

**A Study of the Impact of the Authors' Experiences in Fiction
through F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and Ernest
Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*.**



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Fall 2022

**A Study of the Impact of the Authors' Experiences in Fiction
through F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and Ernest
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A Thesis Submitted to
The Department of English and Humanities
University of Liberal Arts, Bangladesh

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
BA in English

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Fall 2022

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

I hereby declare that this thesis is the student's own work and effort. All sources of information incorporated here have been duly acknowledged. This thesis has been submitted with my approval.



Arifa Ghani Rahman

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DECLARATION

This thesis is a presentation of my original research work. Wherever contributions of others are involved, every effort is made to indicate this clearly, with due reference to the literature, and acknowledgement of collaborative research and discussions.



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Dedication

To my parents and brother, without whom this journey would not have been possible.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to my supervisor, Arifa Ghani Rahman ma'am for her relentless guidance and suggestions. She patiently instructed me in every single step which made the task a lot easier. It is to her credit that I could shape the work the way it is now.

Throughout my journey at ULAB, I had the opportunity to learn from some of the greatest faculty members. I would be eternally thankful to Hasan Zayed Sir, SM Mahfuzur Rahman Sir, Towhidul Islam Sir, Kaiser Haq Sir, Syed Manzoorul Islam sir among many others for showing me the world of literature.

I am also thankful to my mom, my brother and my bhabisa who encouraged me to move forward whenever I faced hindrances or lost esteem.

Lastly, thanks to my cousins-Nuaim, Nafy and Kashfian, who believe and motivate me all the time.

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Abstract

Understanding the extent of the author's reflection in fiction subsequently proves the significance of studying their biography for context of a work. The notion of "death of an author" can obscure the interpretation of allusions and intended purposes of a work, making the ideas seem even absurd at times. Looking into the author's life provides a solid foundation behind fictional works while opening scope for critical perception. The extent of such connections between fiction and an author's life is studied through *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald and *The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway, in accordance to Sean Burke's theory of the author as the central concept, using textual, documental and observational evidences. Along with ideologies and beliefs, many events, characters and factors could be placed at a parallel with the author's life. Thus, reclusion of any information beside the main text which is preached nowadays, possesses the risk of losing its literary significance. The paper re-explores the necessity of studying a work through biographical lens in order to avoid misinterpretation and achieve a deeper look into the literary significance, specifically of the particular time it was crafted.

Chapter One

Introduction

Fictional works, whether a reflection or subversion of reality, carry elements from the real world. The foundation of any fictional work is based on inspirations taken from the circumstances an author encountered. In the dissection of *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald and *The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway, this influence of the author's life is evident. Analyzing through biography criticism theory thus helps in getting a better insight into the works while binding various ideas infused in the novels together. Unfortunately, though similarities between the time of composing, thought process and inspirations from the author's life is ever-present in fiction, biographical approach has been somewhat neglected while analyzing any work for the fear of "Intentional fallacy" which means being guided by the prediction of author's intention regarding a work.

According to a notion of new criticism, the interpretation of a work should be limited to the work itself. External information like the author's biography or purpose can make the critical judgment fallacious (Wimsatt and Beardsley, 4). Hence, to avoid reading too much into an author's purpose, focus from biographical approach has been averted. Roland Barthes has strongly suggested removing the author from the text. But there is no better alternative than focusing on the author's background for context.

The fear of reading too much into the author's life while losing focus on the literary text has transferred the straightforward approach of analysis to the backseat. Surely connecting every single element of a novel with the author's life is futile. However, that is not the point of biography criticism theory. The goal is not to relate everything but to understand the context of the work;

more importantly, the context of composing the ideas which led to the creation of the novel, the state of society, its people, the current affairs that molded the novels.

These are relevant as well as significant because authors often reflect the reality around them in fiction to create an alternative world that is believable. They often share their opinion of the real world or promote their ideologies and views. Verisimilitude becomes a necessity to make these ideas or views far-reaching. Otherwise, it appears too factitious to take into consideration. Literature often presents reality in an altered way. Consequently, to understand even just the infusion of different notions, judgments, and points of view in fiction, studying biography/ real life context of authors becomes necessary.

Fiction more often than not is a complex blend of the author's psyche, imagined reality, dreams and experiences. If the author's background is not regarded while critically evaluating a work, it can result in misreading. For example, Joseph Conrad's *The Heart of Darkness* is not "regarded as a great work of art" to some as Curtler reports but studying his life opens another perspective that perhaps being inside an already established system prevented him to directly oppose the racism rather, he had put it blatantly to stir up morality. Besides, an element which is a reflection of a personal experience can be read as a characteristic of a particular time. Sometimes preached ideologies are because of the author's personal views, it does not speak for the whole generation. Additionally, in a work of fiction, there are many aspects alluded to, many themes incorporated, many ideas indicated. A novel can be looked at from psychological, cultural, socio-economic and numerous other perspectives. Separately learning each of these angles can prove to be time-consuming. But a condensed idea of the probable infused ideas, indications, allusions can be found by studying the author's life. It becomes crucial to learn the author's background in this respect, to comprehend the themes, setting and essence of a novel.

Looking into *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, various components of the novel such as accident, facets of relationship, betrayal have been taken from the life of F. Scott Fitzgerald. Jay Gatsby, a self-made man, cannot get the girl he loves. He is constantly faced with class discrimination. Although he is wealthy, he is not included in the new money club. He is betrayed while pursuing the love of his life. At the end, he faces a tragic death. Fitzgerald, likewise, could not marry the person he loved. He, too, faced class discrimination and betrayal from his lover. The elements of disloyalty, cheating, betrayal come from his own experience. The apparent similarities like these eloquently hold up the context of the novel.

