

F. Scott Fitzgerald as a "Hot Nietzschean": The Influence of Friedrich Nietzsche's Philosophy in This Side of Paradise, The Beautiful and Damned, and The Great Gatsby

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F. SCOTT FITZGERALD AS A “HOT NIETZSCHEAN”: THE INFLUENCE OF FRIEDRICH
NIETZSCHE’S PHILOSOPHY IN *THIS SIDE OF PARADISE, THE BEAUTIFUL AND
DAMNED, AND THE GREAT GATSBY*

by

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B.S. University of Florida, 2014

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ABSTRACT

Beginning in 1915, F. Scott Fitzgerald was exposed to the ideas of Friedrich Nietzsche under the guidance of mentors and from his personal reading lists. While reading Nietzsche, Fitzgerald's concern with the rise of cultural pessimism in 1920s America appeared in his fiction. Interestingly, both the philosopher and author explore the decline of Western culture in the twentieth century—a period of identity crises that affected America and Europe. This thesis investigates Fitzgerald's misreading of Nietzschean ideas that appears in his fiction to highlight the author's interest in explaining the cause of America's decline. In particular, this thesis appropriates a Nietzschean framework from Nietzsche's three metamorphoses of the spirit in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Each thesis chapter compares one metamorphosis to one quest in Fitzgerald's first three novels. I argue that Amory Blaine's quest in *This Side of Paradise* (1920) represents the camel's metamorphosis, Anthony Patch's journey in *The Beautiful and Damned* (1922) aligns with the lion's metamorphosis, and Jay Gatsby's quest in *The Great Gatsby* (1925) mimics the child's metamorphosis. After establishing a connection between Fitzgerald's concerns and Nietzsche's ideas, this thesis asserts that Fitzgerald's limited understanding of Nietzschean philosophy derives from the adulteration of ideas in the twentieth century.

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INTRODUCTION

In April 1927, Harry Salpeter, a writer for *New York World*, describes F. Scott Fitzgerald as “‘a hot Nietzschean’ ever since he read *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*” (*Conversations* 87). Salpeter’s observation illustrates not only Fitzgerald’s reading of Nietzsche but also his attitude toward American culture in the late 1920s. The critic claims, “here was I interviewing the author of *This Side of Paradise*, the voice and embodiment of the jazz age [sic], its product and its beneficiary...only to find F. Scott Fitzgerald, himself, shorn of these associations, forecasting doom, death, and damnation to his generation, in the spirit, if not in the rhetoric, of your typical spittoon philosopher” (*Conversations* 86). Salpeter’s comment summarizes the author’s declining faith in his generation since his manner, according to the interviewer, no longer exudes the gaiety of the 1920s as it once did in *This Side of Paradise*. The cause of Fitzgerald’s increasing pessimism, however, is answered by Salpeter himself. The critic’s candid depiction of Fitzgerald emphasizes the connection between the author’s cynical perspective on America’s “state of cosmic despair” and Nietzsche’s diagnosis of twentieth-century Western culture in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (*Conversations* 86).

Fitzgerald’s bleak outlook on the future of his generation emerged from the rise of alcoholism, industrialization, WWI, and excessive consumerism in the aftermath of WWI in the 1920s. During interviews, he is even aware of his own increasing cynicism. In 1924, Fitzgerald calls himself “‘a pessimist, a communist (with Nietzschean overtones)’” while talking with critic Charles C. Baldwin (qtd. in Bruccoli, *Miscellany* 270).¹ His cynicism is not only a result from

¹ This quote appears in an interview published in *The Men Who Make Our Novels*. Fitzgerald endured stagnant periods of writing and flopped book sales between 1920 and 1924, which contributed to his growing cynical outlook on life.

the rejection of religious faith and the rise of nationalism, but also from his struggle with finding meaning in his career and personal life. Baldwin's interview, similar to Salpeter's, reveals Fitzgerald's gravitation toward Nietzschean ideas. Fitzgerald, in fact, began reading Nietzsche at the start of his career. In 1920, he glorified Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morals* as "the greatest influence on [his] mind" at age 24 (qtd. in Bruccoli, *Miscellany* 272). In 1921, he also praised George Bernard Shaw's characterization of Nietzsche's *Übermensch* in the play, *Man and Superman* (Canterbury and Birch 47). The author's exposure to these Nietzschean works and ideas essentially affected his writing career.

