

The Matrix of Tragedy in the Novels of F. Scott Fitzgerald

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Abstract: *All the five novels by F. Scott Fitzgerald are tragic in the end. The matrix of the tragedy is the essential issue of money in connection with love. The paper attempts to analyze the nature and the factors associated with money and love that cause the tragedy. Money in the life of the protagonists of the novels plays so crucial role that it eventually overrules other things like love. Through an analytical discussion an attempt has been made to establish the thesis that it is the role of money-based culture that functions as the matrix of tragedy in the life of the heroes in the "roaring twenties" and a little beyond in America that F. Scott Fitzgerald has drawn in his novels.*

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Introduction

William Troy significantly called F. Scott Fitzgerald "the authority of failure"¹. In all the novels of F. Scott Fitzgerald we find that in the ultimate event his protagonists invariably suffered either failure or death. The robust heroes like Amory Blaine (in *This Side of Paradise*), Anthony Patch (in *The Beautiful and Damned*), Jay Gatsby (in *The Great Gatsby*), Dr. Dick Diver (in *Tender is the Night*) and Monroe Stahr (in *The Last Tycoon*) ended up with failure, frustration or death. But, of course there was a fundamental difference between the death of the heroes in the later novels *The Great Gatsby* and *The Last Tycoon*. Monroe Stahr was not money-hungry like Amory Blaine, or Anthony Patch or Jay Gatsby and Dr. Dick Diver. The exceptional hero Monroe Stahr died at the altar of aesthetic aspiration that he chased to achieve through producing artistic films in the Hollywood, where Pat Brady, his business partner and rival got into the bitterest enmity and caused his death.

Amory Blaine learned the essentials of life that appear all a frustrating lesson for him. In the second novel Anthony Patch ran through a harrowing litigation against Adam Patch, his grandfather and sweated down on the path

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of his life. Jay Gatsby in the third novel died at the altar of love deeply connected with money, which was but the ultimate tragedy. Dr. Dick Diver in *Tender is the Night* vanished away dejected and drifts as an obscure figure into the vast world of American society. In the last novel Monroe Stahr died at the altar of industrial complexities, again connected with money and love, in the Hollywood. In all the cases thus money is the matrix of the tragedy where love appeared as an associate factor. This is the thesis the present study attempts to establish.

It is just an established pattern that F. Scott Fitzgerald heroes must end up with failure, frustration and death though they had had quite a glamorous beginning endowed with their laudable attributes. Thus it is a normal inquisitiveness as to how money turned to be the matrix.

For the sake of convenience the study has been segmented into two parts. In Part I the first two novels *This Side of Paradise* and *The Beautiful and Damned* have been taken up and Part II focuses on *The Great Gatsby*, *Tender is the Night* and *The Last Tycoon* for the thematic analysis.

Part I

In the beginning we state that most of the novels are based on the author's some personal experiences and impression of life though it is not a prime matter of investigation. Nevertheless it is a relevant point here to see how the facts of money have been engaged into his fiction.

In the early part of his life the novelist realized the value of money in life. Even in his last days he had to struggle against the inadequacy of fund owing to the huge expenses for the treatment of Zelda Sayre (his wife) who was suffering from psychiatric ailment in Zurich. From his biography and relevant documents obtained through many critical studies, we learn that F. Scott Fitzgerald was in need of money, especially after his father's death. The family, as recoded by Malcolm Cowley, ". . . had some social standing and a very small fortune inherited by the mother. The fortune kept diminishing year by year, and the Fitzgeralds, like all families in their situation, had to think a lot about money." . . . "When the only son was eleven they were living in Buffalo, where the father was working for Procter and Gamble."² Malcolm Cowley further recorded: "One afternoon," Fitzgerald told a reporter thirty years later, ". . . the phone rang and my mother answered it. I didn't understand what she said, but I felt that disaster had come to us. My mother, a little while before, had given me a quarter to go swimming. I gave the money

back to her. I knew something terrible had happened and I thought she couldn't spare the money now. . . . A little later my father came home. I had been right. He had lost his job."³ Besides, we know that F. Scott Fitzgerald borrowed money from his classmates and relatives; and he took advances from his publishers. He "became a writer, to begin with, because of the prestige and the money he thought the life might bring to him. . . ."⁴ These are the facts of his personal experiences and impressions of life that were the raw materials for the novelist. Of course we do not attempt to dig into the biographical stuff that played a very significant drive in molding them into finished product of his fiction.

