

The Importance Of Colour Symbolis
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In F. S. Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby"
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every chapter of the novel. Without colour symbolism you would not truly understand the theme of the novel. To bring this view to light, the paper concentrates on, to explain the meaning of different colours used in the novel.

In section one, the study gives a brief introduction to the writer, and sheds light on the social and cultural Background of the American society in 1920's. The various cultural elements reflected in the novel which led to the downfall of the 1920s American Dream will be analyzed in section two . Section three acquaints the reader how Fitzgerald utilizes the colour symbolism to develop major theme and personalities of his characters in the novel. The paper concludes with an analysis of how the colour symbolism reflect the characters under study.

ABSTRACT

F. S. Fitzgerald's masterpiece The Great Gatsby is regarded as one of his greatest work. It has been considered by many a symbol for the "jazz Age," a period of extraordinary wealth and promise. Fitzgerald uses many different symbolisms to express his convictions and ideas. Symbolism is a very important device in the configuration of the story. Colours are frequently used as symbols to accentuate the meaning of a story and explain certain actions of a character. F. S. Fitzgerald uses colour symbolism throughout the The Great Gatsby as a major device to develop the personality of his characters, to represent different themes and set up events.

This study attempts to analyze Fitzgerald's use of colours as symbols which is prominent in

هذه الدراسة تهدف لتحليل استخدام اللون في (غاتسبي العظيم) وهو استخدام يظهر في كل فصل منها وان عدم استخدام تلك الرموز يؤدي إلى عدم الفهم الحقيقي لفكرة الرواية، يقدم البحث في فصله الأول نبذة مختصرة عن الكاتب ويلقى الضوء الخلفية الثقافية والاجتماعية للمجتمع الأمريكي في عشرينات القرن الماضي ويعكس الفصل الثاني مختلف العناصر الثقافية التي أدت إلى سقوط الحلم الأمريكي في الفترة المذكورة . يعرف القارئ

أخلاصه

تعد رواية "غاتسبي العظيم" من أفضل أعمال الكاتب "ف.س.فيتزجيرالد" ويعتبرها الكثيرين رمزا لعصر موسيقى الجاز وهي فترة زمنية تميزت بغناها وازدهارها. يستخدم الكاتب (فيتزجيرالد) رموز كثيرة ومختلفة للتعبير عن أفكاره ومعتقداته وتعتبر هذه الرمزية وسيلة مهمة جدا في بناء الرواية حيث يستخدم الكاتب الألوان بكثرة كرموز دلالة أحداث الرواية وتمثيل شخصياتها.

ينتهي البحث بتحليل للكيفية التي تعكس بها الألوان طبيعة الشخصيات ودلالات سلوكها.

Importance Of Colour

Magazine, at the expense of his coursework. He was placed on academic probation. He dropped out of Princeton University to join the army and continued to attain his obsession, writing Magazine articles and even musicals lyrics.²

At the age of 21, afraid that he might die in World War 1 with his literary dreams unfulfilled, he hastily wrote a novel called The Romantic Egotist and submitted it for publication but Charles Scribner's rejected it, with words of encouragement to resubmit when revised. In 1918, when he was stationed near Montgomery, Alabama, he met and fell in love with a beautiful 18 year Zelda Sayre, the daughter of an Alabama Supreme Court Judge. The romance intensified Fitzgerald's hopes for the success of his novel, but after revision it was again rejected, so Fitzgerald turned to advertising as a steady source of income in order to marry. Unwilling to wait while Fitzgerald succeeded in the advertisement business and live on his small salary, Zelda Sayre broke their engagement.³

After Fitzgerald rewrote the novel for the third time as This Side of Paradise, Scribners accepted it; and published it a year later. It was an instant success. Fitzgerald, became rich and famous almost

في الفصل الثالث من هذا البحث على كيفية استخدام الكاتب (فتر جيرالد) لرمزية اللون لغرض تطوير الأفكار الرئيسية وشخص روائته.

Symbolism

In F. S. Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby"

Section One

Introduction: : 1.1

Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald was born to Edward Fitzgerald and Mary (McQuillan) Fitzgerald on September 2, 1896 in St. Paul Minnesota. His father was descended from old American families, the Scotts and the keys who had settled in the United States early in the 17th century. His mother, (daughter of a well-to-do wholesale grocer) gave him some sense of the thing of economic security and middle-class respectability. Fitzgerald inherited both from his father and his mother" 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." ¹ Fitzgerald was a bright, handsome and ambitious boy, the pride and joy of his parents and especially his mother. He attended the St. Paul Academy, and started writing at an early age. When he was 13, his High School newspaper published his detective stories, encouraging him to pursue writing more enthusiastically than academics. In 1913 he attended Princeton University, where he wrote scripts for Princeton's famous Triangle Club musicals, writing articles for Princeton Tiger Magazine and stories for the Nassau Literary

Valescure, that he wrote his greatest novel The Great Gatsby, published in 1925. The novel marked a striking advance in Fitzgerald's technique, utilizing a complex structure and a controlled narrative point of view. With its beautiful lyricism, pitch-perfect portrayal of the Jazz Age and searching critiques of materialism, love and the American Dream, it was a great success. In April 1930 and 1931, Zelda suffered her mental breakdown and admitted to the John Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, where she spent the rest of her life as a resident of sanitariums.⁶

