
UNIT 1 THE MAN, THE MILIEU AND THE MOMENT

Structure

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 The Changing America
- 1.2 The Literary Context of Scott Fitzgerald
- 1.3 Scott Fitzgerald : The Man
- 1.4 Scott Fitzgerald: The Milieu 'The Lost Generation'
- 1.5 Scott Fitzgerald: The Moment 'The Jazz Age'
- 1.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.7 Questions
- 1.8 Suggested Reading

1.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit will discuss the historical, social and political situation in the America of the twenties. The significance of Fitzgerald lies in the fact that he captured the mood of the American society at the time when America was being forming itself between the two World Wars. To fully comprehend Fitzgerald's achievement it is necessary to know that circumstances which brought him to the fore. The major voices in American fiction who were the immediate predecessors as well as contemporaries merit attention.

1.1 THE CHANGING AMERICA

The period between 1915 and 1932 is very relevant for studying the background for the work of Scott Fitzgerald. The year 1915, the second year of the First World War, was the third year of Woodrow Wilson's first term as President. This year was also significant for The Founding of Provincetown Players at Massachusetts with which the name of Eugene O'Neill is connected. The next year Woodrow Wilson was re-elected to his second term. In the year 1917 Proclamation of the Russian Republic took place and the power was captured by the Bolsheviks between the months of March and November. In 1918, Wilson submitted the 'Fourteen Points'. 1919 saw the Versailles Peace Conference and the League of Nations set up. Prohibition Amendment (XVIII) was adopted to become effective January 1, 1920 (repealed, 1933). This event is important for the character of Gatsby in Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby* because Gatsby is also considered a 'bootlegger' in the background of the 'Prohibition Era'. In 1920 Warren G. Harding was elected President. The National Womens' Suffrage Amendment took effect. Founding of Fascist party in Italy and the Washington Armament Conference took place in 1921. In 1922 the Coal and railway strikes took place and Mussolini became dictator of Italy. The U.S.S.R. was created. In 1923 President Harding died on August 2 and Calvin Coolidge succeeded him and began his administration which lasted until March, 1929. There were scandals in Harding regime and they came under investigation in 1924. There was a General Strike in Great Britain and Transatlantic wireless telephone was set up in 1926. In 1928 Herbert Hoover defeated Al Smith in presidential campaign. Trotsky and his followers were exiled from Russia. On October 29th 1929 the Stock-Market crashed. This is the

beginning of one of the most important events in the twenties in America, indeed in the entire history of America, which had a profound influence on many writers in America. Since the Stock Market crash brought to a climax the financial boom of the Coolidge-Hoover era and led to a severe and prolonged depression in the United States, it is essential, for a good understanding of the literature of the period, that the student to study the extraordinary social and political revolution that ensued not only in America but throughout the world. Such a study will help to explain the change in mood and tone from *The Great Gatsby* to *Tender Is the Night*, and it may help to place Fitzgerald himself, who epitomized the Roaring Twenties as much as any single individual, in clearer perspective. 'The Great Depression' is one of the land marks in the entire history of American literature, along with events like The 'Boston Tea Party' with the idea of the War of American Independence, the great journey towards the West depicted in novels like John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, the Civil War between the North and the South which had a profound influence on American Literature, partly dealing with the question of slavery, Abraham Lincoln and the entire 'Literature of the American South' which produced classics like *Gone with the Wind* and the entire work of Tennessee Williams, creating a whole new area for exploring the literature of the American South. It is in this context 'The Great Depression' has to be looked at which resulted in some writing in the 1930's, which is generally considered leaning towards the 'Left' both in America and England. This led on to the influence of the Spanish Civil War in which many significant American and British writers were actively involved. 'The Great Depression', was followed later on by another important American historical event in the 1950's when the suspected Communists in America were interrogated in the McCarthy regime. One of the people was interrogated was Arthur Miller, the American playwright whose play 'The Death of a Salesman', is the popular text in the American literature courses all over India. Thus the Roaring Twenties, 'The Jazz Age', is most relevant for any study of Scott Fitzgerald. It takes its place along the other important historical and political events which had a profound influence on writing in America. The year 1929 also saw the beginning of the 'Five-Year Plans' in Russia. In 1932 Franklin D. Roosevelt defeated Hoover and began the first of his four terms in the White House. These dates and events give the background for the study of Scott Fitzgerald's times.

1.2 THE LITERARY CONTEXT OF SCOTT FITZGERALD

In the last section we saw the historical and political scene in America as a background to the age of Fitzgerald. Now, we shall trace the evolution of American literature through its major phases as a part of the background material. We shall begin with the year 1915 in order to place Fitzgerald in the context of the Two World Wars; we shall look at the quintessential literary publications between 1915 and 1932. The year 1915 is important for the establishing the writers Theodore Dreiser, Amy Lowell and Richard Aldington. Dreiser's works are usually studied as examples of the Naturalistic movement in American literature. In 1916 Robert Frost's *Mountain Interval*, Vachel Lindsay's *General William Booth Enters Heaven*, Eugene O'Neill's *Bound East for Cardiff*, E.A. Robinson's *The Man Against the Sky* and Carl Sandburg's *Chicago Poems* were published. In 1917 Ezra Pound became the Foreign Correspondent of *The Little Review*. First awarding of Pulitzer Prizes took place. The important publications were T.S. Eliot's *Ezra Pound; His Matric and Poetry*; and *Prufrock and Other Observations*. In 1918, one of the most important American novelists Ernest Hemingway was seriously wounded on Northern Italian Front. Just as many of today's well known novelists -- Norman Mailer, James Jones, William Styron, Truman Capote, and Jack Kerouac know one another and comment upon each other's work, similarly in the 1920's and 1930's writers like

Sherwood Anderson, Gertrude Stein, Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, Scott Fitzgerald, and Thomas Wolfe often met together, knew one another, and corresponded with one another. An important event in 1919 was that the Theatre Guild was founded. The beginning of the 20's saw a number of important literary achievements. *The Dial* magazine was started under the editorship of Scofield Thayer and *The Freeman* magazine. Ezra Pound left London for France. Important works of American Literature like John Dos Passos's, *One Man's Initiation*, T.S. Eliot's *The Sacred Wood*, Scott Fitzgerald's *Flappers and Philosophers* and *This Side of Paradise*, Sinclair Lewis's *Main Street*, Eugene O'Neill's *Emperor Jones*, Ezra Pound's *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*, George Santayana's, *Character and Opinion in the United States* and Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* saw the light of day. 1921 is also significant in the sense that John Dos Passos's *Three Soldiers*, Eugene O'Neill's *Anna Christie*, Ezra Pound's *Poems* 1918-1921 (including first four Cantos) and E.A. Robinson's *Collected Poems* appeared on the scene. In 1922, *The Criterion Magazine* under the editorship of T.S. Eliot made its impact. The important publications of this year were -- e.e. cummings's *The Enormous Room*, T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, Fitzgerald's *The Beautiful and Damned* and *Tales of the Jazz Age*, Sinclair Lewis's *Babbitt* and Eugene O'Neill's *The Hairy Ape*. In 1923, American literatures went on getting enriched with important publications like: Willa Cather's *A Lost Lady*, Robert Frost's *New Hampshire*, D.H. Lawrence's *Studies in Classic American Literature*, Elmer Rice's *The Adding Machine*, and Wallace Stevens's *Harmonium*. The publications of 1924 were from Maxwell Anderson and Laurence Stallings's *What Price Glory?* Ernest Hemingway's *In Our Time*, T.E. Hulme's *Speculations* edited by Herbert Read, Herman Melville's *Billy Budd*, Eugene O'Neill's *Desire Under the Elms* and John Crowe Ransom's *Chills and Fever*. These further enriched American literature qualitatively as well as quantitatively. 1925 is particularly important date this was the year of the publication of the novel under our consideration. Along with Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* appeared, Sherwood Anderson's *Dark Laughter*, Irving Babbitt's *Democracy and Leadership*, H.D.'s *Collected Poems*, John Dos Passos's *Manhattan Transfer*, Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy*, T.S. Eliot's *Poems* 1909-1925, Ernest Hemingway's *In Our Time*, Sinclair Lewis's *Arrowsmith* and Gertrude Stein's *The Making of Americans*. The student would do well to read what Gertrude Stein has to say about Fitzgerald and Hemingway in her *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*. Morley Callaghan, the well known expatriate writer from Canada who was the part of the Paris scene, in his *That Summer in Paris* tells of the incident in 1929 that led to bad feeling between the two writers. Several years later Fitzgerald said that he himself spoke with 'the authority of failure' where as Hemingway spoke with 'the authority of success'. This firmly establishes the text of *The Great Gatsby* in the context of Sherwood Anderson, Irwin Babbitt, H.D., John Dos Passos, Theodore Dreiser, T.S. Eliot, Ernest Hemingway, Sinclair Lewis and above all, Gertrude Stein, significantly in her expression 'In the American Grain' who was mainly responsible for the exploration of the expatriate sensibility in American literature. The significant publications in 1926 were Hart Crane's *White Buildings*, William Faulkner's *Soldiers' Pay*, Fitzgerald's *All the Sad Young Men*, Hemingway's *The Sun also Rises*, Mencken's *Notes on Democracy*, Eugene O'Neill's *The Great God Brown* and Gertrude Stein's *Composition As Explanation*. The year 1927 saw the publication Charles Beard's *The Rise of American Civilization*, Willa Cather's *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, E.E. Cummings's *Him*, Hemingway's *Men without Women*, O'Neill's *Marco Millions*, John Crowe Ransom's *Two Gentlemen in Bonds*, E.A. Robinson's *Tristram* and Thornton's Wilder's *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*. Stephen Vincent Benet's *John Brown's Body*, Robert Frost's *West-Running Brook*, Archibald MacLeish's *The Hamlet of A. MacLeish*, O'Neill's *Strange Interlude*, Upton Sinclair's *Boston* were published in 1928. Four American classics -- Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, Sinclair Lewis's *Dodsworth* and Elmer Rice's *Street Scene* appeared in 1929. The end of the decade of the 20's and a beginning of the 30's saw

some more American classics -- Hart Crane's *The Bridge*, John Dos Passos's *The 42nd Parallel*, T.S. Eliot's *Ash Wednesday*, and Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*. As the 1930's opened American writers like John Dos Passos and James Farrell had begun to publish their long trilogies, and it became quite clear that a new conception of reality was developing among the novelists of social protest. It would be interesting to compare and contrast Fitzgerald's view of society with those of such novelists as Dos Passos, Farrell, Faulkner and Wolfe. A significant development in the area of American Drama and Theatre, also a very important event representative of the 30's was the publications of 'The Group Theatre'. The popular writer, Pearl Buck wrote her classic novel, *The Good Earth*, Kenneth Burke's *Counter-Statement*, Faulkner's *Sanctuary*, O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra* and Edmund Wilson's *Axel's Castle* appeared heralding the 30's. Mark Twain and Faulkner remained the leading figures and *Mark Twain's America* and Faulkner's *Light In August* are landmarks in American literature.

1.3 SCOTT FITZGERALD : THE MAN

Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald was born in St. Paul, Minnesota on the 24th of September 1896. His father was an unreliable provider, but he was descended from old American families, the Scotts and the Kyes, who had settled in the United States early in the Seventeenth Century. His mother's father was an Irish immigrant. From his parents he inherited both the fears of failure and the dreams of social success -- the reality and romance of wealth -- that were to haunt him for the rest of his life. When Fitzgerald was just two years old, his family moved first to Buffalo, then to Syracuse, and back again, in 1908 to St. Paul. Then he attended Newman Academy at New Jersey between 1911 and 1913, where he quickly became a highly popular student. He wrote a story called 'The Freshest Boy' which draws upon Fitzgerald's experience at Newman. He went to Princeton from 1913 to 1917 and left before graduation.