In *This Side of Paradise* (1921) the young protagonist Amory Blaine ended up in frustration as he set foot on the road to life. The matrix of his frustration was money the strength and power of which he came to realize hard. Amory's realization matured through the experience of his family's financial situation and his perception gathered from the world outside the home.

His experience was the outcome of his social life that he lived during the period from 1912 to 1925, covering his early student career at St. Regis's in Connecticut and Princeton. His financial experience had been given by his birth and build-up in a middle-class family, where the father was a humble figure of meager importance. Its root reason lay in the fact that the financial foundation of Amory's family was constructed by the money brought into by his maternal side. It is however needless to say that in all his novels we see that the women were richer persons belonging to a higher social level than their men. The domestic discord between his parents was caused primarily by the fact mentioned. To his displeasure Amory found that the parental discord was a frequent phenomenon.

The agenda of money as integral and inseparable ingredient had been presented as the matrix of the crises in the fiction of F. Scott Fitzgerald, whom the critics called 'a literary giant' of the Jazz Age. The issue of money appeared with full potential right from his first novel *This Side of Paradise*. Here Amory Blaine the protagonist (which is the fictionalized version of the novelist himself) gathered his intimate experience of the practical meaning of money that played so tremendously significant role in life in the capitalistic society of America.

Amory started realizing the strength of money as he began falling in love with a number of girls. He fell in love with at least three girls: first with Myra St. Claire, then with Eleanor Savage and finally with Rosalind (in Princeton), who proved to be his most passionate affair, whose refusal put him into a tremendous catastrophe. The effect of the love affair with the other girls like Myra St. Claire, Marylyn De Witt, Isabelle Borge (in Minneapolis), Eleanor Savage (in Ramilly), Clara Page (in Philadelphia), could not shatter him. With Myra St. Claire, for instance, Amory had only an elementary exercise of love that started and ended just with a kiss; Myra was a girl of thirteen years. But with Marylyn De Witt he developed a little grown-up stage of love in which he shared his aesthetic sensibilities by expressing his soul through composition of poetry that embodied his refined love without any consummation.

But, in case of Isabelle Borge, Amory was rather a passive prey in the hand of the precocious girl. After capturing Amory into her hand "Isabelle resolved secretly that she would, if necessary, force herself to like him."⁵ However, the transitory affair took a deteriorating course soon.

His next course of events opened with another girl named Eleanor Savage. His affair with her showed that she had an obvious drive of wild sexuality (that justifies the second part of her name "savage"); then Amory was virtually a dwarfish character for her. They established their abrupt bond on sharing of poetry and finer literary taste, but Amory's passion for poetry did not match well with that of Eleanor; her love for poetry appeared only 'skin-deep': her principal motive was physical sex-adventure for which Amory was picked. Amory was still fresh and fine; no indecent sentiment deluded him. He did not get into any blameworthy mentality; nor did he attempt any objectionable gesture on any girl, not even on Eleanor Savage despite her recurrent wild provocation. Amory did not indulge in any sexual love: it was all a teen-ager's Platonic passion for a romantic company Amory craved for and availed from these teen-age girls. But certainly his case with Rosalind was a deeper and more mature chapter, the climax of his love-affair. He developed the love for Rosalind up to the level that entangled the question of his existence. And consequently, he suffered extremely as he was declined by Rosalind and her family. Amory started floating and drifting around like a figure of real moral discomfiture enhanced by overdrinking.

