

DREAMS AND DISILLUSIONMENT: THE COLLAPSE OF THE AMERICAN DREAM IN F. SCOTT FITZGERALD'S WORKS

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Annotation: This article explores the theme of dreams and psychological disillusionment in F. Scott Fitzgerald's major works, including *The Great Gatsby*, *Tender Is the Night*, and *This Side of Paradise*. Fitzgerald critiques the American Dream as an illusory ideal that leads to emotional and moral collapse. Through close analysis of key characters like Jay Gatsby, Dick Diver, and Amory Blaine, the study reveals how their pursuit of success and love results in existential despair. The article argues that Fitzgerald's portrayal reflects the broader spiritual emptiness and social fragmentation of early twentieth-century America.

Keywords: F. Scott Fitzgerald, American Dream, disillusionment, psychological crisis, *The Great Gatsby*, *Tender Is the Night*

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqola F. Skott Fitsjeraldning *Ulug' Getsbi*, *Tender is the Night* va *This Side of Paradise* asarlarida orzular va ruhiy tushkunlik mavzusini o'rganadi. Fitsjerald Amerikacha orzuni — ko'pincha haqiqatdan yiroq bo'lgan ideal sifatida — tanqid qiladi va uning inson ruhiyatiga salbiy ta'sirini ko'rsatadi. Jey Getsbi, Dik Diver va Amori Bleyndek qahramonlarning muvaffaqiyat va muhabbat orzusidagi ichki iztiroblari tahlil qilinadi. Maqola adabiyot orqali XX asr boshidagi Amerikadagi ma'naviy bo'shliq va ijtimoiy parchalanishni aks ettiradi.

Kalit so'zlar: F. Skott Fitsjerald, Amerikacha orzu, tushkunlik, ruhiy inqiroz, *Ulug' Getsbi*, *Tender is the Night*

Аннотация: В статье исследуются темы мечтаний и психологического разочарования в основных произведениях Ф. Скотта Фицджеральда, включая Великий Гэтсби, Нежна как ночь и По эту сторону рая. Фицджеральд критикует американскую мечту как иллюзорный идеал, ведущий к эмоциональному и моральному краху. На примере персонажей Джея Гэтсби, Дика Дайвера и Эмори Блейна анализируется, как стремление к успеху и любви приводит к экзистенциальному отчаянию. Статья отражает духовную пустоту и социальное расслоение начала XX века в Америке.

Ключевые слова: Ф. Скотт Фицджеральд, американская мечта, разочарование, психологический кризис, Великий Гэтсби, Нежна как ночь

Introduction. F. Scott Fitzgerald is widely regarded as one of the most influential figures of twentieth-century American literature. As a central voice of the so-called "Lost Generation," Fitzgerald's writings capture the spiritual, cultural, and moral disorientation

experienced by many Americans in the aftermath of World War I. His works are emblematic of an era defined by rapid economic change, shifting social norms, and a growing sense of alienation among individuals, particularly within the younger generation. However, Fitzgerald's treatment of this ideal is far from celebratory. Similarly, in *Tender Is the Night*, the narrative follows Dick Diver, a talented psychiatrist whose descent into disillusionment and personal failure is intertwined with the decay of his social identity and romantic ideals. Across these works, Fitzgerald constructs characters who are dreamers—idealists in search of meaning and beauty—but who are ultimately betrayed by the very ideals they cherish [4]. Through a close reading of *The Great Gatsby*, *This Side of Paradise*, and *Tender Is the Night*, the discussion will reveal how Fitzgerald uses dreams not as promises of fulfillment, but as haunting illusions that expose the deep emotional and moral void at the heart of modern life.

Literature review and Methods. This article employs a literary-analytical methodology to examine the treatment of dreams and psychological disillusionment in F. Scott Fitzgerald's major works. The analysis focuses primarily on three of Fitzgerald's most significant novels: *The Great Gatsby*, *Tender Is the Night*, and *This Side of Paradise*. These texts were selected due to their recurring engagement with themes of idealism, ambition, personal failure, and the socio-cultural forces that shape individual identity within the context of early twentieth-century America. The primary analytical approach is based on close reading techniques, emphasizing character development, psychological depth, and symbolic motifs. Particular attention is given to the inner lives of protagonists such as Jay Gatsby, Dick Diver, and Amory Blaine, whose aspirations and eventual disillusionments serve as narrative vehicles for Fitzgerald's broader critique of the American Dream [2]. Each character is analyzed through the lens of psychological portraiture, with an emphasis on emotional conflict, identity crisis, and the existential consequences of unattainable ideals.