Through the winter and spring of 1916-17, most undergraduates were becoming increasingly preoccupied by the war in Europe and when the United States formally declared war on Germany, students began to leave for the front in France. Fitzgerald too made his decision to apply for a commission. When he received it, he left Princeton to report to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, as a second lieutenant of infantry, in November 1917. He met a beautiful young lady of eighteen from Montgomery, Alabama, at an officers' dance. Her name was Zelda Sayre. She was as ambitious, reckless, and extravagant in her way as he was, and she was to make exceedingly heavy demands on Fitzgerald's romantic ambitions. Zelda Fitzgerald's novel *Save Me the Waltz* (1932) reveals a good deal about her competitive feelings toward her husband. He fell deeply in love, and she soon responded. Early in 1919, Fitzgerald was discharged from the army -- without having achieved his ambition of an overseas assignment. He joined a New York advertising agency, hoping to earn enough money to marry Zelda. But when she impatiently broke their engagement in the summer of 1919, Fitzgerald returned to his parents' home in Minnesota. An earlier novel of his entitled *The Romantic Egoist* which had been rejected by Scribner's, was now re-written as *This Side of Paradise* and it was accepted this time. This novel was published in 1920 in which year he married Zelda Sayre. It was an immediate success and Fitzgerald at once became not merely a historian of the postwar youth, but in fact, the symbol of the 'Jazz Age'. Fitzgerald soon became a legend. His *Flappers and Philosophers* was published in 1921 and *Tales of the Jazz Age* came out in 1922. The same year his second novel, *The Beautiful and Damned* also appeared, and it marked a distinct improvement in Fitzgerald's writing. The title reveals a good deal about Fitzgerald's own sense of his situation, the impending dissolution, he and his 'lost generation' were risking. In 1924 he moved to the Riviera along with Zelda and it was there that he finally finished his novel *The Great Gatsby* and 1925 saw its

publication. *The Great Gatsby* is probably Fitzgerald's most perfect work -- significantly dedicated to Zelda as 'Once Again to Zelda' -- and it immediately won praise from such distinguished writers like Gertrude Stein, Edith Wharton, and T.S. Eliot. It was produced successfully as a play in 1926 and sold to the movies for a good price. 1926 saw the publication of *All the Sad Young Men*. It was at this time that Fitzgerald began to see a good deal of Ernest Hemingway who had just finished his *The Torrents of Spring* (1926) and was working on his *The Sun Also Rises*. There was an interlude in Hollywood where Fitzgerald worked briefly as a script writer. In 1927 he did script-writing in Hollywood to which place he moved in 1937. He fell in love with Sheilah Graham and the film 'The Beloved Infidel' deals with this stage of his life. Sheilah Graham has written (in collaboration with Gerold Frank) of her love for Fitzgerald and his love for her, while he was in Hollywood. The book is entitled *Beloved Infidel; The Education of a Woman*, published by Henry Holt, New York, 1958. Budd Schulberg's novel *The Disenchanted* (1950), is a fictional account of his attempt to write a movie script with Fitzgerald. The unfinished novel of Fitzgerald *The Last Tycoon* can be mentioned in this category. In the summer of 1928 Fitzgerald left for Paris -- the reason being Zelda's determination to become a ballet dancer. In April 1930 Zelda broke down completely and spent most of the following year in a Swiss sanitarium. Fitzgerald had been working for a second spell at Hollywood but he took Zelda to Baltimore for treatment where she wrote her only novel *Save Me the Waltz* (1932). Fitzgerald's *Tender is the Night* was finished toward the end of 1933 and published in April, 1934. He published another book of short stories, *Taps at Reveille* (1933). His novel *The Last Tycoon* (1941) was only half finished at Fitzgerald's death. In November 1940 Fitzgerald suffered a serious heart attack and in December 21, another, which proved fatal. Fitzgerald's late novel *Tender Is the Night* was published in 1934. He died in Hollywood on the 21st of December 1940 and was buried in the Rockville Union Cemetery in Rockville, Maryland. In a manner of speaking *The Beautiful and Damned*, *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender Is the Night* mark three stages in the work of this great writer scanning the years 1922, 1925 and 1937.

1.4 SCOTT FITZGERALD: THE MILIEU 'THE LOST GENERATION'

The name of Scott Fitzgerald is inevitably associated with 'The Lost Generation'. The expression was coined in the 1920's by Gertrude Stein at her Paris flat, No.27, Rue de Fleurs when she remarked that Hemingway and his contemporaries were 'all a lost generation'. Gertrude Stein and Fitzgerald are special in their relation to each other. Gertrude Stein had been very much impressed by *This Side of Paradise*. She said of it that it was this book that really created for the public the new generation. She thought the same of *The Great Gatsby*. She believed that Fitzgerald would be read when many of his well known contemporaries are forgotten. This group, 'The Lost Generation' consisted of brilliant writers who appeared on the American scene during the decade following the First World War and who still dominate American fiction. They included, among others novelists like Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, John Dos Passos and Fitzgerald himself. This is a somewhat misleading name. It describes the generation's own feeling that there was almost nothing in the tradition they inherited. It was their sense that all the maps were useless and they had to explore a new found land for themselves. Thus their generation was 'lost'. However, it was not 'lost', in the sense that it felt despair at the situation. Though it was fashionable in the 20's to talk about being disillusioned, these writers were filled with a typically American kind of energy and optimism. They scorned what they felt was provincialism of American manners and the hypocrisy of American public life. Almost all the writers of 'The Lost Generation' attacked the defects of the conventional life of their times. The 'Lost Generation' was the first coherent group of novelists in the history of American literature. It is possible to see how the First World War shaped the flowering of their

talent in the 1920's. The war forced the Americans to recognize the fact that their country was a responsible part of Western culture. One of the effects of this was that they were dissatisfied with the narrowness of American Civilization to the point where they preferred to live elsewhere, especially in Paris. A backward look at the novels of Henry James may be useful here in relation to the interaction between 'Young America' and 'Old Europe'. A typical novel would be *The Portrait of the Lady*, another great American classic. In fact, T.S. Eliot, in a letter written to Fitzgerald about *The Great Gatsby* in 1925 from the publishing firm of Faber says: 'When I have time I should like to write to you more fully and tell you exactly why it seems to me such a remarkable book. In fact it seems to me to be the first step that American fiction has taken since Henry James.'

1.5 SCOTT FITZGERALD: THE MOMENT 'THE JAZZ AGE'

The decade of the 20's was of the same time the gaudiest and the shortest. It has been brought out in contradictory terms as both a 'Golden Age' and a 'hollow time between the wars'. These years have been seen as frivolous and roaring, thus acquiring the name of 'The Roaring Twenties'. It has also been referred to also by various other appellations like 'Era of Wonderful Nonsense', 'The Lawless Decade', 'The Passionate Years' and the 'Jazz Age'. The 'Jazz Age' was not so much you drinking as a dancing age. Talking about Jazz it must be remembered that this is the most characteristic contribution of America to the world of music just as the 'Musical Theatre' is the contribution of the United States to the world of the theatre. One heard Jazz everywhere from the orchestras, in the ball room, from wind up phonographs, from loudspeakers etc. Before the First World War Jazz was primarily the music of the Southern Negro, especially of the Negro in and around New Orleans. To my knowledge, this is absolutely true because I have not myself found any white man playing 'Jazz' as authentically as the black people. I am saying this after having stayed in New Orleans and after having heard 'White Jazz' in the street-side cafes as well as in the 'Preservation Hall' which is the most authentic place in New Orleans to listen to veteran black musicians with all their wonderful variations and improvisations. Even to this day the names of Louis Armstrong and Duck Ellington are house-hold names among jazz connoisseurs. Among the American writers the person who was most familiar with it was Tennessee Williams who actually lived in the French Quarter, and couldn't help listening to jazz all the twenty four hours. Jazz in the air in New Orleans especially in the French Quarter. It is some time played by a jazz group on the boat which goes down the Mississippi river. In fact, Williams has used jazz music as a contrast to the Varsouviana Polka in defining the two main characters, Stanley and Blanche, in his play *Streetcar Named Desire*. After the First World War, along with the migration of the blacks to the North, Jazz moved North and to Chicago. Then Jazz really spread beyond the black community. However, it was in the twenties that Jazz reached its greatest significance and no wonder the twenties cannot be discussed without 'The Jazz Age' as a part of the Moment to study the age.

1.6 LET US SUM UP

Let me pause here and mention the main points that I have made so far. First of all, I have managed to point out that the study of the Twenties, the 'Jazz Age', 'The Lost Generation' and the 'Great Depression' have been an integral part of the study of *The Great Gatsby*. I have also tried to bring in the Expatriate writers, living in Paris at the time who form the background for the study of Fitzgerald in the proper literary context. I have adopted Taine's formula of 'The Man Milieu and the Moment' in this Unit.

1.7 QUESTIONS

- 1) What were the major political and social events that shaped the Twenties in America?
- 2) Examine the literary context of Scott Fitzgerald with reference to his contemporary compatriots.
- 3) What do you understand by the terms 'The Jazz Age' and 'The Lost Generation'?
- 4) Show how American Literature was trying to find its own 'Americanness' in relation to the 'expatriate sensibility'.

1.8 SUGGESTED READING

- 1 Cohen, Hennig (ed). *The American Experience : Approaches to the Study of the United States*. University of Pennsylvania. Published by American Studies Research Center, Hyderabad with the assistance of The United States Educational Foundation in India. c. 1968. First Indian Printing 1972.
2. Cohen, Hennig (ed). *The American Culture : Approaches to the Study of the United States*. University of Pennsylvania. Published by American Studies Research Center, Hyderabad with the assistance of The United States Educational Foundation in India. c. 1968. First Indian Printing 1972.
3. Crunden, Robert M. *A Brief History of American Culture*. SHS / Helsinki / 1990.
4. Hoffman, Frederick J. *The Twenties. American Writing in the Postwar Decade*. New Revised Edition. Collier Books. New York. N.Y. 1962.
5. Cowley, Malcolm, *Exile's Return; A Literary Odyssey of the 1920's*, New York, The Viking Press. 1951.
6. Callaghan, Morley, *That Summer in Paris*. New York, Coward-McCann. 1963.

UNIT 2 THE PLOT AND THE SELF-IMPROVING HERO

Structure

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 The Plot
- 2.3 *The Great Gatsby* and the Integrative Method
- 2.4 A Close Reading of Chapter VII
- 2.5 The Self-Improving Hero, and The Problem of Gentlemanliness
- 2.6 The Self-Improving Hero and the Problem of his Past
- 2.7 Gentlemanliness and Love
- 2.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.9 Suggested Reading
- 2.10 Questions

2.0 OBJECTIVES

The aim of this Unit is to acquaint you with the novel in detail and help you to understand the ideas of 'The American Dream', the contradictions with in this ideal of improvement and gentility. After reading this Unit you will be able to see what kind of a novel *The Great Gatsby* is and place it in the context of the various types of novels like the 'Novel of Manners', the 'Picaresque novel' the 'Dramatic Novel', the 'Psychological Novel' the 'Historical novel', the 'Autobiographical novel', the 'Stream of Consciousness novel', the 'Self-reflexive novel', etc. The background you have studied in the previous unit helps you to see the complex relationship between literature and society

2.1 INTRODUCTION

There are three fibres in the Narrative structural strategy. 1) Gatsby's attempt to recapture Daisy Buchanan whom he had known five years before the action of the novel begins, when he was an young officer in the United States army and she was a young unmarried woman, the daughter of a rich family. 2) The second strand concerns her husband Tom Buchanan's extra-marital affair with the wife of a garage proprietor, who lives in an unattractive suburb of New York. 3) Nick Carraway, the narrator's attachment to Jordon Baker, one of Daisy's friends who is a sportswoman of some reputation. One of the crucial things in analyzing the plot is to take account of the fact of the themes of betrayal and ingratitude. It is not so much the sequence of events that leads to Gatsby's death but the fact that he has been betrayed by Daisy as well as Tom.

2.2 THE PLOT

The Great Gatsby is concerned with the disillusion of the era following World War I. James Gatz, from miserable surroundings, rises by sinister business dealings to great wealth. Masquerading under the name of Jay Gatsby, Gatz lives mysteriously in a

mansion on Long Island where he entertains lavishly with his ill-gotten gains. Gatsby persuades his former mistress, Daisy, to live with him again. Daisy's husband had as his mistress, Myrtle Wilson. Daisy, driving Gatsby's car, runs over Myrtle killing her instantly. Daisy, is now back in the good graces of her husband. Wilson, the garageman-husband of Myrtle traces the yellow car belonging to Gatsby which had killed his wife. The garageman shoots Gatsby and then himself. The 'great' Gatsby's funeral was only attended by his one friend. Nick, his aged father and one curiosity seeker. This is the Plot that unfolds itself in nine chapters.

