journey since he says, "the stage of the perilous journey and the preliminary minor adventures; the crucial struggle, usually some kind of battle in which

either the hero or his foe, or both, must die; and the exaltation of the hero”⁸ These three stages represent the rhythm of life: death, disappearance and revival. These stages correspond to the cyclic process of natural phenomenon. The first stage is the phase of conflict, which is called in Greek the “Agon”; the second one is the “pathos”, which means the death struggle. The third phase is the “anagorisis” or the discovery, which is also the stage of his recognition. In the last stage, the hero proves himself despite the fact that he does not survive the conflict.

1-b Sigmund Freud’s Psychoanalysis Theory: Oedipus Complex

Psychoanalysis as a scientific field emerged during the nineteenth century thanks to the study of the unconscious mind by the Austrian neurologist Sigmund Freud. The term has been first used in the 1890s to refer to a set of therapeutic techniques used to treat mental dysfunctions or disorders. In order to understand the human behaviours, it is vital to comprehend the apparatus of the mind. The human mind is divided into the conscious and unconscious. The unconscious is the key idea through which we are going to develop this theory since it represents the storehouse of the repressed unwanted and painful desires.

Repression is another Freudian key concept developed in *Studies in Hysteria* 1895, which is a masterpiece written by Freud in collaboration with Joseph Breuer. It is defined as, “An operation whereby the subject repels, or confines to the unconscious, a desire that cannot be satisfied because of the requirements of reality or of the conscience.”⁹

Freud suggests in his theory of personality that the psyche is divided into three parts: the “Id”, the “Ego” and the “Superego”.¹⁰ The “Id” is the instinctive part of the psyche. Every human being is born with some inherited components of personality, and this part responds directly to the desires, needs, urges that work on the pleasure principle. According to Freud, the “Ego” is ‘that part of the “Id” which has been modified by the direct influence of the external world.’¹¹ The superego develops at the age of three during the phallic stage of the

psychosexual development of the child. It contains all the morals and the values that have been transmitted from the society, specifically from the parents to the children.

Freud's work *the Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* 1905 analyses the infantile sexuality and the different areas of the body in which the libido is centered. The libido is a part of the "Id". Freud defined the libido as the energy that comes from drives or instincts that direct our behaviour. According to Freud, there are two types of drives: the life drive also called "Eros", and the death drive that Freud terms "Thanatos". While the life drive stands for impulses, which are related to emotions such as love, the death drive represents tear. However, in most cases the libido is understood as a set of sexual and instinctive drive towards something or someone. Even children witnessed the libido during their psychosexual development.

The psychological development in childhood depends on five psychosexual stages: oral, anal, phallic, latent and genital. The most important stage is the phallic. At the last phase of this stage, children experience the oedipal phase. This phase is the most complex as the child endures a conflict, which Freud calls the "Oedipus complex", inspired from the Greek mythology. *Oedipus Rex* is a tragic play written by the Greek playwright Sophocles. It tells the story of Oedipus who kills his father and marries his mother. Freud inspires from this Myth to explain how the parental relationships with their children could be widely complex. The child develops instinctive desire towards his mother, and becomes jealous from his father, whom he considers as being his rival.

In the latent stage, all of the Id's desires and drives are going to be repressed and sometimes sublimated towards accepted social needs thanks to some defence mechanisms. In some occasions, the repressed Oedipus complex in the unconscious during childhood reappears in adulthood in the form of other symptoms, which create other core issues. "It is

the fate of all of us, perhaps, to direct our first sexual impulses towards our mother and our first hatred and murderous wish against our father. Our dreams convince us that this is so.”¹²

As I Lay Dying and *Zabor ou les Psaumes* tell the mythical journey of the characters. Faulkner and Daoud rely on myth to mirror the social, economic and religious issues of their societies. Both authors inspired from myth to depict the struggle of life and death in their societies. In order to study the issue of life and death in the two novels, we will use Northrop Frye’s conception of Myth. Furthermore, we will enhance our study with some Freudian psychoanalytic concepts. The two theories are crucial for our study in order to explore the authors’ delineation of the theme of life and death from different perspectives.

2- Materials

2- a-The Authors’ Biographies

This part is devoted to the biography of the two authors and the background of their works. It is important to analyse the biographies of Faulkner and Daoud because they reveal the gloomy periods that the writers witnessed due to the religious fanaticism in the American and Algerian societies. The American Great Depression and the Algerian Black Decade inspire both Faulkner and Daoud to mirror the depressed events of the two periods through their novels. Both of Faulkner and Daoud raise many questions about the survival of the two societies in a deadly world.

- William Faulkner:

William Cuthbert Faulkner is one of the most remarkable American writers of the 20th century. He was born in New Albani, Mississippi, in 1897. He is also among the fonder fathers of the modernist movement in America; however, he is best known for his series of related novels known as the Yoknapatawpha Saga.

William Faulkner was named after his great-grand father William Clark Falkner, who is a legendary Confederate soldier, a prominent lawyer, railroad developer, and successful author. Like his grandfather, Faulkner wanted to fight in the First World War, but the war ended before he completed his military training. Although he failed to defend the South in the battlefield, he adopted writing as an effective way to record the history of the South. His novels and short stories analyse and discuss many issues, such as the Civil War, slavery and class conflicts. In 1924, he published collection of poems entitled *The Marble Faun* ¹³, and the printer, who set up William's first book, added the letter "u" to the spelling of the family name. Faulkner realised that his talent was for prose, even if he longed to be a poet. He stopped writing poetry and decided to start his career as a novelist via recording the American South History with a modernist style. In 1926, Faulkner began writing "*Flags in the Dust*", which has been published in 1927. In 1929, the novel *Sartoris* initiates a series of books set in the mythical Mississippi country of Yoknapatawpha, which is a "representation not only of southern experience but also of general human experience."¹⁴

The Sound and the Fury 1929 is the one of Faulkner's most favourite novels. The title is taken from a soliloquy in Shakespeare's play *Macbeth*: "Life is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."¹⁵ In 1930, Faulkner published his fourth novel entitled *As I Lay Dying*. He used the same setting as in his previous novels. *As I Lay Dying* was published during the American Great Depression. It pictures the harsh living conditions of the Americans during this period. The Bundren family mirrors the economic and social issues of the Southerners. Then, Faulkner continued his series of the Yoknapatawpha mythical country through these novels: *Light in August* 1932, *Absalom, Absalom!* 1936 and the collection of short stories *Go Down Moses* 1942. He attempts to define the Southern family structure and reveal about the real conflicting miscegenation between the blacks and the white.¹⁶

-Kamel Daoud

Kamel Daoud was born in Mesra in Mostaghanem in 1970. He is a writer, journalist and chronicler for *Le Quotidien d'Oran* since 1994. He wrote in the column "Raïna Raïkoun", which means "our opinion your opinion". He is raised in an illiterate family, except his father. Daoud studies mathematics, then literature in college. Through his readings of the French classics, he learned and mastered the French language. « En fait, je n'ai pas eu de maître: je suis l'enfant d'une bibliothèque désordonnée ».¹⁷ This quote reveals that Daoud achieved to learn and master the French language thanks to his readings. This mastery of the French language allowed him to express his ideas freely since he considers the Arabic language as a suffocating language. In an interview, he declares, "La langue arabe est piégée par le sacré, par les idéologies dominantes. On a fétichisé, politisé et idéologisé cette langue"¹⁸ In this quote, Daoud declares that the Arabic language has been used as an effective means to impose the doctrines, principles and beliefs on people. He has published collections of short stories and chronicles in Algeria. One of his most irritative articles published in *Le Quotidien d'Oran* entitled *Le Manifest "ou Quand la Bouche Crache sa Langue"* shows the importance of the language as a key element that determines the identity of the Algerians. People, who do not speak their own language when they address to themselves will not be able to grasp objects make reality bend to their desire, name, give a geography, to their history, and vice versa.¹⁹ Daoud's novels emphasise the importance of the language, which is a means of "liberation" rather than oppression. In 2000, he published *La Fable du Nain* (2003); then collections of short stories including *Minotaure* 504 selected for the Goncourt Prize for the news.

His first novel *Meursault Contre-Enquête* (2013) widely gained an international interest. In 2015, it has been adapted under the title *Meursault 19 at the 69th Avignon 20 festival*, at the Benoît-XII Theater. The novel was awarded the Goncourt Prize for the first novel in 2015.

In 2017, his second novel was published under the title *Zabor ou les Psaumes*. In an interview with *L'Orient le Jour*, he declares that this novel is more personal since his fictional character Zabor presents his childhood:

J'ai imaginé un personnage qui serait un peu la version fabuleuse de ma propre vie, un homme qui a foi en la littérature. Pour lui, l'écriture est la seule manière d'aller au-delà de la mort, qui peut perpétuer l'existence. Selon lui, cette éternité a une vertu : elle n'exige aucune prière. J'ajoute qu'elle ne promet pas non plus le paradis.²⁰

In this quote, Daoud claims that Zabor is a fictional character, who shares the same beliefs as him since he thinks that writing is the only way to fight death. He adds that having faith in literature guarantees eternity without any promise of paradise. In one of his interviews, Daoud declares that he has an intimate relationship with this novel because of many reasons. Hence, the main reason is the common name that both the Algerian writer kamel Daoud and the prophet Daoud share. In 2018, he published his last novel *Le Peintre dévorant la Femme*. It tells the story of an Arab who is invited to Paris to spend a night in the Picasso museum..

2- b The Historical Background of the Two Novels

-As I Lay Dying

In the 1900s, the American government adopted the “Laissez faire” system, which limited the interference of the government in business.²¹ This policy prompted the American economy as much as possible. However, the Age of prosperity during the 1920s ended with the collapse of the American shares prices. The Wall Street Crash led to a severe economic crisis known as the “Great Depression”, which lasted from 1929 to 1939. This depression changed the lifestyle of the Americans and caused the spread of many social and economic problems, such as bank failures and high unemployment rates. By the end of 1931, nearly eight million of Americans were out of work.²² In the late of the 1930s, the Great Depression was weakening thanks to the president’s Roosevelt’s New Deal economic policies, which helped the Americans to recover from the crisis. This led to many other problems such as,

“the Religious Depression”. William Faulkner was among the writers, who witnessed this period. He successfully discussed the problems of the Americans relying on the Southern setting. This period also saw the “Dust Bowl”, which is a period of severe storms that destructed the southerners’ harvests. The rise of migration, poverty and starvation made this period an era of disillusionment. Faulkner aims to convey an aesthetic and ideological response to the anxieties of the Southerners through the series of Yoknapatawpha setting.

Zabor ou les Psaumes

Kamel Daoud was among the Algerian authors and journalists who witnessed the Black Decade in Algeria. The period from 1990 until 2000 was a tragic decade for the Algerians; the country was facing social, economic, and political issues. After the fall of the oil’s price in 1986, Algeria encountered many social and economic struggles, such as shortage and the rise of the amount of the unemployment, which led to the increase of poverty.

In October 1988, there were protests against the president Chadli Bendjedid, and many Islamists were present in the event. Therefore, on February 23, 1989, the president responded to the populace’s claims by reforming the constitution and gave the opportunity to the multiparty. The new constitution gave birth to many political parties among them The Islamic Salvation Front, which scored significant victories in the 1990 municipal elections and become one of the major parties in 1991 “The Islamic Salvation Front (Front Islamique du Salut, FIS) soon proved itself the best organized and most effective opposition party”²³. Then, the government interrupted the second round of the presidential election and the army purchased the Islamists. These events launched a civil war between the army and the Islamists. As a result, those Islamists became violent, and the civil war outbreak in 1993 with the spread of terrorism (FIS and GIA): terrorists tortured many citizens, and there were exterminations. The country endured the war from 1993 to 2000 leaded by those Islamists, who killed hundreds of Algerians in the name of Allah.

The Black Decade is characterized by a strength struggle for survival under the threat of those violent Islamists. During these depressing events, Daoud was a journalist in *LE QUOTIDIEN D'ORAN* he eye witnessed this tragic period. Therefore, he decided to show the influence of this civil war on people, and how the Algerians viewed the Islam after this period.

2- c- The Summary of the Two Novels

-The Summary of *As I Lay Dying*

As I Lay Dying (1930) reports the arduous journey of the members of the Bundren family, who travel from their farm in Yoknapatawpha, which is a fictional rural country in Mississippi to Jefferson to bury the corpse of Addie Bundren.

the story's main character Addie Bundren was laying on her bed for her last days. During these days, Cash is building his mother's coffin. While Jewel and Darl go to the town for a load to gain some pennies, Addie Bundren dies before they return. Among the closest Bundren's neighbours who help, the family before Addie passed way are Cora Tull and Vernon Tull. Cora Keeps Company to Addie passed away. However, after the death of Addie, her husband –Anse Bundren- and her five children - Cash, Darl, Vardaman, Dewey Dell and Jewel - must pass through a journey to transport her corpse to her family cemetery because of a promise that Anse has made to his wife before she passed away. However, every character joins this journey for a particular personal goal to be completed. Anse Bundren insists on the importance of completing Addie's last wish, just for purchasing a new set of false teeth. Dewey Dell is pregnant, and she wants to get a medicine for abortion after she had a relationship with her beloved Lave. Cash went through this journey for more personal reasons since he wanted to buy a gramophone. This journey is the climax of the characters' reactions that reveal the hidden reasons that push each one of them to travel in the wagon.

