



Representative Symbols of the American Society: Revisiting F. Scott Fitzgerald's Selected Novels

Fatmir Ramadani^{a*1} 

a AAB College, Prishtina, Kosovo

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Abstract

The themes of F. Scott Fitzgerald's works are highly influenced and inspired by his own life and ideas of the American society. The writer has never been very fond of Hollywood and the American society in his personal life which is clearly evident in the description of events in his books as well as his foundation of the characters. The works of the writer are greatly popular owing to the realistic and raw depiction of people's obsession with social status, wealth, materialism, in a highly artistic manner. However, with time, Fitzgerald's works started to gather less praise and appreciation, some say owing to the influence of Europe and the respective culture on his works. This review paper aimed at exploring various aspects of Fitzgerald's life represented as symbols, themes, characters in his major works including *The Great Gatsby*, 'The Rich Boy', and *The Love of the Last Tycoon*. These works, which comprise both novels and short stories, had become a vehicle for Fitzgerald to express his opinions about the American society and his own feelings about it. For this reason, many of his works present the autobiographical element. 'American Dream' was one of the most important and recurring themes in his works. In addition, themes of 'money' and 'wealth,' in Fitzgerald's works were used as representative symbols to describe the true nature of the American society. The current study also discussed Fitzgerald's views on Hollywood which are greatly evident in the majority of his texts. This study has reviewed the existing literature to explore the said themes.

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1. Introduction

F. Scott Fitzgerald was a literary artist as well as a professional writer. In practice, this meant that he had to sustain himself by producing short stories for mainstream magazines in order to earn enough money to compose decent books, according to him. Indeed, before moving to Hollywood in 1937, Fitzgerald made the majority of his money as a writer by selling stories to magazines. He published 164 magazine stories during his twenty-year career as a writer; other works were never published. Hardcover copies were released for all but eight of the stories that first appeared in magazines. Between the 1920s and the starting of the 1940s, many movements shaped American culture and established what it meant to be an American. These movements have been dubbed "American Modernism", each of these movements has its own set of critical ideas about nationalism, history, and identity. Fitzgerald's novels about American immigrants in Europe indicate a keen understanding of this because on ground Fitzgerald's protagonists are depicted as desperately striving for prosperity, whether by material wealth or social status. His characters predominantly reflect the post-Gatsby generation, which was enamored to lavish

* Corresponding Author.

E-mail address: fatmir.ramadani@aab-edu.net

parties and reveling in their youth. These characters are older and America's social environment has become bleak, they take to a European stage to carry out their frustrated responses to the evolving American culture.

Fitzgerald makes a broader, more serious point about the changing American identity in the aftermath of the Great Depression, as well as the social stigma of failure. Each character portrays a superficial, materialistic version of success, but they have no choice but to act out their manufactured personas because they all want to achieve the same thing: The American Dream. Fitzgerald introduced several European characters to the array of American characters, adding yet another layer of insightful commentary on American identity. Based on the experiences and conversations that Americans had with European characters, his novels made subtle parallels between European and American culture. When Fitzgerald's ensemble of American characters interacted with European characters, their portrayal of American identity demonstrated a mutual malleability of beliefs, while the European characters were still firm in theirs.

In depicting the American characters, Fitzgerald showed how their personalities were built around an expectation that was essentially unrealistic and unfeasible. These American characters represented the exact opposite of American values: individualism, democracy, and the pursuit of happiness, even when faced with death, failure, or even powerlessness. Fitzgerald explained that many of these characters believed in looking the part rather than living it, which was why they varied so much from the culturally embraced standard of Americanism.

This current study review's themes and images in Fitzgerald's major works including novels and short stories. These works presented various symbols, themes, characters. Fitzgerald express his opinions about the American society and his sensitiveness about them in his works. The autobiographical element in his works cannot be denied. For the purpose of making a thematic review of Fitzgerald's works, *The Great Gatsby* (1953), 'The Rich Boy', and *The Love of the Last Tycoon* were chosen for this study. The study revealed that 'American Dream' was one of the most important and recurring themes in his works. In addition, themes of 'money' and 'wealth,' were used as representative symbols to describe the true nature of the American society. Fitzgerald was never fascinated by Hollywood which is greatly evident in the majority of his texts.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Romance and Tragedy Combined into One in Fitzgerald's Works