Similarly, in *The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway, numerous resemblances can be found. It is a story of an expatriate group of friends and the complications they face in navigating life. The background of the novel, World War 1, comes from Hemingway's experience of participating in the war. Jake Barnes's move from Paris to Pamplona and watching bullfights are also loosely based on Hemingway's life. He modeled the characters on his own friends and presented his emotions through the fictional work. The disillusionment that is seen in the novel is the actual scenario of the war-ridden generation of that time. The tangled love-story also bears allusions to the changing socio-cultural condition. Altogether, the context and insight into the novel become clear in light of Hemingway's life.

This research attempts to connect the author's life with the work of fiction. It is directed on the basis of qualitative methodology and relies heavily on the author's biography. Sean Burke's theory of biographical approach is used as the theoretical lens for the exploration of the novels. He claims in his book named *The Death and Return of the Author* that authors cannot be separated from the text. They, rather, are the central concept and manifest their psyche to the works. The evidences that are taken into measure to form this connection between fiction and reality are the

textual, documental, observational analyses along with case studies and interviews retrieved from biographers of the authors. It evidently presents the connections in a well-grounded and plausible way. The study will explore to what extent F. Scott Fitzgerald's and Ernest Hemingway's personalities impact *The Great Gatsby* and *The Sun Also Rises* by connecting different elements and ideas presented in the novels with their (Fitzgerald and Hemingway's) lives.

This study aims to show how diverse elements of the novel can be found in context by looking into the life of an author without reading too much into the author. As the life lived by the author one way or other influences their works, their lives provide a better context to a work than any other lenses can. The social, economic, historical, psychological context of fiction are all found together when it's looked through the biographical lens. As a result, it will attempt to re-establish the biographical approach as one of the significant and swift approaches of analyzing a work. This research, therefore, focuses on holding up the extent of resemblance of the author's life to a work of fiction. It will prove the biographical approach as an uncomplicated framework of analyzing a work which, at once, delivers the essential information needed for critical judgment consequently adding to literary value of its composition time.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Authors often take inspiration from their life to incorporate them in fictional works. It makes biographical approach essential to understand the background of a work as well as to get clear insight of certain implications. Two prime examples of such roman-à-clefs, understood better with biographical lens would be F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*. All the articles used here indicate a reflection of major experiences from the authors' life within the mentioned texts. As each article focuses on one specific element of reality, this literature review is organized thematically. For presenting a parallel of authors' experiences with *The Great Gatsby* and *The Sun Also Rises*, factors like writing approach, characters build-ups, setting, era, and relationship dynamics have been scrutinized critically.

The Far Side of Paradise by Arthur Mizener is the first biography book on F. Scott Fitzgerald, consisting of intricate details of his life and compositional stories of his major works. Mizener put forth a picture of Fitzgerald's rise, marriage, his missteps and ultimately spiraling into despair. The events along with the critical analysis of his works are backed up by Fitzgerald's personal notes, letters and diaries. The book not only contains the charms but also the flaws of the author, portraying a true image of Fitzgerald on the basis of documental analysis. This book accounts major events of Fitzgerald's life, depiction, and representation of those in his works which works as evidence to establish a connection between fiction and real life.

Mirroring of society of the time is one of the biggest examples of a real-life echo. Diadechko in "The Reflection of the Era of 'Roaring Twenties'" analyzed the reflection of the jazz era of *The Great Gatsby*. Through the analysis, the presence of distinguished elements of the jazz era such as clothing, prohibition act, wild parties, bootlegging, luxury automobiles etc. were

located and connected with *The Great Gatsby*. Fitzgerald used his cultural, social, and political knowledge in writing this masterpiece. The connection between the novel and the era is established through the analysis of context, discourse, interpretation and references. Depiction of each element of the era, backed up by evidence and references make the resemblance between novel and era transparent.

One prominent aspect of society is class structure which is shown in the book. Scott Donaldson's essay named "Scott Donaldson on *Gatsby* and the Historical Antecedents for *Gatsby*" from Bloom's *Guides: F. Scott Fitzgerald's the Great Gatsby*, inspects *Gatsby's* unrequited quest of love and his failure relating to his social background. The reality of class difference, however, was not unknown to Fitzgerald as he admitted infusing his life experiences into this character. Donaldson observes the textual data through the frame of class structure. His great detailing makes the analysis easily comprehensive and verifiable. The similarities between the character of Jay *Gatsby* and the social background of Fitzgerald becomes evident enough through the analysis which is relevant to support the argument of author's influence in fiction.

Similarly, Dianne E. Bechtel in "Jay *Gatsby*, Failed Intellectual: F. Scott Fitzgerald's Trope for Social Stratification.", analyzed the construction of Jay *Gatsby* in light of Habitus theory to prove the same. She connected the theory of unchangeable social class depending on economic, cultural, intellectual aspects to Jay *Gatsby* and concluded that Fitzgerald himself being a sufferer of the stratification system is the reason behind this reflection. Bechtel dissected the lifestyle elements- clothing, house, style of Jay *Gatsby* and inspected it using class habitus structure. She portrayed the relevance and rationalized the cause of *Gatsby's* failure through a well-structured analysis. This paper refers to Fitzgerald's reflection of elements from the real world and own experience in *The Great Gatsby*.

Along with other aspects, the existing spirit of society structure such as myths and ideologies also find place in fiction. In “F. Scott Fitzgerald’s Evolving American Dream: The ‘Pursuit of Happiness’ in *The Great Gatsby*, *Tender Is the Night*, and *The Last Tycoon*.”, John F. Callahan, explained the prospect of American dream in novels of F. Scott Fitzgerald and how it is presented in *The Great Gatsby*. Gatsby’s pursuit of love resembles the great American dream which at the end remains unattainable. Through analysis of characters from each novel, Callahan links the ‘American’ myth with the fictional work by observational analysis. It is an organized analysis of the prevailing social aspect. This article reveals the notion of real social conditions depicted in fiction.