In the first eight miles of their journey, a local family helps the Bundrens and receives them to spend the night with them. Due to a severe storm, most of the bridges have been flooded. However, The Bundrens find one near Vernon Tull's farm. While Anse, Dewey Dell, Verdaman and Vernon Tull cross through the remains of the bridge, Cash and Darl will lead the wagon. The next day, Anse purchases Jewel's horse to get a group of mules. The family continues to the town of Mattson where Dewey Dell attempts to obtain a drug that will abort her unwanted pregnancy. They arrive in Jefferson the next day. They spend the last night of their journey in a farm belonging to Mr. Gillespie. During the night, Darl sets fire to the barn and Jewel's back is burned while he is rescuing the coffin from the flames. At the end, Darl has been sent to asylum. Faulkner's novel pictures the issues American society during this era.

-The Summary of *Zabor ou les Psaumes*

Zabor ou Les Psaumes (2017) is a novel written by the Algerian writer Kamel Daoud. The story sets in the village of Aboukir where the main character Zabor goes through a physical and spiritual journey. In this journey, Zabor was introduced to the French language, which contributed to his discovery of the tales *One Thousand and One Nights* and *Robinson Crusoe* that metamorphosed him from an introverted adolescent into a self-confident man.

Zabor defines his name is born from the sound caused by the collision of my poor head against a stony ground when I was violently pushed back by my half-brother. Zabor states that he has realised his secret name when his half-brother Abdel pushed him from the stony buttom.

Because of this accident, Hadj Brahim -who is Zabor's father- denied and abandoned Zabor for the second time since he abjured him when he repudiated his mother -who is his first wife-. In order to drive him away from his family, he bought a colonial house in the village below. In the new house, the younger sister of Hadj Brahim, Hadjer, took care of

Zabor. Besides, Hadjer took care of her father Hadj Hbib, who is abandoned by his onliest son Hadj Brahim whom second wife claimed his departure with that of Hadjer and Zabor from the house after the accident of the stony buttom. *Zabor ou les Psaumes (2017)* narrates the story of an orphan boy who discovers his gift of repelling death. However, the Imams, the reciters of the sacred book (Quran) and the faithfuls of God neither appreciated nor accepted his gift. Through reading and writing, he was introduced to “the voyage and sex” and this contributed to his liberation.

Unlike Aboukir villagers, Zabor spends most of his days sleeping and his nights roaming in the village. When the villagers believed in Zabors’ gift, they called upon him to write a story that will delay the death of a family member. Zabor’s only interests seem to be collecting books and writing texts that are incomprehensible to most of the villagers, who treat him with pity or disgust unless they need his magical writing skills, which have saved and prolonged the lives of many.

End Notes

¹ Magoulick, *What is Myth?* <https://faculty.gcsu.edu/custom-website/mary-magoulick/defmyth.htm>

² Fontenrose, *The Ritual Theory of Myth*, 01.

³ *Archetypal Criticism*, 1.

⁴ Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History*, 297.

⁵ Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, 186.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, 187.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Thuraschwell, *Sigmund Freud*, 21.

¹⁰ Mcleod, *Id, ego and superego*. <https://www.simplypsychology.org/psyche.html>

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Thuraschwell, *Sigmund Freud*, 47.

¹³ Ronald Walker, *Overview of William Faulkner*, 02.

¹⁴ Ibid., 5.

¹⁵ *Analysed by section The Sound and The Fury*, 1.

¹⁶ Joseph M. et al, *The Companion to Southern Literature: Themes, Genres, Places, People, movements and motifs*, 498.

¹⁷ Kamel Daoud (1970-). <https://www.bnf.fr/sites/default/files/2018-11/biblio%20kamel%20daoud%20fevrier18.pdf>

¹⁸ Daoud, *Le Manifest ou Quand la Bouche Crache sa Langue*, *Le Quotidien d'Oran*, October 17, 2017.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Irigoyen, *Kamel Daoud: La Pierre Contre le Sabre, des Psaumes Contre le Père*.

²¹ O'Callaghan, *An Illustrated History of the USA*, 82.

²² Ibid., 98.

²³ Tlemâşani, *Report, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 2.

III-Results

This research work has explored the theme of life and death in both William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* (1930) and Kamel Daoud's *Zabor ou Les Psaumes* (2017). The analysis has relied on some theoretical concepts by Northrop Frye in his *Archetypal Criticism: The Mythos of summer* (1957) and have used an important concept of Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalysis theory, the Oedipus Complex.

The first chapter of the discussion section entitled “**The Journey of Life Till Death and From Death to Life**” has explored the characters' journey in both novels. In *As I Lay Dying*, the analysis has focused on the physical journey of the Bundrens from Mississippi to Jefferson to bury Addie's corpse, and in *Zabor ou les Psaumes* on Zabor's spiritual journey. Using Frye's concept of Myth where the notion of the quest in a journey has revealed that the Bundrens struggle to live through the death of Addie. Their trip into Jefferson to bury Addie's corpse stands as a quest for life from death. At the same time, each character, except Darl, undergoes a personal quest seeking for life with Addie's death and their liberation with her burial. In Daoud's novel Zabor undergoes a spiritual journey. His discovery of his gift of repelling death represents his personal quest of life from death. Moreover, Zabor experiences a spiritual quest looking for life with Hadj Brahim's death, which will liberate him from his father's oppression. Both Faulkner and Daoud rely on myth to depict the eternity of texts, in general and their texts, to be eternal authors.

The second chapter, “**Family Life: Parents and Son(s) Relationship(s)**” has investigated the complex parents-son(s) relationship(s). The complex relationship of Addie and Darl and of Hadj Brahim and Zabor under Freud's concepts of “Oedipus complex” and “sibling rivalry”. The discussion has revealed ambivalent emotions of love and hate that the child has towards his parent. One consequence of this difficult relationship is jealousy between the brothers, the siblings' competition to gain the love of their parents. Therefore, Darl is jealous

from his brother Jewel and enters in a competition with him. Despite the fact that Darl has been rejected by his mother, he is always acting to gain her love even after her death, when he sets fire to end her suffering; this action denotes his extreme love towards his mother. Zabor, too, is abandoned by his father; yet like Darl, he is always trying to gain the love and empathy of his father. Hence, the siblings' competition to gain the love of his father between Zabor and his brother has resulted in hatred towards his father and let him die. This chapter shows Kamel Daoud requesting literary recognition from his father; i.e., the love of the Algerian audience.

The third chapter "**Faith and Religion: Religious Salvation**" has explored the issue of religion and faith in relation to life and death. In *As I Lay Dying*, the analysis of the characters' appearances and deeds have highlighted the hypocrisy of Cora Tull and Addie Bundren since their faith towards God contradicts their deeds. Cora is the most double-dealer character since she uses highly religious discourse to reflect her self-Christian character while her acts do not conform to her beliefs. Addie appeals for the faith destruction reminds us Zabor's in Daoud's novel. Both of the characters believe in God, but do not follow the Lord's words. Faulkner and Daoud criticise the hypocrisy of many religious people in the two societies. In the American society, Faulkner pictures the southern society and the reality of many poor white families as victims during the Great Depression. In the Algerian society, Daoud denounces the violent and aggressive acts committed by the Islamists, who wanted to reach their personal goals. In order to cover their fatal acts, they used God's name (Allah) and pretending their extreme faith in God.

Chapter I

**The Journey of Life Till Death and From Death to Life in
Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* and Daoud's *Zabor ou les
Psaumes***

Introduction

This chapter studies the journey of life till death and from death to life in both Faulkner's and Daoud's novels. It relies on Northrop Frye's theory of Myth that analyses the mythical journey of the characters in both novels. In *As I Lay Dying*, the journey that the Bundren family undertakes to bury Addie's corpse is "preposterous" and grotesque. It is fraught with difficulties, but the Bundrens persist in it in obvious violation of common sense.¹ Faulkner shows how human being can endure, dare and what he can accomplish all along the journey. The burial of Addie Bundren highlights the human capacity for both suffering and resisting through actions. The title of Faulkner's novel is taken from Book eleven of Homer's *Odyssey*, "As I Lay Dying, the women with the dog's eyes would not close my eyes as I descended into Hades."² while the title of Daoud's novel is the name of the sacred book '*Zabur*' revealed on the Prophet David. Both novels are mythical since the two authors inspired from myth to report the characters' journey. In this chapter, we will explore the use of myth by the two authors to reveal the immortality of the texts thanks to writing. The notion of the quest within these literary narratives is important since the two authors use it as a means to comment on their societies.

I. The Quest of the Bundren in *As I Lay Dying*

Faulkner's novel narrates the last days and the death of Addie, and the journey of transporting her corpse to her family graveyard in Jefferson. The journey of the Bundrens starts in Mississippi to end in Jefferson. The story is told indirectly through brief cross-sections of the consciousness and unconsciousness of the characters, "The point of narration is passed around the circle of characters and each monologue advances the action of the journey a little further."³ However, Darl is the most important character within the novel since

he is the author's "mouthpiece". He is the only one to appear as a "mad" character among the Bundrens. Faulkner declares in one of his lectures:

Darl was mad from the first. He got progressively madder because he didn't have the capacity not so much of sanity but of inertness to resist all the catastrophes that happened to the family. Jewel resisted because he was sane and he was the toughest. The others resisted through probably inertia, but Darl couldn't resist it and so he went completely off his rocker. But he was mad all the time.⁴

This journey represents the quest of each character for a specific motivation to be fulfilled through the main journey of Addie's burial. From the beginning of the novel, the reader is informed about the motivations of the members of the family. Anse longs for a set of teeth, "God's will be done. Now I can get them teeth."⁵ The daughter, Dewey Dell, who is pregnant, wants to get an abortion drug "He is Lame and I am Dewey Dell, and when mother died I had to go beyond and outside of me and Lame."⁶ Cash joins the journey to buy a gramophone, "Cash aimed to buy that talking machine from Suratt."⁷ Even the youngest one, Vardaman, wants to see the train toy "The train is behind the glass, red on the track."⁸ Jewel and Darl are the only ones who do not travel for personal reasons, but the journey reveals their rivalry concerning their relationship with their mother.

Through this passage, we will highlight the nature of the heroic deed of each character via not only their selfishness and cowardice but also through their "romantic self-consciousness":

It is not enough simply to bury the mother reverently and with some show of decent grief; the promise she has exacted must be honoured to the letter: come fire or flood, hell or high water, her body must be taken to the spot which she has designated as her final resting place, and no circumstance, not even the most frustrating, is allowed to cancel obligation.⁹

In spite of the fact that the Bundren family undergoes a journey that will fulfil Addie's wish, all the family members have secrets that push them to travel to Jefferson. Darl is the only character who knows the motif and the hidden truth behind their journeys, such as "Dewey Dell's secret thoughts, [and] his mother's special attachment to Jewel."¹⁰ Therefore, the characters join the journey just to fulfil their personal objectives.

In *The Anatomy of Criticism* (1957), Northrop Frye presents the “*mythos of summer: Romance*” as, “the nearest of all literary forms to the wish-fulfilment dream, and for that reason it has socially a curiously paradoxical role.”¹¹ According to another Oxford dictionary, the quest is, “A long or arduous search for something.”¹² In *the Anatomy of Criticism*, Frye explains that the quest is the major journey that the hero undergoes in order to fulfil the aim of his journey. Each of the Bundrens got a ‘wish-fulfilment’ that drives them to travel. Anse justifies this journey with the solemn promise that he has given to Addie. He emphasizes on the importance of carrying this journey since he says, “I give her my promise. Her mind is set on it.”¹³ However, Anse’s words do not reflect the true motif behind his Journey. After Addie’s death, Anse says, “God’s will be done. Now I can get them teeth.”¹⁴ So, the real motivation of Anse is to buy a set of new teeth in order to get married after the burial of Addie.

