

THE PARADOX OF POST WAR AMERICAN SOCIETY IN THE SELECT NOVELS OF F.SCOTT FITZGERALD

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CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION

I, Meyisongla, do hereby declare that the dissertation entitled, *The Paradox of Post War American Society in the Select Novels of F.Scott Fitzgerald*, submitted for the degree of Master of Philosophy in English is my original work and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree on the same title.

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SUPERVISOR'S CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled *The Paradox of Post War American Society in the Select Novels of F.Scott Fitzgerald* is a bonafide record of research work done by Ms. Meyisongla, Regd. No. 52/ 2020, Department of English, Nagaland University Kohima Campus, Meriema during 2019 – 2021. Submitted to the Nagaland University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in English, this dissertation is the fruit of her original investigation conducted during the period of her research.

Ms. Meyisongla has successfully completed her research work within the stipulated time.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1. Post War American Society of the 1920s

After the First World War, America underwent tremendous social, political and economic transformation “emerged as the foremost economic, political and cultural power” (Currell 7). Widely known as the Roaring Twenties or the Age of Jazz, the period resulted in massive growth of the nation in terms of development and innovation. The era flourished in every sphere of life marking the advent of change in commerce, politics and society. In economy, the nation saw great commercial and capital success after the War. There were huge productions of goods and services, inventions, advancements of technologies, capital investments, generation of industries, growth of middle class and rise of the American Dream “industrial production increased by 60 percent” (Sagert 15). With earnings from economic sectors, Americans were exposed to new inventions and innovations such as automobiles, radio, computers and engines “the boom in business was fuelled by progress in new technologies” (Currell 5). People enjoyed new livelihood, lifestyles, accommodations and innovations in great economic prosperity. Industries and machines became great sources of income for the nation which helped generate capital success in high rates. America stood unhindered and “became the most productive and prosperous nation in the world” (Currell 4). The economic success paved the way for Americans to engage in great competition, hard work and acquire skills. At the same time, there were sections of population who still lived under the ruins of poverty with low standards of living. The working population remained unaffected by the nation’s economic growth and progress.

In politics, America witnessed the passing of the 19th Amendment Act in 1919 which paved the way to universal suffrage, giving women the right to vote for the first time “...radically increased the power of women to effect change” (Sagert 4). The issue of women’s rights was a form of celebration for the nation. National Prohibition Act 1919 came into effect which prohibited the trade and consumption of alcohol “the first nationwide experiment with a ban on alcohol” (Sagert 43). These two political enactments changed the outlook of American political scene by advancing emancipation of women and curbing issues of corruption. The nation saw great investments in repairing nation’s rights and policies. The administration and political agencies were successful in their own operations. Before, when these concerns were not under implementation, America remained hidden from many privileges or opportunities. So when these rights or acts were introduced after the war, the nation saw positive impacts helping the country to step forward in generating new laws and reforms for the welfare of its citizens. The prohibition of alcohol, however, failed in its implementation in the long run as the growth of illegal business sales inside America became common “...it gave great power, influence and wealth to gangsters such as Al Capone who supplied speakeasies with illegally manufactured booze” (Sagert 56).

In social spectrum, America saw rise of new facets of modernity. Popularity of mass media, jazz music and culture “...witnessed the birth of popular pop culture” (Sagert 15) established its prominence. People desired new aspects of modernity. The advent of commercial media such as radio, movies and music helped generate entertainment and leisure. Fashion industries and trends became widespread influencing people to adapt modern values, modes and ideas. Society transitioned from tradition to modernity, old to new and rural to urban, “shift to urban living, saw the tastes of the masses pushed to the front” (Sagert15). The new era fostered ideas

of independence, modernity and innovation. The old traditionalism of Victorian era lost its expression and was replaced by new modern free influence and independence, standing away from rigidity, norms and institutions.

Ideas such as individualism and emancipation dominated American society. The most important characteristic of the new culture during this era rested in the emergence of new type of women known as “flappers,” “the first modern liberated woman” (Sagert 13). They dominated the American social and cultural scene with their new sense of fashion, attitudes and freedom. They broke free from the clutches of past tradition and rigidity. They practiced sexual freedom, smoked in public, concentrated in jazz bars and clubs, wore revealing clothes and defied social norms, values and institutions “...dresses cut up to their knees; shinny hair bobbed to their chins, indulged in drinking, smoking and petting” (Sagert, *Preface xi*). They were unconventional women living the new era with a new awakening and breaking stereotypes. Modernity in every aspect of life represented the post war America. With the advent of new influences of culture, the nation also stood immoderate and unstable. The era ended with the collapse of the nation’s economy in 1929 also known as the Fall of Stock Market where the nation journeyed to a new decade of “long-lasting economic depression” (Sagert 9).

1.2. Paradox of Post War American Society

In literature, a paradox is an idea of contradiction and opposites intermingled which appears untrue, absurd and inconsistent, “it is a statement which seems on its face to be logically contradictory or absurd, yet turns out to be interpretable in a way that makes sense” (Abrams 267). Paradox is a literary tool and a figure of speech in which a thought or an idea appears

unreasonable at first but when studied, it stands true and meaningful. It helps in understanding hidden concepts or ideas in a different, creative and unusual manner. In broader sense, a paradox includes determinant opposing ideas existing together through which literary works achieves greater insights of a hidden significance or message. According to Cleanth Brooks in his essay *The Language of Paradox* defines Paradox as “the language of sophistry, hard, bright and witty” “rational rather divinely irrational” (Brooks 3).

The era of 1920s was a paradoxical journey, a time of comforts and chaos, luxury and poverty, assurance and uncertainty and most importantly, celebration and decline. American society witnessed both turmoil and progression as a result of war. It was a phenomenon of never ending contradictions. There was striking presence of good impacts as well as unconvincing bitterness intermingled existing within the society.

1.2.1. Adversity in Prosperity

The first and foremost contradiction the period exhibited after the war is the Adversity in Prosperity. It prevailed almost entirely in every aspect of American life. When the age became advanced, people were exposed to new situations in life. Economy and politics underwent change. People experienced abundance and independence. With earnings from economic sector, people were successful in attaining luxuries. Livelihood became a primary necessity. The more people became aware of the nation’s material prosperity, the more they became ambitious to work and be successful. It became a part of the nation’s goal. Americans became urbanized and independent in their choices in life. The cities and towns gave livelihood to the citizens. Migration and urbanization became normal. The explosion of economy and increased consumerism became positive representations. The nation saw great political investments in

reforming the nation's rights and policies which achieved positive impacts helping the country to step forward in generating new laws and reforms for the welfare of its citizens. Socially, the profound transformation which became vividly prominent rested in the freedom the era supported. Traditionalism became unimportant and people desired new aspects of modernity. The existence of rigidity and guidance soon vanished, making room for new concepts such as independence, trends and fashion to flourish vivaciously everywhere. American social prosperity was reflected in accumulation of wealth, experiencing a joyous contemporaneous living, having leisure, success and modern amenities and opportunities. The coming of new economic explosion, political reforms, freedom and innovation are the facets of prosperity America experienced. Every aspect of life, sectors and sections rose to progression during this period.

However, adversities existed within the new prosperity. As life became convenient and advanced, there were tensions arising out of the nation's success. In every domain of American living, there were consequences impacting lives, institutions, establishments and morality. The main cause of this problem rested upon the imbalanced or unstable exposure to the new influences. This ultimate failure happened due to the roar of extremities. With liberation came problems such as individualism, immorality and breakdown resulting in huge social unrest, complications and decline. When people tasted the idea of freedom, individualism became a choice. In turn, many opted for things that freed them from bondage. Concepts such as marriage, innocence or commitment lost value. People rather preferred worldly pleasures, trends and convenience.

Poverty lived within America's prosperity. Though the nation exhibited great economic prosperity, there were also ruins of disadvantage and poverty at other side of the country. While

few experienced the era's greater influences and prosperity, there were many who were deprived of comforts and needs. Negligence, competition, vulgarity were also a part of adversity. Corruption, indecency, smuggling and crimes dominated America. Atrocities and brutalities became visibly common. Irresponsibility, gloom and poverty dominated America. The pillars of guidance, tradition and morality were paralyzed and chaos emerged. Dignity, passion and hard work collapsed and people indulged in leisure, casual pursuits and resorted to ill means.

With prosperity came adversity. American society was dominated with widespread disruptions in the midst of achievements. Social, political and economic aspects of American society underwent change. While such changes gradually influenced every part of human existence, ranging from advancements of lifestyles, reforms and sophistications, there were also undeniable hindrances and consequences affecting American institutions, beliefs, lifestyles and society. Soon after, these adversities became heavier overshadowing the positive impacts. These forces of adversity within celebration made America appear extremely uneven and uninspiring while at the same time, modern, innovative and challenging.

1.2.2. Depression in Celebration

The second paradox can be found in the contradiction of Celebration and Depression. Victory in the war became a celebration for America, evoking a new start. Right after the nation's victory in war, it grew remarkably successful, prosperous and rich. The end of the war became a matter of celebration because the torments or the miseries were put to an end and America was filled with a sense of reassuring hope for the future. The nation strengthened and recovered, inherited new privileges and growth. The nation became a capital powerhouse

exerting dominance. New awakening, new investments and clear objectives were all forms of celebration.

Celebration in American society can also be seen in how people responded to the new phase. People allowed themselves a chance to taste the new phenomenon. In action, people embraced the new culture, identity and trends spontaneously with interest and attraction. People's positive responses to the advent of new era itself appeared victorious. The influences of trends, music, and culture became intense, remarkable and productive. The attractions people experienced are what made them defy rigidity and guidance. To free from the bondage of tradition and attain independence was regarded as an achievement. To taste the glamour and pleasure of the era became a goal. The social, economic and political awakenings (discussed in the first factor of contradiction) fall under this celebration which people experienced in excess. There is no denying the fact that the victory of the nation in the war and the achievements that came as a result of its successful ventures helped America establish so much in making its own history.

However, depression lived within such celebration. The rapid advancement of change became utterly responsible for numerous downfalls. The depression period of the age was characterized by degradation and disruption, representing the end of the celebration. Depression meant the collapse of economic prosperity, onset of social unrest and loss of humanity. The downfall of stock market crash in 1929 doomed Americans to the period of extreme capital decline and poverty affecting the entire population indiscriminate of rich or poor.

Business, enterprises and capital generation failed resulting in widespread economic urgency. People lost their jobs, many were involved in troubling debts and poverty reached every corner of American society. The economy underwent a reverse turn, losing its shares in big numbers.

In turn, the business world saw wreaking havoc succumbed by breakdown of deals and establishments. The depression meant vivid pictures of human sufferings, impoverishments and mass drought of material resources. The future of the nation was curtailed. Economic success gradually failed, living behind empty riches and widespread debts to handle. With economic disruptions came social unrest. Socially, the environment became restless and disorderly with unprecedented disorder, confusion and decay. The rampant decline of values and the evils of corruption drove people to risk life in danger. People were left in a state of confusion and decline. Celebration of new ideas and orders was a great adventure and experience. But in the same way, such factors contributed to ill facets and circumstances.

Depression means miseries, unproductiveness and restlessness which Americans experienced after the war. The downfall of economy is not the only trouble which initiated the depression. The unrest, change of outlook and disorders all together represented the depressing elements. It is important to note that the post war era exhibited trends of great significance as well as utter disasters and complicating life situations. A whirlwind journey to achievement was soon filled with unending ruins of depression. It is this depression which ended all colorful American achievements.

1.2.3. Desolation and Independence

Another fallout the period witnessed included the desolation of one's existence within independence. Life became utterly distressing and bothering. People underwent existential crises and battled acute sense of dissatisfaction with the changing world. People suffered strokes of discontentment and unhappiness. They questioned their experience of dejection and loneliness. The constant feeling of worthlessness, emptiness and contradictions affected their

mental stability, emotional growth and individual response to existence. As life became extremely risky, mechanical and rebelling, people became lost, worthless and wearisome. Emptiness and skepticism were the greater issues doubting people's existence. The enjoyments and luxuries lasted temporarily. Discontentment and a sense of dejection enveloped people's minds. The population became susceptible to miseries. The overwhelming comforts and riches emptied their spirit. Later, loss of hope and humanity made its way. People became sensitively depressed and burdened existentially. Their existence became loathsome, weary and plain. The 1920s American world became a place of unending ill luck, danger and mystery. Pessimism and lack of spiritedness hindered lives. People lost their faith in humanity. The world became cruel and brutal. The war could have also caused this emotional and mental complexity upon humankind. Even after the war, such feeling still lived within the era's great celebration. It regenerated even more when the new era experienced unsettling influences. The society became monotonous and uncontrolled. People lived in dilemmas. They doubted their fascinations, dreams and existence. Dreams were shattered and the world became weary. People functioned cynically and mundanely. Their outlooks were determined by negativity, idleness and depression. This is an example of desolation within American lives after experiencing the new phase of change.

Against these ill transitions in people's conscience, stood the representation of era's independence and its influence upon the lives of American public. The liberation of the age became a great source of change. Every part of American surroundings, nature, establishments, trends, culture and arts moved forward under the influence of freedom. It is true that liberation and success helped America. Widespread outdoor activities, the progression and potential, rocketing capital incomes, generation of artists and political reforms are all ventures which

happened only through independence. It is this idea of freedom that made American history the most striking and the greatest. It is the free spiritedness and independence which helped new influences or innovations to flourish. Free thinking, broad mindedness and release from tradition are all results of independence which the era supported. Tasting the world of independence truly made Americans sustainable, reliant and prosperous. However, this reign of freedom came with threats. Heavy exposure to such influence became heavily distorted. With freedom came depression. The liberty of the era was useful for the nation's progression as well as declining in many parts of American life. Celebrating independence came with results of inheriting unexpected consequences or events, risky enough to disrupt the calming and prospering nation.

1.3. F.Scott Fitzgerald

Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald (1896-1940) lived in an age of sudden commercialization, social improvisation and political uprising. A novelist, short story writer and a famous celebrity, he became well known for his rather realistic portrayal of American Jazz era which happened to be the new normal in mid 1920s "the personification of the Jazz Age" (Brucoli, *Preface xiv*). Son of a failed business man and a socially awkward mother, he was nested in a middle class household. Right from his childhood, Fitzgerald exhibited his amateur literary pieces in school newspapers and often spend time writing instead of focusing on academic studies. When he joined Princeton University, his literary adventures became even more spontaneous and contributed to his writings to the University Triangle Club.

In no time, he decided to leave the university without a degree and joined the army during the onset of The Great War. In effect, the brutal war changed the life of Fitzgerald. He thought that

he would not survive the war. Already cynical and skeptical about life, he telegraphed *Romantic Egotist* (which later came to be known as *This Side of Paradise*) his first precious literary practice to a New York Publishing House. With its straight forward rejection and honest feedback from the editor, he resorted to revise his book again. When posted as lieutenant near Montgomery in Alabama, he intensified an affair with a local popular girl, Zelda Sayre. In need of financial stability so as to marry his lover, Fitzgerald whole heartedly sent his book revised as *This Side of Paradise* to Scribners and made a huge deal out of it. The debut novel changed the stagnant life of Fitzgerald making him an overnight upcoming star in prosperous American land. The general reading public in America enjoyed his masterpiece and was printed in huge quantities. Right after the novel's release, the couple got married and initiated a memorable vacation. Travelling and visiting places became leisure pursuits. Their excess adventure and lavish gatherings caught the eye of the public "...a man whose life story excites the fascination of a public" (Prigozy 1). Attaining success, status and popularity they became intensely hot headed in the eyes of general critics, writers and friends. Their lives were interesting yet controversial, famous yet sliding and fascinating yet unnerving. As spendthrifts, their lives were often held in jeopardy "they conspired in a dangerous game for which only they knew the rules" (Brucoli, *Preface xx*). The couple lived the age by braving their circumstances, indebtedness and unspoken misery.

Society saw Fitzgerald as wasteful, reckless and scandalous. Brucoli quotes in his preface to the first edition of *Some Sort of Epic Grandeur: The Life of F.Scott Fitzgerald* "his life overshadows his work as he has become an archetypal figure- or a covey of archetypes: prince charming, the drunken writer, the ruined novelist, the spoiled genius." (xix). The reading community disbelieved him. Literary critics conceived him as obscure, frivolous and a failure

“...the man who in moving from a model of success in the twenties to an authority on failure in the thirties” (White 154). With many inquisitive eyes and literary gossips all over, his other publications failed to move up, marriage underwent turmoil, financial instability became intolerable and his career as a writer fully collapsed. With experiences of every little situation in life, his writings became mature, significant and moralistic. Only after his departure from this world, the universe saw him as a serious writer of his generation. With such overshadowing tendencies in life, Fitzgerald still wrote short stories and articles. He often borrowed money from his editor and friends. By late 1920s, Fitzgerald was already a failed writer and a failed individual in all aspects of life. He resorted to substance addiction as his only source of solace and escape from brutal criticisms and societal expectations. His addiction compensated the initial stage of depression and unknown years fell upon Fitzgerald which was the most excruciating, insignificant and hardest phase.

During the ending years of his life, he took up Hollywood screenwriting and wrote generously. Later, after substantial account of time, with weakling heart and tiring soul, Fitzgerald took his last breath on 21 December, 1940. Since then, his fictions were revived, revised, reprinted and acknowledged thoroughly by many leading scholars, ardent readers and critics “Fitzgerald, whose reputation has grown steadily since his death in 1940” (Prigozy, *Preface xv*). Young minds saw fragility, hollowness and sadness. Literary critics were ready to consider him an interesting, sensible and far sighted literary genius who was far ahead of his time. Only after his death, the world saw him as proper and a deep writer who cherished his profession. Bruccoli in his preface again quotes “Fitzgerald was an intensely personal author,” “he embraced his symbolic roles.” (*xix*). Today, he is considered as one among the greatest American writers of the 20th century “writer of real stature and permanence” (Greenleaf 97).