Fitzgerald's fourth novel Tender Is the Night was published in 1934, was a commercial failure. In 1937 he started his career as a screenwriter at \$1,000 a week and achieved modest financial success for his efforts. He began his Hollywood novel, The Love of the Last Tycoon, in 1939 and had written more than half of a working draft when he died of a heart attack in Graham's apartment on December 21, 1940, believing himself a failure. Due to the enormous success of The Great Gatsby, as the quintessential American novel, as well as a definitive social history of the Jazz Age; named by Fitzgerald brought him fame. Because his own history reflected the history of his time: his success and fame in the twenties; his crack-up and relative obscurity in the Thirties. Since his death, his reputation has gained as one of the pre-eminent authors in the history of American literature. Thus this novel has become required reading for

overnight, and a week after its publication, he married Zelda Sayre in New York. They embarked on an extravagant life as young celebrities. Because of this lifestyle, Scott and Zelda did spend money faster than he earned it, and Fitzgerald was constantly sinking deeply into debt. He wrote short stories to make his way out of debt and to pay for Zelda's psychiatric treatment. Their only child Frances Scott (Scottie) Fitzgerald was born in October 1921. His second novel The Beautiful and the Damned was published in 1922. They moved to Great Neck, Long Island, in 1922 where they started to drink heavily and attend all-night parties that is portrayed in The Great Gatsby. The distractions of Great Neck and New York prevented Fitzgerald from making progress on his third novel. During this time his drinking increased, he was an alcoholic. His reputation as a drunker inspired the myth that he was an irresponsible writer.⁴ Fitzgerald's clear, lyrical, colourful, witty style evoked the emotions associated with time and place. The chief theme of Fitzgerald's work is aspiration, the idealism he regarded as defining American character. Another major theme was mutability or loss. As a social historian Fitzgerald became indeed the symbol of the Jazz Age: he wrote in "Echoes of the Jazz Age," "It was an age of miracles, it was an age of art, it was an age of excess, and it was an age of satire."⁵

The Fitzgeralds went to France in 1924, and it was there, in

production of consumer goods. One of the most popular consumer goods was the automobile, it was the most powerful agent of social change. The radio, airplane, automobile and advertisement industries also helped out the economy. A new sense of the traditional American family was forming. Young people wanted independence, their own personal identity and personal satisfaction. The automobile helped shape this image. It provided a way to escape from parental authority and to go off seeking entertainment with friends. But it was also a time of adversity and opposition for others, such as immigrants and farmers. Immigrants had lots of competition when they were looking for work and they weren't treated fairly by Americans. Life wasn't too much better for farmers, because of a large surplus in American food. The surplus caused food prices and farmers income to drop; they also had the "Dust Bowl" to worry about.⁹

The 1920s were an age of dramatic, social and political change. Two major achievements of the reform impulse were the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Amendments, such as the Prohibition and votes for women both of which were ratified by 1920. The 19th Amendment to the Constitution had guaranteed women the right to vote. The Volstead Act, which implemented the Eighteenth Amendment by prohibiting the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages in the United States had powerful social and economic consequences not because it was

virtually every American high school student as well as in the world for the past half century, and had a transportive effect on generation after generation of readers.⁷

Social And Cultural Context Of The 1920s^{1.2}

Fitzgerald grew up with the manners, values, standards, and culture of the late nineteenth century. It was a time of great American fortunes and enormous inequalities. Workers were wage slaves; there were no social security benefits, and pensions were rare. Women were denied career opportunities, as well as the vote until 1920. Low taxes and the availability of servants enabled the upper-middle and upper classes to live very well. The class system was rigid, but Americans still believed that America was the land of opportunity. The self-made man was a model. The pre-war years were also a period of social reform and the Progressive Movement.⁸

The 1920s was a time of change, growth and learning, in the United States. "The Roaring Twenties" had an outstanding impact on the economy, social standards and everyday life. The economy was growing strong, social views were changing and American culture was becoming more diverse. It was a time for positive results in the industry of consumer goods and American families, because of higher wages, shorter working hours. With more time and money on their hands, workers turned into consumers, which caused an increase in the

progressed and led to the rise of gangsters such as Al Capone, Lucky Luciano, Moe Dalitz, etc.¹¹

Vast numbers of Americans were attracted to the culture of business that so permeated American life in the 1920s. The perception of the American Dream was that an individual can achieve success in life regardless of family history or social status if they only work hard enough, they could start with nothing and become a millionaire. Many novels were written during the 1920s that supported the business culture of the decade.¹²

The Roaring Twenties was a period of literary creativity, and works of several notable authors like D.H. Lawrence, William Faulkner, Thomas Wolfe, Gertrude Stein John Steinbeck, Ezra Pound, Robert Frost, E. E. Cummings etc. F.S Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby is often described as the epitome of the "Jazz Age" in American literature. All Quiet on the Western Front by Erich Maria Remarque recounts the horrors of World War 1. Ernest Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises is about a group of expatriate Americans in Europe during the 1920s. It was also a decade for sports across the modern world. Citizens from all over the country flocked to see the top athletes of the day compete in arenas and stadiums. The Twenties brought a vast expansion in media, the mass-circulation slick-paper magazines (The Saturday Evening Post, Collier's, Liberty, Cosmopolitan) The magazines were competing with the new forms of mass

enforced, but because it was unenforceable. Prohibition changed American drinking habits and manners and fostered the rise of organized crime as bootlegging became a major industry. There were no class boundaries: rich and poor drank.¹⁰