Results. The thematic analysis of F. Scott Fitzgerald's major works reveals a consistent and deeply nuanced portrayal of the tension between idealized dreams and the harshness of reality, culminating in profound psychological disillusionment for his characters. Three dominant patterns emerge across the selected texts. At the heart of *The Great Gatsby* lies the tragic pursuit of an unattainable ideal. Jay Gatsby, the novel's central figure, constructs his entire identity around the dream of reuniting with Daisy Buchanan. However, Daisy is not merely a woman in Gatsby's eyes—she represents a symbol of perfection, beauty, and a life that transcends his modest origins. Gatsby's dream is inherently romanticized and disconnected from reality; he does not truly love Daisy as she is, but rather the ideal she has come to represent. When Gatsby finally confronts the real Daisy—a flawed, shallow individual incapable of embodying his grand vision—his dream begins to collapse. This confrontation between idealism and reality becomes a central motif in Fitzgerald's fiction, emphasizing the fragility and illusion of the American Dream. In *Tender Is the Night*, the character of Dick Diver illustrates the devastating psychological toll of clinging to unsustainable ideals. Initially portrayed as charismatic and brilliant, Dick's identity gradually deteriorates under the weight of social pressures, personal sacrifices, and a failing marriage [1]. His decline reflects the internal fragmentation experienced by many of Fitzgerald's characters—an erosion of selfhood triggered by the gap between aspiration and lived experience. As Dick loses control over both his personal and professional life, he descends into emotional numbness and existential despair, representing a broader commentary on the cost of self-delusion and repressed trauma.

Discussion. In Fitzgerald’s fiction, the American Dream—often defined as the belief in social mobility and success through hard work—is subjected to critical scrutiny. Rather than portraying the dream as a path to fulfillment, Fitzgerald reveals its corruption and illusory nature, particularly within the materialistic culture of the early twentieth century. Characters like Jay Gatsby pursue wealth, status, and romance under the assumption that these achievements will lead to happiness and personal meaning. However, their pursuits are rooted not in genuine self-knowledge or emotional depth, but in artificial values shaped by social expectation and illusion. Gatsby’s lavish lifestyle and relentless pursuit of Daisy are emblematic of a society obsessed with appearances rather than substance. His failure, therefore, is not simply personal—it represents a broader disillusionment with a culture that equates material success with moral worth. Moreover, the psychological unraveling of characters such as Dick Diver and Amory Blaine highlights the internal conflict that arises when individuals attempt to reconcile personal ideals with the fragmented, often cynical world around them. Fitzgerald portrays these figures as emotionally isolated, unable to connect meaningfully with others or find a stable identity. This isolation mirrors the condition of the so-called “Lost Generation,” whose members struggled to find purpose in a post-war society marked by change and disillusionment.

Conclusion. In Fitzgerald’s major works, dreams and disillusionment are inseparably linked. His characters are idealists who seek meaning, love, and success—yet their aspirations are repeatedly thwarted by the contradictions of the society in which they live. The promises of the American Dream prove to be deceptive, grounded more in fantasy and illusion than in reality. Social inequality, moral ambiguity, and emotional superficiality all serve to undercut the ideals his characters pursue. Fitzgerald’s literary craftsmanship—marked by symbolic imagery, psychological insight, and a lyrical yet critical narrative tone—allows him to expose the deep emotional and spiritual costs of modern ambition. Rather than offering solutions, his works present the American Dream as a powerful but ultimately destructive myth that leads to internal collapse rather than fulfillment. As such, Fitzgerald secures his place as one of the most perceptive social and psychological novelists of the twentieth century. His critique of American culture remains relevant, offering timeless insight into the dangers of chasing hollow ideals in a world where appearances often matter more than authenticity.

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