Establishing a connection between Fitzgerald and Nietzsche not only allows scholars to view the philosopher's influence on the author's writing but also, more importantly, showcases Fitzgerald's misreading of Nietzschean philosophy. There are commonalities between Fitzgerald's themes in his fiction and Nietzsche's notions that lead to this conclusion. Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883–1891) explores the concepts of cosmic purposelessness (a belief that no entity has purpose) and the *Übermensch* as a solution for the meaninglessness of life.² In particular, Nietzsche's emphasis on "the individual who seeks to preserve authority and autonomy of the self against the mass tendencies in modern life" is a concept that appears in Fitzgerald's fiction (Ratner-Rosenhagen, "Conventional Iconoclasm" 734). At the beginning of the twentieth century, individuals sought to gain back their authority. Similarly, Fitzgerald focuses on the authority and capabilities of the individual in relation to the decline of America in his fiction. Fitzgerald's protagonists embody this search for self-importance in his first three novels.

² The *Übermensch* is also referred to as the "Overman" or "superman" in different English translations. In this thesis, I use the term *Übermensch* to retain the closest meaning and intention of the word. (See Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and *The Will to Power* for further explanation on this concept.)

Despite the likeness between Fitzgerald's and Nietzsche's ideas, the author's limited understanding of Nietzschean philosophy appears in his works. Fitzgerald's reading of H. L. Mencken's *The Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche* (1908) and Shaw's *Man and Superman* (1903) debases his appropriation of the Nietzschean individual and the *Übermensch*, which affects the intention of Fitzgerald's themes. However, analyzing the author's misreading of Nietzsche is important; this analysis helps scholars understand Fitzgerald's attempt to diagnose the decline of America and offer a solution for its destruction. For this reason, I examine Fitzgerald's fiction through the appropriation of a Nietzschean framework to illustrate the author's desire to resist the cynicism of his generation in 1920s America.

In this thesis, I argue that the concepts of the Nietzschean individual and the *Übermensch* influence the creation of Fitzgerald's protagonists in *This Side of Paradise* (1920), *The Beautiful and Damned* (1922), and *The Great Gatsby* (1925). First, I establish a connection between Fitzgerald's commentary on and Nietzsche's consideration of the individual in Western culture. Next, I note the similarities between Nietzsche's three metamorphoses of the spirit and the journeys of Fitzgerald's three protagonists through the appropriation of a Nietzschean framework. I use the metamorphoses as a framework to offer new insight into the purpose of the protagonist's quests. In each chapter I argue that one novel represents one stage of the three metamorphoses. The first metamorphosis (the camel) aligns with Amory Blaine's journey, the second metamorphosis (the lion) parallels to Anthony Patch's journey, and the third metamorphosis (the child) resembles Jay Gatsby's journey. Lastly, I discuss the peculiar effect that Fitzgerald's misreading has on his first three novels. Through a non-dominant interpretation of the author's works, I argue that Fitzgerald's misreading of Nietzsche reveals his desperate desire to understand the individual's purpose in society. The rest of this introduction gives a brief

overview of Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, demonstrates the influence of Nietzschean philosophy in twentieth-century America, and highlights the significance of Fitzgerald's exposure to Nietzschean philosophy.

Nietzschean Philosophy: *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and *The Will to Power*

Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and *The Will to Power* undoubtedly shaped American and European thinkers in the twentieth century. While these works include Nietzsche's ideas on nihilism, both also focus on the Nietzschean individual and the *Übermensch*. *The Will to Power* (1901) explores the cause of Western nihilism.³ According to Nietzsche, nihilism is an accumulation of "the end of Christianity," "skepticism," and "romanticism" (WP 7, 8). As a result of nihilism, the "herd" of society (in other words, groups of people who follow the same beliefs) slips into decadence, such as actions and values that embody "waste, decay, [and] elimination" (WP 25). *The Will to Power* emphasizes that detrimental consequences, such as man's loss of meaning, are the result of this: "but as soon as man finds out how that world is fabricated solely from psychological needs, and how he has absolutely no right to it, the last form of nihilism comes into being: it includes a disbelief in any metaphysical world" (WP 13). While *The Will to Power* explains the existence of nihilism, the book fails to offer a solution for Western culture. For purposes of my argument, I use Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* to discuss the philosopher's answer for living in a society devoid of nihilism.