Prohibition was not the only source of social tension during the 1920s. The Great Migration of African Americans from the Southern countryside to Northern cities and the increasing visibility of black culture—jazz and blues music, for example, and the literary movement known as the Harlem Renaissance. African American became further infused with mainstream America during the Harlem Renaissance. The social and cultural features known as the spirit of the "Roaring Twenties" was marked by a general feeling of discontinuity associated with modernity and a break with traditions. The most familiar symbol of the "Roaring Twenties" is Jazz the most popular form of music for young people and the flapper culture. The typical symbol of the Jazz Age was the flapper, a young woman with bobbed hair and short skirts and makeup who drank, smoked and said what might be termed "unladylike" things, in addition to being more sexually "free" than previous generations. The working girl image became very popular as well. Women often worked as salesclerks, secretaries, and telephone operators. Speakeasies became popular and numerous as the Prohibition years

dream.¹⁵ Gatsby is the epitome of every man trying to find the American Dream in the 1920s. Gatsby, the son of a poor farmer is looking for a better life than the one he grew up with, filled with fortune and materialistic wealth. As Gatsby's father later showed Nick, when Gatsby was a child he had laid down a detailed plan on how to run his life. This plan he felt would make him more successful in life. By the time Gatsby left to join Dan Cody, he had already set himself apart from his old way of life, hence his name change. Gatsby leaving his old life to start a new and more successful one parallels to those newly arrived Americans of the early colonist who left their old cultures and traditions in search of a new and more prosperous life in America.¹⁶ He makes his fortune from stolen securities and bootlegging and illegal sale of whiskey during the years of prohibition, something every American in the 1920's was trying to do to get to the top. With the American Dream the moral rights of hard work and good ethics were abandoned by the need to become rich. Fitzgerald was commenting on how corrupt the "American Dream" had become as a result of behavior and choices made by the generation of the 1920's.¹⁷

During his army days, Gatsby falls in love with the well-to-do Daisy. For Gatsby, Daisy is his American dream, and he does everything he can to achieve her. He was sent abroad on duty when she marries Tom Buchanan, a wealthy

entertainment: the movies and radio. Radio was the most effective means of reaching prospective customers.¹³

Section Two

"The Great Gatsby" And "The American Dream"

F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby, published in 1925 embodies a criticism of American experience, it represents the irony of American history and the corruption of the American dream, that divides the reality from the illusions. Fitzgerald uses vivid descriptions to depict the 1920's lifestyle in this novel. He uses Gatsby to compare the real American dreamer with what has become of the American society in the 1920's. The Great Gatsby is a story of a man's attempt to regain his long lost love and the happiness he once had in life by way of wealth and material possessions. Jay Gatsby is a representative of the American man because he believes that with great wealth comes great happiness.¹⁴

The firmly held belief of the American dream is that everyone has the opportunity to achieve their goals and become rich and prosperous if they only work hard. But the characters of the novel, cannot grasp the idea that The American Dream is an illusion because not everyone can get what they want if they work hard. Through the characters of Jordan Baker, Jay Gatsby and Tom Buchanan Fitzgerald illustrates the corruption and unhappiness experienced by abandoning the original intentions of the American

Daisy back. It was this dream which lead him from poverty to richness and finally to his death.¹⁹

Daisy Buchanan is another epitome of everything that is wrong with the American Dream. She comes from an aristocratic family and is used to good comfortable life. She is shallow, greedy and concerned with nothing but external wealth and material luxuries. Even though Daisy was in love with Gatsby, she still marries Tom because he is wealthy and can provide for her that she needed to live. She hides behind her money and shows no compassion including her daughter. "Her voice is full of money," he (Gatsby) said suddenly. That was it. I'd never understood before. It was full of money—that was the inexhaustible charm that rose and fell in it, the jingle of it, the cymbals' song of it--(The great Gatsby, Wordsworth Classics, 1993, p. 76 hereafter referred to as TGG, with page number). Daisy was aware of her charm and she used it to secure her lifestyle. She always craves more attention. She learned ways to manipulate others to get her way, so that they pay more attention to her."I've heard it said that Daisy's murmur was only to make people lean toward her."(TGG, p. 8) She used her low soft voice to force men to lean in closer to her, to get the attention she was not receiving from Tom, while making Tom jealous. Everyone that looks at her thinks she embodies The American Dream, but she doesn't feel the same. Daisy doesn't have any regard for moral

man who is able to care for her financially. Not until he loses her does Gatsby realize that the time with Daisy was the happiest of his life. He realizes that he can regain Daisy's affection only with money, thus for years he runs dishonorable businesses to become rich in hope that one day his wealth will bring her back. Gatsby is unique among the pursuers of the American Dream because of his quest for wealth and status is inseparable from his love of Daisy.¹⁸