Fitzgerald has often been called 'the Novelist of Manners' descending from Henry James and Edith Wharton, in this context a statement by Henry James about writing about American society may be remembered that it did offer the novelist a fertile enough soil for the cultivation of his art. One wonders to what extent this is relevant in the context of Fitzgerald and asks one self why the American expatriates went to Paris. However, James's statement is to about James himself. The fascination of the Americans for Paris and other Continental cities and for European culture is the main theme of young America versus old Europe. Whether it is *The Ambassadors* or *The Portrait of a Lady*, James is psycho-analyzing the American mind. He is no less a psychologist than his brother William James and it has been said that William James wrote psychology like a novel and Henry James wrote his novels like psychology. However, in *The Great Gatsby* though Fitzgerald does not take us to Europe but remains strictly within the confines of America, especially sticking himself to the East Coast, especially New York and Long Island. Nevertheless his novel is no less psychological in exploring the American psyche than James. 'Scott Fitzgerald became the novelist of the great rebellion. Perhaps this is so because Fitzgerald himself did not quite believe the age but played its game with an air of wonder, a double sense of involvement and detachment which made him the immediate historian of an age he was half living and half creating... It was not until *The Great Gatsby* (1926) that he managed to triumph over his early faults of style and achieve a novel which seemed to T.S. Eliot 'the first step that American fiction has taken since Henry James'.

2.3 THE GREAT GATSBY AND THE INTEGRATIVE METHOD

What should be particularly noticed in studying the novel is the method of narration. The reader's role in reconstructing the events is very important. He has to work along with the narration of Nick as well as the direct statements by Fitzgerald. We will see more about the Narrator and the Narrative technique in Unit 5. However, It is important to consider the fact that the reader can find out what exactly happens with an effort at reconstruction. The geography of the novel represents certain moral values. West represents something traditional and absolute, though Fitzgerald does not spell out what his absolute system of values is. In moving from the Mid-West of America to New York to follow a career in the money markets Nick Carraway is entering dangerous ground. Fitzgerald maintains the geographical distinction referred to already by dividing the tip of Long Island, where the action of the novel mainly takes place, into East Egg, where the Buchanans live, and the West Egg where Nick and Jay Gatsby live as neighbours.

2.4 A CLOSE READING OF CHAPTER VII

In Chapter VII Fitzgerald continues with the Gatsby-Daisy affair. At the beginning of the chapter itself we learn that Gatsby had dismissed all the servants in his house and

had replaced them with half a dozen others as he didn't want the servants to gossip in the market place, as servants do. Gatsby phones Nick inviting him to lunch at Daisy's house and informs that Miss Baker would also be there. Half an hour later Daisy herself calls him up and seemed relieved to find that he was going to her place. The narrator significantly says 'Something was up'. [p. 114]. At Daisy's house Gatsby finds himself gazing round with fascinated eyes, standing on the crimson carpet. At this point we find a typical sentence of Fitzgerald -- 'Daisy watched him and laughed, her sweet, exciting laugh; a tiny gust of powder rose from her bosom into the air'. [p. 116]. It is at this point that we get to know about Tom's mistress through a phone call that Tom receives from her. Tom enters and displays bonhomie, concealing his dislike of Gatsby. Right in her house, Daisy sends Tom to make some cold drink and he is gone she embraces and kisses Gatsby and murmurs 'You know I love you'. [p. 116]. Tom realizes that Daisy was in love with Gatsby and he is astounded. An interesting passage at this point may be quoted :

Gatsby turned to me rigidly :

'I can't say anything in his house, old sport'.

She's got an indiscreet voice', I remarked. 'It's full of --' I hesitated.

Her voice is full of money', he said suddenly.

That was it. I'd never understood before.

[p. 120]

Jordan who is also present on the occasion is told by Tom that he had made a small investigation of 'this fellow' and he could have gone deeper. Jordan makes a joke out of this and replies that he must have found out that Gatsby was an Oxford man. He can't believe it and shouts 'Like hell he is! He wears a pink suit' to which Jordan replies 'Nevertheless he is an Oxford man'. [p. 122]. We get to know more about this Oxford connection of Gatsby later on. We are also introduced to Wilson in this longish chapter -- in fact the longest chapter in the novel. The eyes of Dr. T.J. Eckleburg which is one of the symbols in the novel comes up here and when these eyes came into sight down the road, Gatsby remembered that his car needed gasoline and suddenly puts on the brakes and comes to an abrupt stop under Wilson's sign. Wilson is the proprietor of a gas station. A very intriguing sentence occurs here in the text. When Wilson is unscrewing the cap of the tank we are told 'In the sunlight his face was green'. This is intriguing because green is symbolic in this novel especially, the green light and here the colour green seems to have a different significance from elsewhere in the novel. We also know that green is a colour indicating jealousy. Coming events seem to be casting their shadows before and ironically it is he who murders Gatsby though the apparent reason is that Gatsby has knocked down his wife on the road in a hit and run case in his easily traceable yellow car. What leads upto the yellow car of Gatsby to stop at the Gas station is that it is Tom, Jordan and Nick the narrator were in that car and Tom's car -- his coupe followed them with Daisy and Gatsby in it. Though the original idea was that all of them should go in Gatsby's car and though Gatsby had warned that there wasn't much gas in his car, Tom had brushed it aside saying that he could stop at any place where he could fill the car with gas and thus it was he who had stopped at Myrtle's husband's gas station. All this adds upto a sort of irony when later on Wilson suspects that his wife is having an affair though he doesn't know it is with Tom and not with Gatsby whose car he is able to trace out later. Wilson asks Tom whether he would sell his old coupe assuming that the new yellow car was his and Wilson says it's a nice yellow one, again drawing attention to the colour yellow. When Tom hears that his wife wants to go away to the West and so he needs some money, Tom is startled because of the possibility of his

losing his mistress. Myrtle's husband discovered that she had some sort of life apart from him and again ironically it is paralleled with Tom realizing that his wife Daisy had a life with Gatsby. These little ironies of life make the narration more interesting than telling the story in a straightforward way. There is also a dramatic element, that is added on when we at this point discover that Myrtle Wilson was watching the car down below from one of the windows of the garage. Again a bit of irony when Myrtle thinks that Jordon Baker who is in the car is Tom's wife and that is why she was gazing down at the car with jealous terror fixed on her face. At this point there is a very interesting authorial comment 'There is no confusion like the confusion of a simple mind' [p.125]. The tension between Tom and Gatsby builds up throughout this chapter as rivals. Tom is incredulous that Gatsby was ever at Oxford so there is a direct confrontation :

It this point the narrator's voice intervenes : 'I wanted to get up and slap him on the back. I had one of those renewals of complete faith in him that I'd experienced before'. The earlier skepticism of Tom when he mentions a person called Biloxi and insultingly says that Gatsby must have been at Oxford when Biloxi was at Yale, he curiously brings together the most prestigious Universities of England and the United States. After this confirmation that Gatsby was really at Oxford he comes out into the open and accuses Gatsby of breaking up his marriage with Daisy and asks him point blank 'What kind of a row are you trying to cause in my house?' [p. 130] which is answered equally directly by Gatsby 'I've got something to tell *you*, old sport --'. Daisy tries to interrupt this parley. However, Gatsby is bent on telling Tom 'Your wife doesn't love you. She's never loved you. She loves me'. When Tom doesn't want to believe this Gatsby rubs it in 'She never loved you, do you hear? She only married you because I was poor and she was tired of waiting for me. It was a terrible mistake, but in her heart she never loved anyone except me'. [p. 131]. Tom realizes that his wife knew Gatsby five years ago and asks Daisy 'You've been seeing this fellow for five years?' Gatsby answers the question 'Not seeing, no, we couldn't meet. But both of us loved each other all the time, old sport, and you didn't know'. [p. 131-132]. This exchange is being given here in detail because this is one of the most dramatic moments in the entire novel. This exchange is taking place right in the present of Daisy and thus it is a well known 'love triangle' situation'. Tom tries his best to convince Daisy she did love him and nostalgically recollects some of the tender and intimate moments between them mentioning Kapiolani, then the ball room and then another time when he carried her from the Punch Bowl to keep her shoes dry. These memories make Daisy also nostalgic and she cries out to Gatsby 'Oh, you want too much! I love you now -- isn't that enough? I can't help what's past' which is practically an admission that that she did love Tom. Sobbing helplessly she says 'I did love him once -- but I loved you too'. Gatsby is not satisfied and repeats like an echo 'You loved me *too* ? Tom doesn't want to allow this concession and shouts even that's a lie and continues 'She didn't know you were alive. Why -- there're things between Daisy and me that you'll never know, things that neither of us can ever forget'. [p. 133]. Here is the authorial comment 'The words seemed to bite physically into Gatsby'. The struggle between Gatsby and Tom for the affection of Daisy continues and when Gatsby declares that Daisy is leaving Tom, he explodes 'She is not leaving me'. The ambiguity of Daisy is brought out when she says 'I am, though', with a visible effort. Tom has been making enquiries about his rival and the name of Meyer Wolfsheim, who is one of the minor characters comes up. Tom reveals the discovery he has made that Wolfsheim had bought up a lot of side-street, drug-stores and was selling grain alcohol over the counter and Gatsby was with him in this. Tom triumphantly announces that he could guess that Gatsby had been a bootlegger the very first time he saw him. The tension between the two mounts and Daisy becomes nervous. Tom asks Daisy to go with Gatsby in his car and it is now that the accident takes place when Daisy runs over Myrtle and doesn't stop the car. The narrative continues in his long chapter of bringing in two witnesses of the accident. The first one is the young Greek, whose name is Michaelis who ran a coffee shop and he was

the principal witness at the inquest. Myrtle has an argument with her husband Wilson and he locks up his wife. However, a moment later she rushes out into the desk waving her hands and shouting and that is how she runs in front of the car. The newspapers who picked up the story called Gatsby's car 'The death car' as it didn't stop in this hit and run case. Nicholas who was an eye witness wasn't sure about its colour. Daisy was instantly killed. However, the second witness was a pale well-dressed Negro who said that it was a big yellow car. He says that though he didn't actually see the accident he saw the car going past very fast. The policeman who asks Tom whose car was following Gatsby's and what colour his car was. Tom says that it was blue and they were coming straight from New York and someone who was coming behind the car confirmed this. The narrator's voice is seen at this point. Jordon Baker was with him and when Tom invites him in, Nick says 'I was feeling a little sick and I wanted to be alone'. (p. 143) that is how the 'I narrator' comes into the picture. Nick however refuses to go in and has gone a little further he sees Gatsby stepping out from between two bushes into the path. He learnt that Gatsby hadn't realized that Myrtle had actually been killed though he suspected it. He says that he got to West Egg by a side road and had left the car in his garage and adds 'I don't think anybody saw us, but of course I can't be sure' and enquires who the woman was. He tries to take up on himself the responsibility for the accident by pretending that he was driving the car when it happened. He is not a good liar and when he says 'Well, I tried to swing the wheel --', he breaks off and Nick the narrator guesses the truth and asks him point blank 'Was Daisy driving?' to which Gatsby replies 'Yes, but of course I will say I was'. (p.144). This is crucial in the novel because there is the theme of betrayal which is quietly brought in because Daisy betrays Gatsby at the end by not owning up her guilt. Gatsby even tries to defend Daisy by saying that when they left New York she was very nervous and driving would steady her. Daisy locks herself into her room and Gatsby suspects that Tom might hurt her. An interesting detail is mentioned at this point by Nick when he mentions that if Tom found out that it was Daisy who was driving he might see a connection in it. Perhaps one can ask oneself the question whether this 'connection' could be that Daisy the 'wife' of Tom purposely ran over Myrtle if she knew that Myrtle was Tom's 'mistress'. Nick sees through the pantry window that Daisy and Tom were sitting opposite to each other and that 'There was an unmistakable air of natural intimacy about the picture and that they were conspiring together' (146). The end of the chapter sees Gatsby still hanging about the house with his hands in his coat pockets in a sort of vigil. The last sentence of the chapter is 'So I walked away and left him standing there in the moonlight -- watching over nothing'. (p. 146).