Thus Spoke Zarathustra illustrates the consequences of nihilism in Western society through the prophet-narrator, Zarathustra. Julian Young, a contemporary biographer of

³ Nihilism is a philosophical concept that rejects all moral and religious principles and also a belief that life is meaningless. Nietzsche declares that the downfall of Western culture is linked to the rise of nihilism. (See Nietzsche's *The Will to Power* for more details.)

Nietzsche, decodes Nietzsche's metamorphoses to help modern readers understand the purpose of each stage. He posits that the book's structure is essentially "a *Bildungsroman*, a story of its hero's spiritual development, his progress towards the ultimate 'greatness' of soul that consists in embracing the eternal return" (Young 366). Nietzsche had intended readers to view *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* as "a new religion. . . 'of life' rather than 'after-life'" (Young 366). In the prologue, Zarathustra states the main theme of the book: "human being is something that must be overcome. What have you done to overcome him?" (TSZ 5). According to the prophet, transforming into the *Übermensch* is a viable way for man to form his own beliefs and values.⁴ Luckily, Nietzsche gives essential instructions on how to become the *Übermensch* in the fallen state of Western society through a series of parables.

Critics continue to argue over the universal meaning of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. R.J. Hollingdale, another contemporary critic on Nietzsche, interprets the book as the philosopher's answer for man's search for wholeness amid the destruction of Western culture. He contends the book is "a hymn to solitude and its hero the loneliest man in literature" which culminates the philosopher's ideas on the abolition of Christianity and cosmic purposelessness (Hollingdale 153). However, Wolfgang Müller-Lautner, another critic, believes Nietzsche "was concerned with diagnosing the 'sickness' of the century and developing a 'theory' of decadence" while writing *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (41). Nietzsche examines the debilitation of Western society in order to find a cure. Different from the previous scholars, Martin Heidegger, a German philosopher whose own works question the nihilistic complications and traditions of Western society, argues that "Zarathustra's question retains its importance only if we understand the indeterminate word 'life' in the sense of 'will of power'" (Heidegger and Magnus 414). That is,

⁴ Nietzsche's idea of the *Übermensch* is explored later in the Introduction chapter and throughout the thesis.

he contends that the individual must take hold of his sense of willpower in order to overcome the rising state of nihilism. All three interpretations emphasize Nietzsche's desire to understand and defeat nihilism in Western culture. I use these scholars, along with excerpts from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, as a foundation for applying a Nietzschean framework to Fitzgerald's fiction.

Nietzsche's three metamorphoses of the spirit in Book One is a parable that shows readers—through metaphor, of course—how to become the *Übermensch* through a series of transformations. In the beginning of the parable, Zarathustra declares “mankind is the rope fastened between beast and superman” (*TSZ* 7). In other words, man needs to transform beyond his current state of being. The prophet then outlines the sequence of transformations: “Three metamorphoses of the spirit I name for you: how the spirit becomes a camel, and the camel a lion, and finally the lion a child” (*TSZ* 16). Nietzsche emphasizes that each animal represents a stage that man must also face. For example, man must (like a camel) endure a load of burdens in order to find truth and complete his transformation. Ultimately, the three metamorphoses, which occur in separate stages, lead to the development of the *Übermensch*.