Not only the surroundings but also traumatic experiences of an author’s life is sometimes reflected. For example, Michael Workman in “Infusive ‘Spots of Time’: Young F. Scott Fitzgerald’s Traumatic Summer of 1910” connected the automobile accidents Fitzgerald experienced with the accidents he portrayed in *The Great Gatsby*. Workman linked the similarities of these accidents with great detail, referencing newspaper articles and interviews published after the accidents. The thorough documental analysis of the accidents, Fitzgerald’s state, relationship with the victims and surroundings present an accurate scenario of his trauma and its release in fiction. Workman’s discussion about Fitzgerald using elements from his observations, experiences with evidence connects fiction and Fitzgerald’s life.

Authors also create characters taking inspiration from real life. Matthew Brucoli is one of the experts on F. Scott Fitzgerald who edited Fitzgerald’s books and wrote many books on him describing different aspects of his life. In the first part of “Alcohol and the failure of ‘The Vegetable’” from the book “Some sort of Epic Grandeur”, he mentions the models behind the characters of Tom, Jordan, Daisy, Gatsby and Wolfsheim. In the following part, the effect of

alcoholism is depicted which is also present in the book in reverse manner. Brucoli's observational and documental analysis of Fitzgerald's personal notes provide accurate information regarding Fitzgerald's life events. This chapter connects *The Great Gatsby's* characters with real people.

Likewise, Richard Lehan in "*The Great Gatsby and Its Sources*" highlights the sources behind the novel *Great Gatsby*. He describes the inspiration and models behind creating many of the characters such as Daisy, Tom Buchanan, Jordan Baker, Meyer Wolfsheim etc. He did documental analysis of Fitzgerald's letters, notes, and other biographical bibliographies to support his claim that Fitzgerald took elements from his surroundings and fit them into fiction. Fitzgerald's personal notes alone are capable of making the connections seem viable and accurate. This essay strongly establishes a connection between real-life and fiction.

Among all, Fitzgerald's relationship influenced the character creation of the novel the most. James West accounts Fitzgerald's relationship with Ginevra King in "Ginevra and Scott, Their Romance.". Starting from their first meeting to their last, the intensity of emotions, the tragic end of the relationship and their last letters, he covered it all. West included expressions, letters, notes, pictures from both Fitzgerald and Ginevra in order to avoid bias in putting forward the actual story. He linked the story with fiction using an observational method. The detailed information on Ginevra and Fitzgerald's relationship in this article reflects the situation of *Gatsby* and Daisy, making it relevant to showcase the similarities of real life.

Another perspective on the same issue is viewed by Kendall Taylor who wrote the book *The Gatsby Affair* depicting Zelda and Fitzgerald's relationship. In the chapter "A Mistress Not a Wife", she accounts the brief affair of Edouard Jozan and Zelda Sayre with its effect on Fitzgerald

and his then 'on-process' novel *Great Gatsby*. She did textual analysis of Zelda's books, *The Great Gatsby*'s first draft and Fitzgerald's ledger entries to depict the full picture of their relationship. She included every little detail with evidence and wrote, maintaining a chronology which clearly portrays the effect of Zelda's affair in the *Great Gatsby*. This portrays how Zelda's betrayal affected the *Great Gatsby*'s composition.

For character creation, Hemingway also depended on his acquaintances. Baker brings up the details of Hemingway's third visit to Pamplona which shapes the novel *The Sun Also Rises* in the article named "The Sun Also Rises." from the book *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story*. On this eventful trip Hemingway found the character prototypes along with the structure of his soon to be published novel. Using Hemingway's own quotes and conversation with Kitty Cannel, Baker shows how Jake, Brett, Cohn, Bill, Pedro are based on acquaintances of Hemingway. His documental analysis of letters of Hemingway, Loed, Duff and interviews of the associated people to put an unbiased insight into the trip and the foundation of the novel. This chapter depicts usage of the author's surrounding information in building characters; thus, it forms a link between reality and fiction.

The emphasis of the Pamplona trip is further expanded by Blume in "Eve in Eden" from *Everybody Behaves Badly*. He accounts for some of the major incidents that happened on the trip. Coming across Duff's multiple affairs, confrontation between Loed and Hemingway, participating in bullfighting are some of the events that later found place in *The Sun Also Rises* with little modifications. Blume specifically detailed particular events that were used in the novel in some form or other using documental data. The narration of the trip is backed up by interviews of Hemingway and his acquaintances, which proves the authenticity of the story. The accounts of the

real events in Pamplona resemble the events in *The Sun Also Rises*, connecting real life and fiction to a great extent.

Where Hemingway's trip provides the structure of *The Sun Also Rises*, the background is provided by his war experience as examined by Adair in "'The Sun Also Rises': A Memory of War". He observes that from little to big, many events, places, café names, foods, wordings, imageries, even character models bear allusions to the first world war. The war that Hemingway experienced first-hand. The referred relation was strengthened with evidence from Hemingway's articles, letters, and biographies. Adair used textual data and observation to place the link between the elements. He did not miss small details rather he mentioned even out of the theme elements with meticulous attention. The references of incidents given in the fictional world directly connects to the war ordeal of the real world.

Along with background and plot, cultural references have also been taken from his surroundings. Wendy observes the cultural shift of the 1920s manifested by the subversion of traditional roles through Brett from *The Sun Also Rises* in "Brett Ashley as New Woman in *The Sun Also Rises*". She states how Brett defies certain traditional attributes and in doing so, Hemingway captures the changes happening in terms of gender role, sexual politics, power dynamic, behavioral, psychological, financial and overall, the cultural aspects of America. Wendy does in-depth textual analysis of the character, relating the implications in text with 1920s new woman. She supports her claims by logically refuting other conservative associations with Brett as asserted by other critics. She also evinces Hemingway's experimental writing style that makes the allusion of changing culture in *The Sun Also Rises* viable. These cultural aspects of fiction and the real world mirror each other.