2.5 THE SELF-IMPROVING HERO AND THE PROBLEM OF GENTLEMANLINESS

The introduction to the 'great' Gatsby is through the fabulous party that he gives in his mansion. Everything is on a grand scale. Just a few sentences may be quoted here to give an idea. 'There was music from my neighbour's house through the summer nights. In his blue gardens men and girls came and went like moths among the whisperings and the champagne and the stars... On week-ends his Rolls-Royce became an omnibus, bearing parties to and from the city between nine in the morning and long past midnight, while his station wagon scampered like a brisk yellow bug to meet all trains... At least once a fortnight a corps of caterers came down with several hundred feet of canvas and enough colored lights to make a Christmas tree of Gatsby's enormous garden... In the main hall a bar with a real brass rail was set up, and stocked with gins and liquors and with cordials so long forgotten that most of his female guests were too young to know one from the other'. [p.39-40]. After this background the party itself is described. 'By seven O'clock the orchestra has arrived, no thin five-piece affair, but a whole pitful of oboes and trombones and saxophones

and viols and cornets and piccolos, and low and high drums... The bar is in full swing; the air is alive with chatter and laughter, the casual innuendo and introductions forgotten on the spot, and enthusiastic meetings between women who never knew each other's names... Suddenly one of these gypsies, in trembling opal, seizes a cocktail out of the air, dumps it down for courage and moving her hands like Frisco, dances out alone on the canvas platform... I believe that on the first night I went to Gatsby's house I was one of the few guests who had actually been invited. People were not invited -- they went there... Sometimes they came and went without having met Gatsby at all... [p.40-41]. This long quotation from the text is given here to mention how lavish and generous Gatsby was and how he entertained anybody and everybody who went to his parties to have food and drink and this is our introduction to the man himself. It was a sort of 'charity dinner, free for all'. Nick the narrator tells us how he had been invited to this first party of Gatsby 'The chauffeur in a uniform of robin's-egg blue crossed my lawn early that Saturday morning with a surprisingly formal note from his employer; the honor would be entirely Gatsby's, it said, if I would attend his 'little party' that night. [p.41]. An amusing comment here concerns some Englishmen who were at the party. They are described as 'all well dressed, all looking a little hungry, and all talking in low, earnest voices to solid and prosperous Americans. I was sure that they were selling something: bonds or insurance or automobiles'. [p. 41-42]. This comment on the variety of guests at party completes the picture of the grand nature of Gatsby's parties. The irony here is of how the grandest party was modestly called a 'little party, by Gatsby. This shows the grand scale on which he operated and his magnanimity and the way he lived. This is how 'the great Gatsby' is introduced by Fitzgerald. Nick Carraway, in the course of the party meets Gatsby face to face for the first time. His meeting must be quoted in full as it is the center of the entire novel as far as our understanding of the hero is concerned. Now we get to know Gatsby through the kind of things that are said about it, some of it by nature of gossip. The contacts of Gatsby are slowly established by someone like the butler telling him that Chicago was calling him on the wire. Jordan informs Nick that Gatsby had told her once that he was an Oxford man. The entire fairy-tale atmosphere in the background of the Long Island Sound sets the scene for the tragedy.

2.6 THE SELF-IMPROVING HERO AND THE PROBLEM OF HIS PAST

Gatsby's life story can be partly known from his own autobiographical statement. He starts by saying 'Well I'm going to tell you something about my life... I didn't want you to get a wrong idea of me from all these stories you hear... I'm the son of some wealthy people in the Middle West -- all dead now, I was brought up in America but educated at Oxford... My family all died and I came into a good deal of money... After that I lived like a young rajah in all the capitals of Europe -- Paris, Venice, Rome -- collecting jewels, chiefly rubies, hunting big game, painting a little, things for myself only, and trying to forget something very sad that had happened to me long ago... Then came the war, old sport. It was a great relief, and I tried very hard to die, but I seemed to bear an enchanted life. I accepted a commission as first lieutenant when it began... I was promoted to a major, and every Allied government gave me a decoration [p. 65-66]. It is good to begin to know the character of Gatsby through his own words to start with. This is a true story narrated by him and he even shows Nick a medal which said 'Major Jay Gatsby for Valour Extraordinary... Here's another thing I always carry. A souvenir of Oxford days. It was taken in Trinity Quad -- the man on my left is now the Earl of Doncaster. [p. 67]. Gatsby's name really was James Gatz. He had changed it at the age of seventeen at the specific moment that witnessed the beginning of his career -- when he saw Dan Cody's yacht drop anchor over the most insidious flat on Lake Superior. His parents were unsuccessful farm people and he

never really accepted them as his parents at all. This was because right from the beginning he had a 'Platonic conception of himself'. He thought of himself as 'a son of God'. This is the background in which we have to understand the greatness of the 'Great' Gatsby. One aspect of Gatsby that is very important in the novel is his relationship with Daisy and her husband Tom Buchanan. The conflict for Daisy's attention rages to certain extent that it practically develops into the notorious 'the eternal triangle' with Daisy as the 'femme fatale'. The dislike of Tom for Gatsby is revealed in the following exchange.

'By the way, Mr. Gatsby, I understand you're an Oxford man .

'Not exactly' .

'Oh, yes, I understand you went to Oxford'.

'Yes -- I went there'.

'You must have gone there about the time Biloxi went to New Haven'...

'I told you I went there', said Gatsby.

'I heard you, but I'd like to know when'.

'It was in nineteen-nineteen. I only stayed five months. That's why I can't really call myself an Oxford man...

Gatsby continues 'It was an opportunity they gave to some of the officers after the Armistice. We could go to any of the Universities England or France'.

[pp. 129-130]

2.7 GENTLEMANLINESS AND LOVE

The picture of Gatsby establishing himself as a 'Gentleman' is through the great parties that he gives. In the novel the Social Register of New York is introduced. Some of the characters mentioned here are Chester Beckers, a man named Bunsen from Yale, Clarence Endive from East Egg, Cecil Roebuck, a man named Klipsringer, Benny McClenahan and others who came to Gatsby's house. The Nick-Gatsby relationship continues when Gatsby's gorgeous car lurches up to Nick's house and the horn of the car had melodious music. It was the first time he had called on Nick though he had gone to two of his parties. Gatsby announces 'Good morning, old sport. You are having lunch with me today and I thought we'd ride up together' [p. 64]. The personal oddity of Gatsby is mentioned here that he was always tapping foot somewhere or the impatient opening and closing of a hand. On seeing Nick admiring his car he is satisfied and says 'It's pretty, isn't it, old sport !'. [p. 64]. It is this unique car that is ironically spotted and the owner identified. A kind of intimate dialogue is reported at this stage when Gatsby asks suddenly 'Look here, old sport, what's your opinion of me anyhow?' And adds 'Well, I'm going to tell you something about my life... I don't want you to get a wrong idea of me from all these stories you hear'. [p. 65]. And indeed there were plenty of stories about him, not all of them complimentary.

2.8 LET US SUM UP

Let me quickly recapitulate the main points so that you can check out whether you have missed anything or not. *The Great Gatsby* is both a 'Romance' and a 'Novel'. It would be good to read another novel of Fitzgerald, namely *Tender is the Night* so that Fitzgerald's art as a novelist becomes clear. The important thing to notice is following the career of Gatsby from Gatz to the great Gatsby. This may be termed 'Self-Improvement'. The Unit also has dealt with the dimension of the 'romantic' love

interest. The Unit also has dealt with complications arising from the 'love triangle' in the novel.

The Plot

We have analyzed one chapter in detail, so that we are able to get at the manner and method of the author in the structure of the novel. Chapter IX, being the longest was taken up with this purpose in view.

2.9 SUGGESTED READING

1. Spiller, Robert E. (ed) *A Time of Harvest. American Literature. 1910 to 1960.* with an introduction by Spiller. American Century Series. Hill and Wang. New York. 1962.
2. Allott, Miriam. *Novelists on the Novel.* London : Routledge. 1965.
3. Stevick, Philip (ed). *The Theory of the Novel.* New York: The Free Press. 1967.
4. O'Connor, William Van (ed) *Seven Modern American Novelists.* Bombay. Popular Prakashan. c 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964 by the University of Minnesota. First Published in India 1968.
5. Kazin, Alfred. *On Native Grounds.* New York, Reynal and Hitchcock. 1942.
6. Wilson, Edmund, ed. *The Crack-Up.* New York, New Directions. 1945.
7. Chase, Richard. *The American Novel and its Tradition.* Kalyani Publishers. Ludhiana. c. 1957.
8. Booth, Wayne C., *The Rhetoric of Fiction.* Chicago. University of Chicago Press. 1961.
9. Halperin, John (ed). *The Theory of the Novel.* New York : Oxford University Press. 1974.
10. Milligan, Ian. *The Novel in English : An Introduction.* Macmillan. 1983.
11. Frohock, W.M. *The Novel of Violence in America.* Dallas, Texas: Southern methodist University Press. 1958.

2.10 QUESTIONS

1. Fitzgerald has often been called 'The Novelist of Manners' descending from Henry James. Do you agree? Give illustrations.
2. Do you agree with the criticism that Fitzgerald's fiction is wholly concerned with the wealthy and many people tend to dislike him for that very reason. Discuss.

The Great Gatsby

3. Comment on the Plot Construction of the novel, the way the chapters are arranged and the sequence of events.
4. Can you compare Fitzgerald's interest in the corrupting influence of money as portrayed in the other American writers you have studied?
5. What is the main theme of *The Great Gatsby*? Relate this to the idea of 'class consciousness' and the idea of a gentleman as it emerges in the novel.
6. Can it be said that Scott Fitzgerald thinks like a painter and utilizes the vocabulary of the artist in his 'pen portraits'?
7. Consider the distinction between the 'romance' and the 'novel' with reference to *The Great Gatsby*.
8. How are the opening and the closing scenes related to the structure of *The Great Gatsby*?
9. How does the novel imply a criticism of the American social structure?

UNIT 3 *THE GREAT GATSBY* AND FABLE, SYMBOL & ALLEGORY

Structure

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 *The Great Gatsby* as a Fable
- 3.3 Symbol and Allegory
- 3.4 'Realism', The Fairytale and the 'American Dream'
- 3.5 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.6 Suggested Reading
- 3.7 Questions

3.0 OBJECTIVES

In spite of the fact that the story of *Gatsby* is placed in the Realistic mode, choosing an actual locale -- New York and Long Island, there are elements of non-realism in the narration using literary devices like Allegory and Symbolism and the context of the Fairy Tale and the Fable which lend certain enchantment to the tale of tragedy. In addition to being a novel of character, it is also a Fable and a Fairy Tale. Symbolism and Imagery are related to Realism and Fantasy and the Plot unfolds itself through not merely Setting but through Language and Style.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The entire Fairy-tale atmosphere in the background of the Long Island Sound sets the scene for the tragedy. Chapter V starts with a description of Gatsby's house at night, all lighted up from tower to cellar. This lends an atmosphere of enchantment in a fairy tale. The narrator mentions how when he went to his house that night, he was afraid for a moment that his house was on fire because of the bright light from Gatsby's house and it draws the remark from the narrator that the house looked like 'World's Fair'.

3.2 *THE GREAT GATSBY* AS A FABLE

Gatsby's mingled dream of love and money, and the iron strength of his romantic will, make up the essence of the fable, but the art of its telling is full of astonishing tricks. To make the rise and fall of a gentleman gangster an image for the modern history of the Emersonian spirit of America was an audacious thing to attempt, but Fitzgerald got away with it.

3.3 SYMBOL AND ALLEGORY

The symbolic and the allegorical level in *The Great Gatsby* are such an integral part of the novel that Tom Burnam remarks that there is more than 'a protagonist', a plot, and a green light. Many elements in the story, perhaps will puzzle the practical-minded, for on the level of simple narrative they cannot be accounted for. What does one make, for example, of the faded blue eyes of Dr. T.J. Eckleburg, those staring,

vacant, yet some what terrible eyes so much more than an abandoned signboard: of the ash heap and its 'ash-gray men who move dimly and already crumbling through the powdery air' over which the eyes brood changelessly; of George Wilson's despairing mutter as he gazes at the eyes, 'You may fool me, but can't fool god'. It is interesting to note that the eyes were written into the book after Fitzgerald say what Arthur Mizener accurately calls a 'very bad picture' on the dust jacket, a picture that originally intended to represent Daisy's face. From such remarks, it is clear that the symbolic, the allegorical, the mythical levels in the novel are most important. Telling the story through a Conradian narrator, who is half inside and half outside the action prevented the errors of self-identification. 'Above the gray land and the spasms of bleak dust which drift endlessly over it, you perceive, after moment, the eyes of T.J. Eckleburg. The eyes of T.J. Eckleburg are blue and gigantic -- their retinas are one yard high. They look out of no face, but, instead, from a pair of enormous yellow spectacles which pass over a non-existent nose'. [p.23] The novel richly abounds in the use of symbol, metaphor and allegory. The central symbol is operated through the word 'Green'. He lifts it out of merely being a literal adjective to a non-literal significance during the course of the novel. There are about fourteen occurrences of the word 'green', four of them in the closing pages of the novel; most of them are associated with Gatsby himself. Fitzgerald has enabled the simple word for a certain colour to pick up the meanings of freshness, innocence and energy which it may have in other contexts. The green light which draws Gatsby's attention to Daisy's house across the water in East Egg becomes an apt symbol for his power to imagine the quality of life beyond anything he has actually experienced. 'If it wasn't for the mist we could see your home across the bay', said Gatsby. 'You always have a green light that burns all night at the end of your dock'. Daisy put her arm through his abruptly, but he seemed absorbed in what he had just said. Possibly it had occurred to him that the colossal significance of that light had now vanished forever. Compared to the great distance that had separated him from Daisy it had seemed very near to her, almost touching her. It had seemed as close as a star to the moon. Now it was again a green light on a dock. His count of enchanted objects had diminished by one.