In the first metamorphosis, the spirit shifts into a camel while seeking knowledge and truth in the wilderness:

To the spirit there is much that is heavy; to the strong, carrying spirit imbued with reverence. Its strength demands what is heavy and heaviest. What is heavy? thus asks the carrying spirit. It kneels down like a camel and wants to be well loaded. What is heaviest, you heroes? thus asks the carrying spirit, so that I might take it upon myself and rejoice in my strength. . . All of these things the carrying spirit takes upon itself, like the loaded camel that hurries into the desert, thus it hurries into its desert. (*TSZ* 16)

Young argues that Nietzsche's camel "[abandons] the old, meaning-giving faith for the sake of truth" but has yet to find it (Young 370). Rejecting the "meaning-giving faith" (in other words, religion) allows man to transform beyond his current circumstances. The camel represents a being who upholds knowledge above other worldly pursuits and must wander into a desert of loneliness after finding truth.

During the second metamorphosis, the camel transforms into the lion. This metamorphosis occurs in a separate stage apart from the camel's metamorphosis. While in a wilderness of loneliness, the lion must defeat the great dragon, a figure that represents an authority that oppresses the lion's life:

But in the loneliest desert the second metamorphosis occurs. Here the spirit becomes lion, it wants to hunt down its freedom and be master in its own desert. Here it seeks its last master, and wants to fight him and its last god. For victory it wants to battle the great dragon. Who is the great dragon whom the spirit no longer wants to call master and god? 'Thou shalt' is the name of the great dragon. But the spirit of him says, 'I will.' 'Thou shalt' stands in its way, gleaming golden, a scaly animal, and upon every scale 'thou shalt' gleams like gold. . .My brothers, why is the lion required by the spirit? Why does the beast of burden, renouncing and reverent, not suffice? To create new values. . .to create freedom. . .to take the right to new values. (*TSZ* 16-17)

The lion's transformation conquers two tasks. First, the lion defeats the great dragon by renouncing his authority and power. Next, the lion finds freedom from the oppression of the values and beliefs of the present age. Lastly, once these occur, the lion then wanders in another state of loneliness.

In the third metamorphosis, the lion transitions into the child. Young contends that the child embodies “a new form of life” as “a free spirit” during this phase (370). The child, then, is the last phase before the *Übermensch*:

But tell me, my brothers, of what is the child capable that even the lion is not? Why must the preying lion still become a child? The child is innocence and forgetting, a new beginning, a game, a wheel rolling out of itself, a first movement, a sacred yes-saying. Yes, for the game of creation my brothers a sacred yes-saying is required. The spirits wants *its* will, the one lost to the world now wins *its own* world. (TSZ 17)

Young asserts the child also has “the sense of having *become a genuine self* rather than a ‘herd animal’” as he creates his own values (370). He highlights this characteristic for an important reason; leaving the herd of society is one of Nietzsche’s solutions for overcoming nihilism. Ultimately, the child represents a being who, after renouncing all practices, can be free.

Nietzsche meticulously explores the concept of the *Übermensch* in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. The *Übermensch* represents a type of humanity that thrives beyond men’s decadent and corruptive behavior. According to Nietzsche, the *Übermensch* has yet to appear; it is still a concept and state of being to *strive* toward. It is important to note that an *Übermensch* does not necessarily represent a new creation. Bernd Magnus, a critic of Nietzsche, argues that “an *Übermensch* is a representation only of a particular *attitude* toward life, that it articulates a certain form of life” (634). So, as an example, man can transition into the *Übermensch* if he adopts this mentality. Nietzsche’s purpose for creating “possibilities of future powerful human existence” through the notion of the *Übermensch* is to help mankind seek truth amid false beliefs in Western culture (Müller-Lautner 73).

Nietzsche's hope for mankind rests on the *Übermensch* who embodies characteristics of autonomy and control over his values and beliefs. The philosopher lists these qualities in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. First, the *Übermensch* "aims to bring to light a stronger species, a higher type that arises and preserves itself under different conditions from those of the average man" (WP 463). This characteristic allows the *Übermensch* to conquer the pitfalls of man by choosing his own fate. Next, the *Übermensch* embodies "freedom from morality; new means against the fact of *pain*...the enjoyment of all kinds of uncertainty, experimentalism...abolition of the concept of necessity; abolition of the 'will'; abolition of 'knowledge-in-itself'" (WP 546). This being does not allow society's traditions to affect his life. Consequently, man must also emulate these qualities in order to become like the *Übermensch*. Nietzsche's concept, as discussed in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, strives toward overcoming the decay of Western culture through a series of transformations.