Using elements from reality and reflection of truth even while writing fiction comes from the unfaltering view of Hemingway. His approach to writing and esthetics are explored by Baker in “The Way It Was” from Hemingway, *The Writer as Artist* with analysis of his particular writing pieces as references. Baker discusses about some of Hemingway’s principles that includes steadfastness on depicting the truth incorporated with a sense of place, sense of fact and sense of scene, his vehemence for self-experiencing and observation before composing anything, and lastly depicting things as the way they are with combination of the way he feels about those to present an accurate notion. These claims are backed up by Hemingway’s statements from interviews along with Baker’s observation on Hemingway’s writing. It becomes undisputable with Hemingway’s admittance and persistence of using the particular writing style. This shows a connection of fact and fiction with the disclosure of Hemingway’s preference towards depicting the truth.

In conclusion, all these articles form a link between the characters, society, culture and happenings of *The Great Gatsby* and *The Sun Also Rises* with various events Fitzgerald and Hemingway encountered in their life. The transparent connection between the world of imagination and the actual world shows how much influence the authors’ experiences have on works of fiction. Thus, it is essential to look into the author’s life for an insightful interpretation of any text.

Chapter Three

F. Scott Fitzgerald's Reflection in *The Great Gatsby*

There is a notable practice in almost all authors, and that is the use of elements from their own life in fiction. Most of the time, the reflections are set forth symbolically and metaphorically, rarely in a straightforward way. Upon the scrutiny of the works of two contemporaries, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway, this observation becomes transparent. *The Great Gatsby* and *The Sun Also Rises* are two of the greatest literary works of the 1920s, that meticulously exhibit similarities between the authors' lives and fiction, whether in terms of society they belonged, class dynamics, incidents they faced, or types of acquaintances they had. The extent of similitude between real-life and fiction sets the biographical reading method of any work most suitable for learning the context as well as to get insight into the literary significance of the time of composing.

Glancing at Fitzgerald's biography after perusing his work results in detecting similarities of great multitudes. This remains true for all four of his novels. Where his first three novels, *This Side of Paradise*, *Beautiful and the Damned* and *The Great Gatsby* include character models and his experiences, the fourth novel *Tender is the Night* is considered as a roman-à-clef. He bases character models on his knowledge of people, plotlines consist of likeness to the events he experienced, emotions, reactions are given according to his own conduct, his unchanging viewpoint of the generation obtained by his existence in the world also persists in the writings. He especially saw his troubled relationships whether with Ginevra, Zelda or Sheila, through an artistic vision. These visions that were illustrated by writing created a foundation for his novels. Along with relationships, he found muses from his surroundings and society. All four of the novels have the recurring setting of the jazz era and its burdensome characteristics. The mentality deriving

from the situation of post-war America, financial states of different classes of people, all find place in the writings. He successfully upholds a picture of the life of Americans during the 1920s; exceptionally as seen on *The Great Gatsby* which was composed in 1925.

Burke said “The text is related to a pre-established conception of the author which is both discovered and recovered within the text itself” and when the “author has been found, the text is 'explained'” (14). Some pre-established concepts of Fitzgerald regarding the society are reflected in the novel matching Burke’s claim. Studying Fitzgerald’s history it is found that he started composing *The Great Gatsby* in France. Before moving to France, he was residing in the Long Islands with his family where he found the inspiration to write this novel. He used the same place, American society of Long Islands as the setting of the novel. According to Bruccoli, that “riotous island went into the writer’s process of cerebration” (178). He caught sight of the stark difference in people’s lifestyle, both financially and psychologically between American and French people. Back in America, people were bewitched with the idea of the American dream. The idea that anyone can be successful if they work hard. It made wealthy people more exhibitionist in nature and put a lot of pressure on people to keep up their social status in society. Exhausted from living this extravagant lifestyle, Fitzgerald decided to move away. They were basically “escaping” from the Great Neck which “proved to be expensive” (Bruccoli 188). So, there were primarily two reasons behind the move – financial condition and mental condition. Fitzgerald stated, “We were going to the Old World, to find a new rhythm for our lives, with true conviction that we had left our old selves behind forever” (Fitzgerald, “How to Live on Practically Nothing a Year”). Subsequently, he made progress on his third novel amidst the newfound tranquility. Leaving the frenzy behind, Fitzgerald set out to expand on this part of American society in his novel which he

found as “most shallow” (Bruccoli 188) along with the unattainable nature of American Dream in every circumstance of life depicted.

Fitzgerald could vividly portray society in its truest form as he had obtained first-hand experience being part of such a society. After the success of his first novel, he moved near the Great Neck of Long Islands and lived a luxurious life for some time. This is the place where affluent people would live and spend their days partying. Diadechko found it as “home for America’s wealthiest men and women” (9). Fitzgerald was not out of this excessive indulgence either. This experience, however, proved to be costly and put him under multiple debts. He had to leave this lifestyle behind. His wife, Zelda had “suddenly decided that their life in Great Neck was impossible” (Mizener 175). This decision to move took him out of the vicious cycle while making his consciousness clear. He then portrayed the indulgent lifestyle of the Long Islands through *The Great Gatsby’s* East Egg and West Egg. Diadechko has observed geographical similarities between the places (9). The mansions of the novel are also similar to the famous mansions of Great Neck. During Fitzgerald’s time in Great Neck, he attended numerous parties and saw the opulence of them which inspired the grandeur parties of Gatsby. Fitzgerald mentioned “...champagne was served in glasses bigger than finger-bowls” (34) in the novel that gives a rough idea regarding the nature of Gatsby’s party. Diadechko even found the parties “legendary for their opulence” (10). The superficial life of the Buchanans, along with other people of the place, also were based on the lavish lives and loose morals of the residents. Although Fitzgerald himself was among the wealthy people for quite some time, “his wealthy friends often disappointed or repulsed” him (Mizener 141). He found them “morally disquieting” even. (Mizener 140). He reflected this through the questionable morality of Tom and Daisy. Tom is discovered to be cheating despite being married. As Daisy says, he “got some women” (Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* 13). And Daisy is seen as a

shallow woman whose “voice is full of money” (Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* 86). They are arrogant and seem to have very little respect for people. Fitzgerald saw these traits during his time in Great Neck. So, in a sense, he presented the slice of the Long Islands in *The Great Gatsby* to show the lives of wealthy people. The whole setting came from his own experience and knowledge.