1.4. Select Novels of Fitzgerald

To bring Fitzgerald in discussion, the study will undertake four novel publications which are indispensable in understanding him as a writer and estimating his contribution in the history of American literature. Fitzgerald held sheer uniqueness of interest to commit to writing, to foresee and live through it.

His debut novel *This Side of Paradise* was published in 1920. The novel centers on the protagonist Amory Blaine who lives in a world of adventure, war, love games and riches. The novel is an imitation of post war years where its generation fell apart in uncertainties and disintegration resulting in overwhelming fear, restlessness and despair. The work was highly responsible for the writer's immediate success. The novel reflected Fitzgerald's younger days filled with passion and optimism. The story of Amory growing up or transitioning in every sphere of life and the echoes of experiences, values and thinking which he experienced encompass the moral of the novel. Amory's involvement in love affairs, friendships, accumulation of cynical attitudes and the ultimate discovery of his character are the central ideas which the novel will discuss. The tensions that arise out his achievements in the novel will also be identified.

The Beautiful and Damned (1922) was a shift from his debut novel, realistic and adventurous in content. Mainly autobiographical in nature, it presents the rather high statured New York society in which the characters experience the real world. The novel centers around the portrayal of Anthony Patch, a hero modeled in the ways of the world: pleasures, money, leisure and excess. As a narrative of American post war era, the influence of wealth, hedonism, beauty, absorption and alcohol are important representations in the novel. Gloria Gilbert and Anthony

Patch are the main characters through which the novel will look into the ideas of Commodification of Beauty, Individualism and Extreme Consumerism.

The Great Gatsby was published in 1925 with vigour and inspiration. With rich symbolism and strong message embedded, the work is considered the greatest America novel of all time. Materialism, class struggle, power, corruption, poverty and oppression are vivid capitalist tensions in the novel. Characters are placed in a socio-economic setup where their lives are determined by wealth. Without material possessions, they are subjected to oppression and exploitation in such a setup. Therefore, *The Great Gatsby* will be studied through a general Marxist lens.

The fourth fiction *Tender is the Night* (1934) came out silently without promotion. Fitzgerald considered it as his most important work. The novel is a product of vivid portrayal of mental breakdown, effects of war on humanity, addiction and downfall. The serious of all his works, the novel stood mature, intense and highly submissive. War is an important theme in the novel. The tensions of “Disillusionment” and “Estrangement” in the novel are all impacts of war. Therefore, through the lives of multiple characters in the novel, the complications of domestic tensions, mental illness and breakdown of relationships (effects of war) will be studied.

1.5. Contribution of Fitzgerald

1.5.1. Chronicler of Jazz Age

One most important contributions Fitzgerald placed in the history of American culture is the representation of The Roaring Twenties “representative figure of the age” (Cowley 133). The period saw its documentation in his fictional writings. He holds a high place in expressing his age realistically, modeled with extreme experience, emotion, passion and talent “writer who

saw clearly and saw through, the mores of a particular class in a particular country at a particular time” (Greenleaf 97). An era characterized by new fashion, new music, outlook, women and policies, Fitzgerald high handedly portrayed the trends of modern America in his writings.

As an infamous dweller and also a writer, he knew everything about the sudden flourishing of the age because he enjoyed the living scene of it. He lived the era consciously without hesitation and fear. He knew what to put forth in his short stories and novels, commencing new themes and situations. In pursuit of describing the uprising and the immoderate outbreak of change, Fitzgerald made his way to portray every situation vividly without distraction. The outcome saw literary pieces consumed by realism and rich language in showing the colorful world of jazz. His works are a reflection of his experiences often swayed away by the images of leisurely driven scenery, powerful symbols, engaging themes and intense, realistic character sketches.

His bold portrayal of the celebrated flappers made him a mirror of his time “the writer who identified, delineated and popularized the female representative of the era, the flapper” (Sanderson 143). Personally influenced by his flapper wife Zelda, he knew what he would do with his female characters. He infused them with attributes of the new generation women. Fitzgerald saw them as a part of representation in his works, gave them life and infused them with human attributes and made known to the world. If not for Fitzgerald, the world would not have known much about the women generation which existed decades ago. It is by keen observation and contribution of the writer that the flapper community of 1920s became popular in American culture and literature. A typical image of a flapper as characterized by Fitzgerald can be seen in Jordan Baker from *The Great Gatsby*, “slender, small-breasted girl, with an erect

carriage” (Fitzgerald 14). She is a character who rose to prominence as a celebrated golf player through a cheating scandal in the novel. The author’s sketch of Jordan as a flapper can be seen by her attitude towards marriage, her dishonest conduct, her lack of sincerity and emotions. The image of her is the ideal reality of what flappers actually did during the twenties. With independence, the flapper community took the institution of marriage lightly, sparking the celebration of individualism “modern young woman who was spoiled, self-centered” (Sanderson 143). Jordan Baker represents truly the image of an ideal flapper in every aspect of life. Fitzgerald successfully represented the flappers who dominated the entire American cultural panorama. He could not help but use flapper women characters inspired by such social situation, creating a lively and stylish effect.

Not only the women characters justified his portrayal of the age but Fitzgerald wrote all about the shimmering, attractive and energetic tones which existed. He depicted about alcohol which remained one among the vivid images he wrote in every one of his books. The image was a reflection of the tendency of the age. Liquor dominated the lives of men, with its high scale consumption in bars, jazz clubs and parties. The image was a personal influence which the author infused in every protagonist (Amory Blaine, Dick Diver and Anthony Patch). Living in the most successful and glittering era, Fitzgerald also lived a rather sophisticated personal life. His actions, affairs, scandals, addiction and lifestyles were all representations of the age itself. Therefore, with a touch of personal tone, the account of the age saw great revelations. His story of downfalls or successes, scandals and acknowledgements and relationships and marriages were a reflection and a reference to the age. The Age of Jazz was a conviction which Fitzgerald held up as an influence and an experience “American writer to come directly at the reality of the modern American experience” (Aldridge 44). It inspired him to write great things,

beautiful scenery and adventures which knew no limits. Alcohol, flappers, riches, affairs, clubs, beauty, music and fashion functioned as distraction and dominant symbols of the era, which Fitzgerald extended in his works, as fascination as well as deep concern.

1.5.2. Writer of the Lost Generation

Fitzgerald lived in the right time surviving the First World War. He became a member of Lost Generation writers “you are all lost generation” (Hemingway 1). He knew the war brought him to write deeply about life and profoundly shaped his attitude towards hope and optimism. Resolving to participate in war, he showed his rather skeptical practical view of life, especially with his debut publication, *This Side of Paradise*. His works expressed war inflicted themes and situations. His masterpieces evoked a sense of contradiction and dissatisfaction with the world and pled for humanity. His works showed deep connection with brutalities, confusion and lack of enthusiasm. Fitzgerald saw war as a distraction and also a situation that helped create his life, his maturation and his works. War influenced his characters to be cynical, pessimistic and doubtful about existence. *Tender is the Night* became his most important work representing the Lost Generation theme where he prompts tensions of withdrawal, mental illness, violence and mystery reflecting the ruins of war. Marking all novels, Fitzgerald infused in all his creations, an amount of ill-fated luck, dissatisfaction or an obstacle, an indirect implication of War. Every story, every character is a slave to complexities of life. Ranging from characterization of Amory Blaine to Anthony Patch, Jay Gatsby and Dick Diver, a huge part of their lives are subjected to unhappiness, directionless and incapability. His characters play the part of his generation, a generation exposed to new forces of life. A survivor and a recorder of post war American life, the inevitable outbreak of war and irresistible blasts of socio-economic innovations determined his creations. If not for Fitzgerald, the American experience, war and

diversity would not have been conditioned to its climax. He was a forerunner who portrayed the after War years with great perspicuity, focusing on social dysfunction such as breakdown and emptiness of his characters.

1.5.3. Anticipating the Great Depression

Besides the indispensable role of the writer in exhibiting the American lifestyle during the Jazz Age and the war generation, the picture of the future fall of the nation's economy has survived in his fictional works. Indirectly, his mind had already pictured a shadow of depression in America. The breakdown of American economy was a matter of concern to Fitzgerald. He managed to foresee the dangers, the consequences that served the declining years of the twenties. Fitzgerald talked about the future ahead of them, fearing it might wreck the American establishments and progress. He knew his life, society and the world, the transience. He knew that the glitter, the trends and the new modes would cease to exist. The following year in 1930s, America underwent fatal economic crash ending the era of prominence and glamour. Fitzgerald's anticipation of the terrible future showed reference in his works, marking him a conscious writer fearing life and failure. To be successful in America was significant. In no time, the stress of economic downfall diminished the entire existing social order paving an interest among writers who desperately needed a break through. Writers expressed what the nation needed the most. The pictures of atrocities, poverty, migration, starvation and loss of lives held high, portraying the years of economic depression. Following the declining years of his life as a writer, he spoke out on deterioration of the physical world, the breakdown of human values, fearing life. With his taste of American situation, he ascertained that America's prosperity and success would degrade gradually in no time. Beaten by defeat as an artist with a declining outlook as well as standing as "as the sacrificial victim of Depression" (Brucoli,

Preface xix), his works were truly an expression of concern, a warning put forth realistically infusing an experienced personal tone.

“As a keen observer of the cultural market place” (Prigozy 5), Fitzgerald lived indifferently like any other resident of 1920s America. Sensitive and observant, he wrote freely, completely mused by his personal circumstances “the glamour, the triumph, the euphoria, the heartbreak, and the tragedy of his life were genuine” (Brucoli, *Preface xix*). The age became his weapon and a beam of his inspiration in his works. It also became a sight of unavoidable distraction changing his life forever. The portrayal of American turbulences was his greatest expressions making him “an archetypal American of the twentieth century” (White 154). He observed America intimately, surprised by its driving force and dissatisfied by its uncompromising upheavals. Drawing a colorful American phenomenon inspired by a personal touch, his investment in representing a whole new period assured his position among other American writers. His hand at constructing a whole new social American scenario served to be a landmark and a contribution in the history of American literature. Under the writer’s care, the period achieved its fullest expression, often intermingled with satirizing the period itself. Fitzgerald wrote with a touch of realistic storytelling, symbolic themes, interesting characters and profound expression of thoughts. The lyrical intensity and high poetic value of his works reflect his enthusiasm, diligence and artistry. His works are reflections of celebrating and embracing the new era, accompanied by critiquing with a voice of dejection, introspection and warning. Fitzgerald highlighted the mood of cynicism, skepticism, disorientation and emptiness of modernity, expressing the War generation. An enthusiast by nature, the greatest armour shielding his ambition rested in his unnerving strength to live, to profess and to record. Though celebration of his literary career blossomed late, Fitzgerald’s output of American history,

culture, war and identity proved his versatility. He championed at his own enthusiasm. An aspiring man filled with energy of his own time, nothing distanced his will to write because the art of writing was his truest passion. Writing convinced him to be an artist of his own generation. His documentation of America knew no limits.

1.6. Objective of the Study

The present dissertation aims to study the relationship between the author and the American society. The connection plays an important role in attaining insights into American social background of the 1920s and the role of Fitzgerald in reflecting those social tendencies. The society under which Fitzgerald lived was a period defined by outbursts of events or uprisings in various sectors of living. As a part of such unsettling background, the author knew what made him produce works of significance. The study will point out the characteristics features of the Twenties in the lives of characters and themes which are reflected under Fitzgerald's novels. In relation, the study will identify the paradoxes or contradictions of the post war American society which are inherent in the novels of Fitzgerald. The study will take into account the writer's personal identifications of problems and possibilities of positive responses arising out of era's unstable journey to new establishments, orders, ideas, attractions and culture. The readings that come out of such study will justify the contradictions the era represents. With the help of select fictional works, the dissertation will examine and point out in what ways American society stands in paradox in its progress, success, failure and complications. Through close reading, the study will bring out the tensions and celebration the era witnessed, the contrasting forces of society and its impact upon the established environment. The work seeks to identify the simultaneous presence of opposite tendencies, the extremities of life and attitudes during the post war period, which affected the society in a most unprecedented way.

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CHAPTER 2

CAPITALIST TENSIONS IN *THE GREAT GATSBY*

2.1. Introduction

The Great Gatsby was published in 1925 under great influence of America's economic success and Jazz culture. The work mirrors the nation's exposure to materialism, economic prosperity, individualism, corruption, fashion and competition. The protagonist Jay Gatsby lives in the West Egg surrounded by wealth, luxury and prestige. The Buchanans i.e. Tom and Daisy live in the East Egg with extreme riches, beauty, comforts and privilege. The Wilsons are the lower sections of society in the novel residing in the valley of ashes with poor amenities and sufferings. All the characters are placed in an economic setup where they are under the influence of money, prestige and competition. Gatsby is dominated and mistreated by the Buchanans in the novel even though he is equally capable of economic resources, power and status. George and Myrtle are used and oppressed by the Buchanans to the point of losing their lives at the end of the novel. The disapproval of Gatsby's success by the Buchanans and his death indicates the exploitative world of the characters which is indeed, driven by money and power. The lives of the characters are determined by their material possession, success and royalty.

2.2. Marxism

Marxist theory is derived mainly from the writings of German philosopher Karl Marx who influenced many schools of thought in the early decades of the century. The theory also revolutionized the literary scene introducing new discussion and analysis among the circles of critics, writers and readers. Significantly, the greatest output of all forms among existing

theories, Marxism paved great ventures, applying its teachings in various multifaceted genres ranging from sociological, political, economic and other dialectical advances. Marx integrated the economic condition as the basis of his discussion through which his theory established its main concern "...a man is at last compelled to face with sober senses, his real conditions of life" (Marx and Engels 28). To evaluate society through modes of production and ownership was Marx's idea of a new beginning and experimentation. His new system of organization was based on materialism that celebrated the vision of equal distribution by which an era of governance emerged controlling the capital. Equality and idealistic promise of utopian-like society garnered expectations and envisioned a new future, hoping for the establishment of fairer human society.

The work *Communist Manifesto* changed the outlook of the modern society. In this work, Marx and Engels distinguished two important elements of economic structure in a capitalist setup, bourgeoisie and proletariat "society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps" (Marx and Engels 23). They placed them in an economic based oriented system i.e., based on modes of production. The bourgeoisie "the leaders of whole industrial armies" (Marx and Engels 24) are the privileged section who dominated the proletariat "the modern working class" (Marx and Engels 34) in a socio-economic setup. Provoking a sense of outrageous dissatisfaction among the oppressed, the clash of this two class served the determining factor in up starting the commoners' revolution "the Proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority" (Marx and Engels 42). Aiming to fully eradicate the unequal distribution of economic ownership, Marx implemented his well-known hypothesis, the ultimate revolution and establishment of a classless society, a society without oppression, disparity and stratification.

The superiority of the theory nested in its undeniable relationship with economic history as quoted in first chapter of *Communist Manifesto* “the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles” (Engels and Marx 1). Every part of human existence and its instinctive survival process depended on the sum total of means of production. The more people owned, the more people exerted their authority towards those who owned less. The subjugation, ill treatment and meager wages at work instigated huge aggression empowering a new movement for emancipation, from the clutches of the oppressor. History as a part of economic development (historical materialism) is discussed in the preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy (1859)*, “the mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life” (Marx 11). Marx believed in history only in connection to economic establishments which came in generation after generation, “the totality of the relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society” (Marx 11). He made human resources or material as the ultimate influence in forming of any society. As the theory progressed into maturity, the idea of change formed into a new dimension, resonating its indispensability. Human progress in any society, as believed by Marx, happens through change. He believed that change is a phenomenon which should happen without any hindrance. To bring about progression in society, according to Marx, was to tackle limits or obstacles blocking its way to pinnacle, the future (classless society). The equal, the ideal state of society, thus, had to be formed despite certain impediments in its pursuit. The history of this progression is rooted in hierarchical struggle between the capitalist and the workers which functioned as the main idea behind the theory “it is not the consciousness of man that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness” (Marx 11). It became a ground breaking phenomenon, witnessed at the brink of the world’s

conflicting rise of industrialism and modernity. The theory compromised argument with the human lifestyle. It championed social and political cause, striving for a justified establishment. To uphold firmly, the theory profoundly substantiated the standard ethics, broadening its totalitarian mechanism and scrutiny. The theory offered a broader view of responsibility with prediction of a rather new society ready to overwhelm, experience and assimilate.

Marxism potently believed in massive change and extreme eradication. Many thoughts came under its influence, compensating the advent of great change, modernity, capital and fairer round society. Aspiring for equality and justified distribution of resources and livelihood, humanity saw light with the coming of the great thinkers who fought for the cause of change, among the generation of unsettling division and overbearing threat of competition. The theory implemented predictions that humanity and its livelihood could aspire to transform the dehumanizing effects apparent among the existing social order. Celebrating the notion of equality and justice, the theory was a forerunner of coming expansion, civilization and globalization in the coming years. Documenting the phenomenon of capitalism as the inherent cause of all sufferings, the theory exposed the ill effects of the coming industrialization, exploitation, competition, inequality, oppression and unequal distribution. In the long run, poverty became the ultimate source of its agitation. The material theory elucidated the prevalent structures of social arrangements and its fight for equality. Marxism held strongly the polarities of social, political and economic aspects of society. It set its formidable boundaries, the economy as its central basis and supported the idea of mass revolution “overthrow of the bourgeoisie lays the foundation for the sway of the proletariat” (Engels and Marx 44). It became an ideology seeking the ideals of collective system of acquisition and equal distribution of resources and modes of production. The outlining of the theory became responsible for the

advent of new critical experimentation of ideas, celebrating the output of new derivatives, rationalization of new literary concepts and its endorsements which flourished through creative minds of literary writers of the coming generations.