Lehan stated in his work *The Great Gatsby: The Limits of Wonder* (1990), "It is Daisy Fay who becomes the incarnation of his romantic ideal: Daisy, five years married to Tom Buchanan; Daisy who will at last resort protect herself no matter who or what she has to abandon; daisy, who lacks maturity, intrinsic worth, or solidity of character. And why should she be better than the world of which she is a part? It is Gatsby who endows her with a meaning that she could in no way embody." Lehan (1990) is hinting at the tragic element in the romantic relationship between Tom and Daisy. Likewise, Gholipour and Sanahmadi (2013) emphasize the importance of psychological attachments portrayed as romantic relationships in the book, which they called unnatural and "dysfunctional". They further stated that-

"... almost all romantic bonds in the novel, even Tom and Daisy's, either manifest a hollow emotional attachment or have worn out miserably since the characters fail to relive the painful experience of the unconscious, break down all defense mechanisms to release the repressed, and exploit the scopes of gratification offered by ego, the world of reality. The unresolved conflicts in the characters' psyche in the novel, in this sense, therefore, bespeak the work's consideration as a psychological drama of dysfunctional love." (52)

The novel's abundance of sentimentality is discussed by Lehan (1990), who stated that *The Great Gatsby* is a story that tells us both a past vision and a desired outcome, and that vision is inextricably linked to fantasy and idealism. As a result, *The Great Gatsby* is a novel of deep romantic engagement that lacked the physical and moral representation that such commitment required. It was a narrative about the romantic strength of a self-divorced from an entity, of an ideal separated from experience, of vision inextricable from illusion, where aspirations were placed in an abandoned past that brings the future all the palpability of a pipedream (33). Gatsby's tragedy of romantic love in both poor and wealthy situations was a great example of how ideal love was just a fantasy for anyone, rich or poor, and that love can never be paid for with money or fulfilled with riches. This metaphysical perspective that Gatsby's character reflected to us was

centered on the nature of divine love and how it can only be a fantasy (Bani-Khair, Khawaldeh, Al-khawaldeh, Ababneh, & Alshalabi, 2016).

Lučić (2014) highlighted Gatsby's unique features and mysterious personality, which distinguished him from other love characters. Gatsby was a fictional, legendary character whose history was only known through assumptions, and Gatsby himself did not disclose his origin, upholding the argument that one's origin did not matter when it came to success. Gatsby's visual depiction borders on disgrace; in his pink suit, he made an ironic impression compared to the other members of the upper crust, who were dressed in white, revealing their laxity and lack of feelings (70). Trilling (2008) came to the realization that the story was primarily a tragic romance, or a love tale gone awry in the American fashion. According to Trilling, "From Proust we learnt about a love that was destructive by a kind of corrosiveness... From Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the night* we learned about love ... that is destructive by reason of its very tenderness" (232).

The plot of 'The Rich Boy' revolved around Anson's lack of love, specifically his inability to react to his fiancée Paula Legendre's sincere devotion. Fitzgerald repeatedly emphasized Anson's easy self-confidence and implied, with implicit irony, that it was out of proportion to any real quality or achievement in the individual. He was charming and affable, but he was also self-indulgent, drank excessively, and seemed to lack any intellectual or creative interests. He became a wealthy businessman, but his personality hardly changed or matured (Nilsen, 1987). The ill-fated romance between Paula and Anson was at the heart of 'The Rich Boy' which was largely about the collapse of personal relationships. The sensitive explanation of their relationship demonstrated the woman's superior knowledge in a way that was consistent with current feminist thinking and its argument that women had an innate understanding of what love meant that many men lacked (42). The lack of love and affection in the life of Anson was because of his own ideals and ideas about women. In the story, he claimed that "I could settle down if women were different," he said, "If I did not understand so much about them, if women did not spoil you for other women, if they had only a little pride. If I could go to sleep for a while and wake up into a home diet was really mine — why, that is what I am made for, Paula, that is what women have seen in me and liked in me. It is only that I cannot get through the preliminaries any more" ('The Rich Boy', 179).

Fitzgerald's life was at its lowest point between *Tender is the Night* and *The Love of the Last Tycoon*. Despite spending so much time on the former, Fitzgerald only got lukewarm critical reviews, leaving him emotionally bankrupt, and the novel was deemed "a failure in terms of Fitzgerald's expectations" (Brucoli, 1988). As a result, Fitzgerald was acutely conscious of the shifts in his career and the need to find a new theme for his next novel in order to reclaim his prestige and popularity. Fitzgerald confessed in a letter to Maxwell Perkins announcing the publication of this book that he was "by no means sure that I will ever be a popular writer again" and "this much of the book, however, should be as fair a test as any" (Brucoli, 1988). The novel is said to be "a tragic novel" (Stavola, 1977) about a brave producer who was dedicated to raising the creative standard of the emerging film industry. As a result, we can conclude that the novel depicted the tragic life of a very masculine and wealthy Hollywood actor.