3.4 'REALISM', THE FAIRYTALE AND THE AMERICAN DREAM

Perhaps, the green light may be connected with the idea of the well known '*The American Dream*', the same dream that Willy Loman of Arthur Miller in *The Death of a Salesman* and many other American texts. It may not be out of context in the present day to connect the colour 'green' with many young people in India today who see America itself as a green light. They want to get away to the 'green pastures' by obtaining a 'green card' so that they can work as 'computer coolies' in America and become millionaires. This is the Indian version of 'The American Dream'. Raleigh points out that Fitzgerald's character Gatsby 'as has often been said, represents the irony of American history and the corruption of the American dream. While this certainly is true, yet even here, with this general legend, Fitzgerald has rung in his own characteristic changes, doubling and redoubling ironies. At the center of the legend proper there is the relationship between Europe and America and the ambiguous interaction between the contradictory impulses of Europe that led to the original settling of America and its subsequent development; mercantilism and idealism'. [p. 99] This takes us back to the Jamesian theme already referred to. However, a couple of quotations from the text make the reference to the green light quite clear :

'If it wasn't for the mist we could see your home across the bay' said Gatsby. 'You always have a green light that burns all night at the end of your dock'.

Daisy put her arm through his abruptly, but he seemed absorbed in what he had just said. Possibly it had occurred to him that the colossal significance of that light had now vanished forever.

The last lines of the novel make the point quite clear when Nick Carraway ends the story of *Gatsby* :

And as I sat there brooding on the old, unknown world, I thought of *Gatsby's* wonder when he first picked out the green light at the end of Daisy's dock. He had come a long way to this blue lawn, and his dream must have seemed so close that he could hardly fail to grasp it. He did not know that it was already behind him, somewhere back in that vast obscurity beyond the city, where the dark fields of the republic rolled on under the night.

Gatsby believed in the green light, the orgiastic future that year by year recedes before us. It eluded us then, but that's no matter -- tomorrow we will run faster, stretch out our arms farther ... And one fine morning --

So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past.

His own romantic spirit felt deeply what an Englishman has called the 'myth-hunger' of Americans, our modern need to 'create a manageable past out of an immense present'. The poignant effect of the final, highly complex image of the novel, when *Gatsby's* dream and the American dream are identified, shows how deeply saturated with feeling Fitzgerald's historical imagination was. From his own American life he knew that with his generation the middle westerner had become the typical American and had returned from the old frontier to the East with a new set of dreams -- about money.

The allegorical level of the novel is brought out by John Henry Raleigh when in his essay 'Legendary Bases and Allegorical Significances' relates it with the relationship between the narrator Nick and *Gatsby* the protagonist : 'Allegorically considered, Nick is reason, experience, waking, reality, and history, while *Gatsby* is imagination, innocence, sleeping, dream, and eternity. Nick is like Wordsworth listening to 'the still sad music of humanity', while *Gatsby* is like Blake seeing hosts of angels in the sun. The one can only look at the facts and see them as tragic; the other tries to transform the facts by an act of the imagination. Nick's mind is conservative and historical, as is his lineage; *Gatsby's* is radical and apocalyptic -- as rootless as his heritage. Nick is too much immersed in time and in reality; *Gatsby* is hopelessly out of it. Nick is always withdrawing, while *Gatsby* pursues the green light. Nick can't be hurt, but neither can he be happy. *Gatsby* can experience ecstasy, but his fate is necessarily tragic. They are generically two of the best types of humanity: the moralist and the radical. One may well ask why, if their mental horizons are so lofty, is one a bond salesman and the other a gangster's lieutenant, whose whole existence is devoted to a love affair that has about it the unmistakable stamp of adolescence? The answer is, I think, that Fitzgerald did not know enough of what a philosopher or revolutionary might really be like, that at this point in his life he must have always thought of love in terms of a Princeton Prom, and that, writing in the twenties, a bond salesman and a

gangster's functionary would seem more representative anyway. Entering Princeton meant leaving, the Middle West, which was closed and conservative, for the East, which was rich and unprejudiced; it meant leaving the provincial city for an intellectually alive university campus; it meant, that is, confronting the reality of experience outside the shelter of the family circle. And, in fact, these years at Princeton were the most intense and determinant phase of Fitzgerald's development. It was at Princeton, especially after his return there in the fall of 1916, that he came in touch for the first time with true culture. There he met Father Sigourney Fay (Monsignor D'Arcy in *This Side of Paradise*), formed his ties of friendship with John Peale Bishop (Parke d'Inville in the same novel) and Edmund Wilson (his 'intellectual conscience', as he was later to describe him). He heard of Tolstoy and Whitman, read Booth Tarkington and Shaw, H.G. Wells and Compton Mackenzie, Wilde and Pater, John Masfield and Rupert Brooke to name only a few. It was at Princeton that he wrote the first drafts of *This side of Paradise*, and by the end of 1917 the novel was already 'completed'. 'The symbols that are common to both *Gatsby* and *Daisy* are, a large house with a swimming pool, dozens of silk shirts and elaborate parties. But *Daisy* believes in the symbols themselves, and not in the purer reality which (for *Jay Gatsby*) they only faintly embody'. *The Great Gatsby* can also be read as a 'Fable'. *Gatsby's* 'mingled dream of love and money, and the iron strength of his romantic will, make up the essence of the fable, but the art of its telling is full of astonishing tricks. To make the rise and fall of a gentleman gangster an image for the modern history of the Emersonian spirit of America was an audacious thing to attempt, but Fitzgerald got away with it. The novel also has element of 'Myth'. An English critic has comments on what he calls the 'myth-hunger' of Americans -- the need to 'create a manageable past out of an immense present'. Again, it has been pointed out: 'The poignant effect of the final, highly complex image of the novel, when *Gatsby's* dream and the American dream are identified, shows how deeply saturated with feeling Fitzgerald's historical imagination was. From his own American life he knew that with his generation the middle westerner had become the typical American and had returned from the old frontier to the East with a new set of dreams.

The symbolic context of the novel is related to the two words 'wonder' and 'flower' by Raleigh. As far as the use of the metaphorical is concerned, it is the metaphor of the rock which Nick uses which appears several times in the novel. 1) It refers to firmly based moral standards. It is possible there is an echo here of the New Testament parable about the house which is built upon rock and which survives a storm of wind and rain, while the house built on sand collapses. 2) The reference to a rock occurs in Chapter Two when a photograph on the wall of the sleazy flat which Tom Buchanan rented for his Mistress, Myrtle Wilson, is described as looking like 'a hen sitting on a blurred rock'. 3) At one point Nick picks up a book entitled *Simon Called Peter*. It is easy to connect *Simon Called Peter* with St. Peter, the Apostle whose name in Greek meant 'rock' and on which Christ made the punning remark, 'Upon this rock I shall build my church'. The allegorical significance consists of connecting the references to the 'solid rock' associated with the Mid-West upon which human behaviour might be grounded, taken along with the Biblical associations of that phrase, might suggest that he is returning to a more primitive, if more conventional, way of life, rooted in 'self-disciplined Christian belief of a fundamentalist kind'. It is possible to see that the expression 'Valley of ashes' indicates a single, clear and definite meaning of a non-literal kind: i.e. allegorical. A reference in this context has to be made to the 'Eyes of Eckleburg': 'But above the gray land and the spasms of bleak dust which drift endlessly over it, you perceive, after a moment, the eyes of Doctor T.J. Eckleburg. The eyes of Doctor T.J. Eckleburg are blue and gigantic -- their retinas are one yard high. They look out of no face, but, instead, from a pair of enormous yellow spectacles which pass over a non-existent nose. Evidently some wild wag of an oculist set them there to fatten his practice in the borough of Queens, and then sank down himself into eternal blindness, or forgot them and moved away. But his eyes, dimmed

a little by many countless days under sun and rain, brood on over the solemn dumping ground. The eyes of Eckleburg are brought back again in the picture towards the end of the novel so that their symbolic significance should not be forgotten'. Standing behind him, Michaelis saw with a shock that he was looking at the eyes of Doctor T.J. Eckleburg, which had just emerged, pale and enormous, from the dissolving night. God sees everything, repeated Wilson'.

***The Great Gatsby*
and Fable, Symbol
& Allegory**

3.5 LET US SUM UP

The major symbols like the rock, the eyes of Dr. Eckleburg and the green light have been explained in this Unit in addition to commenting on the Allegorical level and the novel as a Fable.

3.6 SUGGESTED READING

1. Lubbock, Percy. *The Craft of Fiction*. New York. 1921.
2. Forster, E.M. *Aspects of the Novel*. New York. 1927.
3. Wilson, Edmund, *The Triple Thinkers*, New York. 1963.

3.7 QUESTIONS

1. Is there any effectively developed pattern of Imagery, Symbolism, Allegory and Fable in *The Great Gatsby*. Expatriate?
2. How does the presentation of the two scenes of murder in *The Great Gatsby* differ stylistically from the other sections of the novel?
3. Discuss the relationship of The Plot and the crucial scenes in the structure of *The Great Gatsby*.
4. To what extent does a character like Daisy represent theme or idea more than an individual personality?
5. Discuss the function of Myrtle Wilson in the novel.
6. Write an essay on the prose style of Scott Fitzgerald and compare it with that of Ernest Hemingway.

UNIT 4 *THE GREAT GATSBY* : AND THE NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE

Structure

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Fitzgerald and the Hollywood Context
- 4.3 Gatsby's Life and the dual perception of Fitzgerald
- 4.4 Criminal Wealth and Respectability
- 4.5 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.6 Glossary
- 4.7 Questions
- 4.8 Suggested Readings

4.0 OBJECTIVES

The novel has a classic beginning. The first sentence is as significant as the first sentence in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. Nick Carraway, the narrator through whose perception we see the events of the novel introduces himself with the sentence, "In my younger and more vulnerable years, my father gave me some advice that I've been turning over in my mind ever since. 'Whenever you feel like criticizing anyone', he told me, 'Just remember that all the people in this world haven't had the advantages that you've had'. His introducing Gatsby is typical of the narrative style of Nick. The objective of this final section is to make the student understand the entire novel from the point of view of what is technically known as 'the point of view'.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

One of the most significant aspects of *The Great Gatsby* which makes it an extraordinary novel is the introduction of the Narrator and the narrative technique in the novel. The Conradian technique has been commented on by several critics. The first person narration using the letter 'I' by Nick Carraway and how he perceives the other characters is explored here in this Unit. The narrator's voice using the letter 'I' is an interesting literary device. For example, Christopher Isherwood uses the 'I' narration in many of his novels. This 'I' is a persona as different from a person. In fact, Isherwood has four autobiographies written at different periods in his life and this 'I' becomes the 'Camera eye' which records things and events and characters quite objectively as a camera does. That is why a play version about Isherwood is entitled 'I am a Camera'. This point has been made that it is not only the Conradian narrator that has to be taken into account in the discussion of Nick Carraway as a Narrator. Part of it is to distance the hero from the narrator so that the novel does not become an autobiographical novel. Nick Carraway, the Narrator says about Gatsby : 'If personality is an unknown series of successful gestures, then there was something gorgeous about him, some heightened sensitivity to the promises of life, as if he were related to one of those intricate machines that register earthquakes ten thousand miles away'. [p. 2]. Nick introduces himself in a matter of fact manner 'I graduated from New Haven in 1915, just a quarter of a century after my father, and a little later I participated in that delayed Teutonic migration known as the 'Great War'. [p. 3]. This

places the events of the novel in its historical perspective. He describes Gatsby's house. 'It was a factual imitation of some Hotel de Ville in Normandy, with a tower on one side, spanking new under a thin beard of raw ivy, and a marble swimming pool, and more than forty acres of lawn and garden. It was Gatsby's mansion. Or, rather, as I didn't know Mr. Gatsby, it was a mansion, inhabited by a gentleman of that name. My own house was an eyesore, but it was a small eyesore, and it had been overlooked. So I had a view of the water, a partial view of my neighbour's lawn, and the consoling proximity of millionaires all for eighty dollars a month'. [p.5]. This is the Narrator's outside comment by distancing himself and describing Gatsby -- the Man and the Milieu.