The characters’ monologues are complex to understand because of Faulkner’s influence of Bergson’s ‘fluidity of the time’.¹⁵ Faulkner identifies two important elements in relation to the Bergsonian time idea:

Firstly, as we have seen, the idea that only the present exists at a given time, and that it contains both the past and the future within it (a multiplicity, in Bergson’s terms), and secondly, the idea that “the artist” has the ability to play with time, that despite our filtering of phenomena through the lens of time, we are not subjugated to it.¹⁶

Faulkner’s perception of time shows the importance of the consequence of the events. For him, the present is the most important tense since it includes the past and the future. Through this definition, we can notice that modernist writers give much importance to the narrative techniques, such as voiced and unvoiced characters to report the characters’ flow-thoughts, rather than the sequence of the events. Stream of consciousness is a crucial technique used by modernist novelists to show the real thoughts of the characters. Furthermore, Faulkner says:

There isn’t any time...In fact I agree with Bergson’s theory of the fluidity of time. There is only the present moment, in which I include both the past and the future, and that is eternity. In my opinion time can be shaped quite a bit by the artist; after all, man is never time’s slave.¹⁷

This shift of time in the novel indicates mouvement from life to death and from death to life since Faulkner uses many narrative strategies to relive Addie during the journey. Although Addie is dead, Faulkner uses techniques such as flashbacks and memories to relive her. In her monologue, she remembers her past when she was a schoolteacher, “In the afternoon when school was out and the last one had left.”¹⁸ She also reveals how she met Anse, “I saw him pass the school house three or four times before I learned that he was driving four miles out of his way.”¹⁹, and how she gives birth to her children. She divulges the reasons for which she wishes to be buried in Jefferson. Since she was forced to have a sexual relationship with her husband, she wants to revenge for his act. Therefore, this journey also denotes the fulfilment of Addie’s personal desire, and she declares:

It was as though he had tricked me, hidden within a word like within a paper screen and struck me in the back through it. But then I realize that I had been tricked by words older than Anse too, and that my revenge would be that he would never know I was taking revenge. And when Darl was born I asked Anse to promise to take me back to Jefferson when I died.²⁰

She further confesses her sin, “I would think of sin as I would think of the clothes we both wore in the world’s face.”²¹ Furthermore, she suffers from a loss of communication with the people surrounding her.²² However, Cora reports that Addie confesses to her that Jewel is going to be her salvation, “he will save me from the water and from the fire.”²³ Addie’s prophecy comes true since Jewel rescued her from the flood. In contrast, Darl remains as a passive observer and does not show any heroism.

After the death of Addie, the Bundrens have to wait in order to start their journey because of the absence of Darl and Jewel, who went to the town to make a load and gain some pennies, “Him and Darl went to make one more load. They thought there was time. That you would wait for them, and that three dollars.”²⁴ Before the beginning of the journey, a great deal of rain has fallen and the river, which they have to cross is so swollen that it has destroyed the two bridges nearest their farm, “That bridge won’t stand a whole lot of water.”²⁵

After the return of Darl and Jewel, the family started their journey. Mr. Tull describes how the storm has destructed the bridge:

One part of you knowed it was just water, the same thing that had been running under this same bridge for a long time, yet when them logs would come spewing up outen it, you were not surprised, like they was a part of water, of the waiting and the threat...it was like we hadn't expected the bridge to end on the other bank, on something tame like the hard earth again that we had tromped on before this time and knowed well.²⁶

When the Bundrens passed through a distant farm, which belongs to the Samson family, Mr. Samson informed them that the bridge has washed away. As a result, the Bundrens were obliged to accept Mr. Samson's offer to spend the night in his barn. Mrs. Samson expresses disappointment about transporting a dead corpse with them for a few days.

In the next day, the family has to look for another bridge to cross through. When they find one, they tried to cross through it. After an agreement between the brothers, they have decided that Jewel crosses upstream on horseback with a support rope, and Cash takes control of the wagon with Darl. However, a log rushes on them, so Darl jumps:

From the wagon on the downstream. Between two hills I see the mules once more. They roll up out of the water in succession, turning completely over, their legs extended as when as when they had lost contact with the earth.²⁷

This scene reports how the mules drowned, and how Cash clutches at the coffin and his tools. In the next section, Vardaman reports the events after the mules' drowning. Cash, the eldest son, has broken his leg trying to prevent the drawing of Addie's coffin, "Cash went outen sight, still holding the coffin braced... I thought that Cash had given up then and was swimming for it and I was yelling at Jewel."²⁸ Vardaman begins yelling at Darl to catch the coffin before it floats away:

I hollering catch her Darl catch her Darl because in the water she could go faster than a man and Darl had to grabble for her so I knew he could catch her because he is the best grabbler even with the mules...I passed Vernon and he wouldn't get in the water and help Darl he would grab ble for her with Darl he knew but he wouldn't help.²⁹

Although Darl is strong enough to save his mother, Jewel was the one who saved her from drowning. Blake's *Aphorim* is considered as a brief *Anatomy of Criticism*, which

explains that the gygantic myth is expressed as the bible-centered mythology from which all literature descends, and therefore may be identified, and in which the four phases of the bible's archetypal vision are revealed in the pregeneric outlines of comedy, tragedy, romance and satire respectively.³⁰

According to Frye, classical myths come from the Bible, such as the verses of John (7:37), which tells about the promise of the Holy Spirit. This verse says, 'On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink"'. The scene of the river in *As I Lay Dying* is a metaphoric image that is inspired from Greek mythology. The river sited in Faulkner's novel can be compared to the Styx River in the Greek myths, which is a river that separates the living world and the underworld. While some Greeks believed "the soul was reincarnated many times until the soul was pure, others believe in the active afterlife with a connection to the living by providing favour or ill will upon the living."³¹ The Greeks share the belief of ferrying the dead soul across the River Styx.³² According to the ancient myth, the corpse of a dead person will be transported throughout the Styx River. When the soul reaches the river, a boatman named Charon will give it a ride to the underworld for a coin. After the soul achieves to swim across the river, it will wait to be reborn in a new body. The drowning of Addie's coffin represents the act of purification of the soul, so that it could be reborn again.

When the Bundrens reach Mottson town, Addie has been dead for eight days and the smell of her decaying body is the cause for which the family is chased away from the town:

He said the wagon was stopped in front of Grummet's hardware store, with the ladies all scattering up and down the street with handkerchief to their noses, and a crowd of hard-nosed men and boys standing around the wagon, listening to the marshal arguing with the man. He was a kind of tall, gaunted man sitting on the wagon, saying it was a public street and he reckoned he had as much right there as anybody, and the marshal telling him he would have to move on.³³

In the town of Mottson, Anse decides to stop in order to purchase cement and uses it to incase Cash's leg. At the same time, Dewey Dell takes profit in order to buy an abortion drug

from a drugstore. Mr. Moseley rejected her offer and advised her that marriage would be the best solution. Because of the horrific rotten stench of Addie's body, the Bundrens were chased away from the town.

After eight days of their journey, the Bundrens arrive at their final destination, which is Jefferson, a place in Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha country. They stay in a farm that belongs to Mr. the Gillepsie. During this night, the body is housed in a barn, and Darl sets fire to it in an attempt to get rid of the embarrassing corpse:

For an instant longer he runs silver in the moonlight, then he springs out like a flat figure cut cleanly from tin against an abrupt and soundless explosion as the whole loft of the barn takes fire at once, as though it had been stuffed with powder.³⁴

In this section Darl, sets fire in order to end the journey, then describes the fire as, "they sound like an interminable train crossing an endless trestle."³⁵ Fortunately, Jewel has rescued the body from the fire:

Jewel thrusts it back with his buttocks and he appears, his back arched, the muscles ridged through his garments as he drags the horse out by its head. In the glare its eyes roll with soft, fleet, wild opaline fire ; its muscles bunch and run as it flings its head about, lifting Jewel clear of the ground. He drags it on, slowly, terrifically; again he gives me across his shoulder a single glare furious and brief.³⁶

In order to save the wagon, Jewel penances his favourite horse for a team of mules. In the novel, he also rescues his mother from the flood and the fire that Darl has set. The flood and fire are symbols of another world and the journey to "salvation".³⁷

The Bundrens' journey is preposterous since they fought difficulties. However, the Bundrens persist in it obvious violation of common sense. It is a journey that preserves Addie's honour and her salvation in spite of all the problems they witness.

The "climacteric" journey of the novel is the journey of Addie's burial from Mississippi to Jefferson. However, each character within this journey seeks to liberate himself through accomplishing his "wish-fulfilment". Despite the fact that this journey deals with Addie's death since it is about the burial of Addie's corpse, it also represents the journey from death to life. Many Greeks believed in life after death, which is the case of Addie whose soul has been

reborn twice in the flood and in the fire. In addition, this journey represents the quest of each character from death to life since the Bundrens did not only move from Mississippi to Jefferson to bury the corpse of Addie but also to execute their dreams fulfilments.

II. The Quest of Zabor in *Zabor ou les Psaumes*

Zabor ou les Psaumes turns around the mythical journey of the main character named Zabor. In the village of Aboukir, Zabor undergoes a spiritual journey that metamorphosed him. His spiritual journey encompasses three main “climacteric” quests: his learning of the Arab language first in the public school and in the Zaouia; then, his discovery of the French language, which led to his liberation and his realisation of his gift of repelling death using the French language.

Daoud’s *Zabor ou les Psaumes* has a religious origin since ‘*Zabur*’ is the book revealed to the Prophet David, and his Psalms are known in the three monotheist religions: Islam, Christianity and Judaism. It is defined:

Az-Zabour (the psalms) was the Book revealed to Dawud which according to a Hadith reported by Imam Ahmad, was revealed during the month of Ramadan. It contained warnings and wisdom for its people.³⁸

In the Quran, the word zabur has been cited three times. First, the use of the word Zabur in the surah An-Nissa has different connotations since it is read differently in Arabic. Some believe that it is derived from the root “z-b-r”, which is associated with “stone” while others consider its meaning conveys the sense of reciting or writing a text.³⁹

إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ نُوحٍ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ ۚ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ
وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَعِيسَىٰ وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُونُسَ وَهَارُونَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ ۚ وَآتَيْنَا دَاوُودَ زَبُورًا

Indeed, We have revealed to you, [O Muhammad], as We revealed to Noah and the prophets after him. And we revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, the Descendants, Jesus, Job, Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon, and to David We gave the book [of Psalms].

Second, the Surah Al-Isra [17:55] shows that God has allocated each Prophet with virtue, and he has given the Zabur to David.⁴⁰

وَلَقَدْ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَ النَّبِيِّينَ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ ۖ وَآتَيْنَا دَاوُودَ زَبُورًا

And your Lord is most knowing of whoever is in the heavens and the earth. And
We have made some of the prophets exceed others [in various ways], and to David
We gave the book [of Psalms]

In Surah Al-Anbiya [21:105], the word “Zabur” refers to the books revealed not only to the Prophet David, but also to all Prophets, such as Mohammed peace upon him. This ayat reveals that Zabor is a name for all those who write from the books that God has revealed to the Prophets.⁴¹

وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِي الزَّبُورِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الذِّكْرِ أَنَّ الْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِيَ الصَّالِحُونَ

And We have already written in the book [of Psalms] after the [previous] mention that the land [of Paradise] is inherited by My righteous servants.

Those three sourah of the Quran show the revelation of the first sacred book “Zabur” to the prophet Daoud and all other Prophets. They also explain the meaning of the word Zabur, which is writing. Kamel Daoud entitled his book *Zabor ou les Psaumes* inspiring from the Holy Book of the Prophet Daoud to narrate the mythical journey of his main character.

The novel’s narrator is named Ismael also called Zabor. He was living with a large family in Aboukir village before the repudiation of his mother. In the beginning of the novel, Zabor relates an important event that overthrew his life and incited him to undergo a quest through which he imposed himself among Aboukir villagers. In the novel, this quest started when Abdel tried to push Zabor from a hill. As a result, Abdel fell into a well, and Zabor was accused of trying to get rid of him. After the death of Zabor’s mother, Hadjer reports how his ancle left him in the threshold of the upstairs house. She says, « Un oncle t’a ramené et t’a posé au seuil de la maison du haut, puis il a disparu en laissant un peu d’argent et un passe-montagne en laine rouge, le bonnet cosmonaute. »⁴² In this quote, Hadjer reports how Zabor has been left in the treshold of the upper house by his uncle. Despite the fact that he returned to the family home, he was never accepted. Therefore, Hadj Brahim has bought a colonial house down the village where Zabor, Hadjer and Hadj Hbib lived. Those events launched the

first phase of Frye's romance. Zabor enters in a conflict with his father, stepfamily and all the Aboukir villagers.