Along with Gatsby's life being a symbol of its own, his discovery that once he had Daisy in his arms the enchantment that surrounded her disappeared parallels the believe that Americans have, that wealth brings happiness. In a way, Gatsby found the hunt to reunite with Daisy to be exciting; and when he finally had her that hunt was over. Although Gatsby and Daisy resume their love affair, but she rejects him when she discovers how he made his wealth. She is too superficial and shallow to give up the aristocratic life with Tom which is socially acceptable for Gatsby's love which is unacceptable. Gatsby made a mistake that by accumulating worldly possessions he could win Daisy back. In the end, Gatsby is killed because he is seeking more in life, and loves Daisy this causes him to take the blame showing that he pays the ultimate price for losing track of what the American dream is about. Fitzgerald is commenting about the American dream here because Gatsby died for trying to attain his dream of winning

people envy yet he needs to go outside his marriage to feel happy. He flaunts his mistress to Nick and brings her to public places shows that he is corrupt and immoral. Tom abandons key morals by hitting Myrtle in his apartment in New York, when she chants Daisy's name to tease Tom, because he is so caught up in the material side of the American dream. This suggests Tom's hypocrisy and selfishness as well. His biggest fault is not respecting these people. His hypocrisy is also shown early in the novel when he twist Daisy's hand and hurt her. He doesn't have regard for any one. He disgrace Wilson by calling him dumb and stealing his wife. Tom is miserable, abusive and arrogant which are three characteristics which go against all the American dream stands for.²¹ Jordan Baker is another demonstration of the American dream experiencing a demise. She is a beautiful, famous golfer and has experienced wealth and popularity but she is not happy with what she has. Behind her tall, skinny form is a deceptive, untrustworthy personality. She makes her reputation by cheating. She will do anything to get an advantage over the competition and wants to win at any cost. This suggest that Jordan was so caught up in the idea of being rich and popular she sacrificed her key values to attain success which goes against what the American dream is. She is not satisfied with her life because she is not honest. She prays on the responsibility of society and the

values, she is married but still she has an affair with Gatsby. She is unhappy with Tom, yet she won't leave him for Gatsby. She clarified this to Gatsby saying "Be my friend, be my lover" meaning she still cared and craved for Gatsby, but she stays with Tom because she gets whatever she wants and her status quo. At the end, Daisy and Tom get on a plane and leave the mess for others to clean up, instead of dealing with the deaths of Gatsby and Myrtle. She is a perfect example of how corruption affects American society and how good moral values are replaced with what becomes extreme selfishness and materialism. Gatsby's failure to realize this symbolizes America's failure to realize that the American Dream is not all that wonderful.²⁰

Like Gatsby, Tom Buchanan also embodies the American dream; he is handsome and wealthy man, but cruel and insensitive. He has a beautiful wife and daughter, but he is not satisfied with that, he becomes corrupt while searching for the American dream. The American Dream means to him he deserves more. The fact that Tom has a mistress shows that he is not satisfied with Daisy; he needs another woman. He acknowledges his need for more. He cheats on his wife with Myrtle, he feels that he gets more power because of his mistress Myrtle. Because Myrtle is from lower class, he has complete power over her. Myrtle depends on Tom to get her into a better society, but he never lets Myrtle rise above her status. He has a great life that many

green, white, grey, yellow and gold are used by Fitzgerald in a special way because each of these colours has a special meaning to events that are taking place in the novel. Different ones from we regularly know or use in everyday life. Throughout the book characters, places and objects are given "life" by colours. Almost every character or event in the book is described by a particular colour. So In this section I choose the main colours green, white, grey and yellow to analyze their symbolic meaning.²³

There are two main colours green and white that influence the story greatly, throughout the novel. Green stands for a variety of meanings, traditionally it is associated with hope, spring, and youth. Fitzgerald used colour green as a symbolic device of revealing ideas, associated with Gatsby's character to show feelings of many thoughts, ideas, attitude, and changes that Gatsby make during his life. Colour green is used to show the artificiality of the dream lived by Gatsby. Green light is the symbol of the "orgastic future", the limitless promises of the future, which suggests Gatsby has kept his dream of Daisy, he knew and loved before he made his fortune, and the fact that their relationship will always be affected by money. Gatsby sees a green light at the end of Daisy's dock, is a symbol of his hopes and dreams, and a chance to relive the past with his dream girl Daisy. It is Gatsby's hope that pushes him to build his wealth, and allows him to

interest of different male admirers. Jordan Baker is self-centered and fully aware of this. Aside from her egotistical behavior are her devious actions. Many of her actions are dependent on the fact that she will not have to face consequences like a normal person in a society. She is very deceitful and couldn't stand to be in a disadvantage in any situation. Jordan represents the "new woman" of the 1920's with her cynical, self-centered attitude towards society. Her self-centered nature is demonstrated when she is driving Nick home one day. She acts very careless behind the wheel, and Nick is forced to question her abilities and she makes it very obvious just how selfish she is, "'they'll keep out of my way,' she insisted. 'It takes two to make an accident.'"(TGG, p.39) Jordan doesn't think about other people. She simply assumes that everyone is constantly watching out for her and that her actions don't bear a large significance. Not only does Jordan fail to acknowledge the world outside of her own, yet she fails to play honestly in an arena that is her livelihood.²²

Section Three

Colour Symbolism in The Great Gatsby Use Of

New innovations were introduced to literature in 1920s, including the use of colour symbolism. Fitzgerald uses colour symbolism in The Great Gatsby to represent many different things; as a major device in thematic and character development. Colours

when Gatsby, at the Buchanan's waterfront, says, "I'm right across the bay from you."²⁶ (TGG, p. 75) It is then obvious that "Gatsby bought that house so that Daisy would be right across the bay." (TGG, p. 51) Subsequently his purchase of a home shows his pursuit of Daisy and his desire to reunite with her that has long been impossible. As the green light gives him the signal to go forward.²⁷