It would be difficult to present a hero like Gatsby directly. Fitzgerald sought to get around this difficulty by presenting his hero indirectly, through a narrator, and by having the narrator provide the irony. He does it brilliantly, but in the end we have to recognize that he means us to be wholly on the hero's side, to believe that without Gatsby's extreme idealism, life is simply unlivable. Regarding the role of the narrator Nick Carraway and the narrative technique, The Times Literary Supplement pointed out: 'The story, told economically in the first person, keeps the narrator, Nick Carraway well in the background. He is a young bond-salesman, commuting from a cottage set between two large estates on Long Island, one of which is owned by the mysterious Gatsby, also young, who gives huge parties each week-end. A rich married couple, Tom and Daisy Buchanan, friends of Carraway, own another large house on the opposite side of the Sound. Tom Buchanan is engaged in a decidedly sordid *liaison* with the wife of a local garage proprietor; and Daisy's life is unhappy... The book ends in a ferment of ignoble behavior on the part of the Buchanans and Gatsby's former guests and associates; so that finally Carraway is driven to the inevitable conclusion that the gangster, Gatsby, embodied something more genuine -- and on the whole less depraved -- than either the parasites he entertained or the Buchanans, who represented to him (and to themselves and their set) membership of a would-be aristocratic society'. From time to time, Nick the narrator makes an 'outside comment'. For example when Daisy says that Nick reminds her 'of a rose, an absolute rose', the narrator's voice says: 'This was untrue. I am not even faintly like a rose'. While this is one kind of a comment where he is critical of himself, there is also another kind of a comment where he compliments himself half-seriously when he attributes to himself one of the 'cardinal virtues' and says 'I am one of the few honest people that I have ever known'! Even when he thinks he is falling in love with Jordan, he confesses that he is slow thinking and full of interior rules that act as brakes on his desires. His relationship with Gatsby on the one hand and Jordan on the other sets up a fine pattern to the narrative technique. When Gatsby offers him a sort of a job which wouldn't take much of his time and where he might pick up the nice bit of money -- a confidential sort of job and when Jordan Baker tells him that she was engaged to some other man accusing him of 'throwing her over' on the telephone.

Nick's double role as a narrator as well as a character in the novel constantly changes. His portrayal of the other characters as they come into contact with him also includes his judgement of them. Thus the reader of the novel has to see Nick in relation to Gatsby, Jordan Baker, Tom and Daisy, Wolfsheimer and even Gatsby's father. The narrator has two styles of narration: in one, he describes in detail what happened; in the other, he summarises, fills in the background detail, muses and moralises. Nick Carraway, the narrator, is a privileged young man from a wealthy background, but in the first page of the novel it is suggested that his main privilege is to have 'a sense of the fundamental decencies'. Elsewhere he congratulates himself upon his honesty. The presence of the narrator within the novel makes some difference to its presentation and to the reader's response to it. The reader is more aware of the colour which may be added to the story by the personality of the story-teller; there may even be some question of how far we are to accept his version of events. Although the action of the novel leads towards the death of the character from whom the novel takes its name, there is a positive goal for

the book. The moral perceptions of Nick Carraway move from a position of neutrality to one of commitment. Thus the narrator who has been used most effectively in the narrative technique is one of the most important things to be explored in the study of the novel.

4.2 FITZGERALD AND THE HOLLYWOOD CONTEXT

There was an interlude in Fitzgerald's career as a writer in Hollywood where Fitzgerald worked briefly as a script writer. In 1927 he did script-writing in Hollywood to which place he moved in 1937. He fell in love with Sheilah Graham and the excellent film 'The Beloved Infidel' deals with this stage of his life. In the context of Hollywood, it could be mentioned that a separate 'genre' of novels which have come to be known as 'Hollywood novels' exists. For example, Bud Schulberg's *What Makes Sammy Run?* Indeed, a separate research study has been made on the 'Hollywood Novels'. Stephen Vincent Benet comments: 'We have had a good many books about Hollywood, including the interesting and staccato *What Makes Sammy Run?* But the difference between even the best of them and *The Last Tycoon* is not merely a difference of degree but a difference in kind. *The Last Tycoon* shows what a really first-class writer can do with material -- how he gets under the skin. It doesn't depend for success on sets or atmosphere, local color or inside stuff; it doesn't even depend for effect on the necessary exaggerations of the life that it describes. All that is there -- the Martian life of the studios, brilliantly shown. But it is character that dominates the book, the complex yet consistent character of Monroe Stahr, the producer, hitched to the wheels of his own preposterous chariot, at once dominating and dominated, as much a part of his business as the film that runs through the cameras, and yet a living man. Had Fitzgerald been permitted to finish the book, I think there is no doubt that it would have added a major character and a major novel to American fiction. As it is, *The Last Tycoon* is a great deal more than a fragment. It shows the full powers of its author, at their height and at their best. Indeed, there are many script-writers for Hollywood who are recognized novelists in their own right.

The unfinished novel of Fitzgerald *The Last Tycoon* can be mentioned in this category. Christopher Isherwood who was my own teacher may be mentioned here and his novel *Prater Violet* and his film scripts for the Hollywood Studios in general. However, a film script is different from a novel and even a novel has to be scripted again before it is made into a film. Whether it is a play or a novel or a short story -- a literary work, when it is to be made into a film has to be re-written. It must be taken note of that Fitzgerald's novel are eminently filmworthy.

4.3 GATSBY'S LIFE AND THE DUAL PERCEPTION OF FITZGERALD

Gatsby's life is an illustration of certain 'criminal' activity on his part and his subsequent struggle for gaining respectability. He was the son of some wealthy people in the Middle West. Though he was brought up in America he spent some time getting educated at Oxford. A part of his attempt at establishing his credibility as an 'Oxford Man' consists of his using the expression 'Old Sport' which is a mannerism among addressing each other at Oxford between good friends. When his family died he came into a good deal of money. According to his own statement, 'After that I lived like a young Rajah in all the capitals of Europe -- Paris, Venice, Rome -- collecting jewels, cheaply Rubies, hunting big game, painting a little, things for myself only, and trying to forget something that had happened to me long ago. Then came the war, old sport.

It is a great relief and I tried very hard to die and I seemed to bear an enchanted life. I accepted a commission as first Lieutenant... I was promoted to a Major, and every Allied Government gave me a decoration'. [p. 65-66]. This is a good beginning to understand the double strands in his nature -- as a 'would be' gentleman and a person who had bordered upon engaging himself in criminal activity. It is this dual personality that should be explored throughout the novel.

4.4 CRIMINAL WEALTH AND RESPECTABILITY

Arising from this dual perception of the character of Gatsby, an expression from the text where Gatsby is described as having a 'Platonic conception of himself' provides a clue to the relationship between 'Criminal Wealth and Respectability'. He thought of himself as a 'son of God'. Tom Buchanan suspects his bonafides both as a gentleman and an 'Oxford Man'. He has a hunch that Gatsby was a bootlegger and is extremely jealous of his wife Daisy thinking well of him. Nick is quite fond of Gatsby and therefore his references to Gatsby are quite favourable. For example, he says: 'My eyes fell on Gatsby standing alone on the marble steps and looking from one group to another with approving eyes. His tanned skin was drawn attractively tight on his face and his short hair looked as though it were trimmed every day. I could see nothing sinister about him' [p. 50]. Gatsby's other side is seen when he makes a dubious offer of a remunerative job which wouldn't take much of his time and he would pick up a nice bit of money and ominously says that it was 'a rather confidential sort of thing'. Gatsby's positive side is seen when he dances a fox trot and is quite charming. We learn that he knew women early, and since they spoiled him he became contemptuous of them. Two characters who bring out the dark side of Gatsby are Dan Cody and Wolfsheim. Cody was a fifty year old man and a product of the Nevada silver fields and the transactions in Montana copper had made him many times a millionaire. He was physically robust. Gatsby's association with him is central to the understanding of the criminality and the respectability of Gatsby. Cody himself is described in a characteristically Fitzgeraldian style when he says 'An infinite number of woman tried to separate him from his money'. It is the fact that Gatsby was employed by Cody in a dubious manner in a number of capacities like a mate, skipper, secretary and even jailor because Dan Cody sober knew what lavish doing Dan Cody drunk might soon be about and Code provided for such contingency by reposing great trust in Gatsby. Dan Cody at one point claims that he made Gatsby what he was which is revelatory regarding Gatsby's dark side. This is connected with Gatsby as a 'bootlegger'. It is from this questionable way of getting rich that makes him go out of the way to buy respectability which is seen in his owning a distinctive yellow car, which ironically proves to be his death. Secondly, the fabulous parties that he throws which were almost 'open house' because many people came to his parties uninvited and gorged themselves on food and drink. Throughout, Gatsby tries to project himself as larger than himself in epic proportions. However, Tom sees right away for what really he is, partly incensed by his wife's former relationship with him. Thus it is the respectable and criminal aspect are inextricably intertwined. Wolfsheim also has an association with Gatsby which is anything but respectable. He is a shifty, devious, dubious, scheming 'businessman'. He is described as 'A small flat-nosed Jew'. He claims to have made James Gatz into 'the great Gatsby'. When Nick asks him whether he had known Gatsby for a long time, he replies that he had known him for a number of years. However, he refuses to associate himself with Gatsby when he is killed and he has always 'played safe' as a businessman, owning a chain of 'drug stores' peddling dope on the side. The only letter that is found in the text of *The Great Gatsby* is Wolfsheim's letter where he does not want to get involved in any risky business, in so far as Gatsby had been murdered and Wolfsheim doesn't want to get 'mixed up' in the affair. Thus, Gatsby's background which is rather shady and his attempts to become a

'gentleman' so that he can win the hand of Daisy, connected with the symbol of the 'green light' is the essence of the novel.

4.5 LET US SUM UP

In summing up of the novel as a representative of the American 20's, before the advent of the 'the great depression' in the 30's, the tragic story of the interplay of criminality and respectability, of attempting to find fame and fortune on the one hand but attaining these things by illegal and immoral means and how it takes its toll ultimately is the essence of the novel. The worst of human nature is shown by Fitzgerald when no one turned up for his funeral, though hundreds had eaten at his place. It is a sad comment on human nature that when a man dies, he dies alone, absolutely alone. The only thing, thinking in Indian terms that accompanies him are his good deeds, especially those which had been done spontaneously and without any calculation to get something in return. To use an expression of Wordsworth 'The little, unremembered acts of kindness and of love'. Strangely enough this aspect of *Gatsby* is also present in the novel as he didn't even know who his guests were who enjoyed themselves at his parties. Everybody wants to 'play safe' especially a devious character like Wolfsheim. In fact, when Nick goes to New York to see Wolfsheim, his secretary blatantly tells him like he had gone to Chicago where as he was very much behind the door. Nick the narrator knows such tricks of the trade and manages to meet Wolfsheim and invites to come to the funeral that afternoon but Wolfsheim refuses by saying 'I can't do it -- I can't get mixed up with it... When a man gets killed I never like to get mixed up in it any way. Without sounding sentimental and unduly moralistic, one can agree with Antony in Julius Caesar who says that the evil that men do lives after them where as the good is often interred with their bones. It may not be out of place to mention the geography of the United States plays its part in the novel. The moral geography of the novel represents basically that the West represents something traditional and absolute, though Fitzgerald does not spell out what is absolute system of values is. In moving from the Mid-West of America to New York to follow a carrier in the money markets, Nick Carraway is entering dangerous ground. Fitzgerald maintains the geographical distinction. Though *The Great Gatsby* cannot be treated as a 'Local Colour' novel and Fitzgerald as a 'Local Colourist', the distinction between the Mid-West and the East are clearly brought out in the novel. The students of American Literature must remember that though American Literature is generally talked about as a single unit differentiating it from British Literature, the regional differences within America like the New England area, the American South, The Mid-West and the Far-West are significant in 'placing' an American writer. While this summing up seems to be rather simplistic, it is still to be maintained that the significance of *The Great Gatsby* for the Indian reader lies in the fact that the novel, from the traditional Indian point of view, DEALS WITH THE the four goals of life -- the Purusharthas -- only 'Artha' (worldly position AND wealth) and 'Kama' (the fulfilment of bodily desires) have been given primary importance to the detriment of 'Dharma' (righteous conduct). Nevertheless, our consideration of the age of *Gatsby*, discussed in Unit 1, the analysis of the Plot Structure in Unit 2, taking into consideration characterization in Unit 3, dealing with the extra-literary devices like Symbol and Allegory in Unit 4 and the entire mode of the narrative technique in Unit 5 has given us some idea about *The Great Gatsby* as one of the most significant novels of American Literature.