It has been correctly pointed out by Seiters (1976) that "Gatsby created illusion only for Daisy and Dick Diver, who were his small circle of intimates, but Monroe Stahr spun out illusion for a nation" (133). Stahr practiced very hard to be able to handle every aspect of the process, which would eventually result in a world of dreams, in order to build this impression - "Dreams hung in fragments at the far end of the room, suffered analysis, passed - to be dreamed in crowds or else discarded ..." (*The Last Tycoon*: 70). In the novel, when Stahr became a very strong and prosperous executive, he partially realized his dream. However, "without contact and love, it seems a man must parcel himself out in small perishable pieces until there is nothing left for any action or any relationship. Stahr's tragedy is that he acts as if the legend about himself as an irreplaceable executive were all fact and no rhetoric. Desire for power and a sense of responsibility for his culture have led him away from the intimate needs of his personality" (Callahan, 1996).

Fitzgerald's knowledge of Shakespeare's tragedies is undeniable. Fitzgerald surrounded himself with Shakespeare because he was a former literary student and an involved member of Hollywood culture, and it is not irrational to believe that this affected his fiction, just as it is not absurd to assume that he ran into the writings of Bradley at some level during his academic life. The plot of *The Love of the Last Tycoon* continues this pattern in Shakespeare's work, beginning with Stahr at the pinnacle of his career before following his fall from grace in the Hollywood industry, ultimately leading to his death. Part of what pushes him to collapse in his relationship

with Kathleen is his passion and desire for everything around him to be as impressive as in the films. Nevertheless, the narrator, a young woman named Cecilia Brady, described Stahr quite poetically at the start of the book (Andersson Edén, 2017).

Fitzgerald's *The Last Tycoon* demonstrates the risk of Americans' ability to imitate imaginary, performative roles from the movies, because doing so further distances them from realizing the American Dream's true ideals - "a dream of social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are" (Adams, 2014). The danger Fitzgerald alluded to in *The Last Tycoon*, as implemented by other characters in the book, is Hollywood's encouragement of a societal standard in which certain characters cannot achieve their full potential through their innate talents. In his essay "Authors Out Here: Fitzgerald, West, Parker, and Schulberg in Hollywood", Cerasulo (2004) asserted that many American scholars failed to grasp what drew Fitzgerald and other ageing Modernist authors to Hollywood, stating that -

"But as writers bemoaned the waning cultural importance of literature in a market flooded with commodities, many secretly envied film's powers to reach masses and its wonderfully democratic possibilities... Fitzgerald told friends that Hollywood was the future. He and his contemporaries began to recognize that motion pictures would allow them to reach larger audiences than the theatre or books ever could." (5)

Fitzgerald, in writing about Hollywood and including characters based on well-known and popular Hollywood figures, made a point about how Americans combined traditional and modern values.

2.2 Representation of the American Society and Hollywood

The economy of the United States soared and expanded after World War I. People were fascinated with material possessions, and as a result, money became their primary goal of accomplishment. Fitzgerald set the tale of *The Great Gatsby* in the backdrop of a culture that represented the lives of the wealthy and the aspirations of most contemporary Americans. The story's characters represented the prevailing ideas in society. Levitt (2011) in his work *The Great Gatsby and Revolution, in Theme and Style* noted the shallow nature of the characters and the hypocritical nature of the relations shared in the society by all the characters. He further stated that "In the third chapter, the first of Gatsby's parties shows us that the fatuity of such social pretension extends to the rich as well." (263). As a result, in the midst of tainted relationships and a hypocritical social climate, Gatsby's gatherings and endeavors to love Daisy stood out as unique and extraordinary, particularly among the upper crust.

The geographical emblem that divided society into classes, with the east egg representing royalty and the west egg representing self-made millionaires like Gatsby (Bellahcene, 2018). As Fitzgerald demonstrated, the American dream was founded on the pursuit of happiness and exploration. However, the American dream has been tainted by the rise of materialism and the decline of social values, especially on the east coast. Furthermore, Fitzgerald depicted this dream in *The Great Gatsby*. Tredell (2007), in his work *The Great Gatsby: Reader's Guide* (2007), stated that-

"Tended to disconnect Fitzgerald's novel from the intense political and social debates of the 1960s began to be measured, attention began turn again to the broader implications of Gatsby for question of American national identity, and the "American dream" aspect of the novel started to be freshly explored ,through in two contradictory direction of which led towards myths, the other toward history, Milton r sterns the golden moment ,the novel of Scott Fitzgerald affirms that Gatsby sum up our American desire to believe in release from history to believe in redemption and realization that has already happened at that founding moment evoked at the end of the novel." (85)