So, Fitzgerald’s life and personal relations become the background of the novel. Burke supported this role saying that the author is the “true beginning . . . the ground or foundation of everything else” (97). In *The Great Gatsby*, Jay Gatsby before becoming affluent and moving to East Egg, struggled in his life. He was a “penniless young man” (Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* 107) who hoped to settle with the love of his life. When he professed his love to Daisy, she was positive, but she did not wait till his return from the military. He found that Daisy got married upon returning. It was mentioned that Daisy’s mother “effectively prevented” her from seeing off Gatsby (Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* 54) and convinced her to marry a rich guy by scaring her about a poor struggling life. In the novel, this happens due to Daisy’s mother. But in real life, a very similar incident happens with Fitzgerald because of the father of the girl he loved. Ginevra King was the first love of Fitzgerald (Brucoli 54). Fitzgerald “did not come from a wealthy family” (West 31). Before publishing his first novel, he was struggling with his life. He had approached Ginevra with a proposal as they were madly in love but was denied. Her father disapproved of the relationship saying, “Poor boys shouldn’t think of marrying rich girls” as deducted by Smith from the ledger entry Fitzgerald made after rejection. This incident occurred due to the class difference and lack of money. Similar to Daisy’s story, Fitzgerald had found out about Ginevra’s engagement while he was in the Army (West 40). The rejection from Ginevra influenced his works greatly. Fitzgerald admitted Gatsby’s failure of marrying Daisy came from

his own experience saying “The theme comes up again and again because I lived it” as mentioned by Bechtel (121). This tragic incident is what became the material for his novel, cumulated from his own life.

Fitzgerald had met Ginevra at Westover School while he was enrolled in Princeton. From the first meeting, their interest sparked and soon after they were deeply in love (Brucoli 53). But due to financial reasons, he could not marry Ginevra. This rejection from Ginevra made a mark on his life. It remains an unmatched source for his writing. As West put it “The experience changed him and supplied him with material that he would write about for the rest of his life” (13). She served as “model for many fictional women” and “most importantly, Daisy Buchanan, in *The Great Gatsby*” (13). When Ginevra and Fitzgerald’s relationship is taken into view, the similarities with Daisy and Gatsby become uncanny. Ginevra was “sought after” by many people which was one of the reasons Fitzgerald fell in love with her (Brucoli 54). This thing is evident in the case of Daisy as well. Fitzgerald writes “... many men had already loved Daisy—it increased her value in his eyes” (Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* 107). In addition to the major similar events of rejection, and unexpected marriage news, the idea of making attempts for rekindling the relationship is also present in the novel. After Ginevra’s marriage, Fitzgerald “continued to trade letters” in hopes to rekindle their relationship (West 38). Fitzgerald had sent Ginevra the copy of his first novel “shortly after it was published in March 1920” (West 40) although she got “married during the war” of 1917 (West 19). In the novel, Gatsby settles near Daisy’s residence and throws the most lavish parties with the hope of meeting Daisy although she is married. He tries to persuade Daisy to be with him. Gatsby quotes, “I’m going to fix everything just the way it was before” (Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* 78). He hopes to repeat the past. But in the end, neither attempts of Fitzgerald nor Gatsby were successful in saving the relationships. Such likeness in concept and events only

prove that Ginevra was used as the prototype for Daisy. However, the behavior of Daisy constituted characteristics from Zelda Sayre who was another lover of Fitzgerald. He created the heroine of the novel by mixing the events inspired from one woman (Ginevra) and characteristics inspired from another woman (Zelda), both of whom were his real-life partners.

Fitzgerald met Zelda Sayre where he was stationed in the army (Brucoli 83). They fell in love within two months after meeting as Fitzgerald noted in his ledger (Brucoli 84). But Zelda's story with Fitzgerald is unfortunately somewhat similar to Ginevra's one which establishes Zelda as the prototype for Daisy too. Zelda did not agree to Fitzgerald's proposal until he was earning well enough. He was given a condition to be successful to marry her as she was "cautious about marriage to an unpublished writer with no money" (Brucoli 91). So, upon the success of his first novel, they got married. Hindrances in the path of love due to financial reasons again emerged in his life. In addition to reflecting the prominent concept of rejection, Fitzgerald this time takes characteristics from Zelda to model Daisy. Zelda was seen to be a whimsical person, carefree of the worries of the world. In the words of Brucoli she had a "don't give a damn code" (87). These traits also appear in Daisy's character. She lives as if she's "a king's daughter" (Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* 86). Not only their psychological disposition but also their outlook matches each other. Another influential incident regarding Zelda that shaped the novel is Zelda's brief affair with Joze. It happened while Fitzgerald was writing *The Great Gatsby*. As a result, it became a "decisive and determining experience continually revisited" by Fitzgerald (Taylor xiv). Taylor even assumes regarding the affair that Fitzgerald "encouraged it to generate a love triangle that would infuse *The Great Gatsby* with emotional tension" (xiii). He indeed incorporated the issues of infidelity and betrayal in the novel. Infidelity is portrayed through Tom and Myrtle first. Then Zelda's betrayal to Fitzgerald is portrayed through Daisy betraying Gatsby. When Gatsby asks

Daisy to be with him, she says “Oh, you want too much!” (Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* 96) and does not go with him. It perhaps found a place in the story as Zelda chose another man over Fitzgerald even for a moment. Thus, it can be stated, Fitzgerald used his own affairs as the components of the novel.