While commenting on this part, Professor Thomas J. Stavola appropriately wrote, "A new Isabelle appears, called Rosalind, 'a sort of vampire', who childishly treats men terribly yet still possesses an 'endless faith in the ineluctability of romance'". (171) Clearly a realist very much addicted to the security and luxuries money can buy, she is fundamentally egocentric and without depth no matter what kind of lyrical phrases Fitzgerald uses to describe and glorify her."⁶

Rosalind, who had already been mixing with a number of lads like Howard Gilkespie, Amory faced the critical situations, and failed to settle his marriage with her only because he did not have money. What Rosalind did with Amory was not a true love but a temporary and whimsical romance: she preferred to marry Dawson Ryder because he was blessed with opulent money. Mrs. Conage (Rosalind's mother) once said: "Her (Rosalind's = I bracket) father has marshalled eight bachelor millionaires to meet her."⁷ Not only that, she earnestly tried to convince Rosalind, saying: "... You've already wasted over two months on a theoretical genius who hasn't a penny to his name, but go ahead, waste your life on him. I won't interfere."⁸ For, she found it useless on the daughter's part to waste time on unbefitting lads; she must target the right fellow for marriage. So she emphatically argued with Rosalind about Dawson Ryder "... I like him; he is floating in money. . . ."⁹

Rosalind's refusal to marry Amory is a token of social reality of the time: the daughters of most of families were keen to choose their bridegrooms only on the scale of money because that was the ultimate security for them. This is what Professor Thomas J. Stavola observed in his evaluation. He rightly pointed out that "Dawson Ryder is more valuable and necessary to her than romance."¹⁰ It is, therefore assumable that Dawson Ryder was also a case (like others) simply of marriage in the social eye that would guarantee the comfort and security in her personal and social life. Her affair did not essentially bud and bloom on love itself; she opted for him because he was "valuable and necessary" since he was "floating in money". All the love cases of Fitzgerald heroines are similar: they all made romance with their heroes and secretly craved for financial security; human values and personal attributes were of little importance. To them love was a hoax and a trap, a futile game since it was deeply attached with the question of money.

On the catastrophic refusal it appears ludicrous and futile as Rosalind seriously put forward: "Amory, I'm yours – you know it. There have been

times in the last month. I'd have been completely yours if you'd said so. But I can't marry you and ruin both our lives."¹¹ But she behaved on a selfish ground; Amory's ruinous fate hardly concerned her. For, she further hedonistically added: ". . . I like sunshine and pretty things and cheerfulness – and I dread responsibility. I don't want to think about pots and kitchens and brooms. I want to worry whether my legs will get slick and brown, when I swim in the summer."¹² This exposed her real motive. Our experience asserts that there cannot be any true love without mutual commitment of duties and responsibilities. Rosalind's love was only a make-shift game of passion devoid of the noble virtues of responsibilities, care and commitment: genuine love naturally entangles mutual responsibilities and duties. But Rosalind exposed herself as what in terms of the novelist was "a siren", a "flapper" in the Jazz America. In the frustration there operates the twisted bundle of love and money that shows only a case of one-sided affair, a case of hunting for a wealthy bridegroom.

The question of money had been of so profound significance that Amory realized in his bones that poverty is a curse: His perception was poignant because he fell in great financial crises after his father's death. "For the first time he came into actual cognizance of the family finances, and realized what a tidy fortune had once been under his father's management."¹³

Amory realized the gradual decline of the family finance that plunged the family into a deep darkness of poverty. So in a biting comment he declared: "I detest poor people . . . I hate them for being poor. . . It's the ugliest thing in the world. It's essentially cleaner to be corrupt and rich than it is to be innocent and poor."¹⁴ His gloom was further intensified as he came to learn that his mother bequeathed half of her money to the church. In the part entitled "FINANCIAL" of the book, we learn about the investment of the family money: 'the bonds of the rail-road and street car companies'. Being trapped into poverty he considered that communism was the "panacea" contrary to the Capitalistic system. Amory argued with the Big Man (Mr. Ferrenby): "This is the first time in my life I've argued Socialism. It's the only panacea I know. . . I'm sick of a system where the richest man gets the most beautiful girl if he wants her, where the artist without an income has to sell his talents to a button manufacturer. . ."¹⁵

In *The Beautiful and Damned* we find Anthony Patch almost in the similar line. Here also the foundation of the family finance was built on the money

brought into by Adam Patch's wife: In the text we read: ". . . Adam Patch had married an anaemic lady of thirty, Alicia Withers, who brought him one hundred thousand million dollars and an impeccable entre into the banking circles of New York."¹⁶

We see that the matter of money dominated over the entire scenario presented in the novel. Anthony tried his best to manage his finance: he worked at a commercial advertizing firm and struggled all the way, on a humble income. Like Amory Blaine (in *This Side of Paradise*) Anthony Patch (in *The Beautiful and Damned*) almost lost his love Gloria whom he decided to marry. He was lucky that Gloria took a very strong constructive and protective role and saved him by marrying at last.