Fitzgerald described Nick's thought in the novel to prove the significance of the symbol of hope and also the colour's significance to Gatsby. Nick then says, "Gatsby believed in the green light, the orgastic future that year by year recedes before us" (TGG, p. 115) meaning that Gatsby never gives up his hope for Daisy's love and the fulfillment of his desire.²⁸ He works his whole life toward gaining Daisy back, and the light on her dock makes her seem attainable. He has everything except personal satisfaction. It is revealed that Gatsby's desire for Daisy is also his desire for the past. In the novel Nick once told Gatsby that he could not "repeat the past". Gatsby responded by saying, "Can't repeat the past? He cried incredulously, 'Why of course you can!" (TGG, p. 70) Gatsby believes that if he is rich enough he can win back Daisy and return to the past. He lives hoping that he can make the past come back. The green light gave Gatsby the hope that he could do anything, and everything he does in the novel is to try and recreate the past. Gatsby is again

concentrate his life on the pursuit of Daisy. To attain her would be completing Gatsby's American Dream with money.²⁴ Gatsby's dream is clearly intended by Fitzgerald to be symbolic of the pursuit of American Dream for wealth, happiness and success. Gatsby makes drastic changes in his life and established a new cultural orientation for himself. He has disassociated himself from his family and from his past and dedicated himself to the American dream of accumulating great wealth and from this wealth, personal recognition. He changes his name and his history to become wealthy, and successful to reunite with Daisy, "James Gatz that was really, or at least legally his name. He had changed it at the age of seventeen and at the specific moment that witnessed the beginning of his career..." (The Great Gatsby, p. 62) .²⁵

The green light appears early in the story, "when Nick sees Gatsby for the first time, standing in front of his mansion and stretching out his arms to "a single green light, minute and far away that might have been the end of dock' " (The Great Gatsby, p. 16). This green light also represents money and prosperity, which Gatsby has obtained over the years in order to finally reunite with Daisy. Now he has attained everything in life concerning material success, wealth and power, the only aim left for Gatsby's is to reunite with Daisy his love. Fitzgerald shows the connection between the "green light" and Daisy

rich, he wants to be accepted by the society of 'old money.' Acceptance is achieved by the ownership of luxurious mansions, elegant clothes, large green lawns and expensive cars. Gatsby has everything, while especially his green lawn, the green ivy at his house and the green inside of his car. In the car, people even feel like "in a sort of green leather conservatory" .(TGG, p. 63) Gatsby strives to move in higher circles because Daisy is there, he tries to go against the currents, in doing so, he violates a cultural norm, to reach the green light or his dream. Daisy and Gatsby are from different worlds and no matter how much money Gatsby accumulates, he will never be acceptable in Daisy's social milieu. Though he failed to realize it because he was blinded by the hope generated by the green light. It insinuates that hope is not always a reality. As a result, green illustrates the importance of money in Gatsby's life to live the life that he does, and to win back Daisy's love, and its power in society itself. Money rules the life of the people in the story. But unfortunately, money cannot buy everything.³²

Later in the novel when he has Daisy the importance of light diminishes and he realizes that "the colossal significance of that light had now vanished . . ." (TGG, p. 60) Daisy proves ultimately unworthy of the hope, faith and love that Gatsby has invested her with, there is nothing to replace the "colossal vitality of his illusion." (TGG, p. 96) Gatsby's dreams were crushed and

showing the failure of the American dream to satisfy all desires. In the end, this dream becomes a bitter illusion. His tremendous wealth proves insufficient to match the romantic promise that was his dream. This typically American dilemma is the focus of Fitzgerald's concern.²⁹ Later in the novel, Fitzgerald significantly associates Gatsby's green light with the "green breast of the new world"(TGG, p. 115), uniting the hope and promise of Gatsby's dream with that of the image of America which is a symbol of hope, as the green of the land seen by the "old Dutch sailors" who first settled New York showing that America is a land of promise, where people could come and start a new life, being able to make all your dreams come true. At the end as Gatsby's dream becomes corrupted, it is the very essence of American idealism that has failed him. The corrupting of Gatsby's dream is paralleled by the destruction of the early idealism of America by the materialistic concern of the latter settlers.³⁰

Although the colour green is mostly associated with hope , youth fertility etc. But there are many possible meanings for the colour green such as envious or jealous, which describes the character of Jay Gatsby. Gatsby can be seen as an envious jealous character. He is jealous of Tom because he married Daisy.³¹ He is also extremely envious of many of the wealthy people that he invites in his huge parties to his house. As he is new-

name truly fits her character, in the way she comes off sweet, and pure, but deep inside her she is almost evil. Her actions soon explain, however, that her innocence is only a façade. To make herself appear innocent she drives a "white car" and even dresses in white. She cheats on Tom and kills Myrtle. When Daisy runs over Myrtle, killing her, she does not get upset, nor does she make any effort to turn herself in for the crime. She seems as though she is oblivious to what is happening, just as Tom had been when Wilson mentioned that he knew Myrtle had an affair with another man.³⁶