Burke also stated that the author is the “unitary cause, source and matter to whom the chain of textual effects must be traced” (14). It is apparent in the case of the characters of the novel. Apart from Jay Gatsby, who is modeled on Fitzgerald himself to an extent (Lehan 71), and Daisy who is a mix of Ginevra and Zelda, Fitzgerald also based other characters on his acquaintances. He selected characteristics and backgrounds to make things seem as convincing as possible. Even a small character like Meyer Wolfsheim was based on a real-life gangster called Arnold Rothstein who was the culprit of match fixing (Lehan 71). Fitzgerald’s explanation about the elements in his book “always starting from a small focal point that impressed me, my own meeting with Arnold Rothstein for instance” (Lehan 71) is the evidence of it. The meeting of Gatsby, Nick and Wolfsheim is thus inspired by a real event. He also based Tom Buchanan on William Mitchell, a Chicagoan who married Ginevra (Lehan 68). William was a rich aristocrat belonging to an upper social class. Similarly, Tom Buchanan is shown to be coming from old money and inherently belonging to such a social class Gatsby could never reach. Fitzgerald says in the novel that Tom’s “family were enormously wealthy” (131) while Gatsby starts as a “penniless young man” (107). Fitzgerald himself was inferior to William class wise and he represented it metaphorically through the class difference of East egg and West egg. While Tom belongs to the East Egg, Gatsby lives on the West Egg. The character of Jordan Baker is likewise modeled on his acquaintance. He says in a letter to his editor about Jordan that “perhaps you know it's Edith Cummings” (Lehan 66). By modeling characters on real people, he also reflected the image of the era in *The Great Gatsby*.

As voiced by Burke, the author's role is “that of a bridge or portal between text and world” (26). Looking upon the characters of *The Great Gatsby*, it is evident, they carry the style of the jazz era. It is because the novel is set in the 1920s, similar to the time of its composition. Fashion, music, clothing, social events, conventions and practices of different classes of people were all incorporated into the novel. So much so that Daisy “was identified with the type of the flapper” of the 1920s (Conor 38). She wore short skirts and smoked cigarettes. Once Gatsby himself lit “Daisy’s cigarette from a trembling match” (Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* 68). This type of boldness was one of the characteristics of “new woman” of the 1920s. Her behavior was disdainful in nature as well. This was another common nature of flappers during that time. They were known to be more focused on vanity. Then comes the reference of jazz music in the parties of the novel, which is one of the distinguishing features of the jazz era. Nick describes that parties usually start once comes the “burst of jazz” (Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* 92). Fitzgerald did not hesitate to portray the darker side of the era along with its flamboyant side. He believed that the generation was indeed lost. As he said in his article, looking back at the era seemed similar to looking back “at our wasted youth” (Fitzgerald, “Echoes of the Jazz Age” 464). There was an increase in illegal ventures, the spread of immorality, and corruption in people after the alcohol prohibition act was enacted. It is also reflected in the novel. The protagonist of the novel himself is involved in illegal activities. He turns out to be a bootlegger (Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* 44). Most of the characters are engaged in immoral acts. There is the allure of automobiles, advertisements, high social class in the novel as if it’s a mirror of the era. Fitzgerald added real events as well to give a genuine setting which would compel people to notice the decay in real life in parallel to fiction. The novel works like a bridge between reality and fiction.

In *The Great Gatsby*, Jay Gatsby becomes successful in a very short span of time. The story of the novel starts after he becomes a rich person. But his previous state and reason behind this sudden success is revealed later. It is discovered that bootlegging, an illegal activity, is the main cause of his success (Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* 44). This phenomenon was widely happening after the prohibition act of the 1920s. According to Burke “The author will be exceeded but never bypassed in the critical movement to the time, the place, the social energies and structures in which the text was constituted”, and Fitzgerald is no exception (108). He took this incident and added it in his novel. Tom says in the book that “A lot of these newly rich people are just big bootleggers” (Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* 77). Likewise, he took inspiration from other real events that he had encountered and added to the novel. Fitzgerald saw several accidents of his loved ones during his youth which left a mark on his conscience. Those traumatic events were “infused into his craft” according to Workman (85). He infused it in the climax of the novel, which turned the outcome of the novel making it a tragic ending. The accident committed by Daisy gets Gatsby killed. Writers, thus, mold inspirations or events that leave a mark on them into something artistic.

Fitzgerald shaped *The Great Gatsby* novel in a splendid way taking inspirations from little to big instances, people, gestures, surroundings etc. He focused on social status, chasing success and the unattainable nature of it in the novel. He has added the glittering lifestyle of the higher-class people which he lived for a while. All the focal points and turns of the novel seem to stem from his life. Reading on his life story thus connects all directions of the novel together.

Chapter Four

Ernest Hemingway's Reflection in *The Sun Also Rises*

F. Scott. Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway were contemporaries. Their relationship started as good literary friends. Each of them was impressed with the other. It influenced the shaping of their writings too, as they sought the other's review and critique on their own work. Fitzgerald and Hemingway met in 1925 (Donaldson, "A Friendship Abroad" 53). When Hemingway read *The Great Gatsby*, he found it as a "first rate book" (Baker 146). Like Fitzgerald's use of real events and persons in *The Great Gatsby*, Hemingway also used real events and people in *The Sun Also Rises*. They had met each other in 1925 while Hemingway was working on the novel which seemed to make an impact. Their influence on each other remains subtle yet powerful in most of their works.