2.3. Marxist Literary theory

Marxist literary theory became highly prominent following the establishment of Marxism. Literature is a part of superstructure as per the teachings of Marx "...on which legal and political superstructures arise and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond" (Marx 11). According to Terry Eagleton, "Marxist criticism is not merely a sociology of literature ...it also means grasping those forms, styles and meanings as the products of a particular history" (Eagleton 3). The study of literature means the assessment of works of art by looking into the history or the age representing the author. Literature is understood in context to the author's historical and social environment driven by economy "Marxism contends that art, including literature, is determined by the economic base" (Lisman 74).

Understanding the theory involves observation of the position of the author as the producer of literary texts. The generator or the producer invests personal tendencies and taste, making the work a result of his commitment "Marxism sees art and literature as forms of the practical and creative activity of man in his self- creation" (Mohan 10). However, the work itself with its representations of political, social and economic dilemmas becomes a true reflection of the writer's perceptions. The emancipation of highlighting the coexisting struggle of economic disparity and the repercussions that rises from such phenomenon wanders back to the determinism of a particular history. Thus, literature and its relationship with the author is determined by the spirit of a particular existent history upon which both becomes a part

“literary production is mediated by the superstructure is a corollary of the doctrine of economic determinism” (Lisman 75). Literature and its crucial tendency of impacting the readers rests impartially on the social relations, “...understanding the total social process of which it is part” (Eagleton 5). Literature locates realistic anticipation of class struggles, hierarchical domination and overall structure of history without which works are shrouded in dissatisfaction without significance.

Marxist literary criticism demarcates the position of literature, that it is more than representations of economic forces of life or production through which any writer finds expression to go against. Literature could also be a determining asset aiding the process of change which could be a primary role in immersing social change. Literature develops with a consciousness of norms, institutions, culture, uprisings, politics, history and economy. Literature is an institution of society and it has a value function in relation to the environment and ideology of the writer “literature performs a complex of interrelated functions in society” (Mohan14). It is understood in relation to the social and economic conditions embedded within a given set up. In other words, Marxist criticism is the study of literary texts taking into account the social, political and economic history in which the works originated. Literature is studied relation to the historical influence and its role of inciting aesthetic leisure to readers is secondary to it. Works are written with a cause, a conscience and a voice. Literature plays equal role in representations of dynamics in social, political and economic process of any state emerging out of capitalist tradition, competition and modernity.

2.4. Capitalist Tensions in *The Great Gatsby*

The Great Gatsby, one among the greatest American novels of all time, exhibits intense representation of capitalist power, materialistic obsession, struggle between rich and poor and the need for assimilation into higher social class under certain circumstances. This chapter will look into how the American writer Fitzgerald presented the ideology of his age, the silences, the repressed grievances, the socio-economic oppression, causalities and the overzealous inconsistencies, contradiction and conflict under the influence of his personal life and the historical situation of the 1920s. The main aim of this chapter is to focus on how the writer elucidates the functioning of capitalist ideas or elements and study the theme of social stratification and class conflict in justification. The need to identify social, political and economic issues and injustices, their symptoms and impact on various domains of life will help to understand the author's effort in questioning whether his representation of history in a particular way critiqued the capitalist order of his time. Fitzgerald happened to live a life witnessing the post war American transformation. *The Great Gatsby* became his weapon in dramatizing the roars of the 1920s with an innovative, deeply personal and brutal storyline influenced by his personality and vibrant surroundings around him in which he was personally immersed. In the manner of how the writer represents society, the study will be able to gauge the writer's position and his attitude to the capitalist way of life. The rich sketches of American characters, significant themes, powerful symbols and historical references imbedded within the novel legitimizes the role of literature as a part of a social cause. With class, aristocracy, wealth, capital and power, the study particularly concerns itself with the brutal depiction of individualistic capitalist ideology.

Set in the heart of booming America right after First World War, *The Great Gatsby's* most engaging aspect consists of its intense representation of socio-economic oppression and the brutal domination of capitalist power in influencing and determining one's life. Life as vulnerable as it can be, an individual strives to negotiate and transform in various aspects of life. The more people aspire to be successful and contended, the more are they subjected to greed, unfair means and failure. The American dream in the 1920s ambitiously influenced every citizen of America regardless of religion, race, status and occupation. To get rich or to attain comforts became the order of the day, encouraging ambition, hard work, dishonesty, individualism, greed and unequal distribution of power and resources. The socio-economic impact of that influence, therefore, provoked huge sense of instability, breakdown of human values, moral degradation and extreme competitive spiritedness which affected the nation. The novel serves to be the primary depiction of such phenomena personally tasted by the writer himself, colouring his characters with American standards and values and the consequences that came out of such excess and conflict.

Materialism is one dominant tension of the novel. It is a potent force in determining and sealing one's value and fate including existence. The novel is a representation of a booming exploitative environment where the rich ruled and the poor faced atrocities. Class and status are the counter parts. The characters engage in worldly adventures to the point of risking one's own dignity, welfare and life. Success and accumulation of wealth are pursuits represented in the novel driven by ambition. The writer in marking the age by his observations and consciousness makes him to be one of the leading makers of his age. The novel emphasizes the aftermath of the war years filled with enormous growth of economy, capitalist power and domination.

2.4.1. Stratification of Old Money and New Money

The classification of Old Money and New Money ignite tensions of stratification in the novel. The two economic classes equally possessed money, capital and power. However, they are divided in society due to the origin of their wealth or resources. The Old Money are the representative aristocrats whose wealth came in blood. They are born rich since birth. The New Money are the rising high class people who came from humble birth. It is an ironic representation that the two classes of people with equal possessions, money and success were rather differentiated or segregated on the grounds of lineage, birth or source of their accumulation. Though successful and rich, tasteful and powerful, a part of society disapproved of the people of New Money, their upbringing, mannerisms or lack of their aristocratic blood.

In the novel, the Old Money class lived in the vicinity of East Egg, a community of well-educated people boasting a bloodline with privileged economic resources, prestige, estate and fame “...across the courtesy bay the white palaces of fashionable East Egg” (Fitzgerald 7). They occupy the entire social sector exhibiting a sort of power enabling them to assert dominance and supremacy over the other community (New Money) though equally capable of money, resources as well as success. The New Money dwell in the West Egg, a part of town on Long Island, equally capable, well off American citizens with ambition, resources and wealth “...consoling proximity of millionaires” (7). The protagonist Jay Gatsby and Nick Carraway represent this part of town. The most intriguing part of their division rests in the source of their accumulated resources, enabling them to govern the socio-economic ladder and feeding the nation’s privilege in various domains.

The Old Money as powerfully and wastefully represented by the Buchanans exhibited high profile aristocracy and class, being nested in elegant wealthy families since birth. Daisy and Tom Buchanan are the characters who best represent the spoiled exploitative mannerisms of the East Egg. In the novel, they are equally money oriented and materialistic in any negotiation of life. They are the epitome of dominant, the reckless rich generation, outwardly bearing sophistication, sensitivity, virtue and respectability. However, in the darkest and deepest part of their masked persona, a part of their image appears susceptible to greed, selfishness, recklessness and ill heartedness in their treatment of less privileged section of society.

In the novel, Daisy as an aristocrat with an appealing and enchanting beauty uses Jay Gatsby (from New Money) as her bait in her inconsistent indecisiveness, earning the trust of Gatsby into sacrificing his livelihood and life. She never accepted his low upbringing. The moment she became conscious of Gatsby's birth, despite the initiation of blossoming love as young lovers, she open heartedly discarded him. However, when Gatsby gains prominence with wealth and material establishments later, she wishes their ignited fling and memorable lavish moments together lasts forever. As a typical member of the community of the East, Daisy manipulates Gatsby, his emotions, worth, livelihood, wellbeing, mental stability and his future. Her treatment of Gatsby in the novel becomes a vivid reflection of her domineering power in having an indirect controlling influence on him resulting in unfortunate circumstances such as killing of Myrtle Wilson in Chapter 7 "...her life violently extinguished, knelt in the road" (177).

Her actions, voice and personality imposes authority on Gatsby, making room to exploit and manipulate him, pressurizing him into something which would benefit herself. Being conscious of the fact that Gatsby ferociously cared for her, Daisy takes advantage of his unconditional

affection to the point of making him take the blame of killing off Tom's mistress Myrtle. Gatsby's death "heard the shots" (208) could be described as the climax where characters like Daisy from the Old reputed class exhibit immense power and control over the less advantaged section of society, reinforcing the capitalist with power in taking advantage of New money.

Her materialistic obsession which is described by Gatsby as, "her voice is full of money" (154) made her incompetent and deceitful. She made people like Gatsby inferior and damaged using her own liberation and power to control against the expense of powerless or less advantaged people around her. Her mannerisms or treatment of people are concretely influenced by money "... was full of money – that was the inexhaustible charm" (154). Her right to exploit or least, to accept people, depended on materialistic possessions because without such value transaction, people were close enough to be her slave, sacrificing life at the brink of danger. The exposition of her character in the novel provides insights about the power of wealth and how it exerts in influencing one's decision. Her decision on using Gatsby in the novel can be an example of such tension enabling the right to assert power in oppressing and pouring miseries so as to better herself.

Above all, Tom Buchanan surpasses Daisy's poor character in relation to the instances of mistreatment and subjugation in the novel. Tom is a dominant character and possesses immense potential economically and socially, managing great estates with a hidden vile ability to subjugate his inferior subordinates. A large part of his superiority lies in the accumulation of resources as a capitalist "enormously wealthy" (7) and his possession of Daisy, an extension of the same whom Gatsby coveted half of his life. Tom in his impudence mistreated the integrity of Gatsby (New money) in the novel multiple times. Chapter 7 of the novel discusses vividly the misdemeanors initiated by Tom towards Gatsby, provoking arguments and

conspiracies as to disparage Gatsby's worth in the realm of competitive social establishments which both are a part of.

At one instance, Tom reveals the truth behind Gatsby's rocketing business success which comes through illegal selling of liquor, "sold grain alcohol over the counter" (172). Tom mocks Gatsby's social status as a resident of West Egg. Though equally rich and successful, Tom vehemently pours justifications in an abrupt manner, insulting Gatsby's background where he incites that Gatsby could never pass the criteria of fitting into the royals, that no matter how equally equipped his material possessions be, Tom accuses they are different people from different class domains. In one incident, Tom laughs at the car owned by Gatsby calling it "circus wagon" (156) though equally expensive as his car. Tom's priced mansion also intimidates Gatsby in the novel, "I can't say anything in his house," (154) indicating a raw division, a consciousness that belittles him, an indication of his inferiority in relation to the domineering energy Tom Buchanan exudes. Gatsby's disapproval by the moneyed Buchanans is an indication of competitive socio-economic environment thrived by the capitalist setup. Tom and Daisy are equally the oppressor, the typical powerful owners or the rich who use their supremacy against the welfare of the victim for the betterment of themselves. Their brutal conspiracy and sacrifice of Gatsby to Wilson in the game of death suffice their unpleasant intentions, consumed by arrogance and snobbishness.

2.4.2. Socio-economic Oppression (Proletariat and Bourgeoisie)

The people of East Egg (Old Money) are the oppressor or the bourgeoisie who inflict pain and sufferings, who prey on the weak and the vulnerable. They are of the highest class in the hierarchical order of the novel with wide socio-economic privileges as well as determining

power which is able to override or disregard the newly evolved class (New Money) and also the lower strata that form the basis of society. The novel interestingly incorporates characters such as Myrtle Wilson and George Wilson belonging to the lowest section of the economic setup. They are among the oppressed, the less privileged populace struggling to fit into the rising social class with extreme strategies so as to raise up the bar. They are the representative proletariat who are ill fated, who suffer at the hands of the aristocracy. The image of their habitat in Chapter 2 reveals the poor living conditions, the gloomy social environment breeding dark and grim pollutants "...valley of ashes ...where ashes grow like wheat..." (29). This is indicative of the harsh effects of booming industrialization during the 1920s where the poor or the desolate resided taking in, the air of harmful smoke rising from the polluting economic sector inflicting harmful health issues and diseases. Likewise, the residences of these two characters seemingly inhaled bad sources of air. It was an indication of how lowly they were classified in the socio-economic domain.

George Wilson owned a poorly maintained garage where he earned his livelihood for his family. Likewise, Myrtle as a mere housewife had no source of income; she depended on the meagre wage her husband earned out of their poorly maintained garage. Both were vividly mistreated by the upper class society in different circumstances. Wilson gets played by superior Tom Buchanan, in making him believe that he could possess the expensive car which Tom owns "I've got my man working on it now" (32). In the novel, Tom's flattering promise of selling his car seem to be a show of his fake affectation, when in reality, Tom is not at all reliable of sympathetic intention in the entire transaction "maybe I'd better sell it somewhere after all" (32). Wilson as an underprivileged, his only source of income is from his little business setup and his rather friendly business relationship with the rich and dominant Tom.

However, behind Tom's virtuous façade unravels when he betrays Wilson and steals his wife from him with influence of power and money. This is an indication of oppression against poor Wilson, breaking off a relationship and provoking the institution of marriage, making him lose his only treasure. His suicide at the end of the novel "Wilson's body a little way off in the grass" (209) is also an indication of unjust and unfair lives of common people, where justice and equality are reserved for the refined high society.

Myrtle Wilson, the wife of George is also a character owned and used by the rich for their own benefit. Tom bought her body with his wealth manipulating her into assurance that he would marry her someday. She aspired to assimilate into the high class society. The pursuit of Tom provided a chance to come out from her sunken low upbringing, often supplying her with goods, pets and lavish parties which she only dreamed about. Her future depended on the assurance of marriage to Tom which she believed would come true. Nevertheless, as Tom gratified her material needs, it came with a price. In chapter 2 during a party scene, an aggressive tension between Tom and Myrtle is seen where his mistress badmouths the name of Daisy. Tom assaults her physically by breaking her nose drowning in blood "a long broken wail of pain" (48). This is a representation of the oppressive system the lower class people like the mistress experience, where the rich utilized the overall power of owning and using them for their benefit and discarding whenever convenient. Myrtle's existence depended on the generosity of the rich, even to the point of accepting severe physical torture and pain. This hierarchical system between the rich and the poor and the atrocities generated from such divisions are realistically expressed in the novel.

It appears that Jay Gatsby possessed all virtuous qualities, taking into consideration the treatment he received from the family of Buchanans. However, this observation is only driven

by his unconditional love of Daisy and his firm belief that his past could be repeated, “Can’t repeat the past? Of course you can” (142). Readers are astonished by his unfailing vision of hope and his ambitious pursuit for true love. The assumption is that he encapsulates the American Dream, the realization of becoming rich by convincing hard work. However, the deeper the novel delve into his anticipation of business dealings or the accumulation of resources, the readers are allowed to judge his character intimately, doubting whether he stands at the pinnacle of a true successful American story or whether he belong to the group of the moneyed Buchanans with similar dark secrets hovering within.

In chapter 7, the real occupation of Gatsby is revealed to the readers, a shocking truth to all, where he admits unapologetically of his secrets. His character is no less than the dominant Tom Buchanan himself. Gatsby is not new to oppressing the disadvantaged section of society. He equally participated in such situations, making people miserable and weak so as to benefit himself. He is rich, successful and famous for throwing lavish parties. Outwardly he seems generous without the slightest suspicion of corruption and ill heartedness. Inwardly, he is also a reason behind someone’s misery and hopelessness. Powerful and rich like any other capitalist, Gatsby uses his status, wealth and connections to free himself from legal dangers, a direct indication of oppressive domination he held against the less privileged. The incident where Walter Chase was put to jail so as to save himself from danger “let him go to jail” (172) elucidates the disruptive ability of Gatsby who is capable of corruptive motives and audacious illegal crimes which he carried without qualms. Money is a source of Gatsby’s comfort in concealing his corruptive acts. It is his dominant high status, a sort of an aristocratic energy which enables him to control the surroundings around him. Like the characters of Daisy and Tom, Gatsby also oppress the vulnerable, the less advantaged so as to preserve his wellbeing.

The Buchanan family's exercise of authority victimizes Gatsby to the fullest, making him look like the disadvantaged because of his inferior birth. However, in the same order, Gatsby also imposes authority on his inferior subordinates through acts of exploitation and maltreatment. Therefore, he is also an accomplice to the Buchanans in effect. Gatsby is also among the representative bourgeoisies (along with the Buchanans) exercising domineering power in a society where materialism help save their social, economic and political predicaments liberating them and empowering them the right to subjugate people to their advantage. Every character in the novel belonging to the rich class in society indirectly or directly inflict miseries and impediments upon each other, as well as upon people around them in certain situations or aspects for their own greed and advantage. Therefore, the contrast of the East and the West in the novel is a statement generating a conscious act of awareness against the existing socio-economic order, a reflection of American social setting in the booming 1920s fueled by industrialization and corruption. The realistic sketch of the two different economic categories in the novel is the representation of division influenced by American capitalist and the repercussions that allowed oppression and inequality.