At an early age, Zabor was sent to learn in the public school. After a week of his attendance at school, he says; « J'avais une belle écriture appliquée qui remplissait la fonction des veines sous la peau des apparences. Elle servait sûrement à faire circuler un genre de sang. »⁴³ Here, Zabor admires his beautiful writings and insinuates about their usefulness in saving people's lives. Thanks to the Arabic alphabet, he learned how to write his first secret name, « dès mes premières semaines de scolarité, j'accueillis l'écriture, avec les premières lettres de mon prénom secret et l'alphabet arabe » This statement, portrays Zabor's appreciation of the Arabic language since his first weeks of schooling. However, Zabor did not attend school since a long time due to his fits and faintings. Therefore, he was excluded from the public school and was taken to zaouia in order to cure him. He must learn the Quran by heart since it is the only way that preserves him from the devilish possessions. Zabor reports:

Je fus conduit à la maison des récitateurs, derrière la mosquée du centre, et remis aux bons soins du maître de la vieille école coranique où s'entassaient des enfants bruyants. On avait décidé que l'école moderne ne suffisait plus à me préserver des possessions du diable et que l'apprentissage du Livre sacré ne pouvait que me guérir à la longue.⁴⁴

In the above quote, Hadj Brahim has taken him to the Koranic school to learn the Quran, since it is the only way to cure his fits and faintings and preserve him from devilish possessions. However, Zabor declares that he has sometimes hated the Zaouia for many reasons:

Quand je devais retenir mes urines et mes flatulences pour ne pas polluer mes ablutions, quand je devais accomplir des prières sans pouffer de rire ou me grater J'ai détesté cette contrainte imposée aux lois du corps.⁴⁶

This statement shows the reasons of Zabor's hate towards all those rules imposed by the Imams since his body is restricted and limited. He is condemned and restricted since he says, « Le Livre n'était jamais expliqué, commenté ou raconté, nous devions juste nous en faire les

gardiens, les porteurs jusqu'à la génération suivante. »⁴⁷ Here, Zabor thinks that the Quran was never explained, commented or told since it is only memorised in order to be preserved.

Despite the fact that Zabor was among the best learners of the Quran, he decided to leave it and never go back to it, « J'expliquai alors, simplement, que je n'allais pas retourner à l'école coranique. »⁴⁸ Zabor's statement declares that he will never return to the Koranic school. Hence, the Koranic school pushes him to think more about writing. He says:

Je m'interrogeais, un peu perdu, sur le sens de l'écriture, les lettres toujours orientées de la droite vers la gauche, comme aimantées par une pente. Pourquoi fallait-il écrire dans ce sens et pas dans l'autre ?⁴⁹

In this quote, Zabor wonders why the Arabic system of writing starts from the right to the left and not from the opposite side. Therefore, it is important to consider the influence of the Quran on Zabor's life since it represents his first "mainor adventure" that served to his recognition at the end of the novel. In the Quran, the first word of God is "read". For Zabor, reading compromises "le savoir, la loi et la possession."⁵⁰ "knowledge, law and possession." However, Zabor questions the legitimacy of God's words since the surah Al Alak, aya one, in the Quran says, "اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ" (1) "Read ! In the Name of your Lord Who has created (all that exist)". He wonders why God's first word is not "Write" since there was nothing to read. The *Zabur* of the Prophet David is the first sacred book, which its title means the person who reads or writes.

In his childhood, Zabor discovers his prophecy of repelling death. He adopted the writing as being his, « La loi de ma vie que personne ne devine. Je le dis (écris) : Quand moi j'oublie, la mort se souvient. »⁵¹ This statement reveals that writing is the law of Zabor's life. He believes that Writing is the only effective trick against death. He says:

Écrire est la seule ruse efficace contre la mort. Les gens ont essayé la prière, les médicaments, la magie, les versets en boucle ou l'immobilité, mais je pense être le seul à avoir trouvé la solution: écrire.⁵²

The above quote demonstrates that prayers, medications, magic, and religious verses failed to repel death contrary to writing. Furthermore, he emphasizes on writing as the only and effective means of pushing away death.

Many of religious stories metamorphosed Zabor's beliefs. Reading is another key tool that liberated him. According to Northrop Frye, the bible is the fundamental stories' illustration, which contains all forms of symbolism as "the main source for undisplaced myths in our tradition."⁵³ We can apply this to other Holy Books, such as the Quran. Zabor undergoes a mythical journey through reading the legends of the Prophets. In the beginning of the novel, Zabor narrates the accident with his half-brother, Abdel, who pushed him from a stony bottom. « sur un fond caillouteux quand je fus repoussé violemment par mon demi-frère »⁵⁴ This experience can be compared to the incident of the Prophet Joseph since his brothers have betrayed both of them. While the Prophet Josef has been thrown into a well, Zabor has been pushed to a stony bottom. Furthermore, Daoud highlights the story of the Prophet Joseph through Zabor's words:

Les frères derrière moi auraient pu me jeter dans un ravin, personne ne les aurait accusés car il n'y a pas de témoin à cette heure. Dans le Livre sacré, l'histoire des frères jaloux finit bien pour leur victime, mais dans la vie c'est différent, Dieu manque parfois d'inspiration...⁵⁵

In the above quote, Zabor wonders whether his brothers will betray him in the same way that the Prophet Joseph has been betrayed by his brothers. Zabor is also called Ismaël, "Après Ismaël, mon premier prénom, je choisis Zabor, puis il y en eut un troisième, Sidna Daoud, que me donna mon maître à l'école coranique, en référence au prophète d'Israël."⁵⁶ In this quote, Zabor reveals that he has three names. Ismaël is his first name given by Hadj Brahim, and the name Zabor is his secret name while his third name is Daoud as the name of the Prophet David. Zabor and Hadj Brahim underwent a similar religious story of the Prophet Abraham with his son Ismael. Abraham had a dream where he is told to sacrifice his beloved son, Ismael. Although the Prophet loves so much his son, he follows God's command. He took his son to

the mount of Arafat to slaughter him. As a reward for his obedience, God gave him a sheep to slaughter instead of his son. Unlike the prophet Abraham, Hadj Brahim had a dream, which Zabor reports, « C'était un homme qui répétait partout que, dans un rêve, Dieu lui avait promis la fortune et des troupeaux innombrables. »⁵⁷ In this quote, Zabor tells how his father repeats his dream that he will receive wealth from God. Although God has given him countless herds, he has abandoned Zabor who claims, « Comment a-t-il pu ? Il a égorgé des milliers de moutons mais j'étais le premier sacrifié sur sa liste, l'offrande en échange de la bénédiction. »⁵⁸ Here, Zabor says that his father could have had the blessing only through the slaughtering of all those sheep, but Hadj Brahim chooses to sacrifice him.

In the Quranic School, Zabor learned very fast God's words. For him, the Arabic language is a restricted language, which does not give him the freedom he needed and fails to cure his fits and faintings, « une langue à moitié vivante, et son écriture pouvait repousser la moitié de mes peurs. »⁵⁹ Through these words, Zabor declares that the Arabic language is not enough strong to liberate him from his fears. His discovery of the French language is the only means that permitted his spiritual freedom from the restrictions of the Arabic language. This discovery takes him in another minor quest that constitutes the major adventure. In the public school, he stated to learn the French language and continued to learn it alone:

Je me rappelais l'alphabet et quelques mots, de cette période de scolarité déjà ancienne, et disposais de morceaux de textes déjà connus, évocateurs et en attente dans ma tête. C'est à partir de ce capital que je construisis cette langue, entièrement, seul avec mon propre dictionnaire sauvage.⁶⁰

The above quote, describes the process of Zabor's learning of the French language, which he later mastered alone. He also declares that he has discovered the language of his gift either accidentally or via idleness. His quest with the French language started in the public school through learning the Alphabetic letters, but this quest becomes more significant when he found a set of abandoned books in the lower house. He thinks that books are the means through which the reader travels. For him, the French language gives him «une aura, moins

brillante, mais passible de respect»⁶¹ This statement demonstrates how the French language provided respect to Zabor's life. He carries, « Le français était une langue de la mort, pour ceux qui se souvenaient de la guerre, mais pas une langue morte. »⁶² Here, Zabor declares that the French is a living language which represented death due to colonisation.

He further declares, “Cette langue eut trois effets sur ma vie: elle guérit mes crises, m’initia au sexe et au dévoilement du féminin, et m’offrit le moyen de contourner le village et son étroitesse.”⁶³ In this quote, Zabor states that the French language had three effects on his life since it cured his crises, introduced him to sex and allowed him to avoid the village. This language also permitted him to discover the woman's body for the first time; through reading *La Chair de l'orchidée* (1975). In this second quest, he achieves to find a language that has no limits and that freed his body from the restricted language of the Holy Book.

His last minor quest includes Zabor's realization of his gift of repelling death and its scarcity through the French language. He was able to save peoples' lives through writing, in a foreign language that cured his fits and faintings. Zabor writes a story for each member of the village of Aboukir in order to keep them alive. He continued to read other interesting books, which are, « *Mille et un livres. Terre des hommes, Tropic du Capricorne, qui était un archipel, Les Raisins de la colère, Le quai aux Fleurs ne répond plus, Le vautour attend toujours.* »⁶⁴ Furthermore, Zabor uses Scheherazade's tale *One thousand and One Nights* to report the power of keeping death away by narration, “Dans son palais, Schéhérazade raconte pour sauver sa vie.”⁶⁵ This statement tells that Scheherazade narrates stories to save her life. By saving her life, she also saves the lives of many women in the kingdom since the king Chahrayar marries every day a woman, whom he killed the next day.

In the *Anatomy of Criticism*, Frye introduced the first stage in the quest myth, which is “Agon or Conflict”. This highlighted within the novel when Abdel accused Zabor for trying to kill him through pushing him into the well, “Avant qu’il ne perde l’équilibre à son tour et

bascule dans un puits sec. Il prétendit plus tard que je l'avais sciemment culbuté pour le tuer et ce mensonge changea ma vie.”⁶⁶ In this quote, Zabor recounts the event when his brother accused him after falling in the well. After this incident Zabor's life changed since his father abandoned him, and this caused a conflict between them. As a consequent, Hadj Brahim drives away Zabor from the family house. The second stage of the quest myth is “Pathos or Catastrophe”, which is a battle between “Eiron” and “Alazon”.

In the novel, Zabor hates his father not only for his mother's repudiation but also for abandoning him and devaluing his gift. He enters in a conflict with his father. In this case, Zabor is the “Eiron” who enters into a battle with Hadj Brahim “Alazon” since the father does not admit Zabor's capacity of repelling death. He always mocks at him. This battle ends with the death of Hadj Brahim. This created in Zabor the feeling of hate towards his father, and the desire to kill him, so that he could be liberated from his oppression.

Zabor aims to complete his “wish-fulfilment” since he wants to convince his father and the Aboukir Villagers about his prophecy and his capacity of repelling death through writing. In the beginning of the novel, Abdel asks Zabor's help to save his father since he is dying. Zabor accepts to follow Abdel just to prove to his father the miracles of his gift. Hadj Brahim is Zabor's “Alazon” since he is against Zabor's decision of getting married from his beloved Djamila. Zabor fails to rescue his father because of his haterdness towards him, and the death of his father liberated him from his oppression since the life of Hadj Brahim means the spiritual death of Zabor which Zabor declares in the following statement « Je voulais sa mort pour enfin respirer amplement, éprouver le vertige d'être libre. »⁶⁷

Zabor witnesses a spiritual journey through which he experienced his quest. His discovery of the French language contributed to his liberation. In many interviews, Daoud reveals that he prefers to write in the French language:

Pour moi, la langue française est beaucoup plus un bien vacant, un bien sans maître. Je me la suis appropriée, mais ni par violence ni par la guerre. J'ai un rapport pacifié au français.⁶⁸

The above quote shows Daoud's harmonious relation with the French language that he appropriated without any obligations or constraints. The Algerian writer Albert Camus fascinated Kamel Daoud who appropriated the French language to gain the Camusien audience. He declares in an interview with *Le Point*, «J'ai observé que Camus n'est pas seulement un écrivain en Algérie: il est aussi devenu le personnage d'une polémique. »⁶⁹ The above quote shows Daoud's interest in gaining the Camusien audience.

Conclusion

As I Lay Dying and *Zabor ou les Psaumes* explore the myth-quest through the journey experienced by their characters within the novels. The Bundrens and Zabor undergo minor adventures that contributed to the accomplishment of their major quest, which is the journey of the burial of Addie's corpse in *As I Lay Dying*, and the spiritual journey of Zabor through his discovery of both his gift and the French language. While Faulkner inspires from the Greek mythology and the Bible in depicting this perilous journey from Mississippi to Jefferson, Daoud relies mainly on the Quran to report the mythical stories of the prophets. Daoud's novels reveal his quest of recognition since he wants to be recognised by the Algerians, who rejected and mistreated him few years ago. Through his novels, Daoud goes through a quest of recognition by the Algerian Audience. It shows the importance of writing since it is the means through which texts are preserved from death. The two authors relied on myth to show the eternity of an author thanks to his writings. Even if William Faulkner died 50 years ago, his name and writings never died thanks to writing. Through this study, we deduced that Daoud reappropriates the narrative techniques of the American writer to impose his writing to both national and international audience.