Anthony faced tremendous opposition in marrying Gloria as her parents especially Mrs. Gilbert (Gloria's mother) declined the proposal of marriage with Anthony who had a very scanty income to maintain Gloria. We know Gloria had had strongly debated with her mother in favor of Anthony.

According the meticulous scrutiny of Mrs. Gilbert (Gloria's mother) there "was only one who kept any sort of dignity, and he had been a mere child, young Carter Kirby, of Kansas City, who was so conceited anyway that he just sailed out on his vanity one afternoon and left for Europe next day with his father. The others had been – wretched. . . Some of them had confided in Mrs. Gilbert, told her with tears in their eyes that they would never get over Gloria . . . at least two of them had since married, though . . ." ¹⁷ (p 80) That was how the question of Anthony Patch was dropped from the catalogue of the prospective bridegrooms causing a great crisis for both Gloria and Anthony.

Considering the importance of money in such situation, Thomas J. Stavola rightly observed: ". . . in America there is no identity without money, the commodity that guarantees social recognition and love."¹⁸

Regarding the importance of money Anthony argued with Adam Patch, his 'grampa' who emphasized on 'work'. The old-fashioned Adam Patch, who was a staunch supporter of the "Prohibition", was against all sorts of levity and did not approve of the ways young Harvard students like Amory adopted – his smoking, drinking and partying with friends etc. The crisis between

Adam Patch and Anthony stemmed out of the question of money that is the product of hard “work”, according to his philosophy.

But we know that the rift between Anthony and Adam was not only the product of their personality difference: it reached the final irretrievable gap when once old Adam witnessed the wanton party done at “Marieta” that “killed Anthony’s grandfather”: Since then the old Adam Patch ostracized and dropped all connection and correspondence with Anthony and resolved to deprive him of any right to his property as a legitimate heir.

In the following course Anthony was forced to get into litigation with his grandfather Adam Patch, who attempted to deprive him of his legacy by a deed of will prepared by Mr. Brett. Though in the last event Anthony won the case and the money, but it was then too late: all his potential was already exhausted and Gloria also lost her youth and vigor and their life turned an empty process to start afresh. This is how we notice that money is the matrix of Anthony’s gloom and frustration in this novel.

Part II

In the third novel *The Great Gatsby* the protagonist Jay Gatsby suffered death in the last event. He was revengefully murdered by Wilson as his wife Myrtle was killed under Gatsby’s car driven by Daisy while coming back from New York City. But the root cause of Gatsby’s death was money, his not having adequate of it. The story of his glamorous rise and tragic death lay in the matrix named money. His principal drive for career was to earn money as he could not win Daisy without it. We know he failed to win Daisy only because he had no money at the proper time. He took to bootlegging basically because he was determined to make money – plenty of it and achieve social status, without caring the moral judgment or the legal embargo imposed by the “Prohibition Act”. Daisy, on the other hand discarded Gatsby mainly because Gatsby was no social match compared to Tom Buchanan whom she married avoiding Gatsby. Hailing from the wealthy class Daisy talked only of money; her life, so to say, was built of money. Nick’s observation in this context is quite useful; he told: “Her voice is full of money” and “. . . 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 . . . high in a white palace the king’s daughter, the golden girl. . .”¹

It was therefore natural for Daisy Fay to prefer Tom to Gatsby. The possession of money was the most crucial factor. Commenting on Daisy's preference of choice Professor J.F. Callahan commented that "Daisy yields to Tom, not for love, but because he, not Jay Gatsby, is proprietor over stability and wealth."²