Nietzsche's ideas, although controversial, appealed to Western society at the beginning of the twentieth century—especially to Americans. In fact, critics who study the philosopher's influence on American writing argue that Nietzsche is responsible for some of the most controversial discussions in the modernist movement.⁵ Robert Gooding-Williams, a critic on Nietzschean influence in the twentieth century, contributes this to Nietzsche's incisive attack on modernism. He states the philosopher's declaration of "God is dead" pulverized Western beliefs such as rationality (Gooding-Williams 99). American modernists, especially those who denounced religious beliefs, aligned with Nietzsche's view on the restrictive nature of religion. Jennifer Ratner-Rosenhagen, another critic, records Nietzsche's influence on American society

⁵ Ironically, Nietzsche criticized modernism for its advocacy of rationality, degeneration, and impotence; writers in the twentieth century (like Ernest Hemingway and Theodore Dreiser) gravitated toward Nietzsche's emphasis on the power of the individual and included his philosophical concepts in their works.

as early as the late 1800s. She claims that “Americans’ interest in, and appropriation of, Nietzsche’s image during the twentieth century help demonstrate the rise and persistence of what historians have identified as the modern quest for authenticity” (Ratner-Rosenhagen, “Conventional Iconoclasm” 736). Rising American thinkers and writers gravitated toward finding enlightenment from beliefs and traditions, despite being startled by the realization that their principles were “mere fictions, products of human imagination with no basis in the real world” (Ratner-Rosenhagen, “Conventional Iconoclasm” 730).

Nietzsche’s works began circulating America in the mid-1880s, as the philosopher’s works were translated into English (Ratner-Rosenhagen, “Worldly Possessions” 27). Max Nordau’s *Degeneration* (1895), a book that attacked the philosopher’s ideas, was allegedly the first piece of criticism published in America (Bridgwater 150). Later, in 1899, Grace Neal Dolson explored Nietzsche’s ideas in her Cornell dissertation, which discusses the *Übermensch* and eternal recurrence (Steilberg 20). Mencken’s *The Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche* (1908), however, is arguably the most influential book on Nietzsche in America at the start of the twentieth century, according to Hays Steilberg (19). Mencken’s reading and advocacy of Nietzschean philosophy inspired him to translate the philosopher’s works into English (La Belle 43). In 1913, Mencken admitted in an interview that the goal of translating Nietzschean philosophy was to expose the common American reader to the philosopher’s ideas (La Belle 43). Interestingly, a few of Nietzsche’s controversial notions, like his dismissal of Western democracy and truth, caused Americans to question their traditional beliefs. With social events like the rise of industrialization, writers like Fitzgerald sought to reestablish the importance of “a strongly individual generation” amid the tumultuous change (*MLC* 193). A majority of Nietzsche’s philosophy “promised individual grandeur might still be possible in the modern

world,” a notion that resonated with Americans who searched for authority in the 1920s (Ratner-Rosenhagen, “Conventional Iconoclasm” 732).

Becoming a “Hot Nietzschean”: Fitzgerald’s Mentors & Reading List

Fitzgerald’s exposure to Nietzschean philosophy started at 19. He took philosophy courses (logic and history of philosophy) at Princeton between 1915 to 1916, but also read Nietzsche’s works that were on his personal reading list (Canterbury and Birch 19, 25). Fitzgerald familiarized himself with the philosopher’s ideas in the works of Shaw and H. G. Wells while at Princeton, too (Way 14). Shaw was an avid advocator of Nietzschean philosophy who, in the words of Oswald Spengler (a German philosopher and successor of Nietzsche), was a “pupil and fulfiller of Nietzsche” (Bridgwater 60).⁶ The author praises Nietzsche’s notion that mankind must evolve through the *Übermensch*, a theme that appears in *Man and Superman* (1903). Sheilah Graham notes in *College of One* that Fitzgerald recommended reading Shaw because he “admired [the author] for his courage in advocating unpopular causes such as socialism and atheism” (83). In another play, Shaw argues that the Nietzschean idea of poverty as a failure of progress affects the overall wellbeing of society. Interestingly, Fitzgerald’s Amory reflects on this notion in *This Side of Paradise* (Birch 58). However, Shaw’s biased interpretation of this Nietzschean idea (i.e., his extreme disapproval of the impoverished) affected Fitzgerald’s