End Notes

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- ² Yalecourses. 13. Faulkner -- As I Lay Dying.
- ³ Sherri L. Lawrence, *The Endless Journey: William Faulkner's As I Lay Dying and John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath: A Comparative Study*, 10.
- ⁴ Wiley, *A Discourse Analysis of Darl's Descent into Madness in Faulkner's As I Lay Dying*.
- ⁵ Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*, 47.
- ⁶ Ibid., 52.
- ⁷ Ibid., 178.
- ⁸ Ibid., 59.
- ⁹ Brooks, *In William Faulkner The Yoknapatawpha Country*, 143.
- ¹⁰ Ibid., 145.
- ¹¹ Frye Northrop, *Anatomy of Criticism*, 186.
- ¹² Oxford Dictionaries, *Concise Oxford English Dictionary: Book & CD-ROM Set*, 1177.
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- ¹⁴ Faulkner William, *As I Lay Dying*, 47
- ¹⁵ Ben Paps, "From beyond time": a comparative analysis of temporality in William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* and Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, 9.
- ¹⁶ Ibid., 13.
- ¹⁷ Ibid., 11.
- ¹⁸ Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*. 157.
- ¹⁹ Ibid., 157-158.
- ²⁰ Ibid., 161.
- ²¹ Ibid., 163.
- ²² Brooks, *William Faulkner the Yoknapatawpha Country*, 149.
- ²³ Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*, 156.
- ²⁴ Ibid., 42.
- ²⁵ Ibid., 77.
- ²⁶ Ibid., 125.
- ²⁷ Ibid., 137.
- ²⁸ Ibid., 141.
- ²⁹ Ibid., 137.
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- ³¹ Lawrence Berk, *Dying and Death in Oncology*, 102.
- ³² Ibid.
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- ³⁴ Ibid., 204.
- ³⁵ Ibid., 205.
- ³⁶ Ibid.
- ³⁷ Bloom, *William Faulkner's As I Lay Dying*.
- ³⁸ Adel Tarafi, *Zabor ou les Psaumes de Kamel Daoud, une Ecriture à l'Intersection du Sacré et du Profane*, 30.
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- ⁴⁰ <https://www.alukah.net/sharia/0/127023/>
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- ⁴³ Ibid., 15.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid., 28.

- ⁴⁵ Ibid., 219.
⁴⁶ Ibid., 221.
⁴⁷ Ibid., 222.
⁴⁸ Ibid., 229.
⁴⁹ Ibid., 249.
⁵⁰ Ibid., 17.
⁵¹ Ibid., 19.
⁵² Ibid., 51.
⁵³ Hamilton, *"Northrop Frye on the Bible and Literature."* *Christianity and Literature*. 259.
⁵⁴ Kamel DAOUD, *Zabor ou les Psaumes*, 25.
⁵⁵ Ibid. 40-41.
⁵⁶ Ibid., 176.
⁵⁷ Ibid., 42.
⁵⁸ Ibid. 44.
⁵⁹ Ibid. 248.
⁶⁰ Ibid., 268.
⁶¹ Ibid. 302
⁶² Ibid.
⁶³ Ibid., 271.
⁶⁴ Ibid., 313.
⁶⁵ Ibid., 293.
⁶⁶ Ibid, 25-26
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Chapter II

Family Life: Parents and Son (s) Relationship (s) in

As I Lay Dying and *Zabor ou les Psaumes*

Introduction

This chapter studies the issue of life and death in the two novels from a psychoanalytic point of view. Both Darl and Zabor love their parents. However, this love has caused them complicated psychological disorders during their adulthood since they have been rejected in their childhood. This complex parents and children relationship is discussed centuries ago in the book eleven of Homer's *Odyssey*. In Homer's novel, Agamemnon tells to Odysseus the tragic event of his death, and how his wife, Clytemnestra, and her lover Aegisthus worked together to kill him when he returned from the Trojan War.¹ Homer's novel deals with the theme of sacrifice, revenge and hatred. As Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*, Homer's *Odyssey* book eleven discusses complex and complicated relationships between the members of Agmanon's family. *The Odyssey* carries with it a sentiment of violence and hatred, and how families have "very complicated emotional relationships."² In "*As I Lay Dying*", we will scrutinize mother-son relationship with the characters Addie Bundren and Darl, whereas in "*Zabor ou les Psaumes*", we will investigate father-son relationship via the characters Hadj Brahim and Zabor. Through the analysis of Zabor and Darl's childhood, we deduce the rivalry against their brothers that lasted till their adulthood with a strenght desire to end the life of their parents. Then, we are going also to study the impacts of their repressed issues during their adulthood.

I- Mother and Son Relationship in *As I Lay Dying*: Addie and Darl

Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* reveals the vulnerability of the American family, especially the poor white family during and after the Great Depression. Faulkner uses the Bundren family to picture the issue of the family tensions' in order to depict the nature of the relationship between the members of the American family. In the beginning of the novel, the characters show a certain unity in their relations. Each one helps the other and ties together to solve their problems. This is pictured through many attitudes, such as Jewel who barter his horse for a

set of mules in order to save the journey from stopping. However, the death of Addie divulges the secrets, the veiled reasons of the journey to Jefferson, and jealousy between Darl and his brother Jewel. Through this journey, Darl shows his hidden feelings towards his mother. Therefore, this part will be devoted to the analysis of Addie Bundren and Darl's relationship from a psychoanalytic lens.

The novel begins with the descriptions of Addie's circumstances. She is lying on her bed few days before she passed away. In her monologue, she confesses her adultery with Mr. Whitfield, who is a local minister. Addie considers Anse as being dead although he is alive. Her meeting with Mr. Whitfield provided her with the violence she is seeking, which resulted to her adultery. To show the sacristy of her sin, she says, "Garment which he had exchanged for sin was sanctified."³ This illegal relationship gave birth to Jewel, who is Addies' special son. For Addie, Jewel has been conceived in violence; hence, she considers him as being her "salvation". For Addie, life is a preparation for death, so she has to experience life as much as possible. The birth of Jewel represents the adventure through which she experiences life "intensely". Therefore, she loves and takes care of Jewel. In addition, Addie explains in her monologue that her "sexual desire", which she named "the wild blood", ended with pregnancy.⁴ Cash knew that his mother did not accept his conception. Addie states, "when I knew that I had Cash, I knew that living was terrible."⁵ Moreover, she states that Darl's birth resulted from Anse's sexual desire towards her:

Then I found that I had Darl. At first I would not believe it. Then I believed that I would kill Anse. It was as though he had tricked me, hidden within a word like within a paper screen and struck me in the back through it.⁶

In this passage, Addie expresses her dissatisfaction because of her Darl's pregnancy. She is convinced that "Motherhood" is what makes her living terrible since she tried to escape the drudgery of her school children and finally her sexuality brings her back to the same life of child-rearing and constrained sexuality.⁷ The misconnection of the parents made their

relationship weak, which created tensions between the family members. According to Sigmund Freud, children at an early age need to be the centre of attention of the two parents. Otherwise, they develop an unhealthy personality due to the lack of “empathy”. Darl has been rejected by his mother since his birth and did not receive the care he needed in his childhood. At an early age, he develops many psychological complexes that have been repressed ; then, manifested during his adulthood. While Darl loves so much his mother and tries to gain her love and attention, Addie rejected him. The denial defense mechanism protected him and denied his mother’s reject. Therefore, he says, “I cannot love my mother because I have no mother.”⁸

From a Freudian perspective, the child develops feelings of love towards the opposite-sex parent and develops feelings of hate for the same-sex parent. The treatment of Addie towards Jewel makes Darl jealous; this denotes his feelings of love towards his mother. He desires to be acknowledged and loved by her in the same way as Jewel. However, Addie shows much attachment towards Jewel. In the Freudian theory, this is termed as the "Jocasta complex", which is an erotic or unnaturally close emotional attachment between a mother and her son.⁹ Addie does not love her husband, so she loves her son. She pays attention to Jewel more than any member of her family. Deng Yunfei states in her article “*Motherless Children in As I Lay Dying ---Darl, Dewey Dell and Vardaman*” that the birth of Darl is a curse from the outset.¹⁰ Addie devotes that Anse has forced her to have a sexual relationship with him. As a result, she becomes pregnant with Darl. Even though, Darl wants to get his mother’s love, Addie will always reject him. Addie refuses Darl’s love because he makes her remember the moment when Anse obliged her to have a sexual relation with him.

Darl wishes to gain his mother’s attention; however, this leads to a competition between him and Jewel. Freud terms this competition as the “sibling rivalry”.¹¹ In the first monologue, Darl shows his envy and jealousy towards his brother Jewel, when he describes him:

Although I am fifteen feet ahead of him, anyone watching us from the cotton-house can see Jewel's frayed and broken straw hat a full head above my own...Jewel, fifteen feet behind me, looking straight ahead, steps in a single stride through the window. Still staring straight ahead, his pale eyes like wood set into his wooden face.¹²

In this passage, Darl describes Jewel physically using the words “frayed and broken straw hat, pale eyes” and “wooden face”. This detailed portrayal denotes Darl's great attention and interest on his brother Jewel, which insinuates that “there is something different about Jewel—something that makes him Addie's favorite child.”¹³ Since Jewel is Addie's special son, Darl's obsession about his brother created jealousy and hate between them. This intensifies rivalry between them. According to Freud, this rivalry is the result of jealousy and the loss of the parents' love. Darl always admires his mother's love to Jewel, while he unhopefully tries to gain Addie's love and care.

Freud suggested the rage constellated by being displaced and feeling the parental focus shift to the younger child is expressed by the older sibling through jealousy and competitiveness. Competitive feelings are described as hurtful, resulting in a sense of loss of parental love and resource, rather than a spur to achievement.¹⁴

He further shows his jealousy when he has taken Jewel to the town for a load. Despite the fact that Darl knew that his mother is going to die, he took Jewel to the town, so that Addie can not see him when she would die. Darl suffered from the Oedipus complex during his childhood due to his failure to gain his mother's love. He loves his mother and tries to catch her attention as much as possible. He fails to fulfil his childhood wishes. Therefore, his repressed feelings manifested in his adulthood due to his mother's abandonment. During the journey to Jefferson, Darl sets fire to his mother's coffin. In the end of the novel, the Bundrens considered him as being insane since he uses the third personal pronoun “he” to speak about himself. Therefore, the Bundrens justified his act of setting fire by his madness. In reality, all the disappointing experiences he had witnessed made him mad. He understands his mother's wish. He weeps bitterly on his mother's coffin after he has failed in setting fire to end the absurdity of the Bundrens' journey.¹⁵ His act of trying to set fire does not signify

Darl's desire to kill his mother ; rather it denotes his desire to free her corpse from the horrific rotten stench and die in peace for an eternal life in the afterworld. His tears show his "understanding and the true love"¹⁶ towards his mother. His reaction is the result of his complex relationship with his mother. Freud says:

All relationships are refracted through these earlier moments; as we know, early-childhood expectations and disappointments continue to exist in the unconscious even when they appear to be forgotten.¹⁷

To conclude, *As I Lay Dying* reports the complex parents and children relationships through the analysis of Addie and Darl's relationship. Darl is Addie's unwanted child, unlike Jewel who represents her salvation. Relying on Freud's Oedipus complex, we have analysed Addie's rejection of Darl, and how it has been manifested during his adulthood via the accident in the Gillespie's farm. Darl shows his jealousy and rivalry towards Jewel due to Addie's obsession on Jewel. We have deduced that his attempt to set fire to his mother's coffin denotes his true love towards his mother since he wanted to end the sufferings of Addie's corpse and to anticipate her burial.

II-Father Son Relationship in *Zabor ou les Psaumes*: Hadj Brahim and Zabor.

The following part explores the complex father and son relationship of both Hadj Brahim and Zabor. Hadj Brahim is Zabor's father. He has repudiated his wife because of jealousy between his wives. When Zabor was a child, his half-brother, Abdel, tried to push him from a stony bottom. This accident has been falsified by Abdel, « histoire fausse et scandaleuse, d'après Hadjer qui se souvient de ma blessure à la tête: c'est lui qui le prétendit, incité par sa mère »¹⁸ In this quote, Hadjer reveals that Abdel and his mother are the ones who caused the accident and Zabor was innocent. It is this accident that changed Zabor's life and drives him away from his family, « Et cela m'éloigna de la maison de Hadj Brahim pour la seconde et dernière fois de ma vie. »¹⁹ Hadj Brahim is the wealthiest butcher in the village. He repudiates Zabor's mother and pushes his son away, just to satisfy his second wife's wishes:

Ma belle-mère, joues griffées et voix hystérique, menaçait du pire si je restais, et mon père trouva une solution en achetant une maison coloniale au bas du village. Ainsi il pouvait y cacher sa soeur vieille fille, son propre père devenu une branche morte et son fils indésirable à la voix de chevreau, que l'on pouvait égorger d'un simple regard insistant.²⁰

In the above quote, Zabor portrays the state of his stepmother who is threatening to do the worst. As a result, Hadj Brahim bought a colonial house where he hides his sister, his father and his unwanted son.