The Great Gatsby is Fitzgerald's greatest work and a product of combining Modernist conventions with tragedy, socio-political commentary, and realism in a literary novel that includes tragedy, social satire, and realism. Fitzgerald's formula includes a doomed narrator who is unable to fulfil his dreams; the various social strata are scrutinized under a magnifying glass, exposing their hypocritical and reproachable behavior; and, finally, no sweetener is applied to Fitzgerald's formula, allowing readers to understand the environment portrayed in the book (Maruri Pérez, 2020). It is important to note the rise of consumer culture during the 1920s while discussing the birth of mass culture. Consumer products such as home appliances and electric refrigerators were

purchased by Americans who now had some spare money to spend (“The Roaring Twenties History” n.d.). The car, however, was the most significant consumer product that is central to Gatsby’s plot.

The novel’s characters can be divided into three classes, and each class has its own set of problems to deal with, reminding the reader of how dangerous the world can be (Maurer, 2000). First, there are the wealthy; lumping all wealthy citizens into one category would be a mistake. In reality, despite the fact that it seems that wealth unites people, Fitzgerald shows us that it does not. As Maurer (2000) suggests, Tom, Jordan, and Daisy reflect society’s most elitist category, imposing judgments on Gatsby—needless to say, he is also a wealthy man—based on where his money was coming from and when it came into his life, rather than how much money he has (76). Furthermore, this category maintains their status through the possessions or clothing they wear: Daisy Buchanan’s relationship with white clothing is a perfect example of this concept.

In a letter to Kenneth Littuaer, Fitzgerald claims that the latest book (*The Love of the Last Tycoon*) “is absolutely true to Hollywood” and he is striving “to open up a new well, a new vein” (Bruccoli, 1988). Hollywood, it seems, has become a tool for this reason. According to Addison, “Hollywood became established—not only as a center of film production, but also as a cultural institution that valued conspicuous consumption, sexual display, physical culture, and youth” (Addison, 2006). As a result, Fitzgerald embarked on an epic journey to Hollywood in an effort to realize the American Dream, as he saw Hollywood as the final frontier. Addison further asserts that “the elements of America’s New World myth — inventiveness, youth, adventure, energy — were concentrated in the fresh, lively, popular art form produced in America’s last frontier: Hollywood” (15). Furthermore, “Fitzgerald had once written ‘There are no second acts in American lives. But he had gone to Hollywood to prove himself wrong’ (Stavola, 1977). Fitzgerald, of course, did not want to be a disappointment in the “New World” of Hollywood, which meant re-inventing himself to fit into that culture. That society had provided Fitzgerald with the opportunity to begin his final novel. Pelzer claims that the novel is really-

“... a story of the West, of the frontier, of aspiration. Stahr embodies the last of the American pioneers. He is the immigrant son of people who risked all to attain their dream of success. When they found their passage blocked, they simply moved on, out into the vast American western frontier of perpetual promise. That frontier eventually became a state of mind — an expression of desire, a belief in possibility — and its promise beckons still, in the ultimate dream factory at the farthest reaches of the western frontier, Hollywood” (Pelzer & De Roche, 2000).

The Love of the Last Tycoon is considered as an unfinished masterpiece of literature by many scholars and other writers. Edmund Wilson affirms that it is Fitzgerald’s most mature piece of work” and “far and away the best novel we have had about Hollywood” (Bruccoli, 1988). As it has been claimed by Pelzer and De Roche (2000), “Fitzgerald dissects the Hollywood film industry, that purveyor of myths and dreams and that last western frontier, to expose the debased, materialistic power that ultimately destroys the icon of American success — the self-made man” (131). Furthermore, “Fitzgerald even manages to bridge the gap between Stahr, the wary [sic] and disenchanted man of experience and Stahr, the passionate lover. As a matter of fact, that disjunction is close to the center of interest in the book, which is concerned with a man, like Fitzgerald himself, who had loved and lost and who, without ever recovering from the jolt, becomes a different person” (Fahey, 1973). Since the death of his wife, Stahr has obviously changed profoundly, resulting in emotional turmoil and an identity disorder.