4.6 SUGGESTED READING

1. Turnbull, Andrew, ed. *The Letters of F. Scott Fitzgerald*. New York. Charles Scribner's Sons. 1963.

2. Perosa, Sergio. *The Art of F. Scott Fitzgerald*. Ann Arbor Paperbacks. The University of Michigan Press. 1961.
3. Mizener, Arthur, *F. Scott Fitzgerald : A Collection of Critical Essays*. Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 1963.
4. Ramanan, Mohan (ed). *F. Scott Fitzgerald: Centenary Essays from India*. Prestige. 1998.

4.7 QUESTIONS

1. Comment on the Narrator and the Narrative technique in Fitzgerald and Joseph Conrad.
2. Discuss the style of Fitzgerald with examples from *The Great Gatsby*.
3. What, do you think is the major theme in *The Great Gatsby*? Explain by analyzing the text.
4. Describe the Social World of the Eastern United States and the local colour especially with reference to New York, the West Egg, the East Egg and Long Island.
5. Explore the concept of 'The American Dream' in *The Great Gatsby* and Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*.

UNIT 5 CRITICS AND CRITICISM: AN OVERVIEW

Structure

- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Western Critics
- 5.3 Indian Critics
- 5.4 Let Us Sum Up
- 5.5 Suggested Reading
- 5.6 Glossary

5.0 OBJECTIVES

In this Unit, we will discuss the criticism of a number of western and Indian critics on Scott. Fitzgerald and his novel, *The Great Gatsby*.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Fitzgerald is one of the most written about authors and naturally there are a great many critical approaches and opinions expressed by well known American critics like Lionel Trilling, William Troy, Wright Morris, John Aldridge, Edwin Fussell, Andrews Wanning, Malcolm Cowley, Leslie Fiedler, Charles E. Shain, Edmund Wilson, James E. Miller, Jr. Donald Ogden, John Henry Raleigh, Tom Burnam, A.E. Dyson, Marius Bewely, D.W. Harding, D.S. Savage, Arthur Mizener and others. This shows how involved modern critics have been with the work of Fitzgerald, covering all aspects of his writing, both the early and the later works. Some of these critics have written exclusively on *The Great Gatsby* which is, by common consent, the best work of Fitzgerald. The Indian critics have not lagged behind in their critical appraisal of Fitzgerald – critics like A.K. Sethi, Isaac Sequeira, Somdatta Mandal, M. Sivaramkrishna, Prasenjit Biswas, Sherine Upot, Pratima Agnihotri, Pradip Kumar Dey, Suman Bala and R.K. Dhawan. A brief look at some of the opinion of these critical attitudes should provide the introduction for the who 'Block'

5.2 WESTERN CRITICS

Arthur Mizener who has edited the whole collection of essays on Fitzgerald for the Twentieth Century Views Series has written an excellent introduction which covers all aspects of the writer including the background for the Age and the contemporaries of Fitzgerald, in his exclusive essay entitled 'The Maturity of Scott Fitzgerald'. He concentrates on *The Last Tycoon* but draws a comparison between the Hollywood scene in this novel with *The Great Gatsby* where the long island society is brilliantly drawn. However, he thinks that in both these novels this aspect is a 'relatively minor part of its achievement'. Three critics have written exclusively on *The Great Gatsby*. John Henry Raleigh explores the context of symbol and allegory and comes to the conclusion that the novel does not deal with local customs or even national and international levels but in the permanent realities of existence'. Tom Burnam feels that the novel seems a deceptively simple work and hastens to point out that it is really

complex with the symbolic and allegorical aspects. He differs with Lionel Trilling, Lionel Trilling thinks that Jay Gatsby 'is to be thought of as standing for America itself' and adds 'Perhaps; everyone is Everyone in a sense and Gatsby can stand for America as conveniently as he can stand for himself. But it seems to me that the true significance The Great Gatsby is more personal and more specific'. The Times Literary Supplement in 1950 wrote on Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby under the title 'Power without Glory' where it is pointed out: 'Fitzgerald's habitual connotation in many people's minds with the 'jazz age' has sometimes obscured his merits. He is, it is true, a remarkable example of a writer of great gifts striking when the iron was hot - and failing to produce another masterpiece largely on account of the limitations of his time-bound point of view- but he stands apart from most of the American, or English, novelists, among contemporaries who might be considered in his class; and at his best he certainly rises far above recommendation merely as an interesting period piece.

The 'Lost Generation' was the first coherent group of novelists in the history of American literature. It is possible to see how the First World War shaped the flowering of their talent in the 1920's. the war forced the Americans to recognize the fact that their country was a responsible part of Western culture. One of the effects of this was that they were dissatisfied with the narrowness of American Civilization to the point where they preferred to live elsewhere, especially in Paris. A backward look at the novels of Henry James may be useful here in relation to the interaction between 'Young America' and 'Old Europe'. A typical novel would be The Portrait of the Lady, another great American classic. In fact, T.S. Eliot, in a letter written to Fitzgerald about The Great Gatsby in 1925 from the publishing firm of Faber says: 'When I have time I should like to write to you more fully and tell you exactly why it seems to me such a remarkable book. In fact it seems to me to be the first step that American fiction has taken since Henry James...' As H.L. Mencken points out: 'In The Great Gatsby though he does not go below the surface, he depicts this rattle and hullabaloo with great gusto and, I believe, with sharp accuracy. The Long Island he sets before us is no fanciful Alsatia; it actually exists. More, it is worth any social historian's study, for its influence upon the rest of the country is immense and profound'. John Henry Raleigh sums up the importance of The Great Gatsby: 'At its highest level The Great Gatsby does not deal with local customs or even national and international legends but with the permanent realities of existence. On this level nothing or nobody is to blame, and people are what they are and life is what it is... At this level, too, most people don't count; they are merely a higher form of animality living out its mundane existence: the Tom Buchanans, the Joprdan Bakers, the Daisy Fays. only Nick and Gatsby count. For Gatsby, with all his absurdities and his short, sad, pathetic life, is still valuable; in Nick's parting words to him: 'You're worth he whole damn bunch put together'. Nick, who in his way is as much of this world as Daisy is in hers, still sees, obscurely, the significance of Gatsby. And although he knows that the content of Gatsby's dream is corrupt, he senses that its form is pristine. For, in his own fumbling, often gross way, Gatsby was obsessed with the wonder of human life and driven by the search to make that wonder actual. It is the same urge that motivates visionaries and prophets, and urge to make the facts of life measure up to the splendors of the human imagination'. Chase sums up the special characteristic of the novel: 'The special charm of Gatsby rests in his odd combination of romance with a realistic picture of raw power - the raw power of the money that has made a plutocracy and the raw power the self protective conventions of this plutocracy assume when they close in a united front against an intruder'. Paul Rosenfeld says: 'He is a born writer, a meausing himself with tales and pictures; and eventually nothing is interesting except the natural bent. Salty and insipid, exaggeratedly poetical land bitterly parodistic, his writing pours exuberantly out of him. Flat paragraphs are redeemed by brilliant metaphors and conventional descriptions by witty, penetrating turns. Ideas of diamond are somewhat indiscriminately mixed with ideas of rhinestone and ideas of window glass: yet purest rays serene are present in veritable abundance. They must come to this bannerman of the slickers and flappers in a sort of dream,

unexpectedly out of some arcana where they have been concealing themselves, an surprise him by smiling up at him from underneath his pen'. H.L. Mencken, talking about *The Great Gatsby* comments in not entirely complementary terms. Such views are also helpful in our study of the text critical instead of being entirely adulatory: 'This story is obviously unimportant, and though, as I shall show, it has its place in the Fitzgerald cannon, it is certainly not to be put on the same shelf, with, say, *This Side of Paradise*. What ails, it, fundamentally, is the plain fact that it is simply a story – that Fitzgerald seems to be far more interested in maintaining its suspense than in getting under the skins of its people. It is not that they are false; it is that they are taken too much for granted. Only Gatsby himself genuinely lives and breathes. The rest are mere marionettes – often astonishingly lifelike but nevertheless not quite alive... what gives the story distinction is something quite different from the management of the action or the handling of the characters: it is the charm and beauty of the writing. In Fitzgerald's first days it seemed almost unimaginable that he could ever show such qualities. His writing, then, was extraordinarily slipshod – at times almost illiterate. He seemed to be devoid of any feeling for the color and savor of words. He could see people clearly and he could devise capital situations, but as writer qua writer he was apparently little more than a bright college boy;'

As great a critic as Lionel Trilling estimates the importance of the novel this way: *The Great Gatsby*, for example after a quarter century is still as fresh as when it first appeared; it has even gained in weight and relevance, which can be said of very few American books of its time. This, I think, is to be attributed to the specifically intellectual courage with which it was conceived and executed, a courage which implied Fitzgerald's grasp – both in the sense of awareness and of appropriation – of the traditional resources available to him. Thus, *The Great Gatsby* has its sinterest as a record of contemporary manners, but this might only have served to date it, did not Fitzgerald take the given moment of history as something more than a mere circumstance, did he not, in the manner of the great French novelists of the nineteenth century, seize the given moment as a moral fact.

Talking of 'manners' Van Wick Brooks points out: 'A lesser writer might have attempted to make Nick a literal sage and Gatsby a literal prophet. But it is certain that such a thought would never have entered Fitzgerald's head, as he was only dramatizing the morals and manners of the life he knew. The genius of the novel consists precisely in the fact that, while using only the stuff, one might better say the froth and flotsam of its own limited time and place, it has managed to suggest a sense of eternity'. Richard Chase, talking about the milieu of the novel says: 'Gatsby gives us an unforgettable, even though rather sketchy, sense of 1920's and what the people were like who lived in them. We know what the people were like because we are shown the public recognized gestures and attitudes by which they declare themselves as belonging to a certain ambiance at a certain time. Their manners (perhaps one should say their mannered lack of manners) are a clearly minted currency as readily negotiable as the money they all have such a lot of. At the same time the hero who comes to his spectacular grief is not only a man of the 1920's but a figure of legend. No one can doubt that the legend engaged the imagination of the author more deeply than the society in which the legend is played out'. Leon Howard, in his *Literature and the American Tradition* says: Scott Fitzgerald became the novelist of the great rebellion. Perhaps this is so because Fitzgerald himself did not quite believe he age but played its game with an air of wonder, a double sense of involvement and detachment which made him the immediate historian of an age he was half living and half creating it was not until *The Great Gatsby* (1926) that he managed to triumph over his early faults of style and achieve a novel which seemed to T.S. Eliot 'the first step that American fiction has taken since Henry James'. There was, in fact, a Jamesian quality in the book, emphasized by the use of a narrator and the method of presenting the story in scenes, in its conception of flamboyant bootlegger Gatsby as an individual of greater moral sensitivity than the wealthy and well-bred Daisy and Tom; and, although it lacks

Jamesian faith inasmuch as Gatsby is killed instead of being allowed to experience some inner triumph, it is this quality which makes it Fitzgerald's most human book rather than another fine example of social history'.