The major theme in The Great Gatsby is immortality of the people in 1920s, especially the upper class. Daisy, Tom, and Jordan are "old money" people. They wear white clothes, live in white houses, but they are immoral inside, they have no scruples. Even the windows at Daisy's house are white. "The windows were ajar and gleaming white." (TGG, p.7) Daisy, of course, is guilty of superficiality and desires nothing less than self-satisfaction. Jordan on the other hand, possesses dishonest traits and is known for cheating in golf. The author talks about Jordan: "Jordan's fingers, powdered white over their tan, rested for a moment in mine." (TGG, p. 73) superficial woman just like Daisy. She is an example of how people prey on the other people for money. It shows that Jordan and Daisy are similar.³⁷ We can clearly see the corrupt lifestyles that Daisy and Jordan live, they are still trying to

disillusioned, because Daisy could never live up to his expectations as her love cannot be as ideal as Gatsby imagines.³³

White is frequently used in the novel as a main symbol of innocence, purity and honesty. Fitzgerald uses white to describe the personalities and social status of Daisy Buchanan, Jordan Baker, Nick Carraway, and Jay Gatsby but it mostly symbolizes Daisy and Jordan. The symbol of colour white is important to the story plot because it shows that Daisy had supposedly lived a pure and clean life. He used white to underline the inside of the wealthy people.³⁴ Fitzgerald introduces Daisy and Jordan for the first time when Nick meets his cousin "Daisy and Jordan :They were both in white," giving the illusion of purity.(TGG, p. 7) Daisy's colour is white, she wears white dresses and recalls her " Our beautiful white girlhood."(TGG, p. 14)The real characteristics of Daisy are revealed here it shows us that when Daisy was younger she was innocent, but now she has changed. This use of colour white helps to characterize her as the unattainable "enchanted princess" who becomes personified as Gatsby's dream.³⁵ But this innocence is deceiving ; they hide their darker side behind it. Daisy, Jordan, and Gatsby are all corrupted individuals. For example Daisy, as her name symbolizes a flower: its petals are white, but its inside is yellow, represents corruption. In the novel Daisy is one of the most corrupted characters. Her

party he wore white."Dressed up in white flannels I went over to his lawn a little after seven. . ." (TGG, p.27) He believes that he himself "is the most honest person he knows."(TGG, p. 6)But he arranges the meeting between Gatsby and Daisy which is not honourable for a descent and honest person.³⁹

The colour grey used in the novel, depicts the theme of moral decay in the American Society after World War 1. The colour grey conveys the feeling of lacking spirit and dreariness. It is symbolic of corruption, in the Valley of Ashes which lies between West Egg and New York, is created through industrial dumping and thus a by-product of capitalism, reflecting class status. It shows the corruption of the land, the pollution, of morality, the spiritual decay of the people. Fitzgerald describes the Valley of Ashes as ". . . a fantastic farm where ashes grow like wheat into ridges and hills . . . where ashes take the forms of houses and chimneys . . . and ash-gray men swarm up with leaden spades and stir up an impenetrable cloud"(TGG, p. 16). It is also noted that ". . . grey cars. . . grey ashes . . . the grey land"(The Great Gatsby, p. 16). With the dark and grey descriptions Fitzgerald provides the reader with illustrations of a poor, useless, and "desolate area of land." (TGG, p. 16)⁴⁰

The Valley of Ashes associated with lifelessness and barrenness, where men worked tirelessly in the ashes, with no hope

depict themselves righteously. At the end of the novel, she is described as selfish, careless, and destructive.

In The Great Gatsby, colour also displays a status of an individual beside expressing personalities. Gatsby described in white, is also a corrupted individual, gaining his wealth illegally and allowing his and Daisy's affair to take place after her marriage.³⁸ Fitzgerald refers to the steps of Gatsby's house as being white. "On the white steps an obscene word, . . ." (TGG, p. 115) also ". . . made a bright sort of colour against the white steps . . . when I first came to his ancestral home."(TGG, p.160) When Gatsby wanted to meet Daisy for the first time after 5 years, he wore a white suit to show that he was good, pure and honest to appease Daisy. ". . . and Gatsby, in a white flannel suit, silver shirt and gold-coloured tie. . ." (TGG, p. 54)CHECKED This thought is also expressed when Gatsby takes Nick for a ride in his car. He was stopped by the police for speeding. "Taking a white card from his wallet, he waved it before the man's eyes. . ." (TGG, p.44) which symbolizes corruption, when the police officer sees this, he lets Gatsby go. Nick thought it was a Christmas card sent to him by the officer, but Gatsby had bribed the police officer. This tells us that Daisy and Gatsby look innocent from the outside but not from the inside, instead they are corrupt people. Nick is also usually dressed in white to symbolize his innocence. The first time he went to Gatsby's

but he failed later in his life to achieve his dream. This illustrates how the American Dream is impossible to achieve. Jordan's eyes are also grey. Jordan does not have a deep love of anything. Love to her is superficial. She has no pain for her life and no dreams for her future.⁴³