Monroe Starh, a truly masculine hero, feels devastated over the death of his wife and Kathleen, his lover, and it is here that we can see the consequences of his tragic loss. Furthermore, “his continued love of life, his daily defiance of death, and his victory over the ghosts of the past, as evinced in his love for Kathleen, deepens the pathos to tragedy” (Fahey, 1973). Fitzgerald attempted to recycle the theme of the demise of the American Dream, which he had used effectively in his previous novels, despite the fact that he had tried to overcome much of the gender insecurities of the previous novels. As a result, *The Love of the Last Tycoon* can be seen as a reinforcement of Fitzgerald’s traumatic fictional storylines depicting the loss of idealized women, creative failures, and the hero’s death. “In Monroe Stahr, Fitzgerald embodies the failure of a man ambitious for power and desirous of love to humanize his society enough to live in fulfillment himself” (Callahan, 1996), and this book is about “the struggle to abandon illusions and enter into life” (Callahan, 1996).

Another notable feature of the novel is that its protagonist, Monroe Stahr, is an artistic reflection of real-life Hollywood mogul Irving Thalberg, as Fitzgerald once acknowledged. In January 1927, Fitzgerald met Irving Thalberg, who was regarded as Hollywood's "boy wonder". Irving Thalberg "was head of production at Universal when he was twenty and died in 1936 at thirty-seven" (Bruccoli, 1988). Fitzgerald had confessed at that time -

"Thalberg has always fascinated me. His peculiar charm, his extraordinary good looks, his bountiful success, the tragic end of his great adventure. The events I have built around him are fiction, but all of them are things which might very well have happened, and I am pretty sure that I saw deep enough into the character of the man so that his reactions are authentically what they would have been in life. So much so that he may be recognized — but it will also be recognized that no single fact is actually true. For example, in my story he is unmarried or a widower, leaving out completely any complication with Norma" (Bruccoli, 1988).

According to Callahan (1996), "Fitzgerald embodied in his tissues and nervous system the fluid polarities of American experience: success and failure, illusion and disillusion, dream and nightmare" (Callahan, 1996). As a consequence, Stahr is Fitzgerald's most compelling character throughout his writing career. Monroe Stahr, like the other protagonists in Fitzgerald's previous novels, aspires to achieve the American dream. Notably, "Monroe Stahr, like Jay Gatsby, is an idealist destroyed by the corruption of his own dream. Like Gatsby, Stahr is a self-made man. He rises from the obscurity of a Jewish ghetto in the Bronx, New York, to become the ultimate purveyor of dreams. Indeed, he embodies the American Dream of Success, and he believes in the system that has enabled his self-creation" (Pelzer & De Roche, 2000).

Fitzgerald offers a contrasting but positive conception of American identity in *The Love of the Last Tycoon*, which, like *Tender is the Night*, focuses on an accurate portrayal of Americanism. Fitzgerald moves from a pessimistic view of American identity that emphasizes the lack of traditional ideals to a less cynical view of American identity in *The Love of the Last Tycoon* (Reyes, 2018). Fitzgerald continues to focus on the unsustainable practice of executing identities that moves Americans away from conventional ideals and from realizing the real intent of the American Dream.

2.3 Use of Symbolic Representations, Imagery, and the Metaphor of 'Money' and 'Wealth'

The Great Gatsby depicted a prosperous world whose economy was booming to the point that everyone needed more money to buy the things they desired. They believed that if they had enough resources, they could accomplish something. They can buy happiness and comfort with money, as well as pure joy and the absolute goodness of life. They dressed up like the French and partied until the wee hours of the morning (Jiang, 2019). As it has been depicted in the text itself, "In his blue gardens men and girls came and went like moths among the whisperings and the champagne and the stars." (*The Great Gatsby* 40). Tom's free time is spent on polo matches and book reads, while Jordan's is wasted on golf courses or parties... Reed (2009) has defined this leisure class, especially Tom Buchanan, as a wasteful leisure class due to the lack of production and its disruptive and anti-progressive power (39).

Daisy, as Goldsmith (2003) claims, sports white dresses with white pearls and owns a small white car, demonstrating not just her whiteness but also her social status, as "it has always been popular with those who wish to demonstrate wealth and status through the conspicuous consumption of laundry soap or conspicuous freedom from manual labor" (456-457). Jay Gatsby's character gives the impression of a rich, over-showy man who has no taste or style and uses his money upon what reflects the brightest without hesitation, which is evident in a scene where Gatsby begins throwing a pile of his shirts and the shirts being described by Fitzgerald as "shirts with stripes and scrolls and plaids in coral and apple-green and lavender and faint orange, with monograms of Indian blue" (*The Great Gatsby*: 59).