Ernest Hemingway had a distinctive writing style. While Fitzgerald incorporated elements out of fascination or inspirations, Hemingway believed to reflect truth in writing, no matter what. According to him "A writer's job is to tell the truth" (Baker 48). He even tried to experience things before writing about them so he could establish an authentic background. Real places, real descriptions were essential to him, in the case of writing fiction as well. This viewpoint emerged partly due to his profession of being a newspaper article writer. Hemingway "started his career as feature writer in *Toronto Star Daily*" (Donaldson, "A Friendship Abroad" 53). For the nature of the work, he had to fact check and write concisely with as much credential news as possible. It shaped his fictional writing style which consists of real places, real scenes, real facts mixed with creativity and imagination. Baker says, "Facts march all his pages" (51). *The Sun Also Rises* is an example of such writing of Hemingway. He has built on the things that happened and

the way he felt about them. He initially wanted to write a nonfiction which turned into a **roman a clef** (Balassi 128). Like Fitzgerald, he also brought his relationship history in the novel. He has drawn on his psychological state post-war. He was a participant of the First World War which left a mark on his conscience. The haunting effect and allusions of war are scattered throughout the novel. He has then included small focal points from his trip to Spain and his acquaintances. Most importantly though, he portrayed the picture of the surrounding and the era. There are so many stark similarities in the novel and the reality, including his own life, that it is considered his most autobiographical novel.

Burke's statement that "the retracing of the work to its author is a working-back to historical, cultural and political embeddedness" is proven in the case of *The Sun Also Rises*'s background (108). The First World War affected people in more ways than one could imagine. People became hopeless, disillusioned, unstable and haunted emotionally. Those who participated in the war were left with unhealable wounds. It completely changed their perspective on life. It is very much reflective of the works of writers of that time. Both Fitzgerald and Hemingway hinted about the war in their respective novels. Where Fitzgerald's protagonist Gatsby is a soldier in the Army, Hemingway's protagonist Jake is a war veteran. Hemingway had volunteered in the war as an ambulance driver for Sector four of American Red Cross (Baker 42). He witnessed the goriness and violence of the war directly. This experience made him a different man. Hemingway says about his war experience that he "was an awful dope" when he went to the last war, trying to express the crazed idea (Baker 38). The lingering effect of war is noticeable in his writing. One of the most prominent notions he infused in *The Sun Also Rises* is the background of the war. He mentioned places in the novel where significant incidents happened during the war such as Bruges, Senlis, Quai d'Orsday etc. Bruges which "was a site for a German base" (Adair 75) is suggested

for visit by Jake in the novel (Hemingway 9). Then Senlis is mentioned by Jake which is another place known as a fortified “Zone of War” (Adair 75). Besides places, the cafés Jake and his friends frequented had names that refer to war. Café Versailles, Café Milano, Café Suizo are all connected to the history of war in one way or another. Versailles is the name of a place where a peace treaty was signed by Germans (Adair 77). Adair supposes the Café Milano and Suizo suggests traveling from Milan back to the war. **As in the book, Jake goes from café Milano to café Suizo to search for his friends (83).** Even the food they ate or ordered had war allusions. According to Adair, one of the examples would be Bill suggesting Jake to eat hard boiled eggs (80). A food item which is staple for the soldiers. Hemingway had also written an article which covered his personal experience and famous battle places, named “A Veteran Visits His Old Front” (74). It shows he had extensive knowledge of places that were important in war. From there along with his perspective on writing, it can be deduced that he added the allusions to the war with the purpose of showing the culprit behind “the lost generation” which remains the war. The textual effects “find their genesis, meaning, goal and justification” according to Burke which is evident here when the allusions are traced back to Hemingway’s experience (14).

Burke further added, “Authorial subjectivity is theoretically unassimilable” (102). It is noticeable in Hemingway’s case as he portrays the disillusionment through characters, which he, himself felt. The story of *The Sun Also Rises* revolves around a group of expatriate groups who seek comfort in foreign lands. It brings forth a picture of “the lost generation”. All the characters of the novel seem to be looking for something- a purpose, a goal. Their activities appear as nothing but meaningless pursuits. Not finding comfort in their homes, they travel to other places a lot. Most of the time they are seen to “hang around cafes” (Hemingway 70). But Jake himself admits in the novel saying, “You can’t get away from yourself by moving from one place to another”

(Hemingway 13). Jake and his friends try to fill their lives by participating in fests, watching bullfights, and seeking relationships. But none of them are content or successful in the end. They feel lost emotionally and psychologically. Morality is also blurred. Their lostness, disillusionment is the reflection of the jazz era. Although on the surface, the era seems very sparkly, underneath there is this absence of truthfulness, purpose, morality and hope. Every attempt at achieving fulfillment results in vain as there lies the unwavering disappointment of life beneath. Jake feels his life is going really fast and he is not living it (Hemingway 12). This is what ultimately the characters' journeys indicate. Fitzgerald has also hinted about the disillusionment in *The Great Gatsby*. But in Hemingway's version of the jazz era, the disillusionment is more prominent than the veil of superfluosity and indulgence. Both captured the reality of the era in their respective novels.

Like Fitzgerald, Hemingway has added real elements to his novel for a strong foundation. Fitzgerald mostly added various notions of his love life, but Hemingway based the novel on a trip he made. When Hemingway's life is studied, it is discovered that he wrote *The Sun Also Rises*, after coming back from the Pamplona trip with his friends and this novel, consequently, is heavily influenced by the incidents that happened there. Hemingway on his trip to Pamplona was accompanied by several of his friends and a lady who became a reason for a dispute between him and his friends. Kitty was one of his friends who accompanied them on the trip. She was known to be "advising him to write stories with real plots" (Baker 154). At the end of the trip, Hemingway informs her that he is taking her advice (Baker 154). This implies that he wrote the novel based on his Pamplona trip and its events. One of the prominent similarities between the novel and reality is the complicated love story of Hemingway/Jake. In *The Sun Also Rises* develops a love of complicated nature revolving around Lady Brett between Jake and Cohn. Brett is a socialite who