After the death of Zabor's mother, Zabor lived with his unmarried aunt who takes care of him and assumes the role of his mother and father, « ma tante Hadjer à la peau brune qui m'élevait comme son fils »²¹ Zabor states that his aunt Hadjer raised him like her son. Even though Hadjer took care of him and performed the roles of his parents, he always feels orphaned since he never knew his mother's affection. To add, Zabor is raised like an orphan due to his father's abandonment despite the fact that he is alive. Hadj Brahim never treats Zabor as his real child; he always gives him nicknames that devalue him, which engender on him the feelings of "envy":

La vérité est que mon père m'avait affublé de mille noms ridicules pour se moquer de moi et me tenir à distance de son affection. Il m'appelait "punaise tordue" à cause de mon genou et de ma démarche, le "tordu", souvent, la "poupée" à cause de mes évanouissements, et ainsi de suite.²²

The quote refers to the "ridiculous" names that Hadj Brahim uses to devalue Zabor. Unlike Zabor, his half brother Abdel is better treated by his father, whom always exalts him in front of people. Hadj Brahim entrusts Abdel the responsibility of herding his sheep, which is a role of great importance in the family. This way of treating his children has created in them the issue of "sibling rivalry" (competition with siblings for the attention and affection of parents)²³, and leads to a triangular conflict. Abdel does not appreciate his brother because of the possibility to share with him his father's wealth. Therefore, he tries as much as possible to obey his father and gain his contentment. « Même le fils aîné, Abdel, éduqué à me détester comme un rival, qui a la main sur les troupeaux du vieillard depuis son enfance »²⁴ This

quote shows that Abdel was raised to hate Zabor since childhood. This passage reveals the domination of Abdel over Hadj Brahim's wealth since he takes the responsibility of herding his herd of sheep, "The elder child's urge to approach father since the sibling's birth motivates the older child to relate more fully to father."²⁵

According to Freud, Childhood is a very important period in the construction of the child's personality. In this period, the child endures the issue of "Oedipus complex", which is a set of passionate feelings towards the parent of the opposite sex and hatred towards the parent of the same sex.²⁶ Relying on the Freudian theory, many anthropologists derived another complex within the patriarchal societies. The kinship in a patriarchal society focuses on father-son conflict within the Oedipus complex since it arises from the father's position of authority.²⁷ This complex father-son authority is introduced by the Polish sociologist and anthropologist Bronisław Kasper Malinowski. Zabor lived without his parents since his childhood. This caused to him psychological disorders, instead of an ordinary psychological development. The Oedipus phase is the last phase of the "phallic stage" of the child's psychosexual development. During this stage, Zabor endures the accident that changed his life, and triggered in him feelings of "envy and hate" that he has towards his father. In Zabor's view, his father is a criminal, since he deprived him of growing up without his mother.

Qu'a pensé Hadj Brahim sur le chemin du retour, quand il nous a laissés au seuil d'une maison presque vide, alors que le vent hurlait? S'est-il senti léger et en accord avec son dieu? A-t-il accompli des ablutions pour se laver du crime?²⁷

In the above quote, Zabor wonders whether his father did not feel guilty after he abandoned them in the new house. These feelings have been repressed in Zabor's unconsciousness. As a child, he tries to gain his father's confidence, but his half-brother Abdel has been in competition with him. Zabor's father refers to him as a flaw in front of Aboukir villagers: « Chaque fois qu'il s'adresse à moi, me regardait longuement ou voulait signifier à ses amis qu'il n'attendait rien de moi et que j'étais plus une tare qu'un héritier. »²⁸ Here, Zabor tells how his father treats him in front of his friends and he does not expect anything from him.

Consequently, he considers his father as a symbol of evil and draws a negative image about him since he considers him as being empty as Zabor says in the following quote, « Un homme terrorisé par le vide, qui tentait de le conjurer par l'abondance. »²⁹

At a very early age, Zabor discovers his ability to repel death and rescuing people thanks to writing. However, no one believed him. Through time, Zabor has proved his gift, and becomes the saviour of many dying persons. Despite the fact that Hadj Brahim is so wealthy, the doctors were unable to save his life. As a consequent, one night Abdel comes to ask Zabor's help and rescue his father from death. Zabor has waited this moment for a long time, « Ce n'était pas facile pour moi. J'ai attendu ce moment tellement longtemps que je l'ai enrichi de trop de détails, de répliques, de bons mots et de pauses. »³⁰ In this statement, Zabor says that he waited for this moment since a long time, so he enriched it with too many details and good words. He waited for this moment in order to prove to his father his legacy and save him from death. He also wants to gain his father's love and to be recognized, so that his father could treat him as his real son.

Furthermore, Hadj Brahim has much mocked Zabor's gift. Therefore, Zabor thinks that it is the best opportunity to show his talent and convince his father about it, so that he could be accepted and recognized. However, the family house becomes a source of memories that feeds his hate and envy, « Je me suis mis à penser aux vents que j'ai toujours détestés...c'est mon premier souvenir de la maison où Hadj Brahim nous a abandonnés, ma mère et moi, loin au sud d'Aboukir. »³¹ This quote divulges Zabor's thoughts and memories about his father abandonment. In psychoanalysis, anxiety is an experience that breaks the defense mechanisms and reveals our core issues.³² When Zabor arrives at his father's house, he remembers how his father has repudiated his mother. Zabor's defense mechanism of "*Regression*" fails to protect him from his painful experience.³³ Freud defines this defense mechanism:

Regression is an unconscious defense mechanism, which causes the temporary or long-term reversion of the ego to an earlier stage of development (instead of handling unacceptable impulses in a more adult manner). Regression is typical in normal childhood, and it can be caused by stress, by frustration, or by a traumatic event...Regression in adults can arise at any age; it entails retreating to an earlier developmental stage (emotionally, socially, or behaviorally).³⁴

Zabor's defense mechanisms fail to eliminate his hate towards his father. His father's house is the central element that activates the regression mechanism since it recalls him about all the repressed painful events that occurred in the past. Zabor remembers the stony bottom accident and his mother's repudiation. All these memories accentuate Zabor's hate and envy towards his father. Zabor was left alone with his father in the same room in order to write and cure him. The feelings of hate and envy pushed Zabor to enter in a struggle of either to rescue or kill his father. Even if he can save people with his pen from death and give them immortality, he can not write the story that will save his father. He thinks that there are many reasons for the death of Hadj Brahim:

Le vieillard avait douze raisons de mourir avant l'aube. Et même treize, si je me comptais. Lesquelles ? La rancune, l'impatience. Peut-être, mais pas seulement. Je voulais sa mort pour enfin respirer amplement, éprouver le vertige d'être libre.³⁵

The above quote sites the reasons for which Zabor wants the death of his father. According to Freud, the child develops emotions of love towards the opposite sex parent while he holds grudge toward the same-sex-parent. His envy and jealousy grow until he wishes to kill his rival. The father-son authority can be highlighted between Zabor and Hadj Brahim since each one of them competes the other to gain the authority. The myth of Oedipus says that Oedipus kills his father and marries his mother. While in the father-son authority ends with the domination of either the father or the son. Zabor achieved to take the authority from his father and kills him because of the story he could not write. In the story, he writes:

C'était une histoire Presque parfaite, tant le dessin de la quête et l'assouvissement final y sont précis et glorieux. Une histoire dans laquelle mon frère est mon frère, ma mère est encore vivante, mon père est de retour après une très longue absence et il m'accueille avec un rare sourire qui n'est pas un couteau.³⁶

The above quote refers to the story that Zabor could write to save his father from death. In the psychoanalysis, the superego is the part of the psyche in which social values and morals have been incorporated. It represents the rational part of the mind. Zabor's superego laments him for not writing fast and rescuing his father. Although the death of Hadj Brahim liberates him from his oppression, he regrets of not saving him after he passed away.

This story represents one of Zabor's uncompleted desires since his childhood. Zabor feels somehow guilty because of his inability to rescue his father. However, these feelings liberated him from his father's oppression. In order to decompensate his mother's love, Zabor wants to get married with a woman, who is similar to his mother. Zabor falls in love with a woman who has been divorced "or may be repudiated"³⁷ and has two children. In order to replace his mother's love and care, he chooses a mate that has the same criteria with his mother.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have highlighted the complex and conflicted relations that the Bundrens witness in Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*, and Hadj Brahim's family in Daoud's *Zabor ou les Psaumes*. In order to show this antipathy between the characters, we have relied on Freud's concepts of "Oedipus complex" and "sibling rivalry". The analysis of the characters' portrayals has revealed strained relationships between mother and son relationship in "*As I Lay Dying*", and father son relationship in "*Zabor ou les Psaumes*". This parents-son(s) conflict engenders hate and rivalry between the brothers: Darl and Jewel, Zabor and Abdel. While Darl and Jewel travel in the journey to show their love towards their mother, Zabor seeks for his father's love. Through our study, we have deduced that the two authors tackled the issue of hatred in the family members to picture the violence and the hatred in the two societies. In the beginning, Faulkner's writings were less known; however, he achieved to impose himself and became the most known novelist in the United States. The Algerian society rejected Daoud's writings. In addition, a minority of believers asked his execution. Daoud's quest aims to gain the love of the Algerian and international audience. Despite of the

fact that he is threatened with death, he is living in Algeria, which proves his love towards his country. Both Faulkner and Daoud expose the issues of their countries to resolve them and defend them, “The author sincerely loves and hates and which he perceives to be a state of catastrophic decay.”³⁸ This quote refers to Faulkner as a southern writer, who defended the South after the Civil War. He gives perceptions about the injustice that the Negroes witness in the Southern society.³⁹ Faulkner’s representation of the decline of the Southern society can be compared to Daoud’s depiction of the decline of the Algerian society during and after the Black Decade.

End Notes

- ¹ Yalecourses, *13. Faulkner -- As I Lay Dying*.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ax1QzmclDT0>
- ² Ibid.
- ³ Roberts, *J. Lamar, Cliff's Notes on Faulkner's As I Lay Dying*, 50.
- ⁴ Ross Mary, *Notes on As I Lay Dying*, 42- 43.
- ⁵ Ibid., 43.
- ⁶ Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*, 160-161.
- ⁷ Bergman, *"this Was the Answer to It": Sexuality and Maternity in "As I Lay Dying"*, 397.
- ⁸ Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*, 86.
- ⁹ Matsumoto, *The Cambridge Dictionnary of Psychology*, 271.
- ¹⁰ Yunfei, *Motherless Children in As I Lay Dying ---Darl, Dewey Dell and Vardaman*, 67.
- ¹¹ Tyson, *Critical Theory Today*, 14.
- ¹² Faulkner William, *As I Lay Dying*, 01.
- ¹³ Smith, *Tears of a Clown: Reexamination of Disabled Narrators in William Faulkner's The Sound and the Fury and As I Lay Dying*, 57.
- ¹⁴ Clarck, *Freud and his Siblings*, 02.
- ¹⁵ Yunfei, *Motherless Children in As I Lay Dying ---Darl, Dewey Dell and Vardaman*, 68.
- ¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁷ Thurschwell, *Sigmund Freud*, 122.
- ¹⁸ Daoud, *Zabor ou les Psaumes*, 34.
- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ Ibid., 34.
- ²¹ Ibid., 27.
- ²² Ibid., 29.
- ²³ Tyson, *Critical Theory Today*, 14.
- ²⁴ Daoud, *Zabor ou les Psaumes*, 30.
- ²⁵ Clarck, *Freud and his Siblings*, 02.
- ²⁶ Thurschwell, *Sigmund Freud*, 46.
- ²⁷ Steinmetz, *From Father to Son: Kinship, Conflict, and Continuity in Genesis*, 17.
- ²⁸ Daoud, *Zabor ou les Psaumes*, 44.
- ²⁹ Ibid., 29.
- ³⁰ Ibid., 42.
- ³¹ Ibid.,
- ³² Ibid., 43.
- ³³ Tyson, *Critical Theory Today*, 16.
- ³⁴ Rennison, *Freud and Psychoanalysis*, 89.
- ³⁵ Hermioni, *N. Lokko, and Theodore A. Stern, Regression: Diagnosis, Evaluation, and Management*.
- ³⁶ Daoud, *Zabor ou les Psaumes*, 43.
- ³⁷ Ibid., 329.
- ³⁸ Ibid., 71.
- ³⁹ John Bassett, *William Faulkner*, 207.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid.

Chapter III

Faith and Religion: Religious Salvation

Introduction

This chapter explores life and death in relation to faith and religion in both Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* and Daoud's *Zabor ou les Psaumes*. It studies the characters' beliefs in their religion, and the importance of faith in their lives and after their death via analysing their appearances and deeds. In Faulkner's novel, we will analyse the characters Cora Tull and Addie Bundren while in Daoud's novel, we will study the characters Hadj Brahim and Zabor. Moreover, the novels backgrounds will show the differences between the appearances and deeds of the characters.

I-Faith and Religion in *As I Lay Dying*

Christians used to refer to the Bible in their daily life since it consists of rules that are relevant in their lives. They behave according to the principles of Christianity, so that they could reach the inner peace during life and gain the Lord's reward after death. However, many people do not respect those principles, commit sins in their lives and ask for salvation before they die. In Faulkner's novel, there are characters, who have a deep faith in God. Their deeds depend on the Christian rules, which provide human beings with the tenets of the right conduct. Nevertheless, they show a different picture of the Christians and reveal a certain insincerity towards their religion. Addie Bundren and Cora Tull are two characters' with different principles. Addie is less faithful towards her religious tenets than Cora, who shows a strong belief towards Christian assumptions.