Yellow and gold colours symbolizes greed, desire for wealth and 'old money'. In olden days people used gold as a means for exchange, but green money dollars replaced as new money. In the novel gold symbolizes Daisy and Tom's old money and green symbolizes Gatsby's new money.⁴⁴ Corruption is distinctly represented by yellow, but death is also a key to yellow's dark symbolism. Yellow is usually seen around a tragic death. Myrtle was killed by Gatsby's yellow Rolls Royce, in front of her yellow brick house under the yellow spectacled eyes of Dr. T. J. Eckleburg. The yellow colour of Gatsby's car led to his death. If the colour of his car was black, like most of the cars during that time then he wouldn't have been killed. Gatsby is seen walking through 'yellowing trees' just before he was murdered. ". . . but he shook his head and in a moment disappeared among the yellowing trees."(TGG, p. 103) Gatsby is a character who desires for wealth. The first time he meets Daisy after 5 years, he wears a gold necktie. Gatsby is destroyed by the materials which the American experience offers as objects and criteria of passion. And this exemplifies a theme of death of the "American

of escape, and people saw this area as dirty and low-life. They are described with shades of grey because they lead a life that does not have dreams. The grey atmosphere surrounding them symbolizes the hopelessness of their destitute situations. The people living in the Valley of Ashes, appear in grey, for example the Wilsons, except for Myrtle, When she enjoys the company of Tom Buchanan, in order to get out of the grey, the valley of ashes, and to use him as her path to the American dream of excessive living.⁴¹

Mr. Wilson, is a handsome but lifeless man who is described as grey by the ashes in the air. Wilson's face is "ashen dust veiled his dark suit and his pale hair as it veiled everything in the vicinity—except his wife, who moved close to Tom."(TGG, p. 18) Wilson's eyes are described as "pale" and "glazed." Here, the use of grey ash allows readers to see that Wilson is a man with no fortune and no hope for the future. The grey on him symbolizes the lack of spirit that he has. The ash, in a sense, suppresses him, leaving him with no chance for future betterment. The colour grey can also be interpreted a symbol of death. Myrtle Wilson's death occurs in the grey setting of the Valley of Ashes trying to escape the area.⁴² It is then no coincidence that Wilson is the bearer of lifelessness, killing Gatsby among yellow leaved trees, which had something to do with destruction. Jay Gatsby is also from this area , he made money illegally

the development of the theme and to the characteristics of the characters in the novel. These colours give us a great understanding of the characters and their lives. Fitzgerald is able to evoke emotions in the readers by showing how colours are able to symbolize and enhance characterization and setting. Both colours white and green describe the characters in a unique way, letting us know more about their past and their future goals. A central theme of the novel, is the idea that people aren't satisfied with what they have, they are always striving for that bright star. This is shown through the characters of Gatsby, Tom and Myrtle the need for more destroys Gatsby's and Myrtle's lives

We observe that Gatsby and Myrtle both try to break into the closed, old-money society of the East Egg. They don't realize that some dreams, no-matter how you try, doesn't come true. America was based on the dream that anything can come true and Gatsby swallows this idea whole. In the end he went too far and it meant his failure or demise.

We can see clearly how money plays a big part in the life of the characters. Daisy would only marry a man that had money. Tom uses his money to get whatever he wants. Nick is trying to acquire money so that he can achieve whatever happiness may come with it. Jordan does not really have the money but she is associated with it, and the people that have it. Finally there is Gatsby who makes his money for one purpose to get back

Dream." The immoral people have all the money, and according to the "American Dream," money should be a reward for honesty and hard work not of crime and corruption.⁴⁵

Yellow is also associated with Daisy and Jordan. Daisy like her name suggests, is a flower with white petals and a yellow centre. The yellow or golden center of the flower represents the money and corruption and sense of power that Daisy bases her decisions and life around. The white colour of the petals represent the overall emptiness of the material artifacts that Daisy surrounds herself with and the falseness of her life.⁴⁵This shows that Daisy looks innocent and pure on the outside, like her petals, but is rotten on the inside, which is represented by the yellow part of the flower. She ends up killing Myrtle even though she looks harmless on the outside. Daisy is called the 'golden girl.' Gold is also associated with the colour yellow."High in a white palace the king's daughter, the golden girl. . . "(TGG, p.76) Jordan's yellow side can be shown through her hair, which is "autumn leaf yellow.' Jordan can also be seen associated with the colour of gold. Nick says: "With Jordan's slender golden arms resting in mine. . . "(TGG, p.28) also "I put my arm around Jordan's golden shoulder. . . "(TGG, p. 86)⁴⁶

SECTION FOUR

Conclusion 4.

In conclusion, Fitzgerald's use of colours throughout The Great Gatsby prove to be of importance to

can be understood by simply analyzing its colours.

I hope to have proved that, that in Fitzgerald's novel, the meaning of colours is of great importance. Analyzing them, we may discover many additional themes, which have great effect on the main plot of the story. It is obvious, from my analysis, that colour symbolism helped to convey themes of The Great Gatsby through use of characterization it was possible to see the relationship between the colours and themes, that affected the meaning of the story. Without it The Great Gatsby would be a simple love story.

NOTES

¹ Coles Editorial Board, Coles Notes, The Great Gatsby, 1991, p.1

² http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=F_Scott_Fitzgerald&oldid=52047213

³ "A Brief Life of Fitzgerald," University of South Caroline. 29 Mar 2010 Web 08 Apr 2010 <http://www.Sc.edu/fitzgerald/biography.html>

⁴ Coles Notes: F. Scott Fitzgerald: The Great Gatsby 1983, pp. 2-3

⁵ (<http://www.biography.com/people/f-scott-fitzgerald-9296261?=&pages.1>, 2, 3

⁶ (" Biography of F.S Fitzgerald" <http://www.fsfitzgerald.org/biography/biography.html>

⁷ "Scott F. Fitzgerald." 2012 The Biography Channel website. 03: 06, 2012. 17 November

what he had once lost. Money played a big role in the life of every character as it plays a role in most people's lives. This hope of happiness through money is believed in by countless Americans today, as well as people throughout the world, no matter what the problem, people believe that wealth and material possessions can make things right.