once volunteered as a nurse and met Jake there. Although Brett has a history with Jake, she spends time with Cohn. Cohn says to Jake that he and Brett “lived together at San Sebastian” (Hemingway 116). Lady Duff Twidson, too, on whom Brett is modeled, “spent a week” with Harold Loeb (Baker 148) on whom Cohn is based, before attending the trip. There is also this instance of having an argument with Cohn which reflects a real-life event Hemingway experienced. Regarding the argument related to Brett, Jake even swings at Cohn (Hemingway 114). In reality there also happens a verbal brawl between Hemingway and Loeb regarding Duff Twydsen (Baker 159). In the real trip of Hemingway, they roamed, attended fancy dinners and watched bullfights. These instances are found in the novel as well. The real trip was eventful in nature with the existence of turbulent emotions toward each other besides the enjoyable activities. The novel is similarly a mixture of turbulent emotions and dramatic events. Just like Hemingway and his friends roamed there, attended fancy dinners and watched bullfights, Jake and his group seem to do the same. Along with the events, Hemingway’s friends also find a place in the novel. So, Hemingway “conjoins—text and context” here which is a role of the author as expressed by Burke (109).

Hemingway modeled characters of *The Sun Also Rises* on real people. The protagonist of the novel, Jake, reflects Hemingway to an extent. Hemingway was a war veteran who got injured (Baker 44). In the novel, Jake is a war veteran who got “hurt in the war” (Hemingway 15). Jake is also an expatriate living in Paris like Hemingway did. Cohn calls Jake “an expatriate newspaper man” (Hemingway 70). Jake’s character replicated Hemingway’s real life. His actions are given as Hemingway himself would act. In early drafts, the character was even named as “Hem” (Mellow 303). Besides, Jake’s relationship with Cohn and Brett resembles Hemingway’s relationship with Harold Loeb and Lady Twydsen, especially as it was on the Pamplona trip. Harold Loeb was Hemingway’s friend and rival whom he met in Paris. He accompanied Hemingway on the

Pamplona trip where things went sour between them (Blume). So, Hemingway resorted to making him the villain of the novel as admitted to Kitty (Baker 154). There are many similarities between Loeb and Cohn, background and attitude wise. They both played Tennis, attended Princeton and got involved with Hemingway/Jake's love interest. Jake introduces Cohn as his "tennis friend" who was in Princeton (Hemingway 147). Then, the heroine of the novel, Brett, has been sketched taking characteristics from two real persons. Her background, attitude in addition to unfolding events related to her are based on Agnes von Kurowsky with whom Hemingway fell in love during volunteering at war and Lady Twydsen with whom he developed a complicated relationship in his Pamplona trip. Agnes Von Kurowsky was a nurse during the war and Hemingway was an ambulance driver. After Hemingway was injured, she was the one to attend to him. There he had fallen for her (Kurowsky et al. 28). Brett is also a war veteran in the novel. Jake says "she was a V. A. D," where he was admitted after the injury (Hemingway 27). Agnes's background and the love story of Jake and Brett possess similarities from this perspective. Along with Cohn and Brett, Jake's other friends are also based on Hemingway's real friend group and acquaintances. He has added Kitty as one of the characters. He himself assures Kitty that he would depict her nicely (Baker 154). These establish the fact that he took inspirations from his surroundings to create the characters just like Fitzgerald did in his novel.

Ernest Hemingway got the inspiration to write *The Sun Also Rises* after reading *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald. Both novels possess similarities in the notion of their structure and composition. *The Great Gatsby* is a great example of Fitzgerald's imagination mixed with complexities of his real life. Likewise, *The Sun Also Rises* depicts real events Hemingway encountered in a dramatic way with a touch of creativity. Not one but several aspects of the novels are taken from their real experiences. They elaborated the inspirations or prompts and created a

literary world similar to reality. Thus, to get an understanding of the reasons for things the way they are in the literary world, a peek into the composing context or biography of the authors are necessary.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

An author's life's elements and influences are the primary source of components in fiction which is established by the precise scrutiny of *The Great Gatsby* and *The Sun Also Rises* with F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway's lives. The analysis in this thesis showcases the magnitude of the vivid similarities between the author's life and fiction; not only from a certain perspective but at once from the social, cultural, economic, ideological, psychological perspective. It presents a coherent picture behind the composition of a work. The time of composition of *The Great Gatsby* and *The Sun Also Rises* have evidently influenced the setting of the novels, the character styles, the behaviorist notions, and actions of the characters. The authors' mental state also influenced the structure of the work and incorporation of themes to a great extent. The notions of disillusionment in both of the novels mostly derive from the war experiences of the authors. Similarly, as the characters were based upon real people, their actions and lifestyle enlighten about the lifestyle of real people, therefore, the economic state of that time. This way, multiple facets behind any work is learnable briefly in a condensed way that makes further study of a work more feasible. Just learning about the authors' lives gave a general idea of the era, economy, beliefs, social class structures that influenced the novels.

On the other hand, looking through one specific lens, for example, new historicism would provide one facet of the novel extensively; it would not provide a broadened perspective or an overview. Besides the general background of a work, this study implies how important a biographical lens is for understanding the text thoroughly. By giving an idea of the author's psyche it reasons the introduction of certain ideas infused in a work. Subsequently chances of misreading and misinterpretation decreases. As Fitzgerald himself said that "of all the reviews, even the most

enthusiastic, not one had the slightest idea what the book was about" (Anderson) which guides the dissection of the work in a different way and leads to deciphering the actual meaning or message he might have tried to convey. Thus, the necessity of getting an overview of an author's biography for comprehending the foundation of a story and a general idea behind the work is demonstrated and justified. The extent of link between fiction and author's life found in the study undeniably restate the significance of biographical approach.

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