Fitzgerald's protagonist is "destroyed by the materials which the American experience offers as object and criteria of passion, or, at best, he is purged of these unholy fires, chastened and reduced" (Ghasemi & Tiur, 2009). Nick Carraway is a character whose position is always ambiguous and easily confused. Nick, in particular, represents the whole concept of class anxiety: his character is divided between the aristocratic European concept of hereditary entitlement and the American middle-class concept of eternal upward advancement (Reed, 2009). Nick's upward mobility, which was set in motion by his entrance to the bond market, poses a challenge for him

because he is half “aristocratic” even if it “can validate certain class positions and forms of wealth, carries with it the threat of encroachment on pre-existing privilege” (35). The characters of Myrtle and George inform audiences that no one is entirely equal, and that despite chances and opportunities, there will always be someone fighting under their feet as another progresses. Fitzgerald, as claimed by Hearne (2010), understood that “below the feet of the rich lay a valley of ashes, a valley that the rich propagated and, in many cases, tyrannized for profit” (192). Myrtle takes on the part of Tom’s lover, seeing their relationship as a way to get out of the garage where she and her husband live, as well as an outlet from the Valley of Ashes and a staircase or elevator to Tom’s position. And George, the garage owner, awaits Tom’s cars and instructions so that he can work and earn money.

In the article “Best Analysis: Money and Materialism in *The Great Gatsby*”, Wulick states that the phrase “wear the gold that” translates to “wealth is presented as a key of love”. F. Scott Fitzgerald ties the American Dream to American history by portraying his heroes as having “usually American ideas” and “typically American drive”. Fitzgerald’s proclivity for symbolism by color patterns can be traced back to various times of American history (Keshmiri, 2016). For instance, Gatsby sees a green light across the bay from Daisy Buchanan’s house, which is a well-known symbol for wealth, envy, and greed. *The Great Gatsby* is a symbolic depiction of life in the 1920s, in which Gatsby’s financial wealth should theoretically entitle him to membership in the upper social class. Gatsby reflects the misrepresentation of the Dream in Fitzgerald’s book, as his desires can never be achieved regardless of how much money he has. In this way, Gatsby represents the disintegration of the American Dream in an age characterized by the accumulation of money and materialistic things (Åkesson, 2018).

‘The Rich Boy’ is an analysis of the impact of wealth on a young man’s character; in the first paragraph, Fitzgerald makes his famous remark about the born wealthy: “They are different from you and me”. The story’s central concept is that inherited wealth breeds passivity and self-satisfaction in the wealthy, making them unfit for interaction with reality; their crack-up usually takes the form of a love affair, since true human devotion is one of the few qualities that cannot be purchased (Heiney, 1958). As Fitzgerald has extensive experience with money and wealth, he is unable to marry the woman he desires due to a financial problem. Money imprints itself on his mind, which he communicates in his characters through his prose. In Fitzgerald’s view, money has left a huge wound. Being a materialist was a victim at the time for Fitzgerald, as it created a sense of greed in his characters, who used their wealth and superiority to amass items and transform people into objects (Fahmi, 2016-2017).

‘The Rich Boy’ is one of the best observations of Fitzgerald’s perceptions of wealth.” It is a little different in terms of how money is used. This short story depicts the concepts of money, having a job, and inheriting wealth. This section’s main goal is to filter the two principles of money and wealth as they relate to ‘The Rich Boy’ - “Let me tell you about the very rich. They are different from you and me. They possess and enjoy early, and it does something to them, makes them soft where we are hard, and cynical where we are trustful, in a way that, unless you were born rich, it is very difficult to understand.” (‘The Rich Boy’:1). The premise behind the distinction between the very rich and the very poor is that everyone cannot be on the very prosperous level of income and enjoy the lifestyle that they have. There is no way for the poor to compete with “the very wealthy”, so you cannot believe that the wealthy are superior to the poor. Money portrays a world in which the wealthy are born with many advantages, such as more money and a higher social status.

Another basis of Fitzgerald’s tragic vision is his sense of the past. However, this is not the case in *The Love of the Last Tycoon*. Fitzgerald succeeds in conveying a tragic sense of love that reveals the emptiness of the American dream: the emptiness of attempting to repeat the past. The love of Stahr for Kathleen is used to provide us with an ironic perspective on the brilliant world of the money men. Fitzgerald was fascinated by depicting the world of the wealthy. However, it is not his purpose to write these narratives with a money theme because he is envious of the wealthy. It has been well described by Piper (1951).