2.4.3. Problems of Marxist Aspiration

According to Lois Tyson, the novel fails to further the Marxist position adequately. He brings forth several conditions of inadequacy in the novel's attempt to its Marxist take. One most apparent flaw of the novel from the Marxist point of view "... is the unsympathetic rendering of the Wilsons" (Tyson 73). It is true that George and Myrtle are portrayed poorly in the novel who represent the theme of poverty, an indication of lower section of society. Naturally the readers expect them to be different from the other antagonists in the novel, the rich class populace who are blatantly corrupted, greedy, materialistic and irresponsible. However, the

novel incites they are also characters equally driven by individualism, immorality, jealousy and devoid of the slightest respect for others. Belonging to the valley of ashes, they are conscious of their upbringing and miseries. Both sabotage strategies to raise their standard of living by means of dishonesty and posing as virtual parasites. Myrtle is seen as jealousy incarnate, indecent “carried her surplus flesh sensuously” (32), immoral and inconsiderate. Eleven years of marriage and living under the old garage with Wilson, she knew what she wanted in life. At first meet, she knew she needed a Tom in her life. Not only did she break her commitment to marriage with Wilson, she stole a married man. Her pursuit of Tom is highly immoral, aggressive and ambitious as it deepens “became more violent moment by moment” (39). Having to rise from impoverishment to little riches, her strategies include trading her body for expensive parties, gifts, security and a future. The more she saw Tom’s extravagant mannerisms; her desire to move into the neighborhood of East Egg became stronger, “it does her good to get away” (33). Her inconsiderate gestures towards her husband negate the ideal characteristics of a housewife, making her an unpleasant woman. The novel gives her an image of a loud, scandalous and jealous woman who is overtly ahead of her plans “noisy, cracking pivot” (39). This negative portrayal of the poor section of society overshadows the existing socio-economic tensions in the novel. If she manifested a character which is more virtuous, calm, hardworking or capable, the silences of the common section of society would have its own justifications.

In the same way, George Wilson’s character shares similarities with his wife. He is dependent on the promises of Tom. The readers expect him to be more diligent at his work though he is more of a better representation than his wife. As a victim of class oppression, the readers offer him a blend of sympathy because it is not his fault being a part of the impoverished residing in

the valley of ashes. However, he being a parasite in relation to the friendship he shares with Tom, making his wife take care of Tom when he visits the garage, with a motive of acquiring something for the family's benefit gives an impression that George Wilson is also equally represented negatively by the writer. The novel describes George as "spiritless man" (31) who feels hopeful every time Tom Buchanan visits his garage "damp glam of hope sprang into his light blue eyes" (32) indicating his dependence upon the rich people like Tom. If he could work hard and attend his responsibility severely in a more honest diligent way, the novel's position against the atrocities, discrimination, suppression, unfair or unequal treatment of the impoverished would have held its grounds. Its responsibility in challenging the existing exploitative socio-economic panorama becomes strained and unfulfilled as there is no strong opposition to the capitalist onslaught.

Ranging from the characterization of Gatsby's notorious actions to the Wilsons' weak representations, the novel fails to fully condemn the problems it challenges. In other words, the justifications of proletarians are dimmed or neglected by their own failings, vices and downtrodden values rendered. Therefore, at the end of the day, as quoted by Tyson, "we blame the victim instead of the system that victimizes him." (Tyson 74).

2.5. The novel's responsibility in representations of the rigid socio-economic oppression and its dynamics became more or less subjected to misjudgment and failure, a part that falls on the author in not pushing further the exposition of the existing ideology in which the novel was grounded. Its identification of problems and the scrutiny of such existing phenomenon became reserved only to certain judgments, marking the work less attentive, productive and revolutionary. The oppressive class system and its rather unsuitable approach of the presentations of characters delimit the ability of progressive tensions expected to be imparted to

the readers. The novel presents the American experience in its poetic use of description but there is a need to carry further the realistic validation needed in processing the novel which Fitzgerald fails to incorporate in his undertakings. As a part of a critique of American economy and capitalism, *The Great Gatsby* rightfully condemns the existing socio-economic milieu which Fitzgerald insisted and fostered partially. However, there are situations in the novel which take a reverse turn, losing its direction in pursuing its objectives. Gatsby is an imposter to the readers in effect, substantiated by juxtaposition of his character development from timid, generous and compassionate to rather deceptive, tragic and superficial. Most importantly, the lower sections of society are undeniably negative representations. Positioning them with the not so remarkable capitalist characters like Tom and Daisy marks the turning, neglecting the objectives the novel tends to impart. Thus, the novel tends to overlook strong voices of revolt and concerns itself with the stereotypes to point to the capitalist problems prevalent in America. The novel shares undeniably, the concerns of American social and economic injustices and the destabilizing repercussions, yet, as far as the representations are held accountable, the awareness it generates are far away from what Eagleton opines "...it calls on the writer to commit his art to the cause of the proletariat" (Eagleton 35).

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CHAPTER 3

EXTREME CONSUMERISM, INDIVIDUALISM AND COMMODIFICATION OF BEAUTY IN *THE BEAUTIFUL AND DAMNED*

3.1. Introduction

The Beautiful and Damned is the second novel published in 1922. The novel is a tale of American cultural phenomenon, a subtle portrayal of 1920s concentration of nation's journey to hedonism and boredom, most prominent among the class of rich. The novel is set in New York City involving socialites and moneyed elitists with reputation, beauty and riches. The characters Anthony Patch (protagonist) and Gloria Patch (heroine) belong to high class society. Anthony is a refined creation with an aura capable of breaking hearts. Gloria is equally beautiful with an extreme luxury most likely an ecstasy for men. They are a married couple who waits for their inheritance money (source of livelihood) from Anthony's millionaire grandfather Adam Patch. They aspire to survive life only through it. They involve in archetypes of lifestyle such as travelling, terrific consumption, leisure and parties. At the end of the novel, the couple gets disowned by the grandfather after discovering their insignificant and unconvincing lifestyles. Anthony deteriorates physically, emotionally and mentally. He becomes an alcoholic and withers away his youth. Gloria becomes old, weary and lives in misery.

The Beautiful and Damned is a work that deals with high fashion and beauty standards, elitism and breaking stereotypes. Anthony and Gloria are followers of high fashion standard living in an elitist town with mannerisms of the East overshadowing tradition and existing conventions. Anthony is a man without a vision. Gloria is an insecure woman driven by the ideas of

perfection and timeless beauty. It is a manifestation of timeless voices of the American generation of the twenties. Though the novel lacks the seriousness of *The Great Gatsby*, the novel vividly captures the sophistications and refined milieu of the society in sharp contrast to the stark representations or ideas the writer imparts. The novel is a timeless story of the superficial American pretentious moneyed class, swayed by extreme boredom, idleness and monotony.

The chapter will help unearth the novel's main concerns rooted in extremities of the time, the blunders and the reflections as a result of a peculiar phenomenon. It projects the glamour and the unconventionality of the new phase far removed from tradition and rigidity. The captivating and intimidating lifestyles, indulgence, material extravagance and social landscape of the characters are important in the study of themes in the novel. The novel is a written record of 1920s generation, a period of new awakening that shockingly shattered principles, orders and beliefs. What makes the work remarkable for discussion is the way in which the writer describes the American situation (the age) memorably all in its grandeur and in failure. With descriptions of attractions, influences and modernity, the novel also reflects empty dreams and empty pleasures. Fanciful descriptions of architecture, riches and language appeals to the readers. But the novel is also a work of intensifying emotions, waste, decay and breakdown. The theme of "Extreme Consumerism, "the era's championing "Individualism" and the inherent social hypocrisy behind America's "Commodification of Beauty" will be studied in the lives of the protagonists, Anthony and Gloria.

3.2. Extreme Consumerism

The novel is set in the heart of New York City. The novel depicts the American thirst for new lifestyles, new thinking, new aspirations and new vision. It is seen through a peculiar lens of embarking on a journey to success, living eagerly and seizing great times. The theme of Consumerism of individual characters is the focus of observation. The characters owe allegiance to concrete materialism and commerce. The study looks at the impacts or consequences the individuals undergo in relation to such influences, their connection to material influenced lifestyles and the outcomes of such indulgences. Consumerism in the novel is a part of American exposure to new facets of modernity in the twenties. The nation stood ambitious and liberal in embracing new influences and success. The idea of wealth, commerce and living standards in the novel are undeniably portrayed in relation to the nation's history.

In the novel, Anthony and Gloria live under influences of worldly materialism, sophistications, fashion, parties, alcohol and indolence. These factors define their life, fame and perfection. They are privileged enough to taste such influences from a very young age. Anthony grew up in a high class household. Gloria is raised by her two sophisticated parents in comfort. They know nothing about poverty, failure and hard work. Their obsession with luxury, money and fame begins from younger days and they become addicted to them in the long run. *The Beautiful and Damned* is a work contemplating human fascination with materialism, concrete inventions and the ultimate dependence on pleasures it exudes.

Anthony is a young, refined gentleman with an obsessive elegant lifestyle. His blood relationship with his millionaire grandfather Adam Patch enables him to nest in a luxurious household along with a negotiation for his future (money inheritance). He enjoys high

privileges and comforts. He lives in sophistication and vibrant surrounding filled with parties, pleasures and amusement. His life is a reflection of classy elitist behavior. It is seemingly admirable but is also addictive which he experiences in the long run. For example, the expensive, abundant and exquisite infrastructure where he lives is an indication of great consumerism. These concrete establishments or material exhibition are intermingled with eye appealing details in the novel, showing the lengths of consumption which the characters exhibits through their lifestyle.

In chapter 1, the novel vividly describes the superficial architecture where Anthony resides “...had fine ceilings and three large windows” (Fitzgerald 17). The intimate description of motifs and exhibition of beautiful decorations usurp the readers senses. They are indications of the era’s outbursts of material success, making the population hoard and attach great significance to such influences. The novel’s descriptions of Anthony’s “the sight of enormous...orange-colored standing lamp” (17) “...exotic rug of crimson velvet was soft as fleece”(17), indicates his attachment with luxuries. The descriptions of material lushness around the protagonist indicate his connection with material bearings. Without such privilege and accumulation, he thinks he is empty and deprived of elegance. He lives his life admiring, obsessing and attaching to material consumption. His life is all about his luxuries, lavishness and abundance, relegating human relationships, passion and friendships to become secondary. Anthony’s amenities in life are luxuries such as beautiful house, fancy clothes, expensive drinks, parties and spending. For him, such little things raise his standard of living. He is worldly, lacks values, talent, diligence and social skills. He knows only to consume riches and waste. And without such privileges, he cannot survive life.

The discussion lies in his excessive dependence on such consumption which includes the luxury, style and wealth "...it traces its protagonist ...brought on by too strong an attachment to money" (West 50). Anthony is a slave to his own habits of consumption. He lives as a heir to great fortune. It is his liberality which allows him to live differently in elegance. Anthony is wasted, materialistic and lethargic and the only key to his happiness and security is the inheritance. It is his grandfather's money that allows him to accumulate mansions, tubs, drinks, pools, halls, robes, library and other extravagant activities that he engages in. The novel clearly demonstrates the lifestyle of Anthony which is of extreme consumption. His renting of expensive hotels, apartments with eye catching descriptions of bathtubs, paintings, books, wardrobes to throwing parties and travelling are all extreme, expending and exhausting. Without his grandfather, he could not have pursued the feeding of his addiction to those concrete riches and maintain his elite status. Having to nest in abundance with infinite luxury and comfort under the shelter of his dominant rich grandparent, it is inevitable that his life has manifestations of reaching a certain level of standard.

When this consumption becomes Anthony's priority, he neglects his wife, family and work. He fails in many facets of life. As a grown man he is unable to provide security to his marriage financially. He has no work to earn "he did nothing" (22) and sustain his consumption. His lethargy and laziness upsets his grandfather and gets disinherited "he did it, God damn him" (242). His debts become high. When he cannot live without those privileges, he resorts to alcohol so as to better himself. He encounters poverty for the first time and his attachment with everyday luxuries and goods declines. It depresses Anthony, brings humiliation and collapse. His extreme fascination with the worldly, the glitter and modern consumerism is an addiction which he cannot live without. It poses as a factor which hinders his growth in life. His

extravagant indulgence hinders him from learning, experiencing and developing goals in life. His attachment with the commercial necessities and its temporary sustenance is a portrayal of the idle non-working American high class society and its ramifications such as unproductive lifestyles hindering progressions and goals in life. He suffers breakdown of marriage with his wife Gloria and his grandfather due to his extreme consumption. His self-absorbed nature and idle lifestyles makes him depend more in his indulgences and dissipation. His apartment, parties, drinking, travelling, fancy robes, mansion, library are all indulgences with which he lived half of his life. His deterioration at the end of the novel shows his failure as a result of his consumption.

An important image incorporated by the author in presenting the concept of consumerism is alcohol. The novel clearly depicts alcohol consumption in excess “smell of whiskey” (362), a vivid historical reference to the American society which embraced liquor as a desirable and commercially successful enterprise through which people got hold of huge capital. Anthony is a character with alcohol addiction “he’s been drinking here all day” (337), a habit that makes him physically and mentally unhealthy resulting in insanity. The references of characters with extreme indulgence in beer, wine or all sorts of alcohol indicts alcoholism responsible for the way to an empty, tragic and unhealthy future. Anthony’s uncontrollable addiction and dependence declines his health, relationships and life. His hallucinations “madness in his eyes” (364), extramarital affairs, insanity and damage to his mental health are results of his addiction. His parties are all vivid pictures of indulgences in alcohol “too great a fondness of alcohol” (West 50). He also influences his friends and wife to drink in huge quantities indirectly supporting their addiction as well. It acts as a source through which he gains temporary

happiness and peace. Anthony suffers from forms of addiction - material and alcohol consumption. Without such forces, his life is revolting, depressing and insignificant.

Drinking is a reckless pursuit destroying Anthony's life, morality, relationships, physical and mental health. His attachment with worldly and material pursuits deteriorates his life "I want some happiness" (251). The novel is a direct narration of high class sustenance. It entails their involvement in pleasures and consumption resulting in ultimate attachment to indulgences which lead to downfall of their lives. Gloria Gilbert also justifies the depiction of extreme consumption. She lives and acts like her husband. She equally consumes alcohol, smokes cigarettes, attend parties, wear fashionable garments and maintain high lifestyles and luxury. She spends money of her parents and lives a wild extravagant life. Their picture of wasting away time, travelling, changing of apartments, smoking, drinking and reliance on inheritance points to the theme of extremities of the upper class domain without responsibilities and management, "for them, their allurements are hotels, bars, cabarets, movie theatres and retail stores" (West 50) . Their habit of extreme consumption is a central idea in the novel.

3.3. Individualism

The Beautiful and Damned is a masterpiece that represents the idea of individualism. Anthony and Gloria are characters with their own freedom, rights, beliefs and principles. They are representative of individualism influenced by socio-economic changes and progress of post war America. Their lives in the novel are a reflection of America's individualism, freedom and liberation from bondage of tradition. The trends, fashion, orders and excess in the novel are reflections of independence of the twenties.

The protagonist Anthony Patch is a free willed character, despite his dependence upon future inheritance. Being left all alone after the death of his parents “had a horror of death” (14), he is sheltered by his grandfather. The novel sketches him as a survivor, a lonely soul without parental guidance and limited friendships “almost entirely himself, an inarticulate boy” (14). He is alone, confined and extremely reserved “had grown up alone had lately learned to avoid solitude” (30). By nature, he is unconvinced, unemotional and untouched by adversities of time. His luxurious lifestyle fills up these lacks in life “it was his pride, this bathroom” (18). He is emotionally detached and objective by nature and is a care free, independent individual with his own principles and will. His choices, decisions, his opinions and judgments in life are influenced by his individualism. He stands superior among his friends intellectually and maintains an elegant lifestyle “he became an exquisite dandy” (15) of his own.

His self-absorption and centeredness makes him individualistic and independent. He is a personality who places priority upon himself. He cares for his profit and advantage. He knows of his welfare and wellbeing. He is independent in his own way. His social status, luxury, popularity and social skills reflect his independence, confidence and arrogance. His journey or involvements in activities such as parties, intoxication, travelling, extra marital affairs and leisure points to his individualism and free spiritedness. As he stands in relation to what the era celebrated for (individualism), he is fully liberated from the bondage of tradition and social norms. His worldly adventures and indulgences indicate his unconventional outlook and identity. He is a man tasting the influences of his time, indulging in worldly activities without any hindrances from society, family and friends. In this sense, he is a reflection of America’s changing era where people explored the perils of independence.

However, there is no denying the fact that he is a failed individual who is incapable of sustaining his livelihood “you ought to do something” (20). It is the assurance of the inheritance from his grandfather that allows him to attain comforts, riches and resources. Without the money of his grandfather, he is a man of empty words, empty dreams and future. His deterioration “...bleak and disordered wreck” (333) at the end indicates failed individualism. He had not accomplished anything in life. He has no self-reliance and security to sustain his extreme consumptions. His extramarital affair and breakdown of relationship with his grandfather indicates negative representation of individualism. Without diligence, perseverance, efforts and hard work, he idles away the prime of his youth and experiences misery at the end of the novel. Without evidence of self-reliance which is a characteristic feature of what the notion of individualism supports, the creation of Anthony’s centralism is a subject of failure. His public image and mannerisms are just a part of what the era’s individualism looked like. However, the positive implications of individualism such as persistence, ambition and commitment are unimportant in his life. It is observed in the novel that he is never portrayed independent at his work; instead, he lives off lavishly by feeding upon the enormous wealth procured by his grandfather.