We learn from the text that ". . . it was from Dan Cody that he inherited money – a legacy of twenty-five thousand dollars."³ But it was not enough for Gatsby because his limit was the sky in reaching which Dan Cody triggered his imagination. Dan Cody, who picked Gatsby up just "from the gutters", acted as the philosopher and guide to him and functioned as Gatsby's career-architect, although initially he used Gatsby as his business tool. He himself discovered the money-route from 'the Nevada silver fields' the 'rush for metal', and "Montana copper that makes him many times a millionaire."⁴ At Dan Cody's instruction, Gatsby operated bootlegging, for his sole mission was to win Daisy back and "repeat" his past, in doing which social eminence was an unavoidable precondition. Not only bootlegging, he also operated some illegal trades that he names the "side line" business in drug stores. That is what Tom, out of resentment, disdainfully and rhetorically attacked Gatsby with, to stab him dumb: "I've heard of making a garage out of a stable, . . .but I'm the first man who ever made a stable out of a garage."⁵

Gatsby's sky-kissing material ambition was presented not only in vivid terms of the physical wealth in his possession, but it came to light in greater scale when, after his death, Mr. Henry C. Gatz, his old father appeared to attend the funeral ceremony. With a taste of irony we listen to what he tearfully narrated, "Jimmy always liked it better down East. He rose up to his position in the East. . . .He had a big future before him, you know. He was only a young man but had a lot of brain power. . . . If he'd of lived he'd of been a great man. A man like James J. Hill. He'd of helped build up the country."⁶ We know that James J. Hill (1838-1916) was a railway tycoon; the dream-figure Gatsby's father visualized his son to become. We see that Gatsby's main drive of life was money – the immense earning of it and the lavish spending of it at social parties as an exhibitivite token of eminence.

We remember that Daisy once insulted Gatsby for not having a 'regular shirt' and later in his hey-day Gatsby buried her under the "piles of shirts" when she attended to a tea party at Gatsby's castle the Rack-Rent. Amazed and

dazed Daisy cried out: "It makes me sad because I've never seen such – such beautiful shirts before."⁷ Not only this, Gatsby was then so rich that he forcefully bragged: "I've a got a man in England who buys me clothes. He sends over a selection of things at the beginning of each season, spring and fall."⁸ We know that Gatsby bought a hydroplane of his own, decorated his castle Rack-Rent with all the furnishings and amenities required to be an elite, and above all he threw grand banquet parties attended by innumerable invited and uninvited guests, who were the remarkable celebrities including Hollywood movie-stars and cine-directors and other varieties of industrialists. A stunning catalog of invited guests was recorded in the text that shows the wide range of social and business connections that constituted Gatsby's world. The obvious contrast between his poverty in the past and the opulence of wealth of the present calls our attention to the importance of money that the novel took up as a major theme-item. It is also noticeable how pathetically he is humiliated by Tom, who suffers deplorable skin-burn for Gatsby's possessing the great opulence.

About his tremendous poverty we learn significant details from Dan Cody. Dan Cody said: "My memory goes back to when I met him, . . . A young major just out of the army and covered over with medals he got in the war. He was so hard up he had to keep on wearing his uniform because he couldn't buy some regular clothes. . . He hadn't eat anything for a couple of days. . . He ate more than four dollars' worth of food in half an hour."⁹ It is also relevant here that Dan Cody picked him up and molded him in business line because of money for both himself and Meyer Wolfshiem and Cliffspringer (the other gangsters) and Gatsby.

On the other hand the moneyed class is represented by Tom Buchanan. Tom Buchanan already stood on a great social eminence: he was a national hero as a great footballer while studying in Yale. His pride rested on the family finance that had an old foundation inherited from his ancestors whereas Gatsby was just a "nouveau riche" – an upstart. Gatsby had started amassing money by bootlegging which was an anti-law, anti-moral line. In the eye of the old aristocrat like Tom Buchanan, Gatsby was a "rough neck", a "moneyed thug" who desperately strode to reach the pick of aristocracy in Jazz American society where the spirit of the American Dream propelled their motivation to "get rich quick". Through the juxtaposition of Jay Gatsby and Tom Buchanan, a comparative view between the old aristocracy and the emerging moneyed class has been presented in *The Great Gatsby*. Matthew