It is a mistake to say — as many still do — that Fitzgerald was a spokesman for the very rich. He was interested in the rich only in their relationship to the middle class, and he wrote about them invariably from a middle-class point of view. If his writings are preoccupied with money, this is because money is a preoccupation of the middle class. People with inherited wealth usually interest themselves in other things. (292)

2.4 Autobiographical element of the novels

The Great Gatsby

A few critics (CARTWRIGHT, 1984) commented on the narrative quality of Nick Carraway in *The Great Gatsby* have suggested that the novel is really a "self-portrayal" of Fitzgerald. "I think this is a truly fascinating thought and an investigation according to this viewpoint would give great bits of knowledge about Fitzgerald" (CARTWRIGHT, 1984). Both Carraway and Fitzgerald came from Midwestern childhoods. Fitzgerald was brought into the world in St. Paul, Minnesota while Carraway stated that he came from a "Center Western city for three ages," (Fitzgerald 3). In the early part of Fitzgerald's life, he was enlisted in the military however was rarely convoyed. Carraway, notwithstanding, genuinely took an interest in the conflict and was a veteran also, "I partook in that deferred Teutonic relocation known as the Great War". Both become unsatisfied with their Midwestern way of living and moved to New York City. Fitzgerald "moved to New York City wanting to dispatch a profession in promoting," while Carraway wished to get into the bond business.

This description might address Fitzgerald's ethical side. Yet, what might be said about the opposite side? The piece of Nick that is undermined and partakes in the speedy, crazy life in New York maybe addressed as a latent aspect of Fitzgerald's character. "I started to like New York, the suggestive, daring feel of it around evening time, and the fulfillment that the steady glimmer of people and machines provides for the anxious eye," (Fitzgerald, 1953). The delight Carraway takes in New York accompanies the advancement of a drinking propensity. As delineated by Fitzgerald, later Nick's appearance in New York, his blamelessness was broken by the bait of liquor, "I have been inebriated only twice in my life, and the subsequent time was that evening; so all that happened has a faint, cloudy cast over it," (Fitzgerald 29). Fitzgerald was a lot of something very similar however Carraway showed only a brief look at Fitzgerald's drinking propensity, "a substantial consumer, he advanced consistently into liquor addiction and experienced delayed episodes of an inability to write." Liquor addiction being one of the numerous aspects of Fitzgerald's life, shows up subliminally in *The Great Gatsby*—regardless of whether it be in Nick's drinking propensities, the thundering gatherings held at Gatsby's chateau, or Gatsby's actual occupation as a peddler.

2.5 'The Rich Boy'

The narrator's assertion on the "extremely rich" is regularly cited as a representation of the hole between the general public wherein many individuals resided – including Fitzgerald himself – and the general public which they pointlessly yearned for. The story is supposed to be founded on one of Fitzgerald's companions, Ludlow Fowler. Fitzgerald claimed at the time that 'The Rich Boy' was "probably the best thing I have at any point done."

There are matches which can be drawn with Fitzgerald's own encounters just as his companion. Tracker's absence of achievement at Yale mirrors Fitzgerald's own ineffective school insight as he, similar to Hunter, was redirected by to pomposity instead of considering. Paula Legendre is not regular of Fitzgerald's courageous women in that she is "fairly appropriate." She is the kind of young lady Hunter should wed, and subsequently never will. He remains pulled in actually to "nature" women of "high tone" like Dolly and the youngster on the journey. His material inclinations direct him to have and claim individuals in the manner he gets things done, and this methodology doesn't speak to the ladies around him.

Notwithstanding Hunter's simple utilization of ladies and his imprudent, special demeanor, it is suggested that he maintains the sexual guidelines of his day. Taking into account that he is being introduced as an unsympathetic, clumsy hero, it is astounding when he won't lay down with Dolly without cherishing her. Cart obviously gets this as exceptionally unfeeling treatment. However, as it were, it is the primary indication of Hunter's regard for Dolly that he advises her to sit tight for somebody who adores her appropriately. The narrator can consider Hunter's downfalls to be he isn't "like" him. At the point when they are grieving Paula's passing on the voyage, Hunter is diverted again by another lady.

2.6 *The Love of the Last Tycoon*

F. Scott Fitzgerald kicked the bucket before he finished *The Love of the Last Tycoon*. This is the story of a tycoon, Monroe Stahr and his love, who after losing his better half, mirrors the condition of the story as Fitzgerald left it. Bruccoli (1988) organized an assortment of working

notes by Fitzgerald and added his very own portion considerations also. However, the outcome was nothing but a completed work. While there is a similarity to a story, there are clear leaps, breaks, and stops. The plot appears to falter along like an antiquated junker, gradually jolting down, repetitive back roads just to turn a corner and coast flawlessly down a slope close to a lake, quietly mirroring the magnificence of encompassing snow-covered mountains. It may have been a phenomenal expansion to Fitzgerald's portfolio, had he completed it. He didn't. From his functioning notes, one can induce that Stahr was to ultimately kick the bucket in a plane accident in Oklahoma (or another detached region in America) during an outing to New York (151). This never happens during the book.