Anthony is not the only character who maintain or aspires to follow the principles of one’s choice and inert individuality. Gloria is a free spirited woman who leads an astonishing provoking life. She makes bold statements through fashion, beauty and independence and leads an easy life under the economic security of her parents. In the novel, she is described as “traveller of a nationwide notoriety” (57). She is a public figure who is known for her wild adventures and charm. She is appealing, fashionable and arrogant who has been freed from the clutches of social norms and expectations. She also stands in relation to the theme of

individuality. She is a character who lives in society with her own principles, opinions and rights without any hindrance. She is unconventional, modern and individualistic who has no intentions of living under the teachings of any social reformers as indicated in chapter 2, “I detest reformers, especially the sort who try to reform me” (55). She is detached, emotionally stunted, objective in pursuit of happiness and comfort. Without any constraints, she gets her wishes done giving a choice of individuality of her own. With her beauty, she fulfills her necessities, decisions and dreams. Her lifestyles involves drinking cocktails, cigarettes, skin tanning, attending showy parties, association with numerous men and her overall artificiality make her a representative of individualistic woman who lives a life of liberation and freewill. However, despite showing bold, overstated sense of emancipation, Gloria Gilbert remains ineffectual, pretentious and a failure as standing far away from other successful, free minded and self-reliant women (equally individualistic flappers) capable of great future and talent. In the novel, she depends upon her husband Anthony and parents for attaining her luxuries and comforts. She has no work or accomplishments in life. At the end, she becomes equally miserable like Anthony. She is a liberated woman with individuality but is an incapable individual who stands far away from the positive implications of what the notion of individualism imparts.

Both the characters enjoy their own freedom. In the novel, they engage in verbal fights and argue in heated conversations. Their absorption and arrogance provokes and intensifies such issues in their marriage. It might be a result of their individualist attitudes, living their own lives, having own rules and exercising their freedom. Their marriage stands cold and problematic (involvement in extramarital affair on the part of Anthony). In other words, their own individuality, style, choices, interests and fondness overshadows the indispensability of

their marital relationship and interconnectedness as partners for life. This unhealthy absorption or individuality dominates the novel as a part of the writer's representation of the age. They belong to the generation under the spell of outer sophistry, pleasures and misdirection paving way to the breeding of individuality, rather negativities and adverse influences in life. The novel is intimately a diary of characters and their journey towards the phenomenon of individualism which bears positivity and optimism. However in reversal, the novel is a tale reflecting the consequences that rise out of this new trend resulting in unfortunate events affecting lives.

3.4. Commodification of Beauty

The theme of Beauty is an issue of importance which the author directs in a form of hypocrisy, a social dysfunctional portrait in the midst of rising popular culture and fashion industry. The standard, worth and essence of beauty which became a phenomenon during the Twenties generated issues of validation, recognition and popularity, value and marketing and most importantly, the promises of a bright future. Beauty is a part of female persona as sources of inspiration, mystery and deception. It is through beauty that the joy of existence is experienced. In first chapter, the novel introduces the world of Anthony and the intriguing presence of 'Beauty' manifested as a person with a voice, claiming a future where it promises to reign the world "...you will be known during fifteen years as a ragtime kid, a flapper, a jazz baby" (32). Thereafter, the persona of 'beauty,' Gloria Gilbert is introduced in the second chapter as attractive, elegant, outgoing, audacious and appealing with a reputation for intense recklessness (38). She is the dominant portrait of the era's opinion on how beauty influences mankind, the beauty fashion industry, the socio-economic ownership and the overall survival and dependence on such admirable deceptiveness.

The novel speaks of the era's beauty standards, its deterministic market values and the fortune it bestows upon those who possess it. The phenomenon was not confined to female community; it equally had its functional application to the male residents which became a social tendency influencing people at time of industrial, commercial and cultural uprising. Tendencies or activities such as "tanning, flashing of skin by wearing revealing dresses, keeping short hair, smoking of cigarettes, making appearances in bars or clubs etc." (13) as described by K.B Sagert, became the order of the day making society susceptible to loss of moral values and principles, giving rise to insensible notions of commodification of beauty generating concerns.

In *The Beautiful and Damned*, Gloria is a woman with unreal beauty and untamed popularity "young beauty in the country" (72). It is her beauty (the only natural treasure) which makes her life an advantaged one, as without which her entire existence is undeniably affected. It is her beauty that makes her life easy and when such beauty fades, she lives in misery. She is fully dependent on it, undermining her other qualities and personality.

Beauty is just a part of human qualities underneath other dominant qualities, through which human beings evolve, learn and grow. In the novel, beauty itself do not help curb circumstances, ill luck and miseries of Gloria, though its essence looked admirable. Gloria is placed in relation to luxury, money, fame and success. She is an object of discussion for Anthony and her male friends and is treated as a beautiful woman without any sense of intelligence "... didn't have a brain in her head" (47). It is judgment of the male characters and their opinions about women that they laugh at their inferiority of knowledge. They gather jokes on her obsession of skin tanning, her legs, her age, her ankles, her whole body "...no by tan" (47) which is an indication of men's conscious desire, often hidden under their silly discussions. She stands as an object of observation from these self-consumed men who give out

judgments on her appearances and manners. She is a matter of importance only when the male characters party, travel or when they gather to discuss stories leisurely. Anthony's love for her is genuine and promising at the beginning. He loves her for her beauty at first sight which blossoms during their courtship leading to marriage. However, there are incidents where his love for her is questionable especially when he involves in extra marital affair. It is indicative of failing love and beauty when Anthony no longer sees Gloria as beautiful as he saw her during their first meeting. During the initial stage, Anthony feels intrigued by hearing strange interesting stories about her tanning legs from his friends as they converse. When they (Anthony and Gloria) are introduced by their mutual friend, Anthony is seen astounded by her beauty and her spirited opinions on certain societal rules and its bondage. Right after their lively interesting meet, they begin their sweet love story leading to serious marriage. However, their love for each other is a part of value exchange.

Anthony, here, commodifies Gloria. It is her beauty that attracted him towards her. He ignores and fails to notice the other innate qualities she possesses. In this sense, Anthony is a buyer of her, with his worthy riches such as the inheritance of his grandfather. It is the wealth and the material accumulation which catches Gloria's attention, allowing Anthony to freely sabotage his enterprise. The successful possession of her makes him more haughty and admirable earning him prestige among his friends (as everyone wishes the girl to be theirs). Her truest personal or self stands secondary to her husband. It is her beauty that makes her become important to Anthony. If not for her beauty, Anthony would have treated her indifferently at their first meet, taking into account the belittling conversations he engages with his male friends about intellectual incapability of women and the dissatisfactions that gives out in return. Gloria is nothing without her beauty "...has no sense of responsibility" (40). Their marriage

breaks down in the novel. This monotonous marriage life follows with multiple breakdowns and misunderstandings leading to unusual fights reflecting their incompatibility. Her beauty and confidence collapses when her marriage declines.

She is an object of Anthony's where the owner has the authority to decide whether to keep her or discard her anytime he wishes to. He replaces her by pursuing an affair with another woman out of their intolerable marriage and personality. This is an indication of her husband losing interest in his wife after getting conscious of her monotonous fading beauty. The first meeting and their overall fling is a progress compensated by Gloria's beauty and elegance. When her beauty becomes tiresome in the eyes of her husband, the overall relationship between them becomes wearisome with intense frustration and lethargy affecting their marriage. The total breakdown of the entire relationship between them indicates their incompatibility and the bleak future ahead of them. In exchange of security, sustenance and fame, she is made an object and is sold in market under the enterprise of Anthony who buys her for her beauty. But the transaction is subject to ill fate, dissatisfaction and a failure to both characters who wanted something out of each other. Their marriage is not necessary without such transaction. The deals or the proposition between them is what leads them into the contract of marriage. Gloria's beauty is the driving tool in such business production and the handsome heir is the dominant pursuer of such commodity.

However, the novel cannot fully blame the acts of what Anthony sabotages because a part of such action is done under the consent of the Gloria herself. She is a living beauty queen who is determined to earn her living by her own beauty alone. In the novel, she allows herself to be an object through which she gains resources. She is a girl without diligence and responsibility. She is confident enough to live her life by staying all pretty and tanned "...who made a living

directly on her prettiness” (36). This indicates how unwilling she stands in pursuit of her future, career and life choices through hard work and suffering. Instead, she sacrifices her gift of beauty to people who pay for it. Her dream of becoming an actress is a choice under the influence of her appearance. In the novel, her beauty is what threads her dream, her source of livelihood. She considers her beauty as a source of an income, a means through which her life is a successful story. Her appearance is what treasures friends, Anthony and her future.

Beauty is a force she depends upon to attend her requisites. She gains reputation, privilege and security within society with such beauty. In the novel she gets anxious of becoming old and grey worrying it might taunt her prospect in path to becoming an actress “...to have it grow ugly and shapeless” (171). Without her youthful beauty value, she is doomed, helpless and weary. She bears an opinion that her beauty should be the determinant factor in deciding her life, her story. Such opinion influences her to add value to her beauty allowing to commodify herself to those surrounding her. Anthony buys her for her stability, happiness and future. However, Anthony also fails to provide these promises in their marriage as he gets disowned of his riches.

Beauty is not the only quality which characters need so as to identify themselves and be successful. Characters like Gloria maintain a price for her beauty in exchange of something she wants. Thus, she considers herself as an object which she thinks people should pay a price for. Therefore, enabling people around her to use her at their own advantage. People around her commodify the beauty she carries. Anthony marries for her beauty alone. If she had her motivation and diligence, it is a hope that her life will be constructed differently. But she holds her beauty differently in the novel. She had high hopes of getting to share great wealth with Anthony, aiming a bright future. Nevertheless, it results in tensions ranging from marital fights,

emotional breakdown and loss of hope. Her dream of becoming an actress fails as she idles time away carelessly. Her marriage crumbles when her beauty fades away aching. The novel ends with her beauty fading away in old age. Actives such as beauty and wealth in the novel are temporary ecstasy “they fail and fade off” (141). They appear promising in the lives of the characters but are short living and ephemeral.

The work is a reflection of social superficiality where the institution of marriage became less important “I don’t want to have responsibility and a lot of children”(59) where the appearances of the world, the beauty and the glamour reigned the nation’s era for a generation “in appearance and reality...borrowed from beauty” (16). An example can be seen in the behavior of Gloria who thinks her beauty can help change her life, her future without having to struggle or work, “to be young and beautiful for a long time, ...to have money and love” (229). The heroine falls under the spell of such social setup and markets her beauty in exchange of sustenance and security. Beauty became a necessity and a prerequisite which made things easier for people, paving way to brighter things by just wearing it. This is also indicative of the era’s booming fashion industries where entertainment productions became popular especially among women. Women stars rose to prominence with their beauty, helping the industries or production even more economically successful. Gloria’s beauty and her dream of becoming an actress is a reflection of such times. American lives of Anthony and Gloria are driven by these influences.

3.5. “*The Beautiful and Damned* expressed a tragic vision of the consequences of the unfettered, misspent youth, failing to condone, while hesitating to glamorize the idea of young life” (Podis 74). Under influence of money and consumerism, the lives of Anthony and Gloria are unfulfilled and empty. Their sense of attachment with material world (consumerism) is

temporary in the novel and in effect, these characters gradually desire for value and happiness in life “seek the moment’s happiness as reverently and persistently as possible” (226). The path of individualism of the characters mean break from tradition and independence. At times, their individualism is taunted by an inner longing or need for social or family relationships. Both Anthony and Gloria inwardly seek peace and assurance; however, fail to attain as they are in constant retreat towards the temporary attractions and detachment. Beauty is superficially manifested and represented in their lives. Gloria’s beauty is seen in relation to exchange of security and prestige. The economic value of Gloria’s beauty in the novel also marks deceptiveness and profitability which both the characters pursue. In contrast, the characters also search for depth of human virtues and goodness, love and solace within such beauty. Though the work simply detects the negatives of beauty, individualism and consumption of the characters, there are also certain ways in which the novel imparts ideas of success and guidance. The stabilities and success story of Richard Caramal (friend of Anthony) and his rise to eminence as a writer bring ideas of hard work and inspiration. It brings a certainty to humankind, a striving for achievement within an environment filled with unfavorable influences. The life of Anthony’s grandfather Adam Patch stands as a force of guidance and tradition in the novel “reformer among reformers” (12), appearing as a sort of a dominant force protecting the new generation of youth “...the moral regeneration of the world” (12). The author also brings beauty alive upon the eyes of the readers with his descriptions of appealing American generation, sophistication and prosperity “by the lush language used to describe the world of leisure and luxury” (Tyson 76).

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CHAPTER 4

WAR, ESTRANGEMENT AND DISILLUSIONMENT IN *TENDER IS THE NIGHT*

4.1. Introduction

Tender Is the Night is an important fiction mastered by Fitzgerald at the time of his failure years as a writer. The book is genuinely his anticipated action directed under influence of his personal life in transparency, intermingled with characters provoking a sense of terrific aggressions, eccentricity and unpredictable events completing the novel in a rather tragic way. Sad and personal in nature, the novel is undeniably introspective, serious and maturing. Fitzgerald is poise and brutal in presenting a generation who are disheartened unhappy souls experiencing life after the devastating war. The novel mirrors scenes of marital infidelity, violence and killing, mental illness, moral degradation and exhaustion of humanity. The novel is the writer's most contemplative work outgrowing the other novels which he wrote ambitiously in strength. The novel intervenes the lives of interesting mysterious characters intensifying the plot interestingly. The work is known for its representation of intense and profound sketches of depression, provoking aggressions, emptiness and lack of spiritedness among the lives of characters. It is complex in its establishment of plot, travelling in time with the narrative of present to past, romantic in gifting the readers with love story and timeless letters and brutal in its depiction of the post war years. It is undeniably true that the novel is Fitzgerald's greatest accomplishment despite the ill receptions. From the poignant creations of the family of Divers to the personal ruination of Dick Diver (protagonist) and gradual improvement of Nicole's plight, the novel indicates theme of strangeness, change, disappointment, trauma and tragedy. The families of Diver, North, Mckisco, and Warren in the

novel are all estranged, broken and lost due to the war. Most importantly, the failure of Dick Diver (protagonist), aggression of Maria Wallis and Abe North are crucial in depiction of human sufferings and decline.

The chapter is responsible in bringing out the reflections of the Great War and its impact upon the new generation heading towards new phase in life involving physical, mental and emotional turmoil. The birth of notions of estrangement and disillusionment upon the minds of the characters, the changing environmental conditions, the challenging forces of modernity and the overall struggling conflicts are havocking orders making the lives of characters miserable. Out of war produced in humans, a feeling of distraction, aimlessness, loss of relationships and humanity. These tensions are determining factors in forming the subject matter of the novel where the writer infuses them with complexities of time. The novel is a product of war. It is a distinguished written story about the aftermath, the panoramic American view of life and people experiencing life in agony, remorse and violence. Without such aggravating factors, the work is just a specimen of beautiful scribble of words and bittersweet memories of romances supplied in intense narrative. The novel binds acutely of after war years in rapid pictures of turmoil, uncertainty and pain in the lives of characters placing them in situations unapologetically and depressingly.

Reading the novel in relation to the social and historical background in which the author amusingly took active participation, the study cannot deny the fact that *Tender Is the Night* is a masterpiece which is equally a great source of personal detailing of the author's fight for life. His lackluster unfortunate literary life resulting in failure is given an expression form through the life of Dick Diver who at the end of the novel becomes nobody in life. His wife Zelda's diagnosis of mental instability is seen through the characterization of Nicole Diver who is

portrayed in an unsound condition. The key to progress in the novel lies in influences derived directly from the writer's life and the unavoidable circumstances of the post war years inflicting the generation with new sources of pleasures as well as burden, innovations as well as disintegration and most importantly, independence as well as breakdown of principles.

4.2.War

The context of the Great War gives impetus to the development of the novel. Set in the aftermath of War in America, the novel is argumentative in portraying the effects of War upon humanity. The novel is a narrative of disrupted world with characters placed in many circumstances due to War. The way the characters act and live is under influence of War. Ranging from the protagonist Dick Diver to Nicole Diver, Rosemary, Abe North and other characters, they are American lives feeling a sense of dissatisfaction, dejection and pain. They are tourists who are visiting places, engaging in drinking, gossips, affairs, sexual pleasures and violence. Each individual exhibits emotional instability, neglect, longing, trauma, degradation, misery and aggression. They are sharp, violent, immoral, unkind and lost reflecting the debilitating effects of the War. The mental breakdown of Nicole Diver experiencing episodes of insanity indicates trauma. The random shooting of a man by Maria Wallis and brutal killing of Abe North are an indication of loss of humanity. The instances of extra marital affairs are a reflection of moral decline in pursuit of temporary pleasures. The brutalities of life make them rowdy, inconsiderate and lonely deprived of inspiration, energy and positivity.

The protagonist, Dick Diver and his life story represents the American generation of War. The novel describes him as a handsome man who works as a psychiatrist. His life is peaceful and perfect after having married a rich woman, Nicole. He lives in luxury with reputation and

admiration. Nicole and Dick are happily married, stable and successful. Dick is generally admired by people, and exerts upon others intimidation and envy. However, as the plot progress, he becomes weak, unenthusiastic and a failure. He turns into a fragile man terrified at the mysteries, miseries and complexities of life. He struggles with experience of hollowness, doubting his position as a man and a husband. In life, he becomes dissatisfied and disheartened. The novel shows instances where he feels unworthy and incapable. As a doctor, he confidently guides and cures his patients. Behind his work experience and outer portrayal of stability, there is another representation where he is depressingly incapable of many great genuine things. Being a doctor who heals mentally unsound and unstable patients does not necessarily mean he is liberated from experiencing vulnerabilities and pain. He is a doctor who cannot heal himself of his own miseries. This feeling of emptiness and the struggle of unspoken conflicts on Dick is an indirect effect of War.