⁶ Fitzgerald avidly praises Spengler’s *The Decline of the West* around the time of writing *The Great Gatsby*. Salpeter (during the same interview he calls Fitzgerald a “hot Nietzschean”) describes the author as a “Spenglerian.” Spengler’s ideas on the decline of the west also influenced Fitzgerald’s perspective on the despair and doom of America. Spengler’s ideas also echo Nietzsche’s. The author’s work, *The Decline of the West*, extends Arthur Schopenhauer’s will to power, the same notion that Nietzsche examines in his philosophy (Canterbury and Birch 193). (See Chapter 3 for more details.)

(and also Amory's) own perspective on this topic. In other words, Fitzgerald's misreading of Nietzsche occurred through the British author's interpretation.

Wells, who also explores Nietzsche's ideas, critiques the necessity of the *Übermensch*. This gave Fitzgerald an advantageous perspective on Nietzschean philosophy. According to Bridgwater, "Wells disapproved of the Superman idea and the glorification of 'master-morality' at the expense of (democratic) 'slave-morality'" (57). He disliked how Nietzsche totally dismissed Western ideals like democracy in favor for individual freedom. However, Wells did approve of two Nietzschean ideas in particular. Critics argue that Wells praised the philosopher's notion of transvaluation of values in *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896) (Bridgwater 57). *Tono-Bungay*, another novel by Wells (and one Amory refers to *This Side of Paradise*), also discusses Nietzsche's attitude toward decay and decadence in Western culture (Birch 64). Fitzgerald's reading of Wells, as well as Shaw, introduced competing interpretations of Nietzschean ideas to the author.

However, Mencken's advocacy of Nietzschean philosophy was the greatest influence on Fitzgerald's exposure to Nietzsche. Richard L. Wilcke, a critic of Mencken, claims the American satirist "presented his own thoughts as Nietzsche's" in his works (Wilcke 297). He was known for utilizing Nietzschean ideas of democracy to further his own political agenda. Douglas C. Stenerson, another critic who reexamines the controversy of Mencken's social and political ideas, argues that his "emphasis on a free and assertive individualism" stems from the concept of the Nietzschean individual (695). Interestingly, Nietzsche's individual rejects the American bourgeoisie, a group of people that Mencken himself detested (Stassen 99). Maurice M. La Belle contends that Mencken's interpretation of Nietzschean philosophy—such as the *Übermensch* and eternal recurrence—is wholly biased, since Mencken failed to understand the intention of

Nietzsche's ideas (La Belle 46). Specifically, Mencken calls the concept of eternal recurrence "the most hopeless idea, perhaps, ever formulated by man" (qtd. in Stassen 106). This concept, in fact, was meant to be joyful for man. Mencken's desire to create a better type of humanity also distorts his interpretation of the *Übermensch*. Nietzsche intended this being to represent the continuous improvement of man, not eliminate or have bigotries toward certain groups or ethnicities. Despite his misunderstandings, Mencken nevertheless popularized Nietzschean philosophy in America. Fitzgerald's misreading of Nietzsche, unfortunately, was furthered in his correspondence with Mencken.