5.3 INDIAN CRITICS

So much has been done by Indian scholars in American studies that this has to be taken into account. Special mention must be made A.K. Sethi. His essay 'T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* and the novels F. Scott Fitzgerald and Nathanael West' is seminal, comprehensive and insightful and the view expressed is so relevant to the study of *The Great Gatsby*. Another very significant essay is by Isaac Sequeira who is the doyen of American studies in India. Isaac Sequeira who is an authority on Popular Culture with a book on the subject to his credit is versatile with a knowledge of Jazz and Western Classical music. His essay, even without the oral and auditory dimension in the printed version is central to the understanding of the Jazz age which is also called 'The Gay Twenties, the Day of Boom and Bust. The Roller Coaster Ride Up and Down, the period of meretricious gaiety, of the lost generation, of flappers and philosophers'. He points out that one critic described the Jazz Age as 'a Marx Brothers Extravaganza with a frenetic jazz orchestra in the pit and a bawdy farce on the stage. He quotes Fitzgerald's own comment: 'America is going on the greatest spree in history.

Mohan Ramanan points out that "Fitzgerald became a 'cult hero'. His life style was representative of his age and it was careless and amoral. He, as well as his age become synonymous with affluence, high life, and liberalism of all kinds. Some of the other Indian critics who have written on Fitzgerald will be briefly mentioned here: Somdatta Mandal has commented very perceptively on the jazz age and 'The Moment' discussing the years between the two World Wars. She comments: The decade of the 1920s was at one and the same time the gaudiest, the shortest and the most misinterpreted era in American history. It has been judged both as a 'golden age' and as a 'hollow time between wars'. The years have been seen as frivolous and roaring, and, at the same time, bathed in tragedy and despair. The tremendous interest that chroniclers find in this period can be judged by the various terms that have been used to define it—'Roaring Twenties', 'Era of Wonderful Nonsense', 'The Aspirin Age', 'The Lawless Decade', 'The Passionate Years' and of course, 'The Jazz Age'. All these chroniclers either regard the period as an adolescent spree or with a regret approximating that of a bad hangover.... The best history of the younger generation which ran wild, of the emergent debutantes, playboys and flappers find voice through the All these chroniclers either regard the period as an adolescent spree or with a regret approximating that of a bad hangover... The best history of the younger generation which ran wild, of the emergent debutantes, playboys and flappers find voice through the writings of F. Scott Fitzgerald. As the earliest chronicler of the 'Jazz Age', (he himself coined the phrase). Dr. Mandal completes the picture of 'The Jazz Age' when she quotes from Hansen Chadwick regarding 'Social Influences on Jazz style': But the Jazz Age was not so much a drinking as a dancing age. In those days, one heard jazz everywhere—from orchestras in the ball—room, from wind—up phonographs in the parlour, from loudspeakers blaring in variety stores, lunch wagons, even machine shops—and jazz wasn't even tapping one's feet: jazz was the music with a purpose; it was music to which people danced. Before the First World War, jazz was primarily a music of the southern Negro, especially of the Negro in and around New Orleans. But during and after the war, along with the migration of the Negroes to the north, jazz moved north as well and 'Chicago soon replaced New Orleans as the centre of the jazz world. It was then that jazz really spread beyond the black community and became the jazz men had, of course been playing for some white audience long before, but it was in the twenties that they acquired a truly national audience and found

themselves a part of the national entertainment industry, subject to all its requirements'. After quoting Chadwick she comments: 'So, to the young generation of the Twenties, jazz carried with it a constant message of change, excitement, violent escape, with an undertone of sadness, but with a promise of enjoyment somewhere around the corner next week, perhaps at midnight in a distant country. Further, the moan of the saxophone replaced the gentle hum of the violin the ball-room and men and women danced daringly close together. in Gatsby's parties too, we witness how the traditional orchestras is replaced by the jazz band'. She also draws the picture of 'The Moment' in relation to the Paris of the 20s'. m 'No picture of the jazz Age is complete without the mention of Paris and the part it played in shaping the conditions of the Twenties. Tom and Daisy Buchanan of *The Great Gatsby* came to settle in New York 'after spending a year in France for no particular reason' and then drifting 'here and there unrestfully wherever people played polo and were rich together'. The Paris of the young American writers in the early and middle 1920s was both a city and a state of feeling induced by the Great War and its aftermath and they went to Paris not as if they were driven into exile but in search of a spiritual home. Paris was a continual excitation of the sense — freedom to dress as they pleased, talk or write as they pleased and even make love without worrying about the neighbours. If we can believe the stories of the American literary men in Paris at that time, they had leapt at one bound from the Midwestern world of their childhood into the world of Caporetto and Dada, of Picasso and Gertrude Stein (who called them 'the lost generation'). Their detachment from the native tradition now became their own first tradition. Drunk most of the time, traveling considerably, they also managed to get an impressive amount of good writing done. The early works of Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Dos Passos, e.e. Cummings and others bear testimony to the fact that Paris for them was really 'Babylon Revisited'.

M. Sivaramakrishna in his essay 'Some Indic Pathways to Fitzgerald's Paradise takes an Indian philosophical view which is quite characteristic of him and examines Fitzgerald from the point of view of Purusharthas — the four goals of life in Indian thinking. In his opinion American fiction in general and that of Fitzgerald in particular is a dramatization is a inherent contradictions in a purely sensate level of existence exemplifying. Modern critical perspectives from the point of view of 'theory' have also figured in the Indian approach. L for example Prasenjit Biswas discussed *The Great Gatsby* in a Barthesian Conspectus. He discusses the novel from the theoretical vantage point of Roland Barthes's *A Lover's Discourse*. He opines that Barthes's *Loves Discourse* provides this post-hoc outlook through its formulation of a state of suspension of the possibility of realization of love. Talking of the modern theory, Sherine Upot in her essay 'She — Centering *The Great Gatsby*: Fitzgerald, Barthelme and the Gender Question' supplies the lacuna of the feminist perspective and gender issues. She argues that *The Great Gatsby* is 'undoubtedly a male centered text' and says that 'In spite of the stirrings of feminism in the Twenties and despite Fitzgerald's seeming enthusiasm for the movement indicated by his over admiration for Zelda. *The Great Gatsby* can be seem to represent and partake of patriarchal ideology in its portrayal of women'. Pratima Agnihotri places *The Great Gatsby* in the European tradition by invoking the proverbial Tantalus and connects this the green light of Gatsby and says 'Just as Tantalus the doomed king of the nether world, was condemned to stand in water that always receded when he tried to drink it and under branches of fruit he could never reach, Jay Gatsby almost acquires a self, almost comes to terms with its various others, almost reaches the American dream to have all these failing him and receding further away like the American Frontier itself'. Her approach is full of references to literary sources like the outlawed hero, Don Quixote and the Rousseauesque self constitution. while mentioning Eckleburg's eyes she thinks that 'they become the conscience of the American self'. Pradip Kumar Dey discusses *The Great Gatsby* in the context of the 'American Dream' and feels 'The Original idealistic determinants of the American Dream are juxtaposed with their contemporary distortion greed and acquisitiveness. Daisy represents for Gatsby the twin ideal of

eternal youth and that opulent American touch, money. In fact both these are inseparable in the present case for it is affluence that for Gatsby is the means to achieve the dream'. Suman Bala and R.K. Dhawan bring in a comparative perspective effectively. While Suman Bala writes on the two narrators, Nick in *The Great Gatsby* and Morlow in Joseph Conrad's novels, *Youth*, *Heart of Darkness*, Lord Jim and *Chance* and points out how by creating an eyewitness narrator, both Conrad and Fitzgerald lend authenticity to their story and concludes 'By using Morlow an intermediary between himself and the other characters, Conrad achieves a detachment which it might have been more difficult to maintain had he dealt straightforwardly with autobiographical material. The same holds true for Fitzgerald. Nick is at once involved in the story he narates and a commentator who subtly directs the reader's response to his tale'. R.K. Dhawan concentrates on the central characters of Gatsby and Kurtz and points out that 'A sense of mystery surrounds both Kurtz and Gatsby and they remain enigmatic figures till the end... both Gatsby and Kurtz are romantic idealists; but they are not products of a social tradition but of their own imagination'. In interesting aspect of his study is his drawing a comparison from a novel by an Indian—English novelist, Arun Joshi, In his novel *The Apprentice*. Dhawan shows how both Gatsby and Kurtz are destroyed by their illusions.

5.4 LET SUM UP

From the aforementioned discussion, it is clear that Scott Fitzgerald is an extremely popular American novelist in India also and the critical appraisal that he has received from Western critics is matched by the Indian critical perspective which is most relevant from Indian students to comprehend. Some of the aspects to be covered in this Write—up which help the students to understand the varied aspects of Fitzgerald and his times from a study of the text in detail. The mood of the Twenties upto the 'Great Depression' of the thirties, the Jazz Age, the Expatriate sensibility of the 'Lost Generation', Prohibition and bootlegging from rags to riches story of the 'American Dream', the various critical attitudes and appraisals of American and Indian critics — these aspects are meant to provide the student with basic materials for study as well as finding incentives for further research. What I have tried to do in the Units is to provide this material in addition to adding my own personal experiences of the study of American literature during a number of visits to various American Universities. Unit ONE provides the Background for the Life and Times of Fitzgerald, Unit TWO concentrates on the Form of the Novel, Unit THREE on the Plot Structure, Unit FOUR on the Symbolism and Allegory in the novel and Unit FIVE on the Narrator and the Narrative Technique., each Unit with its own list of Suggested Reading and a Glossary at the very end of the Write—up.

5.5 SUGGESTED READING

1. Fitzgerald, Zelda. *Save Me the Waltz*. First Published in the U.S.A. by Charles Scribner's Sons. 1932.
2. Howard, Leon. *Literature and the American Tradition*. Doubleday & Company, Inc. Garden City, New York. 1960.
3. Wilson, Edmund. *The Shores of Light*. New York. Farrar, Straus and Young. 1952.

4. Graham, Sheilah, and Frank, Gerold. *Beloved Infidel : The Education of a Woman*. New York. Henry Holt. 1958.
5. Ulanov, Barry. *A History of Jazz in America*. Pyramid Books. 444, Madison Avenue, New York 22, New York. 1957.
6. Abrams M.H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. Sixth Edition. Prism Books Pvt. Ltd. Bangalore. 1993. The Glossary is prepared with the help of this book.

5.6 GLOSSARY

Novel:

The term 'novel' is now applied to a great variety of writings that having common only the attribute of being extended works of fiction written in prose. It is a narrative distinguish from both the Short Story and a work of middle length called the *novelette*.

Plot:

The Plot in a novel is constituted by events and actions performed by the characters. The Plot construction varies according to the type of novel like the Picaresque or the Historical Novel.

Narrative / Narration:

A Narrative is a story, whether prose or verse involving events and characters, and what the characters say and do. Narratology denotes a recent concern with narrative in general. It deals especially with the identification of structural elements.

Point of View:

It signifies the way a story gets told -- the mode (or modes) established by an author by means of which the reader is presented with the characters, dialogue, actions, setting, and events which constitute the *narrative* in a work of fiction.

Stream of Consciousness:

This was a phrase used by William James in his *Principles of Psychology* (1890) to describe the unbroken flow of perceptions, thoughts, and feelings in the waking mind. James Joyce developed a variety of devices for stream-of-consciousness narrative in his famous work *Ulysses* (1922).

Realism:

Realism is connected to Naturalism. Realistic fiction is often opposed to romantic fiction. The *romance* is said to present life as we would have it -- more picaresque, fantastic, adventurous or heroic than actuality; realism on the other hand is said to represent life as it really is. Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* has both these elements so that it is dealt with as a 'Novel' as well as a 'Romance'.

Symbol:

In the broadest sense a symbol is anything which signifies something; in this sense all words are symbols. In discussing literature, however, the term *symbol* is applied only to a word or phrase that signifies an object or event which in its turn signifies something, or has a range of reference, beyond itself. Thus the Rock, Dr. Eckleberg's eyes and the Green Light have been used as symbols in this novel.

**Critics and Criticism:
An Overview****Allegory:**

It is a narrative fiction in which the agents and actions, and sometimes the setting as well, are contrived to make coherent sense on the 'literal' or primary level of signification and at the same time to signify a second, correlated order of agents, concepts, and events.

Jazz:

Jazz is the most characteristic contribution of America to the world of music just as the 'Musical Theatre' is the contribution of America to the world of the theatre. Before the First World War Jazz was primarily the music of the Southern Negro, especially of the Negro in and around New Orleans.

The Lost Generation:

The expression was coined in the 1920's by Gertrude Stein at her Paris flat, No.27, Rue de Fleurs when she remarked that Hemingway and his contemporaries were 'all a lost generation'. Gertrude Stein and Fitzgerald are special in their relation to each other.