War was such an unpleasant phenomenon which shocked Americans. Massive deaths, health damage, dislocations, destruction of landscapes, infrastructures and the overall bankruptcy impacted people. People like Dick are a part of this problem where the ruins of War indirectly impacts life. His lack of spiritedness and inspiration "...used to want to create things but now" (Fitzgerald 285) is the outlook of life he suffers from. His gradual withdrawal from his own surroundings makes him a man of his time, already losing faith in society. His journey to deep mental stress and vulnerability makes him lose his domineering personality and charm. He becomes susceptible to temporary pleasures of life. In order to escape from his personal torments, Dick involves in travelling with his wife and exciting adventures. His affair with young Rosemary disrupts his marriage with Nicole. He is a towering figure outwardly among his family friends and appears fit and secure. However, he is in gradual decline in spirit, in

health, in marriage and in life. Therefore, he engages in temporary pursuits in order to escape from such an unfulfilling life. His extramarital affair with Rosemary dooms him into unfortunate events such as divorce from his wife whom he still loves. He also experiences a mysterious murder scene in Rosemary's room allowing him to take responsibility in covering it. In effect, his separation from his wife makes him already dejected, lonely and remorseful. His witness of murder done by an unknown character puts him in danger because he becomes a suspect. His life is held in uncertainty and tension, fearing he might be put in jail. His relationship with his mistress also declines. Rosemary separates from him as she gradually discovers that Dick Diver is becoming less attractive, bitter and irresponsible. He inculcates drinking addiction "...half-pint of alcohol a day" (271) and dependence making him temperamental, aggressive and unstable. At the end, he wanders off to places away from his family and friends. He quits his profession "...felt the ethics of his profession dissolving" (273), instigates verbal fights with people, engages in empty sexual pleasures with multiple women and lives an unknown life in misery "into a lifeless mass" (273). Life is uncertain for Dick. From an energetic enthusiastic adventurer, he falls into addiction, separation, failure and depression. He has failed in his marriage and his career "I'm ruined" (284). He becomes an outcast far away from the world he once dominated. The novel never heals him from such torments and remorse. The ending story of Dick represents the 1920s generation in the path of misdirection and dilemma. His marriage is a failure, incidents involving jail, physical fights, insult of people and drinking during working hours are evidence of his deterioration "he was not young anymore with a lot of nice thoughts and dreams" (331). His temporary feelings of pleasures become harbingers of falling life and collapse. His miseries, grievances, aggression and addiction all stand in relation to the outcome of War.

Nicole Diver suffers from trauma and fear of men. One of the main cause of her illness rests in molestation by her own father Devereux. She is clinically treated under the care of her husband. The bathroom scene in the novel “control yourself” (119) exposes her illness when she undergoes episodes of insanity and breakdown. Her illness is an indication of trauma experienced by Americans after the War. Her incapability to express, her tearless cries, loss of hope and acute fear of men (as she is a victim of sexual assault) imitates the consequences of terrible war crises affecting life, marriage, health and future. Though she is a heiress to her father’s fortune, she is terrified at the world as she sees it. Her father sexually abuses her at young age that she suffers from unspoken pain, trauma and fear. Her lack of confidence, social skills and enthusiasm shows her soul chained due to trauma and she is incapable to set free. Though she travels with her husband across places to relieve her pain, grievance, sorrow and fears, she suffers from frequent breakdown and episodes of extreme insanities. She quarrels with her husband, cries in pain and feels distanced from her own surroundings. Infidelity of her husband hurts her and in turn, she is empty and insecure of her safety. Later, in the novel, she engages in an affair with Tommy who accepts her ailing health and weakness. The marriage of the Divers dissolves “we’re both ruined” (291). They change their priorities as the husband is fully engrossed in protecting his mistress with the unexpected murder incident and Nicole draws attention to Tommy who pursues her. Her story is also a representation of psychological effects of War through which people suffered deadly traumatic experiences and brutalities.

Her story also gives a brighter side of the novel. In book 3, she completely frees herself from mental instabilities and trauma “Nicole’s not sick” (255). Her health progresses in speed. She finds her love Tommy who genuinely accepts her insecurities and illness. She gradually becomes social and responsive towards her surroundings. She frees from her own torments,

pain and lethargy. She survives the era's tensions and complexities. Her total emancipation from miseries and crises incites a ray of hope, regeneration and optimism in the midst of chaos and sufferings "she seems hopeful and normally hungry for life" (141).

The side story of Abe North is crucial to the theme of war. He is a victim of tensions generated by War. A known musician by nature, Abe is not new to sufferings in life. The novel describes Abe as "one of the saddest faces" (9). After sudden loss of interest in music "he's a rotten musician" (11) "composed nothing for seven years" (16), he turns to drinking as the chief reliever of his humiliating life. He is mistreated by friends and family around him because of his drinking and anger issues. His drinking habit makes him problematic and disturbing. He distances from his wife and friends "tired of friends ...women's world" (86). He engages in violence and commotion away from his friends. The act of his withdrawal from every aspects of life such as career as a musician, his duties as a husband, as a friend in his friend circle, his overall role as a man of his time all lies in the insignificance of War. It is an indication of how men of its time experienced a sense of dejection and loneliness within the harsh physical world. Standing right at the heart of riches, fame, adventures and talent, a man like Abe North is a result of the breakdown of human conscience and loss of inner hope, transforming him into some unrecognizable, unhappy random human being involving in conflicts, alcohol addiction and violence. He is driven by aggression and brutalities. His instigation of physical fights and substance abuse are forces of escape for him. He stands uninspired, lost and broken far away from affection "Abe made a gloom figure"(85). Life is painful and empty for Abe. His repressed anger and dissatisfaction makes him violent and vicious. His unexpected brutal death in book 2, "beaten to death" (214) signifies uncertainty and he ends his life as a victim of War.

The plight of Dick and Abe represents American lives after war. The vacancy of the world is seen in their lives. Their unrest, agonies, negligence, choices and actions are complexities of lives after War. All characters in the novel vacationing in the French Riviera are imperfect, depressed, hungry and empty tourists who are dissatisfied with the way they lead their lives. They are travellers busy involving in fights, violence, extra marital affairs, seduction, breakdown, divorce and drinking. They are all damaged, unhappy, incapable and weak. The conflicts, hopelessness, sickness and exhaustion of the characters are undeniably repercussions of War.

4.3. Estrangement

Living in war shocked era, the characters in the novel seclude themselves as a part of their lifestyle. Detachment and breakdown of human relationships are a part of estranged nature among the characters. The more they stay together, there is always a sense of disconnection, breakage and distance among them. They stand alienated from families, friends and the world.

Family relationships are portrayed strangely. The family of the Divers is challenged by infidelity, lack of communication, problematic emotional and mental exhaustion and failure. Dick and Nicole are two love birds in a happy marriage with two kids, living under the greatest luxury. However, as the story progresses, Dick is tempted by a famous, free spirited and appealing Rosemary Hyot. Nicole is deprived of love. She precedes an engaging secretive affair with Tommy Baraban. As both parties make their boundary of respecting each other's privacy, their relationship becomes extremely empty and loveless "they possessed no future" (86). The breakdown or loss of past memories, closeness, communication and tenderness estrange them from each other "one could not reach the other anymore" (284). It results in

unhappy failing life of Dick who at the end withdraws from his family, friends and society. He plunges into the world of depression devoid of any helpful relationships to guide him. As of Nicole, she is fortunate enough to start over her life conquering her illness. The Divers are incompatible and distanced as a couple fading away from affections and care. The act of distancing, retreating and ignoring each other's values, dreams, needs and life reflects their estranged nature from each other. Besides, the loss of spirit, inspiration and purpose of Dick indicates estrangement from the normal facets of life. In this sense, the protagonist stands isolated from his surroundings. He distances not only in human relationships but also against the world "...living a world completely his own" (320).

The family of Abe North and his wife Mary North experience the same crises. Their relationship is driven by a sense of degradation and irresponsibility. They clash in opinions, engage in verbal fights and experience failing love. They neglect each other and take no responsibility in working their marriage. The wife feels embarrassed of her husband's rowdy behavior. Therefore, they stand distanced, bearing each other's grievances. The couple is estranged from one another. They deal with their personal conflicts on their own and live together in misery and stress. The husband involves in addiction, physical acceleration and violence all over. The wife is dissatisfied in her marriage and plans to divorce him. Thus, their family relationship worsens. They show no affection and care for each other feeling rejection, loneliness and detachment. The death of the husband in New York is the climax of strangeness of their lives. With the sudden brutal killing of Abe, the tormenting and obscure relationship resolves to diminish. The Norths are family with uncompromising relationship and awful miseries. Their relationship dissolves in time. Abe alienates from his wife as well as his surroundings. His sense of dejection starts from his marriage. As of Mary, she gets a chance to

start all over again, marrying a rich man and changing her life afterwards. Her freedom in the novel gives an assurance of hope, an affirmation of life within a conflicting world.

The family of McKisco undergoes same crises. Albert McKisco is a man with a success story and a well-established career as a writer. However, his relationship with his wife Violet McKisco is estranged. He stands far away from his wife. They live a loveless married life “...married twelve years, nothing serious but drifting apart” (48). The wife is unpleasantly a picker, irritable and outwardly social. Her husband negates her gossips. He distances from the sight of his wife. They are a married couple who distances away from each other so as to make themselves feel peaceful, worthy and insulated from prying people. Their verbal fights indicate conflict and miseries, “Mrs. Kckisco were a signal that such a detachment from the world had been attained” (36). Albert alienates from his surroundings and groups. He is a depiction of depressing human separation from the world which is full of disappointment and despair. Nevertheless, McKisco’s recognition as a writer at the end of the novel gives some optimism for escape from oppressive depression. His story in the novel encourages the brighter side of the world which people have so far forgotten.

Other characters such as Tommy Baraban, Baby Warren, Freeman and Devereux Warren are all estranged in their own way. Tommy is a soldier who alienates himself from certain social situations already feeling a sense of dejection “I have no home” (32). His sense of isolation and pessimism are dominant. Baby Warren, sister of Nicole Diver, is robbed of social interactions and disapproves people around her. She derives satisfaction in her wealth. Her relationship with her sister Nicole is estranging. Though siblings, they completely withdraw from each other and are deprived of each other’s secrets and disapproves of their choices. Baby Warren is oblivious of Nicole’s sexual assault by their father, instead, she blames Nicole of her mental diagnosis.

They are incapable of love and bonding. Baby Warren denies affections and support and distances from the outer complexities of life. Freeman is the black man who goes to jail under false accusation of robbing people. Freeman represents the order of human rejection from the existing social and physical world. His story depicts justice which stands weary and desolate. His imprisonment due to wrong accusations indicates a sense of alienation in his existence. He is completely ignored by his own surroundings, discarding him of interaction and support. Devereux, father of Nicole sexually assaults his daughter. He is, therefore, alienated from his daughter and exists in darkness, rejection and seclusion. He dies in isolation without his family.

Therefore, the novel narrates estrangement in the lives of its characters. It is seen in family relationships where couples alienate each other. The characters are victims of their times. Their dreams and hopes are broken and shattered. They flee away from the physical world. They neglect and ignore each other. The breakdown of relationships, friendships and rejections are tendencies of estrangement. The Divers, the Norths and the Mckiscos are all families already estranged in their own ways. They withdraw from responsibilities, norms, laws and institutions. They distance further away from love, family and physical world without any obligations binding them. They have money, fame, talent and beauty making the best of their times. However, they are empty souls experiencing rejection from each other and the world. They withdraw from society, institutions, obligations and family relationships. They are in constant retreat towards the shadows, far away from human relationships and the physical world.

4.4. Disillusionment

Disillusionment is another tension seen in the lives of the characters. Disillusionment is manifested in the form of bitterness, violence and total lack spirit. The feeling of sadness,

discouragements and dispiritedness are common in the novel. Dick's life is a reflection of disillusionment. His initial feeling of disappointment in life starts when he engages in a sexual relationship with Rosemary Hyot. He involves in this relationship due to boredom. He thought his life will experience greater adventures and gratifications. However, as he initiates this physical relationship, he realizes that it is bringing him trouble, complexities and unwanted dramas in life. The affair frees Nicole but he suffers from feelings of guilt and remorse. On the other side, Dick is unsure of his affection towards Rosemary making him inconsiderate in her eyes and thus, she also leaves him. His involvement in this relationship disillusion him. It changes the way in which he represents himself to the world. His resignation from his work deepens his disappointments in life. He no longer believes in his career as a doctor and stops curing people. He develops addiction making him destroy his friendships with colleagues and families. He stands alone in distress without motivation and happiness. From an extraordinary lifestyles, popularity and admirable persona to an isolated and unknown, he stands completely disappointed in life, bitter in heart and cynical in outlook. Disillusioned Dick does not find peace and joy in living. He thinks the world is brutal, desolate and weary. He resolves to travel across America far away from his loved ones. He disappears into the world of oblivion where he resumes to withdraw away from fruitful existence. His downfall, addiction, extramarital affairs, loss of friendships and family paves the way to his disillusionment in life.

Not only is Dick deprived of happiness and fulfillment, there are characters who are equally disillusioned with the world, the natural forces and social environment surrounding them. With fading human relationships and social decline, the other characters also experience greater influence of disillusionment. Rosemary, Maria Wallis, Abe North are all displeased and disheartened in life. They share the same plight of severe grievances and despair. Rosemary is

the young lover of Dick passionately in love. She represents her world filled with ambition, fashion, parties and luxury. She assures that life with Dick will provide her with unconditional affection and sincerity. Her opinion of Dick rests upon promises of his companionship and love. This expectation comes with rather disgruntling insincerity and hurt. She realizes he never loved her. When attraction becomes empty and when she becomes conscious of his failing inconsideration, she experiences dissatisfaction and frustration. She realizes Dick is an inconvincible man who was drawing nearer towards the edge of losing himself. This failed relationship changes her views on marriage and love affairs. She does not believe in love and affairs. She refrains from such involvements in the later part of the novel. She is disillusioned from such experience, involves in other love affairs idly, losing her decency and moral limits as a result of failed relationships. She represents the breakdown of society's moral ruination which paradoxically brought American liberation from the bondage of tradition. Her story is a depiction of how people were strikingly influenced by the new facets of modern influences such as freedom from moral stagnancy and tradition. People like Rosemary stand far away from protection and guidance against the forces of an uncertain world. They become disillusioned in tasting such influences which turn out to be disheartening and awful. She aspires less and worries more when she grows mature. Characters like Rosemary represents the world's frustration, collapse and bitterness of having to explore new varieties of influences making them feel disillusioned and vulnerable. Living without proper guidance and getting to experience worldly influences at such young age, Rosemary is the representative of a generation who are withering away after the experience of temporary pleasures, infusing in them long lasting disillusionment.

Maria Wallis is also not new to disillusionment. She is miserable with an acute sense of violence. She is disillusioned of her own existence. Her life is nothing but a matter of pain and darkness. She is an example of a character standing away from the world of amusements, excitement, dreams and fascinations. Instead, she stands for the distanced, agitated and disillusioned providing her the freedom to act violently in despair. In the novel, she is seen shooting a man in a train station without the slightest hesitation “two revolver shots cracked” (88). She is another character with feeling of utter disappointments, dejection and emptiness holding onto a gun in desperation to act in violence without restraint. She belongs to the disillusioned generation under the influence of violence and severe destruction allowing themselves to randomly kill people anywhere. Standing unloved and lost, characters like Maria and Abe live under certain ruins of violence and anxiousness, crippling them of brighter things and promising future. Their sense of fatal and gloomy tensions, especially where Abe is seen clashing and provoking people in extreme acceleration, depicts the disillusioned, dispirited sense of feeling. It deprives them of adequacy and meaningful life. Every step or actions they involve within life are met with little or more discouraging rejections. Such experience transforms them into failed individuals. Tendencies and movements such as violence, affairs, killing, travelling and consumption are results of disillusionment in life. Some characters never liberate themselves from bitterness and defeat till the end of the novel. Some experience brutal death.

Characters such as Nicole Diver and Mary North are some among few people who survive and overcome life's disappointments and dejection in the long run. Their improvement and emancipation from existential struggles and complexities stand far away from those characters who have failed in life. Misery, failure, abuse, addiction, violence, alienation and lack of spirit

are all forces of disillusionment in life. Fitzgerald's characters experience genuine pressures due to the world, the War and the overall complexities of life. They are normal human beings witnessing terrible life issues, trauma, violence, immoralities, tragedy, despair and depression. They lose faith in the world, optimism and hope for the future. The emotional, mental and physical damage lives with them forever. The author places them in harsh physical establishments and environment. He portrays them with different life stories and experience. They live in pain, boredom and dilemma. They experience failures, death, joy, independence and realities of the aftermath. Engagements in worldly pursuits such as drinking, sexual encounters, affairs, travelling and parties allow them to ease their stress temporarily.

4.5. *Tender Is the Night* is a work that wholeheartedly anticipate ruins of war, estrangement and disillusionment. War is the central idea through which characters act and live differently. The story of the Divers is a realistic representation of human suffering and hollowness which Americans experienced after its victory in War. The withdrawal of the protagonist from his family, wife and society is an indication of the collapse of humanity. His failure in every aspect of life is a depiction of human dispiritedness and loss of direction in the midst of a roaring environment. The extreme violence and aggression of Abe North and Maria Wallis represents the brutality and mundane experiences of human existence. Their repressed anger, pain, emptiness and sufferings provoke them to become heartless, violent and rough. They are all indirectly the victims of War. The trauma and fears of Nicole is also a consequence of War. Estrangement and Disillusionment are also effects of War upon the minds of people who stand vulnerable, weary and lost. The characters live in a world of emptiness where they feel the perils of isolation and dejection far away from regular interactions, affections and responsibilities. Family relationships, love and friendships are disconnected. There is a rift

which separates the characters from each other in their world. Without obligations, norms and orders to guide them, they live by their own choices, decisions and will. Their actions, manners and stories depends on such independence. Their alienation, complicated human interactions and feelings of discouragements are all valid depiction of impacts of War. The pictures of momentary indulgences of the characters indicate their empty lives. Mystery, killings and fights in the novel portray uncertainties and weariness of the world.