Fitzgerald met Mencken, the editor of *Smart Set*, after publishing his first short story, "Babes in the Woods" (1919) in the magazine (Berman, *Fitzgerald's Mentors* 11). According to Brian Way, Fitzgerald "encountered Nietzsche's ideas at about the same time, first, in diluted form, in Shaw's *Man and Superman* and, a year or two later, in the version popularized by H. L. Mencken" (16). Mencken's relationship with Fitzgerald shifted from a purely professional correspondence to a personal one after the critic married Sara Haardt, one of Zelda Fitzgerald's childhood friends from Montgomery, Alabama (Brucoli, *Epic* 331). By 1920, Fitzgerald claimed in a letter that "Menckenia" had already influenced his writing (Fitzgerald, *Correspondence* 70). He references Mencken in *This Side of Paradise* (which was published in March 1920) just after a three-month correspondence with the critic (Brucoli, *Epic* 106). This "Menckenia" mostly includes Mencken's commentary on Nietzschean philosophy. In particular, Fitzgerald's "letters and interviews acknowledge Mencken's effect. . . on his own writing," especially in *This Side of Paradise* (Berman, *Fitzgerald's Mentors* 49). Along with reading Nietzsche's *The Genealogy of Morals* in 1920, Fitzgerald declared Mencken's *The Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche* (1908) as one of the most influential books in 1923 (Berman, *Fitzgerald-*

Wilson 17).⁷ Mencken called Fitzgerald one of the upcoming writers of the 1920s after reviewing *This Side of Paradise* (Crowther 74). He declared *This Side of Paradise* as “the best American novel that I have seen of late” (Brucoli, *Epic* 120). His approval of Fitzgerald’s writing also flattered the writer and compelled Fitzgerald to seriously consider his ideas on Nietzsche. Mencken’s mentorship proved to be essential for the author, since “Fitzgerald knew from experience *how* Americans acted as they did; and he could see that Mencken explained *why* they acted as they did” (Berman, *Fitzgerald’s Mentors* 15). After the success of *This Side of Paradise*, their correspondence increased as Fitzgerald wrote the early drafts of *The Beautiful and Damned*. Mencken’s advice during this period steered Fitzgerald to focus on the Nietzschean individual and to question the cause of the downfall of 1920s America.

Appropriating a Nietzschean Framework in Fitzgerald’s Novels

Fitzgerald’s curiosity in and misreading of the Nietzschean individual appears in his first short stories and novels. In a 1924 interview, Fitzgerald even claims “when I was twenty I wanted to be King of the World, a sort of combined J. P. Morgan, General Ludendorff, Abraham Lincoln, and Nietzsche not to omit Shakespeare” (qtd. in Brucoli, *Conversations* 65). As late as 1940, Nietzsche’s ideas continue to influence his literary writing (Brucoli, *Letters* 472).⁸ While reading *The Genealogy of Morals*, Fitzgerald rewrote *The Romantic Egotist* into *This Side of Paradise* and submitted “Dalyrimple Goes Wrong” (1920) to *Smart Set*. Fitzgerald’s fascination with Nietzschean heroism appears in these works, especially through Amory in *This Side of Paradise* (Berman, *Fitzgerald-Wilson* 18). The protagonist—along with Bryan Dalyrimple—

⁷ Fitzgerald lists Mencken’s translation in an article titled “10 Best Books I Have Read” which was published in the *Jersey City Evening Journal* in 1923.

⁸ Fitzgerald discusses the impact of Nietzsche’s philosophy in a letter to his daughter, Scottie, in 1940.

reveals “the Nietzschean notion that the individual could free himself from social constraints and become what Scott called ‘a personage.’ A belief in a ‘willed order’ —that we are not simply dust in the wind—unites what otherwise seems a contradiction” (Canterbury and Birch 49). Fitzgerald’s attraction toward the Nietzschean individual centered around the belief that man can free himself from restrictive values and beliefs (Canterbury and Birch 49). However, Fitzgerald’s take on Nietzschean heroism focuses on the “genius that ‘conceives a cosmos with such transcendental force that it supersedes, in certain sensitive minds, the cosmos of which they have been previously aware’” (Berman, *Fitzgerald-Wilson* 18). In other words, Fitzgerald explores the behavior of the Nietzschean hero in a 1920s American setting.