After finishing the novel we realize that Gatsby's dream destroys him because he refused to examine his dream, his inability to separate reality from illusions, when he first met Daisy after five years. Similarly people with millions of dollars gain many material possessions but unless they find someone they truly care about to share it with their possessions are meaningless. The idea of being surrounded by people you care about not the ones who only care about your money is also shown at Gatsby's funeral. Hundreds of people have associated with him or have gone to his parties including his lover Daisy but only Gatsby's true friends, like his father and Nick were there with him when he died.

To summarize, symbolism takes reading to another level. Between the East and West Egg, through the use of colours such as the green light, it is evident that symbolism is sometimes misleading and difficult to recognize, however, it is existent in every good novel and makes things more interesting. Fitzgerald has brilliantly linked each colour symbol to the other, using them to build and mold a novel that

²¹<http://www.helium.com/items/1934477-the-great-gatsby?pages=4-5>

²²

<http://www.personal.psu.edu/ay16034/thegreatgatsbyfinal.doc>) Need paraphrasing

²³<http://grin.com/en/e-book/61100/color-symbolism-in-f-scott-fitzgerald-s-the-great-gatsby>

²⁴<http://www.123HelpMe.com/viewpapers.asp?id=4717>

²⁵<http://essaymania.com/121297/the-great-gatsby-s-color-symbolism>

²⁶<http://www.123HelpMe.com/view.asp?id=100920>

²⁷<http://www.helium.com/items/1069499/the-great-gatsby-color-symbolism.htm>

²⁸

<http://www.123HelpMe.com/search.asp?text=color+in+the+great+gatsby>

²⁹

http://www.culturazzi.org/literature/thegreatgatsby.F_Scott

Fitzgerald culturazzi_org.mht

³⁰ Arthur Mizener, 1963, pp. 100-102

³¹

<http://www.MegaEssays.com/viewpapers/80421.html>

³²

<http://www.kimburleymurphy.com/notes/Gatsby/Gatsby%20Colors.htm>

³³<http://www.grin.com/en/e-book/61100/color-symbolism-in-f-scott-fitzgerald-s-the-great-gatsby>

³⁴<http://www.sciaga.pl/tekst/15581-16->

<http://www.biography.com/people/f-scott-fitzgerald-9296261>

⁸<http://www.sc.edu/fitzgerald/eras.html>

⁹ "The Reality Of The 1920's." 123HelpMe.com. 01 Nov 2012 <http://www.123HelpMe.com/view.asp?id=157974>

¹⁰

<http://www.sc.edu/fitzgerald/eras.html>

¹¹ "The Roaring Twenties." 2012. The History Channel website. 31st August 2012, 4:59 <http://www.history.com/topics/roaring-twenties>

¹²

<http://www.education.com/study-help/article/beginning-modern-america-1920s/pages=1-3>

¹³http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Roaring_Twenties&oldid=520430160

¹⁴ Arthur Mizener, A Collection of Critical Essays, 1963, p. 126

¹⁵<http://www.helium.com/items/804056-the-american-dream-and-the-great-gatsby?page=1>

¹⁶ Shakti Batra. F. S. Fitzgerald, The Great Gatsby, Delhi: Surjeet Publications, 2009, pp.88-89

¹⁷<http://suite101.com/americanfiction/the-american-dream-in-the-great-gatsby>¹⁸ Shakti Batra, p.

123

¹⁹ Arthur Mizener, A Collection of Critical Essays, 1963, p. 122

²⁰

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³⁵[http://www.helium.com/items/1069499/the-great-gatsby. . . color-symbolism.html.](http://www.helium.com/items/1069499/the-great-gatsby...color-symbolism.html)

³⁶[http://www.helium.com/items/1069499-the-great-gatsby. . . color-symbolism](http://www.helium.com/items/1069499-the-great-gatsby...color-symbolism)

³⁷http://www.sciaga.pl/tekst/15581-16the_great_gatsby_f_s_fitzgerald_colour_symbolism/obrazy/10305

³⁸[http://www.helium.com/items/1069499-the-great-gatsby. . . color-symbolism](http://www.helium.com/items/1069499-the-great-gatsby...color-symbolism)

³⁹<http://www.123HelpMe.com/view.asp?id=151314>

⁴⁰<http://www.StudyMode.com/essays/Color-Symbolism-Great-Gatsby-97950.html>

⁴¹<http://www.leskost.d/amlit/hh1252c.htm>

⁴²<http://kimburleymurphy.com/Notes/Gatsby/Gatsby%20Colors.htm>

⁴³<http://www.123HelpMe.com/search.asp?text=color+in+the+great+gatsby>

⁴⁴<http://www.kimburleymurphy.com/notes/Gatsby/Gatsby%20Colors.htm>

⁴⁵http://www.sciaga.pl/tekst/15581-16-the_great_gatsby_f_s_fitzgerald_colour_symbolism/obrazy/10305

⁴⁶<http://www.123HelpMe.com/view.asp?id=14600>

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