However, the novel also liberates some characters from mental illness, lethargy, pain and agony. Nicole's survival from torture and instabilities of life generates a touch of optimism and a sense of total wellbeing "Nicole had been designed for change" (298). Albert Mckisco's successful life as a writer at the end of the novel assures of another brighter side of American world in hope "...possessed more vitality" (220). Mary's freedom from her marriage and starting over her life again indicates renewal despite brutalities and gloom. Their victory in overcoming despair, monotony, illness and abuse against the backdrop of war is an indication of regeneration of hope, dreams, aspiration and optimism "past were forgotten" (220). Their stories are restoration of lost lives, health, love, relationships and humanity in the midst of conflicting environment. Therefore, the novel also infuses ideas of optimism and hope within a brutal collapsing world. In the same way, the novel is provokingly sensitive, brutal and tragic. The root cause of the overall tensions in the novel rests on the implications of The Great War "there's a war- there always is" (32).

According to James H. Meredith , "Fitzgerald did not write combat literature that emphasizes the naturalistic aspects of modern war" (192) " ...but did write about the aftermath of World War I" (192). Therefore, *Tender Is the Night* is a novel written realistically about the post war American situation after the War, experiencing its effects within society. The sufferings of the

characters in the novel are genuinely a reflection of complexities within such established society as a result of the Great War, “Fitzgerald’s sensibilities always favoured social issues” (Meredith 197). “Fitzgerald’s works concentrates on the bitter peace rather than the bloody war” (Meredith, *Fitzgerald and War* 165). It is important to note that the novel vividly depicts the society after war, its complications such as breakdown of relationships, disappointments, alienation, decline and violence as Meredith says “*Tender Is the Night* illuminates how bitter the post World War I peace became” (Meredith 197).

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CHAPTER 5

DIMENSIONS OF SELF- DISCOVERY IN *THIS SIDE OF PARADISE*

5.1. Introduction

This Side of Paradise stands the brightest among Fitzgerald's literary creations marking the beginning of his popular establishment as an American writer with potential and youthful aspirations. The debut novel celebrates the creation of Amory Blaine in perfection based on his memories of Princeton University, love affairs, academic adventures, War and failures in life. Set in post war era, the novel is rich and successful in presenting the protagonist who experiences pleasure and pain, love and remorse and contemplation and failure. The work is a typical representation of a young man who excels in social manners, literary pursuits and fails in relationships and life. His journey from happy childhood to cynical adulthood forms the main idea in the novel.

Amory Blaine is a young, good looking sophisticated man of his time who gains liberation at a young age with many worldly influences, surprises and interactions. Starting from ordeals in life to complexities, Amory learns to appreciate things in life, transforming and maturing in outlook and character. It is important to examine his personal conflicts, tensions and circumstances as tools of his transition. His maturation means his self-discovery, realization and identification of his character. His purpose, dreams and failures are equally important in justifying the transformation of Amory. There are factors which help Amory transform in life. His love affairs, family relationships, friendships, social class and academic journeys are important encounters through which he attains self-discovery. His role as a lover, as a friend, as a son, as a competitor and as an individual holds an important place in examining the

dimensions of his discovery. The novel celebrates the genuine growth of Amory's character. Growing up in an unanticipated world alone, he liberally engages in numerous worldly attractions, ventures and pleasures during his youth. Involvement in travelling, affairs, friendships and War are all influences in his life. He gradually evolves to understand the realities surrounding his existence and contemplating life, finally accepts himself as an imperfect man of his time.

There are three stages which influence him to change, grow and discover. They help Amory attain maturity and growth, develop character and find equanimity in contemplation. The three stages are:

- i) The relationship period where he involves in numerous love affairs as a part of his youth.
- ii) The War period where he enrolls to serve his nation.
- iii) The older years where he wanders to places contemplating life.

5.2. Relationship Period

The Relationship period is an important phase which helps in shaping his character. Amory's experience of love and its impact reshapes his life. Love is an important theme which helps the protagonist to experience commitment, responsibilities, pain and discovery of his vices. There are four different female characters who shape the life of Amory at different intervals and circumstances. They exert an influence in the path of his character development. Amory is a young man who involves in numerous love affairs without any sense of commitment and sincerity. He stands in relation to pleasure and temporary enjoyments in life. He engages in relationship with women of different upbringings, personalities, beauty and ambition. They are

the driving forces through which he learns about his character and experience of life. Through relationships, Amory matures in life. Each of the female characters contributes in taming the arrogance, immaturity, irresponsibility and self-centeredness of Amory. They equally expose and amend him.

With Isabelle, Amory embarks on his first relationship during his younger years. She is a prominent figure in the novel yet not as ambitious as the other female personalities. However she mirrors the mannerisms and traits of Amory sensitively. This relationship is one sided as for Amory, it is unnecessarily plain and loveless. Being young, their love is a matter of temporary attachment often described through scenes of participation in parties and night outs. Book 1 details their growing affair with exchange of love letters. In this relationship, they explore each other's personality traits. She makes him aware of his incompetence, inconsiderateness and arrogance. The presence of Isabelle makes the plot uncover small details of Amory's character. In chapter 3, she calls him "...conceited" (Fitzgerald 69) and claims that he is absorbed and "critical" (69). He is astounded by her observation. He questions his character but he also realizes that he has no care for Isabelle "not an ounce of real affection" (68). He questions his role in relationships whether he is capable of loving as normal people do "...whether he was after all, temperamentally unfit for romance" (69). In this relationship, he sets the path to identify his character slightly.

In book 1, the conversation with his friend Alec proves his immaturity. When asked of his marriage with Isabelle, Amory stands distanced in utter lack of interest and answers "but marry—not a chance" (60). It is indicative of his empty affection towards his lover and a picture that he is still young, interested in other pursuits rather than settling down. The presence

of the first girl in his life does not influence much of his development. However, this first relationship paves the way to serious life lessons and failures for his future.

Isabelle stands uncorrupted or uninfluenced by the material possession of Amory. In book 1, Anthony becomes mildly conscious of his father's riches and its downfall because of bad investments which he discusses with his friend Alec (60). However, his weary mind stands temporary as he is just a twenty year old college student who is contented in literary pursuits, affairs and friendships. Therefore, the dilemmas of the future, marriage or economic stability are less indispensable for Amory at this stage. His temporary attachment with Isabelle does not impact much on his life and character development. It only reflects his initial growing years involving his first experience in relationship and the feeling of emptiness that comes out of it. At this point, he is growing and experiencing worldly adventures. His character is ready to progress and is bluntly enjoying life. He learns about his arrogance but he is not ready to accept it. His fling with Isabelle opens a new phase of life for Amory in disguise.

Amory initiates his second affair with Clara. She is described in the novel as a deep, graceful and responsible woman with family values, diligence and dignity. A mother of two children and impoverished, Amory pities her plight. Her character stands in contrast to Amory in many ways. She is challenging to Amory because she is equally intelligent as him. She draws him to love, deep conversations and beauty which he lacks in. In this relationship, he truly discovers his vanity which is "painfully conceited" (105) and which Clara insists in their conversations. He learns about religion, morals and duty. Her love for Amory is pure, innocent and deep whereas Amory's love for her is consumed by hasty attraction, leisure and admiration. She changes the protagonist's emotions which are symptoms of confusion, carelessness and flattery. Through her, he changes as an individual. He slightly believes in love and romance. In this

affair, Amory changes his casual outlook towards love. His character develops as a man. He learns to live genuinely and live in guidance through faith. This affair helps Amory's personal growth in love, in life and in character. He also realizes that he is deprived of genuine companions who keenly "interested him" (104). He becomes conscious of his egotism and learns to reflect about himself. Temporary pleasures no longer excite him. He is encouraged to live life differently. He views life as promising and his pride as brutally existent. He learns to taste life. However, the old Amory still lives in him who is bashful, lazy and playful.

His ultimate maturation or development comes from his third love affair which he initiates passionately during his final years in university. This relationship influences him to dream bigger and live life diligently. He fully matures when he falls in love for the first time "she had taken the first flush of his youth" (155). He changes his directions, plans and life entirely. Rosalind stands as his third love interests who completely influence him to think and act practically. The advent of their relationship gaslights the life of Amory. He slowly awakens to the practical world ruled by the material, intelligence and status. The enormous privilege of Rosalind foreshadows the versatility of Amory. He realizes he is reckless, incapable, unkempt and idle. This courtship enable Amory to question his position (he realizes he has not established his career). Therefore, he has nothing to offer "who hasn't a penny to his name" (141) Rosalind whom he wishes to marry. During this affair, he realizes he has neglected his time and his life. At the age of twenty three, Amory Blaine matures as a practical man. His emotions are intense and his vision appears clear. He is ashamed of his life. He is rejected by Rosalind's unconvinced mother as she wants her daughter to marry only moneyed suitors.

In this relationship, there are fundamental changes in Amory. Firstly, he no longer craves for empty romance and engagements. He learns to value responsibility and hard work. He exhibits

sincerity, inspiration and practicality in contrast to his former traits of cockiness and recklessness. Secondly, he is conscious of his socio-economic status. He realizes that he has no wealth and power to sustain the luxury Rosalind needs. Economically, he becomes aware of his empty capital and prestige. Amory also aspires to be rich and successful “dreams of becoming suddenly rich” (137). He wants to hold a dignified job and attain superiority and he wishes to provide a home to his lover, “such love leads Amory to thoughts of settling down, finding a job, getting married, raising a family” (Burhans 613). He is no longer unfit for commitment and marriage. Rosalind matures Amory. The sudden urgency to uplift his livelihood and revive his overall wasted years is the maturation of his character. The character which once displayed boredom, sluggishness, over confidence and absorption diminishes and begins to exhibit a personality of diligence, sensitivity and acquiescence. He gradually accepts his plight of limited capital and collapsing reputation.

The presence of Rosalind awakes the protagonist of his failing years and he also resorts to start over in life. He is now a responsible person who questions his existence. Thirdly, Amory journeys to self-discovery by which he holds himself responsible for not accomplishing anything in life. He accepts his failure in losing Rosalind to one wealthy aristocrat at the end of the novel. Her presence allows the protagonist to question his accomplishments as a man of his time. He concludes his character as disruptive, unworthy and disastrous. He withdraws away from his surroundings, out of his miseries and pain. Now, he thinks maturely and perceives things sensitively. He regrets slacking away youthful days. He stands apologetic and remorseful of his past and wishes to amend his mistakes. He is emotionally maturing, mentally articulating things and becoming an adult man through experience of true love, humiliation and collapse.

The final love affair he initiates at the end of the novel centers around the audacious woman who poses as a challenge to Amory in personality, knowledge, attitudes and lifestyle. She is what Amory lacks and fears in life. He fears and feels overwhelmed to be a part of her relationship. Amory gets involved with Eleanor right after he breaks off the relationship with Rosalind. Eleanor influences the protagonist to taste the adversities of circumstances, ill luck, and wilderness of nature, intellectual growth and unbound moral conduct. During his courtship with her, he progresses and invents his final self. Amory Blaine is now a fully grown individual with an inferiority complex harboring dissatisfaction, intellectual paucity and loss. He realizes that in this relationship he is no longer that young witty youth who once possessed energy, sheer interests and skills to survive.

The novel describes Eleanor as “magnificent and a witch” (170), who “gave other people thrills” (171). She is an independent, courageous and unrestrained woman who stands differently against Amory in opinion, character and actions. Together they show a sense of total wildness, intelligence and darkness. For Amory, to fully accept her became burdensome and problematic. The more she expressed her free spiritedness and engaging thoughts, the more the protagonist realizes that he is inferior in many aspects of life.

Here, at this point, Amory has already matured and has already lost faith in institutions, marriage, love, friendship and life. He questions whether he is ready to “love again” (173) and feels empty. Through this season of relationship, he learns to love himself “...had loved himself in Eleanor” (180) despite his vanity, confusions and lack of general affection. He feels appreciative of meeting Eleanor who accepts him the way he lived life, neither Rosalind nor Isabelle approved of such living. He experiences the harsh realities of life surrounding him. Amory thinks he is still a person who has not let go of his own interests. Through her, Amory

Blaine accepts the strength of his character and learns to endure his pain. Without her, he has no audacity to identify and accept his inferior self. She is a strong woman with character and a straightforward vigor. Standing close to her makes him realize how weak and incapable he has been in life. He realizes he is incapable and bereft of direction “he was in an eddy again, lethargy gulf” (184).

His four affairs do not last long and Amory has no motive of pursuing further except Rosalind for whom he unexpectedly falls for. His empty initiation of affairs, however, in turn helps him mature his character. Isabelle makes him aware of his vanity and absorption leaving him unapologetically.

Clara proves handy in influencing him to learn and believe in love. She makes him conscious of his egotistical self and helps him become aware of his vice, though he had no intentions to alter. He learns of his undesirable personality which many people around him attest to. Rosalind completely matures his life forever. When he became ambitious of attaining practical things in life, influencing him to work, earn, love and live life ardently. Losing her makes him realizes his failures, his mistakes and regret about his unproductive youth where he could have established so much for himself. Through her, he uncovers his hidden character and idle existence (his failing life) which he realizes right after losing her. Eleanor gives strength and company during his final days. She teaches him to identify his incapable self and learn how to endure brutalities. He realizes he is acutely inferior and incapable of many things (which hurt his ego). The female characters, thus, help in the character development of the protagonist. He transitions from a young carefree boy to an adult man witnessing the failing years of life.

5.3. War Period

War plays an important role in changing the life and shaping the character of the protagonist. Amory enlists in war and survives. His participation in war changes his outlook and character. War influences his maturation, in thinking differently and generating pessimistic outlook of life. He learns of his mind, his developing cynical attitudes and the unpleasant consequences from participating and experiencing the War era.

The first and foremost development in him during the war years is the unending feeling of cynicism. His energetic outlook of youthful days is replaced by an unenthusiastic adult period shrinking himself from outer comforts of life. At twenty, Amor Blaine discovers that he is a “cynic” (62). He cannot heal himself from the ruinous war experience and it exerts a controlling influence upon him in every step of his life. He functions differently from the day he becomes aware of his cynicism, experiencing an onslaught of discouragements, lack of confidence and tiring streams of thought. His cynical outlook of life indirectly influences him in losing his cherished vibrant life “he had fallen into a deep cynicism” (92). He realizes he is skeptic and disappointed in life “war has made me a passionate agnostic” (121). The feelings of tiredness, profound lingering of despondency and distress in Amory influences his life decisions, work ethic, love affairs and character. He realizes the bitterness of life and its nature of uncertainty and despair. In turn, he resorts to literature, women and drinking as a part of his grievance. Drinking is also a tension through which his pessimism becomes apparently deeper and frightening. Now, Amory’s character has reached the stage where he is consciously lost and lonely. He accepts the fate of his life. He regards himself as a grown individual who is going through the same crises as other people do. He matures mentally by tasting the war ruins of his generation. His opinion towards the world is negative in nature. Now, he thinks deeply

and sensitively. Thus, from an immature, happy and energetic young man, Amory realizes he is cynical and lost in life.

The War teaches him about life and suffering. Though a cynic, he still lingers not giving up on his life. He identifies himself as a man who is deprived of his true love, his job and his loved ones. He stands alone in the world in contrast to successful establishments, happy marriages, ambitious jobs, talents and riches of others. Being nested in a sophisticated household with money, Amory is new to brutalities surrounding him. When he serves in War, he doubts his survival. Still, he lives and the outcome that arises allow him to grow deeper as a person.

War is a reality to Amory because ever pinch of his misery begins with it. Before War, he stands unaffected in life. His decision to sacrifice his life in war gives is an impression of his maturation. Though he develops a sense of cynicism, Amory takes the courage to discuss such influence with his friends “it sort of killed individualism out of our generation” (158) and in doing so, he accumulates encouragements and feels more human and alive “I am restless” (158). He learns to assert his mind and his thinking. During this period, he learns to find peace. His thoughts develop day after day, learning to tolerate such negative ideas and decides to continue living. Amory’s participation in War is a reflection of his growing years as Monsignor Darcy also writes to him “...you will never again be quite the Amory Blaine that I knew” (117). It is the reality where he is changing and adapting alone, far away from his loved ones. War helped him experience life. He saw downfall of humanity and faith. The death of his college friends in War also changes his attitude. Often, his sentiments are triggered and his inner pain comes at certain points of his life. Eventually, he learns to understand and face reality. It is true that War exerts an influence, in affecting his outlook and developing his

character. From college to War, his discoveries mature significantly. Though confused and depressed, he matures into an adult accepting his broken life and continues to live.

5.4. Ending Years

The ending years of his life are important in the novel because it gives insight into the discovery of Amory's egotism. Egotism is a characteristic trait of Amory which he exhibits from his childhood days to adulthood. It is undeniable that the protagonist suffers major failure as a result of his unpleasant pride and absorption. Through his love relationships, there are vivid glimpses of his character driven by an acute sense of egotistical traits. This vice concentrates stronger when he matures. His egotism makes him a man of his time, one who is incorrigible and dominant in all his friendships, relationships and work. But at the end, he discovers his vice and contemplates about life.