Indeed, even the completion of this distributed version doesn't appear to be a closure by any means: "That is the way the fourteen days began that he and I went around together. It just took one of them of Louella to have us hitched" (129). One hoping to fulfilling a hankering for another Fitzgerald magnum opus won't leave away fulfilled. On the other hand, as a look into the interaction, Fitzgerald utilized for composing an original book is interesting. One can see from the notes the long course of composing a book incorporates changing the book, adding characters, eliminating characters, shortening and extending the book. One can comprehend that those succinct little areas that Fitzgerald jumped at the chance to embed were now and then made autonomously with molding a setting around them.

3. Conclusion

Finally, Fitzgerald succeeded in introducing his idea of "the very rich" in the context of a sense of superiority. In the short tale of *The Great Gatsby*, money is concerned with Anson more than anything else. As a result of his wealth and prestige, Anson develops "his own dominance", which leads to depression and alcoholism. From the start, the reader may get the impression that money is Anson's biggest supporter. Nonetheless, it is destroying his emotional component, if he has one. Money, without a doubt, can be interpreted in a variety of ways. Furthermore, it emphasizes how it functions as a means to achieve super-status in society, or as a weapon to possess others, especially women. The connection between money and superiority leads Anson to adopt the supremacy that will be the subject of the characters' next chapter.

Fitzgerald recounts a series of conversations he overheard as a screenwriter in Hollywood that signaled a change in the use of art to depict American nationalism. His works about Hollywood, on the other hand, allow us to observe the changes that occur in Hollywood prior to the Red Scare, McCarthyism, and the Cold War. Clearly, the novel *The Love of the Last Tycoon* is about the tragic loss of Monroe Stahr, Fitzgerald's ideal and total masculine hero, who seems to be destroyed in the novel's initial intention. The promising art and love that he wants to create in the "New World" ultimately corrupts the genius tycoon. Stahr's memory of his dead wife has now merged with Kathleen Moore's, the woman who has abandoned him. As a result, Stahr represents a disappointment in private life. Since he is so weakened by the loss of his wife, he does not seem to understand the significance of Kathleen's love for him. Stahr's past memories are too traumatic to acknowledge, so he can never be happy with another woman, even though she looks like his dead wife.

The disaster triggered by the American dream has been a recurring theme in Fitzgerald's stories since *The Great Gatsby*. Stahr's story, however, does not end with his death. Stahr is unable to suppress his tragic sense of love in his conscious mind. The truth is that man's fate is sealed. Whether or not man will give up his illusion and return to reality is determined by his philosophy of "accepting with a certain esprit of sadness, the misery of the world we live in". Stahr's tragic sense of love gives us a huge esprit to live in this way. In this book, Fitzgerald also demonstrates a moral awareness similar to that of Jay Gatsby and Dick Diver. Gatsby and Diver demonstrate moral consciousness from an idealist's perspective, while Stahr does so from a rationalist's perspective. Fitzgerald represents man's love as an Icarian desire to sail into the light, which is intriguing. Love, like Icarian's wings, motivates man to understand the illusion. Despite the fact that we know what will happen, we continue to travel. This is considered to be man's tragic sense of love.

Fitzgerald has discovered another universe in which the tragic meaning of love reveals the nature of life to all. He has been depicting love as a source of tragedy for heroes. But in this book, he depicts a different kind of love: a tragic and wise love. Stahr is no longer preoccupied with capital. He is not motivated by money to love Kathleen, but by a desire to replay the past. Stahr,

like Gatsby, discovers its impossibility. However, in the ambiguous milieu of the American dream, Stahr's love — the tragic sense of love — takes on a new significance in leaving an illusion. In terms of the stories' involvement in Fitzgerald's career, they served as a source of financial motivation, a testing ground for his ideas, a workshop for his art, and a ruler of his public image.

To sum up, a serious student of Fitzgerald's works faces the dilemma for not able to decide whether to study the influential professional writer who created 164 stories for mass consumption or to focus on his celebrated works of art. To do one without the other is to offer not only a fractured but also a skewed image of Fitzgerald's literary production. The financial and emotional atmosphere from which they all came illustrates the essence of their interconnectedness, just as the narratives accompany the novels and the novels make the stories more important.

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