1. Cora Tull: Discrepancy between Appearances and Deeds

In the novel, Cora is Vernon Tull's wife and the mother of Kate and Eula. Although, she is only a neighbour of the Bundren family, Vernon and she tie strong relationships with its members. Cora is a Christian woman, whose way of conduct conforms to the Christian tenets. In her section, she refers to her conducts as being the perfect way that a woman should

behave. She says, "I have tried to live right in the sight of God and man, for the honour and comfort of my Christian husband and the love and respect of my Christian children."¹ Here, Cora's announcement shows the sanctification of her whole life to her religion, so that God will reward her in afterlife. Like the goddess Persephone, she represents the cycle of life and death since she is living for her death, and wants to live eternally after she dies thanks to her good actions.

Cora introduces herself in the sixth section as being a "self-satisfied Christian Character."² In her view, her actions represent the best code of conducts. For her, the use of highly religious words delineates strong faith in God, "religion provides a special kind of high-flown language which they may use both in their unspoken thoughts and in everyday speech."³ Because of her absolute faith, she accepts her doctrine without much questioning its principles, "She is preaching the doctrine which she herself accepts without question, the notion that everything is part of a divine plan and that man's role is simply accept without question and to express gratitude."⁴

In several occasions, Cora's acts prove her commitment towards the Christian principles. For example, during Addie's last days Cora kept her company. This act is among the lofty values commanded by the Christian doctrine, "If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well." (James 2:8) However, Faulkner's technique of stream of consciousness indicates the characters' thoughts flow. Thanks to this technique, we depict Cora's judgement about Addie's loneliness "She lived a lonely woman, lonely with her pride, trying to make folks believe different."⁵ For Charles Reagan Wilson, Cora is "a self-righteous, complacent churchwoman, minding other people's business."⁶ For instance, her objection about the journey to Jefferson illustrates her nosiness. She also criticises Addie's request of being buried in her family cemetery when she says to her husband, "A woman's place is with her husband and children, alive or dead."⁷ Her

statement demonstrates the importance and the value of the wife's place within the family. "A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord." (Corinthians 7:39) This biblical verse proves that women must stay with their husbands and children till their death, which corresponds to Cora's view.

Cora's perfect Christian code of conduct does not reflect her thoughts as she criticises others. While she tells others how to behave properly by following God's words, she gossips about their actions. According to the Bible, such conduct is not in accordance with the Christian law:

Brothers and sisters do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or a sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but setting in judgments on it. (James 4:11)

Cora's judgements about the other characters reveal her hypocrisy towards her Christian principles. In her first monologue, she repeats a biblical verse after her failure to sell the cakes she had baked "Riches is nothing in the face of the Lord, for He can see into the heart," (Proverbs 11:7), and she continues, "Maybe I can, sell them at the bazaar Saturday."⁸ This biblical verse shows the importance of contentment since it denotes that only right living can save people from death. Nevertheless, her reaction reveals greediness. Therefore, we deduced that her actions do not correspond with her Christian idealistic thoughts, and Faulkner revealed this hypocrisy through his writing to depict how societies exploits God's name in order to achieve their goals.

2. Addie Bundren : Discrepancy between Appearances and Deeds

Addie is the central character in Faulkner's novel. She stands for the matriarch poor Southern family within the story. She speaks once in the fourteenth section. In her monologue, she remembers her past when she met Anse and married him. She confesses her adultery with Mr. Whitfield, which resulted to Jewel's birth. Unlike Cora's limited code of

conduct, Addie has an “unconventional view of moral codes and ‘good’ behaviour.”⁹ Moreover, she desires to experience the real meaning of “virtue” through committing sin.¹⁰ This means that her experience with Mr. Whitfield is the result of the satisfaction of her sexual desire, which ended with Anse when she gives birth to Cash. However, Addie’s sin furthered her from God. She thinks that words of religion are meaningless and found the truth for herself via her experience. Therefore, Cora sees the downfall of the Bundrens is due to Addie’s lack of faith and Christian duty.¹¹ The deterioration of Addie’s life is due to her influence about her father’s nihilism. Her father considers life as a preparation for death, “My father said that the reason for living is getting ready to stay dead.”¹² Therefore, she experiences life intensively until she understands its meaning. Her father’s influence prevented her from having natural relationships with the members’ of her family:

I knew at last what he meant and that he could not have known what he meant himself, because a man can not know anything about cleaning up the house afterward. And so I have cleaned my house. With Jewel I lay by the lam, holding up my own head, watching him cap and suture it before he breathed the wild blood boiled away and the sound of it ceased.¹³

After her adultery, Addie wanted to repent from her sin since such an act is banned in Christianity “You shall not commit adultery.” (Exodus 20:14). As a result, she gives birth to Dewey Dell and Vardaman, whom birth signifies the act of reconciliation from her sin, “I gave Anse Dewey Dell to negative Jewel. Then I gave Vardaman to replace the child I had robbed him of.”¹⁴ Her announcement shows the insincerity of her atonement, which is due to the desire of settling accounts with her husband by providing him two other children to replace Jewel’s birth, “And now he has three children that are his and not mine.”¹⁵ Despite the fact that, Darl, Dewey Dell and Vardaman are her children with Anse, she continues to deny this truth until her last breath. This act of denying her own children, who are born from a legitimate marriage, is a hypocritical and unfaithful act towards her doctrine “But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”(Timothy 5:8) She never regrets her experience

with Mr. Whitfield since she gives birth to Jewel, whom she considers as her salvation. She thinks that Jewel is the fruit of an extensive experience through which she realises the meaning of 'virtue'.¹⁶ She believes that Jewel is her saviour after her death, "He is my cross and he will be my salvation."¹⁷ He is going to save her from the flood and fire. Furthermore, Cora's flashbacks about her conversation with Addie reveals Addie's refusal to ask salvation about her perception that Jewel replaced God, "She just sat there, lost in her heart to God and set that selfish mortal boy in his place."¹⁸ She is not only unfaithful and challenges God's words. Her behaviours appeal for the destruction of the basis of the Christian faith and beliefs.

In addition, Addie spent the rest of her life without confessing the truth about the identity of Jewel's father while Anse and the other members think that Jewel is a legitimate son. Darl is the only character who knows the truth thanks to his capacities as an observer. In the bible, the woman who does not confess her sin deserves death "If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (John 1:9). *As I Lay Dying* deals with the theme of faith and religion. Faulkner gives the picture of the Southern Christians through many characters. However, this passage has analysed the hypocrisy of Addie and Cora in relation to their faith and religion. While Addie is the less Christian figure in the novel, Cora represents the highly Christian character throughout her perfect code of conduct. Through this analysis, we deduced the religious hypocrisy of the characters, which pictures the hypocrisy of some Americans during the Great Depression. Many people lost their faith due to the corruption of the Christian institutions. For example, the Ku Klux Klan is a movement created in the United States of America in 1865 and ended in the 1960s. It includes all "the white, native-born protestant Americans; it excludes all others."¹⁹ This movement gathers up into itself all the holy traditions, hopes, aspirations, dreams, purposes and the faith of the Anglo-Saxon and protestant fathers.²⁰ However, it is considered to be "the largest and most feared terrorist group".²¹ Their sign consists of burning

wooden cross that they will place outside the homes of their victims. This mouvement is one of the factors that contributed to the spread of violence within the American society.

II. Faith and Religion in *Zabor ou Les Psaumes*

In the Islamic societies, the Quran represents the first source from which the majority of the teachings come from. Since it is the fountainhead of Divine guidance, it imposes the limits imposed by God for every Muslim. Therefore, Muslims give much importance to the sacred book and constantly refer to it. Daoud's novel reports the daily life of the Islamic society. However, the characters within the novel reveal a hidden truth about people's hypocrisy towards religion. Zabor and Hadj Brahim appearances do not correspond with their behaviours. In addition, the title of Daoud's novel shows a religious origin since it shares the same name with the Prophet David's sacred book. Daoud aims to reveal the holiness of his book because Daoud's « Zabor » is the first sacred book revealed by Allah as the Quran.

1-Hadj Brahim: Discrepancy between Appearances and Deeds

Hadj Brahim is the most known butcher in the village; he represents the patriarchal man of the Islamic society. As the Aboukir's people, Hadj Brahim is a Muslim, applies the tenets of Islam and believes strongly in God, "Il croyait fermement en Dieu."²² Zabor states that his father believes strongly in God. He shows his faith in God through prayers; "Mon père quand il s'approchait de moi avec l'odeur de son burnous et de ses moutons, repentant ses prières à la mosquée et ses invocations."²³ Here, Zabor describes his father's prayers and invocations. Despite the fact that Hadj Brahim's appearance delineates the appropriate portrayal of Muslims, his actions dissociate with his behaviours. He repudiates Zabor's mother in order to satisfy his second wife's request:

Il s'agit d'une banale histoire de jalousie entre épouses, ma mère et ma belle-mère. Le patriarche décida alors une répudiation rapide, assortie d'une trentaine de moutons offerts à la tribu de ma mère, et nous abandonna.²⁴

In the above quote, Zabor reports that his father repudiated his mother because of the jealousy between the two wives. Through this act, Hadj Brahim disobeys God's words since God orders justice between wives. Moreover, if the man can not be just with them, it is better to marry only one.

وَأِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوا فِي الْيَتَامَىٰ فَانكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ
النِّسَاءِ مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبَاعَ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا
مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ذَلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَعُولُوا

And if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphan-girls then marry (other) women of your choice, two or three, or four; but if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one or (the slaves) that your right hands possess. That is nearer to prevent you from doing injustice. (surah An-nissa aya 3)

In addition to his unjust with his wife, he has also abandoned his father. He accepted to drive away his closest family members' in order to submit to his wife's request, after the incident of the well in which Zabor was accused of pushing his brother Abdel from the stony bottom: "ma belle-mère exigea notre départ, celui de Hadjer, celui de mon grand-père et le mien après l'incident du puits dans lequel je n'ai jamais poussé Abdel."²⁵ In this statement, Zabor asserts that the accident of Abdel was the reason for which his step mother demanded his departure with Hadjar and his grandfather.

In Islam the children must respect and take care of their parents, otherwise God will punish them in hell. In the Quran, Surah Al-Isra [17:23-24] shows the parents' favour over their children since it says:

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِمَّا يَبُلُغَنَّ
عِنْدَكَ الْكَبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أَفٌ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا
وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا (23) (الاسراء)

And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him. And that you be dutiful to your parents. If one of them or both attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect, nor shout at them but address them in terms of honour.

Furthermore, Hadj Brahim's faith was secretly annoyed by the wills of God « mais sa foi permettait une sorte d'agacement secret face aux volontés célestes. »²⁶ This quote reveals Hadj

Brahim's scepticism about the wills of God. Throughout these passages, we notice that Hadj Brahim is a hypocrite character towards his religion since his deeds disobey the wills of God.

2. Zabor: Discrepancy between Appearances and Deeds

In the Islamic societies, children were sent at an early age to "Zaouia" in order to learn by heart the Quran. As any other Aboukir's boys, Zabor is sent to study in the Koranic School, where he learned by heart almost the entire of the Quran, « j'y appris presque la totalité du livre sacré. »²⁷ "I learned almost the entire sacred book". Although he was among the best learners in the Koranic school, he left it « Je suis sorti de la mosquée avec la moitié d'un livre dans ma mémoire. »²⁸ In this statement Zabor states that he memorised the half of the Quran when he left the mosque. He drops out from the "Zaouiya" because of his inability to interpret God's words, which is only limited to those of Imams and Islamic scholars. Zabor questions God's Holy Book and suggests the possibility of having many interpretations. His ideas are not accepted in Islam since it is considered a distortion of God's words.

His discovery of the French language introduces him to a different world. His readings of French books give him the ability to go beyond the limits imposed by the sacred book. The Quran was not enough to free him, « avec une langue à moitié vivante, et son écriture pouvait repousser la moitié de mes peurs. »²⁹ In this statement Zabor declares that the Arabic language is not enough to liberate him from his fears. "With a language which is half alive, its writing could repel only half of my fears." However, reading books introduced him to the world of sex, which is considered taboo for Muslims. Furthermore, Zabor believes that reviving through writing is a prophecy and prefers to explain books through his sacred way of seeing things instead of relying on the sacred book, « Ma prophétie ne laisse pas un livre sacré mais une explication – sacrée – de tous les livres possibles. »³⁰ In this quote, Zabor declares that his prophecy is to leave explanations to all books. In the fifth section, Zabor declares that he believes in God when he says, « Je crois en Dieu, mais je ne cherche pas à lui parler »³¹ In

the above quote Zabor announces that he believes in God but does not search to communicate with him. Nevertheless, his revelation about prayers denotes his unfaithfulness towards God since he says, « L'appel du muezzin ne me concerne pas car je réveille les morts, pas les dormeurs, à ma façon. »³² In this quote Zabor says that the muezzin's call does not concern him because he wakes up the dead, not the sleepers. This declaration shows the contradiction between his acts and thoughts.