Relationships

In relationship, his conceit offends his lovers. All four women in his life disapprove of such qualities in him. They all leave him for better people. Amory is superficial and engrossing. When his lovers confront him of his pride, he skillfully negates them. During his younger days, he had no doubts about his character. But as he grew older, his ego prevents him from forming better relationships and friendships with his lovers. He is careless and inconsiderate who playfully engages in relationships, often hurting people. Relationships and leisure define Amory. He leisurely enjoys life and perfection. It makes his ego bolder. He has no enthusiasm and diligence but a dominant ego. His true love Rosalind diminishes such ego. Through her, he becomes conscious of his unfavorable centrism. Standing impoverished and helpless in front of her, his arrogance suffers humiliation. In relationships, his attitudes and duties are driven by

egotistical nature often hurting the sentiments of his lovers. At the end of the novel, he matures and realizes how his ego destroys his relationships “I was perhaps an egotist in youth, it made me morbid to think too much about myself” (198). Amory becomes a character who independently learns of his pride. At the age of twenty three, he is fully conscious of his egotism. He accepts that his vanity made him an uncompromising character. The discovery of his egotism in relationship indicates his growth in character.

His lack of ability to build connections or bond with his surroundings also leads to further concentration of his egotistical traits in him. He is deprived of emotions and affection. At his maturing period, he realizes his inherent troubling egotistical traits which hindered his relationships. Later in his life, he comes to compromise by accepting his vices. At the initial stages, he fails to admit his unpleasant character. But when he grows older, he consciously gains wisdom and courage to admit his unpleasant arrogance. At old age, he becomes conscious of his surroundings, of his mistakes and learns of his imprudence and lack of skills. His egotism in relationship and its effects matures Amory. It is a reflection of his character development. His lack of commitment and sincerity are egotistical traits.

Friendships

Amory’s friendships in university campus are driven by his egotism. He makes friends only with rich and intellectual companions. They collectively control and dominate the university’s magazine. In campus, he has great reputation and prestige among his friends. Among them, he completely appears fanciful, talented and poetic. His friend circle influences him to read works of art and philosophy. With such outer privileges and reputation, Amory fancies only great things, sophistications, excitements and honor. His fascination with Dick Humbert who is an

aristocrat with charming social skills and attractiveness give an impression of how the protagonist longs to fit into the world of others who stands out deliberately in wealth, looks and talent.

Amory imitates the habits and skills of his friends. In return, he acquires qualities of social skills, popularity, talent and dominating personality in his friendships. Therefore, Amory unconsciously feels superior, perfect and dominant among his friends. His egotistical peculiarity and domination enables his surroundings to expect more from Amory. His outer representation of stability, skills and confidence severely allows his friends around him to expect only great things to happen in his life. He is what his friends admire and aspire to be become as he appears well nested, perfect and versatile. However, such fanciful appearances of Amory does not last long especially when he is removed from the editorial board of the university on grounds of his academic failures. At this point, he is cynical and mortified in life. He questions what has become of him. He becomes fully temperamental when he realizes that he has failed to pass college and earn a degree like his other friends. While his friends are becoming successful and graduating from Princeton, he realizes he is a drop out who has failed in education.

In the novel, he questions his failure and one of his friends comments "...laziness" (73). Here, he sensitively ponders as to what has made him become aimless and lost. His removal from the university's board and inability to pass the college degree makes his ego shatter to pieces. His friends see him as a failure. At the end, he learns and realizes that his overall prideful personality is burdensome and tiring to wear. Gradually, he starts to accept his failures and starts seeking genuine friends who encourages and support him. He deeply realizes that it is his conceit that has unconsciously led him to his failing academic life. He has no success story to

share with his friends. His university friends gradually forget him which also indicates insincere friendships of Amory. During the reunion party at the end of the novel, he flees away from his friends in shame because all his friends have accomplished great things in their lives. His former friends fail to recognize him as he appears shabby, unattractive and poor unlike his former days when he exhibited great stability, talent, popularity and social skills.

In the novel, Amory does not have genuine friends in life. His university friendships happened only because of his outer portrayal of stability and pride. He also did not genuinely cherish much of his friends as found in the first part of the novel. It is during the later years that Amory transforms his intentions where he negates his ego and even saves one of his friends Alec from a hotel complication. Amory takes the blame for his friend's obscene act. This incident of sacrifice which the protagonist initiates is a reflection of friendship affection he renders to his only friend after he alters his vanity. His sacrifice for his friend in need is an indication of his maturity and changed personality. Even his mentor friend Monsignor Darcy gives assurance of Amory Blaine's transition "...you've lost a great amount of vanity" (76). In addition, the sudden death of his three friends under different circumstances helped him to gradually understand emotions of pain, nostalgia and affection which he cared less during his younger days. The friendships he build throughout his academic years taught him of many great things. The taste of humiliation and embarrassment, the knowledge and support, the horrors of death and life, the sacrifice and hope are life lessons which help Amory find himself. At this final growing year, his superficial image and the hidden perils of his egotistical traits which he displayed among his friendships are all compromised and uncovered. Towards the end, Amory Blaine stands changed in opinion, in strength and in character. Now, he lives far away from his past where he no longer bears the slightest arrogance and absorption.

Work

In pursuit of his work, Amory accomplishes nothing big in life. He never takes the ethic of work seriously and ambitiously. His life consists of empty quest for knowledge and comforts which he pursues without much diligence and complications. His egotism functions equally even in his work affairs making him lose his job. When his life requires financial stability so as to prove his worth to his true love Rosalind, he feels anxiously desperate to better his financial position. To better his lifestyle and position as provider of a marriage, he needs a dignified job to sustain and attain comforts for his lover. When he takes his first work in a newspaper agency, he is discontented with his minimal wage “I think I was rottenly paid” (153). He wants something bigger than just the average job so that he is free from embarrassing himself in front of Rosalind. His ego directs him to neglect his work “we haven’t seen you for several days” (152) “you’d never worked before” (153). The protagonist thinks that he should be placed differently in a position because he thinks he can excel much better. Thinking of getting a high job without a college degree is a reflection of his persistent pride and confidence. As such tiring vanity involves in his work, he thinks he deserves more superior position than just being a columnist. With such opinion, he leaves his work intentionally as he is dissatisfied with his thirty five dollars weekly wage “I’m quitting” (152). He thought it was far more better to be jobless than working in an infamous advertising agency with low income. As such opinions stir his mind, he neglects his assignments and skips work for weeks. He leaves his work and soon becomes empty handed in poverty.

At this point, he experiences the reality of poverty “being very poor at present” (203) “I want a great deal of money” (203) and the brutal sufferings that arises out of this misfortune. He stands alone impoverished. Bearing empty pocket with no security and livelihood, he is seen

visiting his university after many years. He wanders helplessly around his university, strolling all alone missing his younger days and memories “faint stirring of old ambitions and unrealized dreams” (213). After collecting every evidence of his past mistakes, he contemplates how aimless and lethargic he had been, how proud and consumed he had lived his life. He stands empty and broken in uncertainty and regrets “for his lost youth” (213). He is left all alone in darkness and pain “felt that life had rejected him” (185). His friends are gone and his parents have died. His mentor and his lovers have left. It inflicts a sort of contemplation upon him. From a handsome talented boy he is now an unkempt jobless adult, stricken by immense poverty. At the end, he attains answers to his ultimate downfall which he subjects to his proud personality and idleness. He stands alone realizing no one knows him better than himself, neither his friends nor his family have known him well. Plunging into the world of discovery, he soon accepts his life, his failures and his vices “he could accept, roam, grow, rebel” (213) and laments those days where he had everything peacefully. He feels nostalgic of his energetic ventures, talents and experience. At the end, he agrees he is no longer the youthful versatile character but is an adult American man of his time and declares, “I know myself but that is all.” (213).

5.5. The trauma of War causes interruptions in Amory’s life. Brokenness, cynicism and the need to embrace it all opens the door of growth. Intimate relationships that cause pain when they break off are the most consistent teachers in Amory’s life. The greatest breakthrough happens through self-discovery. The taming of his ego and his acknowledgement of his weaknesses and failures costs him everything of what he has held true in the past. And yet out of the brokenness of his life, there emerges his true person. The paradox in suffering is the emergence of a life refined by fire. “Recapitulating and appraising all that has happened to him,

he discovers a provisional purpose for his life and a way to live in the world, and in this discovery is reborn the capacity for dreaming which characterizes him.” (Burhans 614).

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CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Analyzing the novels textually, the study has looked at the post war American society of 1920s and the portrayal of inherent issues prevalent within such society which Fitzgerald undertook as a part of his authorship. The novels which he wrote are all reflections of his age, the history in which he lived and experienced. The relationship he shared with his society and the inspiration he derived, fully established him as a writer of many great things. From reading his novels, the study finds that Fitzgerald wrote presenting the contradiction, ambivalence and idealism of his time. His novels are reflections of American panoramic scenes with patterns of paradoxes, depicting polarities “Fitzgerald embodied the fluid polarities of American experience: success and failure, illusion and disillusion, dream and nightmare” (Callahan 141). He presented America of astonishing success and achievement and also delineated conditions that overshadowed its greatness. His attitude of contradiction as a writer is seen when Fitzgerald quotes “...one ought to be able to see that things are hopeless and still be determined to make them otherwise” (Fitzgerald 64). His works exude a blend of ideal representation intermingled with stark renderings.

In *the Great Gatsby*, the writer provides vivid representation of nationwide economic prosperity and egalitarianism where characters are placed in an economic setup with equal rights to better their livelihood. Gatsby, Tom, Daisy, Nick and the Wilsons are all under the same roof of emancipation and equal opportunity. Living during the nation’s great economic outburst and growth, these characters are placed by Fitzgerald in an environment of extreme prosperity in every aspect of life. The descriptions of luxuries, accumulation of wealth and

social status in the novel are reflections of American social environment driven by prosperity. At the same time, the novel, in contrast, details the existing perils of adversity such as poverty, division and oppression within the setup. The Wilsons family and their existence is another story far away from the prosperity. While some enjoyed privilege, there were sections of society living in rags and in the dumps. Their underprivileged life, poor amenities and deprivation of needs and comforts depict adversity. The oppression of the family of Wilsons (lower strata) by the privileged class such as the Buchanans impart the novel with brutal effects of capital domination and power, neglecting and dehumanizing the less advantaged section of society. The instances of corruption, vulgarity and competition in the novel are indications of the era's widespread problems and inconsistencies. Gatsby's involvement in illegal activities and crimes mean corruption. Myrtle's representation is vulgar. The division of the East and West Egg gives the picture of America's competition under the influence of extreme economic success. Therefore, though there were equal opportunity, economic success and independence in American society, there were also serious problems arising out of it. The novel completely brings out these opposites of American society and is seen through a Marxist lens, bringing out the tensions within a successful socio-economic setup. The novel presents the American society as economically prosperous and ambitious with equal opportunities for every citizen. In the same way, the novel identifies tensions and adversities that came out of such prosperous conditions. The study finds Fitzgerald critiquing the American capitalist set up of his own period. However, the novel fails to tackle the problems of capitalism strongly. The negative representations of the family of the Wilsons from the lower strata reveals the novel's lack of strong voices of revolt, and thus, limits the work from achieving revolutionary ideas. However, it may be also considered that the economic setup or determinism of that society itself has

influenced the lower sections to stand insensitively and negatively in the novel. Therefore, the work is found to be heavily grounded in harsh reality of the economic environment where characters are driven by such a determining world. The writer's position of ambivalence is substantiated by the opposite forces inherent in complexity of the world the novel inherits.

The study of *The Beautiful and Damned* with the themes of Commodification of Beauty, Individualism and Consumerism reflects the era of jazz with engaging descriptions of waste, independence and consumption. The writer is transparent representing the paradoxes with characters who are placed in an era of defining instabilities. The fascination and attachment with commerce or materialism in the novel leads to breakdown of human relationships, lethargy and excess. Individualism of Anthony and Gloria in the novel is a subject of failure as their independence means only a break from tradition, norms and institutions generating negatives that comes out of such liberation. The theme of beauty was the era's reflection of social dysfunction in the midst of popular culture and fashion industries. The economic proposition of the beauty in the novel means ownership, objectification and security. These factors are the existent problems which were generated during the post war era, reflected in the characters by the writer. The writer juxtaposes material obsession (alcohol, riches and beauty), indulgence and individualism against agents of tradition and stability. Richard Caramel and his success story in the novel celebrates insular stability within the world of degeneration and exhaustion. Adam Patch is a representation of guidance, stability and tradition, standing firm and uninfluenced by attractions of the world. The writer places him as an ideal that brings hope and guides the new generation already swayed away by worldly pursuits. The pursuit of failed individualism, the unhealthy attachment with material things and negative aspect of beauty in the lives of Anthony and Gloria are themes which stand opposite to the successful

establishment of stability and assurance of guidance given by the other two characters. The study finds in the work a strong critique against the motives that fuel the ills of the jazz era's material journey, exhaustion of resources, hedonism, idleness and break from tradition and objectification of beauty vividly in strong tone. The breakdown and deterioration of Anthony and Gloria are statements of writer's concerns about the era's illusionary choices. At the same time, the light of achievement of timid characters like Caramal and the strong portrayal of Adam Patch's (Anthony's grandfather) aspirations to guide his young generation and upholding of tradition are another side of story which stand opposite in nature. Besides, the writer's use of fanciful language and beautiful and grand descriptions of luxuries and the material world is an aesthetic achievement on the part of the writer.

Tender is the Night is a definite narrative of The Great War. The novel's take on estrangement and disillusionment is brutal, eccentric and uncertain. War is an important theme in the novel because the other tensions are grounded on it. Through the study of the novel, it has identified the paradox of celebration in depression presented within the lives of characters. The estrangement of the characters from society, relationships and families are an indication of American society after the war. The disappointments and sadness the characters undergo in the novel are the indirect or indirect impact of war. The circumstances of heavy violence, aggression, verbal fights and death described in the novel are all implications of trauma and alienation resulting in the loss of humanity, breakdown of human values, broken life and dreams. The sufferings and problem of mental illness, abuse and insanity in the lives of characters such as Nicole are also ill effects of war which people experienced in pain and silence. The writer realistically represents the 1920s American generation focusing on issues of human sufferings and voices of agony in their depth of pessimism. In contrast to this, the writer

incorporates a sense of celebration among some characters who free themselves to liberate from the bondage of trauma, pain and mental illness. Nicole Diver, Albert Mckisco and Mary North are such characters who survive the brutal world of mankind by overcoming abuse, trauma, alienation and loss of lives. They represent a side of celebration in the American world of depression. Fitzgerald uses contrasting phenomenon of post war America in the novel. Acts and moods of depression such as violence, emptiness, alienation, trauma and disappointments were already existent in the American society which Fitzgerald saw. He presents characters in the novel which predicted the overcoming of the effects of generated War. The celebration is nothing but a sense of hope, optimism and renewal which the writer idealistically imparts upon his characters, freeing them from the existential torments, miseries and sufferings. This idea of Fitzgerald's regeneration, emancipation and hope in the novel stands prominently with images of brutalities and complexities arising out of War, identifying the novel as document of opposing tensions functioning together.

This Side of Paradise celebrates the development and discovery of Amory Blaine's character in great strength and stature. The essences of his emotional, mental and character development in the novel are ideas of great celebration and victory. In contrast to the characteristic progression and development of the main character, the writer sets the novel in the backdrop of war with supporting scenes of death, cynicism, decline, withdrawal and failure. With Amory's discovery of self and gradual development of life into adulthood, there are also symptoms of decay, aimlessness and failure in his life which overcomes the celebration of his gradual attainment of wisdom, contemplation and maturation. The different phases of Amory, cynicism at the beginning after his participation in war, the discovery of his egotism in relationships and the contemplation he experiences at the end of the novel are indications of a human striving for

independence, growth and total consciousness of his being. However, with such growth and progression, at the ending of the novel he is subjected to extreme dejection, desolation and breakdown. The lack of spiritedness, pessimism, rejection and loneliness of Amory at the end are the ruins of depression which live within man's experience of change, growth and maturation. When the protagonist finally gains wisdom and tastes the realities of life by experiencing profound contemplation and discoveries, the writer again transitions the character to another new dimension which transforms him to a whole new character succumbed by failure, disappointments and decline. His life is significant and he attains remarkable maturation and development during such challenging times. However, the novel's sudden change or turn of his life abruptly at the end of the novel indicates another paradox of life. Just when Amory is poised for a meaningful life, there is when he loses everything after failing in relationships and life. Therefore, the novel is a masterful representation of the post war American society; the writer depicts the contrasting forces of inner life as opposed to the outer world that falls apart around the protagonist.

The American society was a world filled with extreme outbursts of economic, political and social upheavals. The conditions of abundance, independence and transformation of the nation stood as a threat to the existing institutions, values, tradition and society. Therefore, inside the nation, prosperity and adversity lived clashing against each other. There was depression in the new era of celebration. Fitzgerald, as influenced by such phenomenon, wrote his novels reflecting those tendencies, perhaps out of concern and also to immerse his readers in the period's overwhelming attractions. His works depict the unfettered responses of the era to independence, opportunities, wealth, modernity, individualism and success. At the same, time, his novels represents negative tensions such as pessimism, failure, depression, poverty,

dispiritedness, uncertainties, pain, trauma, withdrawal and disappointments in life. The paradoxical and remarkable impacts of the age have been realistically and sometimes quizzically represented in the novels, showing a simultaneous amalgamation of victory and decline.

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