J. Brucoli rightly commented: "An essential aspect of the American-ness and historicity of *The Great Gatsby* is that it is about money."¹⁰

Dr. Dick Diver, the central hero in *Tender is the Night* suffered deplorable failure turning a virtual non-entity resulted by the crucial role of money. Hailing from a humble origin Dr. Dick Diver became a specialist psychiatrist and happened to undertake the responsibility of curing up Nicole Warren in Zurich. After their marriage the crisis opened as the Warren family especially Baby Warren, Nicole's elder sister devalued Dr. Diver's priceless services. Muddle-headed Baby failed to estimate the essential potential of Dr. Dick who simply donated his life-blood magnanimously out of love and care. The unbounded pride of the Warren money crushed the noble virtue of Dick's love through brutal humiliation. In this great novel F. Scott Fitzgerald asserted the crucial fact that the American society is predominantly money-based and money-oriented where a man is measured only in term of money nothing else. It is pertinent here to recall what the eminent critic William Fahey observed in a pithier but more pin-pointed opinion: He said, "It is a world filled with trivial pleasures and gaudy baubles, a society whose only bond is the cash nexus."¹¹

Had Dr. Dick been as moneyed as the Warrens, there would have been no chance for humiliation for him at Baby Warren's hand; nor would there have been any degrading course for Dr. Dick Diver, because he had had the scholastic wealth that the Warrens did not have even the grain of it. Baby's humiliating remarks are really unforgettable; once she boastfully said to Dr. Dick: "We own you, and you'll admit it sooner or later. It is absurd to keep up the pretence of independence."¹²

Referring to the family money Baby mentioned Nicole's position and boastfully announced: "For her sake trains began their run at Chicago and traversed the round belly of the continent to California; chicle factories fumed and link belts grew link by link in factories; men mixed toothpaste in vats and drew mouthwash out of copper hogsheads; girls canned tomatoes quickly in August or worked rudely at the Five-and-Tens on Christmas Eve; half-breed Indians toiled on Brazilian coffee plantations and dreamers were muscled out of patent rights in new tractors – these were some of the people who gave a tithe to Nicole; . . ."¹³

Baby Warren, who has been painted as an instrumental character for American money, performed quite an effective role. She “. . . had looked Dick over with worldly eyes; she measured him with the warped rule of an Anglophile and found him wanting . . . and she pigeon-holed him with a shabby-snobby crowd . . . he put himself out too much to be really of the correct stuff. She could not see how he could be made into her idea of an aristocrat. . . . Doctor Diver was not the sort of medical man she could envisage in the family. She only wanted to use him innocently as a convenience.”¹⁴ Their money-oriented egoism is exposed in plentitude when we read that Baby considered, “. . . young doctors . . . could be purchased in the intellectual stockyards of the South Side of Chicago . . .”¹⁵

Not only this, it is Baby Warren who, after Nicole's recovery persuaded her to break away from Dick and proceed for another marital settlement: in the later development, Nicole jumped upon Tommy Barman and got the second marriage that shattered Dick altogether. One would, in such circumstance, conclude that the tradition of the society rested absolutely on money, keeping aside all the moral values and the divine dignity of love – marriage is but a commercial deal for the sake of social regularity and existential decency. The most tragic role Nicole played was that she wrote an insulting letter to wretched Dick, after their formal separation, if he “. . . needed money.” It is understandable that it was not out of sympathy or love for him but out of her conceited egoism embedded on money that Nicole wrote such a degrading letter showing nothing more than her condescending attitude, sharpened with stabbing insult towards Dick.

The novel attempts a comic satire on the crassness of money of the moneyed class F. Scott Fitzgerald saw and taunted their inner vacuity though not as mercilessly as, for instance, Sinclair Lewis does in his novels like *Babbitt*.

With regard to *The Last Tycoon*, in the very outset it is to be borne in mind that it is a novel that F. Scott Fitzgerald could not finish writing: his friend and early critic Edmund Wilson gave the finished form to the book in 1941 after the novelist's death in 1940. We therefore base on the text finished by Edmund Wilson that he worked out on the schemes, plans and notes left behind by the novelist.