Zabor discovered his gift, which consists of saving the lives of dead people through writing. He questions whether God has given him this extraordinary gift, or maybe it is him, who have stolen the Lord's power of repelling death « Dieu m'a donné un pouvoir immense. Ou peut-être est- ce moi qui lui ai dérobé le sien. »³³ Here, Zabor says that God gave him an immense Power. His statement does not show a strong faith in God's words since it contradicts the verses cited in the surah Al-Bakara ayat [107], which shows God's uniqueness and greatness since it says,

أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ

Do you not know that to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth and [that] you have not besides Allah any protector or any helper?

Zabor's hypocrisy towards religion is highlighted through the contradiction between his actions and appearances. He believes on the existence of God, but he says that he may have robbed God's power. Moreover, he has his own spirituality, and his way of belief that differs from the Islamic society. He believes in God "Je crois en dieu"³⁴ "I believe in God", but he also denounces that faith is not just by prayers and it is beyond these, "l'essentiel est ailleurs que dans la prière ou la désobéissance."³⁵ Regardless of his belonging to an Islamic society, he rejects the old values of his society, which glorifies death more than life. Unlike those Islamic societies, Zabor used his gift to give importance to life rather than to death. Moreover, he liberated himself from the oppression of the religious values. Like Addie, Zabor appeal for

the destruction of the Islamic basis since he declares, « C'est qu'il n'était pas facile, dans leur univers, de croire que je pouvais sauver une vie et congédier la mort en écrivant autre chose que leurs versets et les quatre-vingt-dix-neuf noms de Dieu. »³⁶ In this quote, Zabor states that it was difficult to people to believe that he could save lives and repel death by writing other than using their verses and the ninety-nine names of God. Here, Zabor comes out of God's protection since he dissociates himself with the reciters of the Quran. Daoud's novel reflects the hyposcrisy of many Algerians during the Black Decade.

The Black Decade was a bloody period, characterized by the rise of violence due to the spread of terrorism that threatened the lives of the Algerians. During this period, the religious moralities withdrew people's minds, so that they will devote their lives only to the afterlife. However, many people started to be aware about the deceiving reality of those people, who use the religion of Islam in order to justify all the violent acts they have done. In reality, those people do not represent the Muslims; rather a specific term is coined to refer to them, which is the "Islamists" or fundamentalists. In this regard, Alek Baylee Toumi writes an article entitled "*Literature and Power: Muslims Vs. Islamists*" in which he gives a definition about the differences between the Muslims and those Islamists. He says:

In French, the word *Islamite* refers to radical Islamic fundamentalists, to Islamic terrorists and their organizations. *Musulmans* [i.e., Muslims] is a term used to designate mainstream Muslims, ranging from liberal, secular, or non practicing Muslims to moderate or conservative Muslims who go to the mosque but are not fundamentalists. In the case of the civil war in Algeria, the overwhelming majority of the assassinated people, journalists, intellectuals, school teachers, raped women, children, are Muslims. This means that the victims are Muslims, while the killers, the assassins, the terrorists are Islamists. This is the major difference between them.³⁷

This explanation of the differences between the Muslims and Islamists reveals the reality of those Islamists and fundameltalists, who pretend to be true Muslims. Moreover, a definition of those fundamentalists presented by Thomas Schirrmacher says: During the Algerian Black decade, an armed conflict between the Algerian government and various fundamentalist rebellious groups launched when the government cancelled the elections after

the first round results, which had revealed that the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) party would win. Those fundamentalists imposed many orders that people must respect. For example, the prohibition of reading francophone books and newspapers, the prohibition of taking French education and the prohibition of the satellite dish (as the Islamists call it the diabolical) and of television.³⁸

However, many resisted against those Islamists commands. As a result, they were killed. Katia Bengana was one of the symbols of resistance against those extremists' ideas. In 1994, some Islamist extremists murdered her because of her refusal to wear the hijab (veil). In an interview in one of ECHOUROUK TV's programs called '*Here Algeria*', Daoud denounces his rejection of those Islamists', who misuse religion to attain their own purposes since it is estimated that between 150,000 and 200,000 people have been killed during the Black Decade. Committing crimes in the name of Allah does not reflect faithfulness and true beliefs towards God in Islam. It contradicts all the Islamic tenets taught by the Quran and the Hadith. Therefore, such acts are considered hypocritical. In another interview, Daoud declares:

J'appartiens à une génération qui a été dépossédée de la vie ici-bas par deux choses : un discours religieux qui met par la vie en sursis, qui la promet pour après la mort ; et surtout, par le récit national, le poids de l'histoire de la colonisation et de la guerre d'indépendance.³⁹

In the above quote, Daoud declares that he belongs to a generation that has been dispossessed of life by religious discourse, the promise of paradise and the national narrative, the burden of the history of colonisation. For him, the fundamentalists obliged people to believe in Allah through imposing a set of orders that decide what taboos are. He also says that his belief in God is an intimacy, « Je n'aime pas que l'on me pose la question de mes croyances parce que, justement, je me bats pour qu'elles restent du domaine de l'intime. »⁴⁰, and everyone, who believe in God, must prove his sincere faith to God, and not to other people. Daoud uses the Pascal's Wager to illustrate the hypocrisy of the Islamists, who wants to impose their belief on other people. He says:

Les gens qui veulent imposer leurs propres croyances sont, au fond, dans l'angoisse de croire seuls, de perdre seuls. Souvenons-nous du pari de Pascal: si je crois et que c'est vrai, je gagne; si c'est faux, je ne perds rien. Mais le radical le formule ainsi: je crois et vous devez croire avec moi. Parce que si c'est vrai, on gagne tous, et si c'est faux, je ne perds pas tout seul.⁴¹

In this quote, Daoud declares that the people, who imposed their own beliefs on others, are actually living in constant fear from believing or losing alone. He relies on Pascal's wager to prove hypocrisy of those fundamentalists in Algeria.

Conclusion

As I Lay Dying and *Zabor ou les Psaumes* show the difficulties to survive in an oppressive and deadly world, which is similar to that of the Great depression and The Black Decade. William Faulkner and Kamel Daoud are among the writers who have highlighted the hypocrisy of the modern societies towards religion. Both authors were influenced by their background since both have lived and witnessed the difficult moments of their countries, during their careers as journalists. In 1930s, the United States knew a severe socioeconomic depression while in 1990s, Algeria went through the Black Decade caused by the fall of the country's economy. The two periods were depressive for both Algerians and Americans because of the harsh living conditions. While *As I Lay Dying* mirrors Faulkner's biblical influence, which is an important source of many myths, Daoud uses the name of one of the sacred books "*Zabur*" revealed by Allah to the prophet David to show the sacredness of his book. The *Zabur* reveals the sense of the importance of prayer. While the Prophet David reads the Psalms, all the creatures gathered around him because of his soft voice. Kamel Daoud's novel teaches to pray, how to worship, and how to live faithfully in a world full of hypocrisy, violence and brutality.

End Notes

- ¹ William Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*, 19.
- ² Ross, *Notes on As I Lay Dying*, William Faulkner, 21.
- ³ Ibid., 72.
- ⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵ William Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*, 18.
- ⁶ Richard North, *The Influence of the Bible on As I Lay Dying*, 37.
- ⁷ Op.cit., 19.
- ⁸ Ibid., 04.
- ⁹ Mary Ross, *Notes on As I Lay Dying*, 60.
- ¹⁰ Ibid., 43.
- ¹¹ Op.cit.
- ¹² William Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*, 164.
- ¹³ Ibid.,
- ¹⁴ Ibid., 165.
- ¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶ Ross, *Notes on As I Lay Dying*, William Faulkner, 43.
- ¹⁷ Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*, 156.
- ¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹ Lewis Fowler, D.D.,LL.D.,*The Ku Klux Klan Its Origin, Meaning and Scope of Operation*,12.
- ²⁰ Ibid., 10.
- ²¹ O' Callaghan, *An Illustrated History of the USA*, 56.
- ²² Daoud kamel, *Zabor ou les Psaumes*, 219.
- ²³ Ibid., 141.
- ²⁴ Ibid., 44.
- ²⁵ Ibid., 115.
- ²⁶ Ibid., 219.
- ²⁷ Ibid., 225.
- ²⁸ Ibid., 248.
- ²⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁰ Ibid., 86.
- ³¹ Ibid.
- ³² Ibid., 53.
- ³³ Ibid., 23.
- ³⁴ Ibid., 31.
- ³⁵ Toumi, Alek Baylee, *Literature and Power: Muslims VS. Islamists*, 127.
- ³⁶ Ibid., 128.
- ³⁷ Le Monde, Kamel Daoud : « Il est difficile de s'exprimer sur l'Islam quand on est coincé entre Islamistes et Islamophobes. », 01.
- ³⁸ Aggoune, *Blouse Blanche Zone Grise Décennie Noire*, 59-60.
- ³⁹ Op.cit., 05.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid.
- ⁴¹ Ibid.

General Conclusion

William Faulkner is among the founding fathers of the modern American literature while Kamel Daoud is among the contemporary Algerian french-language literature. This dissertation explored the theme of life and death in William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* and Kamel Daoud's *Zabor ou les Psaumes* from different perspectives. Relying on the theory of Myth by Northrop Frye and Freud's psychonalysis concept of 'Oedipus Complex', we have investigated the characters' physical and spiritual journey that metamorphosed them. The journey has revealed the characters' complex relationships between them, mainly the mother/father and son relation.

In the first chapter, we have discussed the issue of the two different journeys from life to death and death to life in the two novels. In order to study the journey of the characters in both works, we have relied on Northrop Frye's theory of Myth to analyse the characters' quest, which has revealed that the Bundrens' true motivations behind their clemateric quests in *As I Lay Dying*. In *Zabor ou les Psaumes*, the main character Zabor undergoes in a spiritual journey that metamorphosed him to discover his gift of repelling death. Both authors' works are inspired from the sacred books and the Greek Mythology in relation to the theme of life and death in the two novels in different ways. Through analysing of the characters' quests in the two novels, we have deduced that Daoud reappropriates criteria of the American literature to reflect the social, economic and religious problems of the Algerian society. Despite the fact that Daoud aims to transmit his writings for both national and international audiences, most of his works are written for the European audience since he was rejected by the Algerian one. In *Zabor ou les Psaumes*, Zabor achieves to impose himself among the Aboukir people despite of their hate towards him. Daoud's novel pictures the author's quest to gain the Algerian audience, who rejected him. He wants to show the immortality of the texts thanks to writing, which prevents the death of any literary work after the death of its

writer. The two authors use Myth in order to show the eternity of the texts since Myth is the main source of all literature.

Furthermore, we have explored family complex relationships in the two novels via the use of the Freudian concepts of “Oedipus complex” and “sibling rivalry”. On the one hand, we have analysed the conflict of son relationship with their parent. In *As I Lay Dying*, Darl is seeking for his mother’s love and affection. However, Addie rejected him. As the result of this rejection, Darl suffers from trauma. On the other hand, we have depicted Zabor’s complex relationship with his father, who abandoned him since his childhood. Both Darl and Zabor seek recognition from their parents. After their failure to get their parents’ love, they develop the feelings of “envy” and “hatred” towards them and their brothers. Through our study, we have deduced that the two authors tackled the issue of hatred in the family members to picture the violence and the hatred that two societies witnessed during the decline of the South in *As I Lay Dying* and The Algerian Black Decay in *Zabor ou les Psaumes*. Daoud also aims to gain the love of the Algerians inspite of the fact that many Islamists wanted his execution.

In the third chapter, we have explored faith and religion in both novels. In Faulkner’s *As I Lay Dying*, we have depicted the hypocrisy of the characters Cora Tull and Addie Bundren towards their religion. In *Zabor ou les Psaumes*, we have highlighted the opposition of Hadj Brahim and Zabor’s thoughts with their deeds. The two authors delineated the hypocrisy of the Islamists and the Christians through the portrayal of those characters. The Civil War and the Great Depression in America are two periods that marked the American history due to the amount rise of violence, racism and inequality. The Black Decade in Algeria was a bloody period because of the spread of the terrorist groups that were striving for Allah in order to achieve their personal goals. Daoud denounces those Islamists whose actions contradicts their beliefs and show their hypocrisy. The title of the novel is inspired from the

sacred book revealed to the Prophet Daoud, who shows his sincere faith and emotion towards God when he reads the Psalms. As the Psalms of the Prophet Daoud, Kamel Daoud's novel pictures the meaning of the real faith.

Throughout this dissertation, we depicted some similarities and differences between the two authors. Both authors tackled universal theme in order to portray the issues of their societies. In addition, Kamel Daoud adopted the American to target the international audience. The works of the two authors are inspired from myth and sacred texts.

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