Again it is money that plays the fundamental factor in bringing in the tragedy in the life of the central protagonist Monroe Stahr. Of course the novelist'

attitude towards money in this novel is different from that reflected in other novels as far as the tragedy of the protagonist is concerned. Here F. Scott Fitzgerald holds an appreciable attitude towards the American money and the moneyed Americans – avoiding any scathing criticism of money-culture in the society.

In *The Last Tycoon* we see Monroe Stahr acted as the supreme figure in the Hollywood film-industry, where Pat Brady operated as his business partner. They were not on friendly terms as both of them aspired for supremacy of complete authority over the industry. Their enmity reached such a climax that they, in the last event hired murderers to finish the opponent out of the way. Monroe Stahr died in a plane crash and Pat Brady suffered a death done by the hired killers immediately after Stahr's plane-crash. But at the root of the tragedy there was a very subtle role of money. The inception of the crisis started with the issue of money as Pat Brady attempted to adopt the policy of "pay-cut" for the various subsidiary hands like the writers, cameramen, and such technicians working in different departments of the industry; but Pat Brady acted in support of the Labor agitation. Pat Brady sided with the Labors' movement while Stahr went to visit Washington on a business related tour. Stahr could not bear with Brady's role because Brady's ultimate aim was to eradicate Stahr from the entire business. We know that Stahr's purpose of the tour to Washington was to discuss with the root financiers so that the "pay-cut" issue could be resolved and the entire labor agitation could be brought under smooth control.

While assessing the rivalry between Monroe Stahr and Pat Brady we would naturally estimate their personalities: Pat Brady "had acquired with luck and shrewdness a queer interest in a booming circus – together with young Stahr. That was his life's effort – all the rest was an instinct to hang on."¹⁶ Cecilia Brady further added that her father (Pat Brady) had no sense of a 'story' for a film. On the other hand Monroe Stahr "was a maker of industry Edison and Lumiere and Griffith and Chaplin. He led pictures way up past the range and power of the theatre, reaching a sort of golden age, before the censorship."¹⁷ Stahr worked day and night but Pat used to go to the studio at noon – he is so lazy and perfunctory.

Monroe Stahr was so dedicated a film maker that he struggled for producing a film rich in aesthetic measure even it required to suffer a financial loss, which Pat Brady did not approve of. His valued struggle was none the less

than that of a general in a war field. His immediate struggle was against Pat Brady who ideologically opposed him. Considering the gradual rivalry between the two, Henry Dan Piper made a realistic observation: he said:

“. . . Stahr was a general waging war on a dozen fronts at once – against lazy sub-ordinates, jealous associates, penny-pinching financiers, power-hungry labor unions. In his single-minded struggle to maintain independent authority over the organization, Stahr – like any other general – found it necessary at times to permit himself a minor moral infraction for the sake of a larger good. . . .”¹⁸

Stahr's total attitude towards life was not money-oriented, money-dominated and money-based matters; he cared the least for love; to him the work for the film industry was more valuable than love. He paid almost no importance to Kathleen's love though she infatuated him at first as she resembled his (Stahr's) dead wife Meena Davis. He did not think of marrying Kathleen only because she was poor belonging to a lower social class that did not suit with ambition. “He wanted her very much now but one part of his mind was cold and kept saying: She wants to see if I'm in love with her, if I want to marry her. Then she'd reconsider whether or not to throw this man over. She won't consider it till I've committed myself.”¹⁹ As we read this part of his speculation we see that Monroe Stahr certainly valued money though he was not money-hungry. We understand this from his decision in discarding Kathleen for marriage.

Stahr was not love-hungry. To him the film production was more valuable than his love: he was so dedicated a film producer that he paid no heed to Cecilia Brady's long-cherished love. Rather he realized that artistic films could not be produced unless the control over the agitation could be re-established in a unified fashion as before, whereas Pat Brady was a thorough businessman who cared only about the profits that would fatten his “bank account”. He was “a monopolist at his worst,” and “a scoundrel of the lowest variety.” Not only that, he “. . . regards film-making as a business venture, not an art form.” His interest in the studio is confined to how its success “will benefit his bank account.”²⁰

But “. . . a paternalistic employer” Stahr boastfully claimed that all the screen-writers were his pet workers and they must pay due allegiance to him. Once he argued with Wiley White (a screen - writer): “That's a question of

merchandise, . . . I'm a merchant. I want to buy what's in your mind." ²¹ His command over the screen-writers, technicians and actors was so commendable that there was none to dispute against his instructions or orders. Once an actor said to Monroe: ". . . I came to you, Monroe. I never saw a situation where you didn't know a way out. I said to myself: even if he advises me to kill myself, I'll ask Monroe." Casually he mentions, "I've been to Pat Brady," but "He gave me a lot of phony advice and I tried it all, but nothing doing. . ." ²²

Apart from the keen rivalry between these two business partners, there were cases where we see that money was crucial: Wily White, a script-writer, who desired to marry Cecilia (Pat Brady's daughter), once clearly told her: ". . . you have got one great card, Celia – your valuation of yourself. Do you think anybody would look at you if you weren't Pat Brady's daughter?" ²³ For, it was all a question of money. Celia was so lucrative only because her father was a film-producer, a moneyed man in Hollywood. In another occasion he softly cajoled her: "I love you, . . . I love you more than I love your money, and that's plenty. May be your father would make me a supervisor." ²⁴ Not only Wiley White, but there were many others so eager to marry her primarily because she was the daughter of a moneyed person. Once, earlier Wiley White clearly and earnestly enquired: "Cecilia, will you marry me, so I can share the Brady fortune?" ²⁵ His tenacious desire rested only on money. Cecilia too realized that money was the basis of things. About Wiley White's line of thought was right; she once said, "He was right – I knew that since 1933 the rich could only be happy alone together." ²⁶ Nevertheless Cecilia valued one's personal potential and skill above money: she was not like Daisy (in *The Great Gatsby*) or Nicole (in *Tender is the Night*) who judged a person only on his possession of money. Cecilia considered one's talent and personal skill to be something more valuable than money. That is why she preferred Monroe Stahr to Wiley White although Monroe Stahr had a very meager academic back-ground. "Though Stahr's education was founded on nothing more than a night-school course in stenography, . . ." Cecilia said: "I still like to think that if he'd been a poor boy and nearer my age I could have managed it, but of course the real truth was that I had nothing to offer that he didn't have; . . . It's more than possible that some of the pictures which Stahr himself conceived had shaped me into what I was." ²⁷ It reminds us of the close similarity between Jay Gatsby (in *The Great Gatsby*) and Monroe Stahr the moneyed heroes lacking educated sophistication.

The crucial issue of “pay-cut” on which the crisis between Pat Brady and Monroe Stahr reached the climax of enmity was also basically an agenda of money. The labor crisis in Hollywood originated from money-matters in which Pat Brady’s and Monroe Stahr’s roles were diametrically opposed that resulted in deep bitterness. Monroe Stahr manipulated the situation by holding a formal talk with Brimmer, a Communist leader, with the help of Cecilia but deplorably fails. Once he decided to quit the organization but however withdrew and agreed with Pat Brady to launch Producer Union so that the capital invested could be saved and the business could be continued.

Commenting on the prevalent social patterns in general, with special consideration of money and love, Professor Milton R. Stern observed so pivotal opinion that it can be quoted in this relevant context: “. . .this fictive world of money-selves, Fitzgerald presents a system in which men with money receive no true human identity from their riches, and men without money receive no such identity from their labor.”²⁸

Conclusion

Thus, in fine it is established that money – either having it in possession or not having or the desperate aspiration for possessing it – is the matrix of tragedy in the life of the heroes as presented in the novels of F. Scott Fitzgerald. The novelist has been fully successful in portraying the social reality that he observed in his contemporary American life the fruit of which are his five novels. Realizing the full potential of the novels – especially *The Great Gatsby*, – T.S. Eliot wrote to the novelist: “. . . I have, however, now read it three times. I am not in the least influenced by your remark about myself when I say that it has interested and excited me more than any new novel I have seen, either English or American, for a number of years . . . In fact it seems to me the first step that American fiction has taken since Henry James. . .”²⁹

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