For purposes of this thesis, I examine Fitzgerald’s *This Side of Paradise*, *The Beautiful and Damned*, and *The Great Gatsby* through the appropriation of a Nietzschean framework. Scholars noted in this chapter have begun to explore the influence of Nietzschean ideas in Fitzgerald’s fiction within the last four decades, and this thesis extends the ideas of these scholars. The purpose is to discover the influence of the Nietzschean individual and the *Übermensch* in the characterizations of Amory Blaine, Anthony Patch, and Jay Gatsby in Fitzgerald’s fiction. Each wrestles with understanding the purpose of life in their narratives.

In *This Side of Paradise*, Amory declares “‘I know myself, but that is all’” after experiencing the emptiness of post-war America (*TSOP* 244). The protagonist grapples with his own autonomy apart from being a remnant of “genetic heritage” (Ullrich 41). While David W. Ullrich’s research focuses on the themes of free will and determinism, his research opens a pathway for exploring Amory’s portrayal of becoming the *Übermensch*. The protagonist’s quest for knowledge shifts toward an earnestness in transcending beyond the illusion of America. While Amory’s quest in *This Side of Paradise* reveals Fitzgerald’s interest in the Nietzschean

individual, Anthony from *The Beautiful and Damned* further explores the inevitable crisis of the individual in Western culture. Essentially, he is “in transition between the unassimilated philosophies of *This Side of Paradise* and the fully realized American vision in *The Great Gatsby*,” according to Joyce Morrow Pair (114). Anthony rebuffs the glitz and the glamour of the concrete jungle that consumes him and his wife, Gloria. Robert Sklar’s *F. Scott Fitzgerald: The Last Laocoön* (1967) notes how “Anthony and Gloria, as characters and in their actions, misrepresent and abuse their Nietzschean creed” throughout the novel (104). Both characters are absorbed in the corruption and decadence of New York City and lose sight of their individualism. Lastly, Nick’s narration of Jay’s journey creates hope for becoming the *Übermensch* in the future. Jay’s inability to move beyond the empty illusion of Daisy Buchanan in *The Great Gatsby* causes him to fail. Nick Carraway’s epiphany (“So we beat on. . .”) at the end of *The Great Gatsby* represents Nietzsche’s cyclical nature of timelessness, a notion that affects Jay’s development into the *Übermensch* (Hansen 293).⁹ Overall, each protagonist fails to find fulfillment and succumbs to cosmic despair.

Fitzgerald’s own failure to find purpose in his life appears through Amory, Anthony, and Jay, as each protagonist explores a different stage in the concepts of the Nietzschean individual and the *Übermensch*. The author, who strives for fame and wealth during the peak of his literary career, fails to find meaning in these pursuits throughout the 1920s. In Chapter One, I evaluate Amory’s journey in pre- and post-WWI America in *This Side of Paradise*. I argue Amory’s transformation suggests the camel’s metamorphosis in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, since both seek knowledge. In Chapter Two, I analyze Anthony’s rejection of corruption and decadence in *The*

⁹ Nietzsche’s concept of eternal recurrence discusses the cyclical nature of timelessness. Eternal recurrence is a theory that all existence has recurred, and continues to recur, throughout the universe. This idea is discussed in Nietzsche’s *The Gay Science* and *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

Beautiful and Damned. Anthony's narrative parallels to the second stage of the three metamorphoses of the spirit—the lion's—as he renounces prior practices and beliefs. In Chapter Three, I investigate Jay's failure to transform into the *Übermensch* (but his rhetorical triumph through Nick's romanticized recollection) in *The Great Gatsby*. The protagonist's development, at first, resembles the third stage—the child's metamorphosis—while creating a new identity.

CHAPTER 1: AMORY BLAINE AS NIETZSCHE'S CAMEL IN *THIS SIDE OF PARADISE*

“I know myself,” he cried, “but that is all—.” (*TSOP* 260)

Amory's utterance at the end of *This Side of Paradise* echoes the philosophical crisis of his quest. The protagonist, who “could not tell why the struggle was worth while, why he had determined to use to the utmost himself,” realizes his quest for knowledge reveals only two truths: first, that he only understands himself, and second, that he understands nothing else (*TSOP* 260). Amory's declaration reverberates a similar crisis of the American youth between 1900 and 1930.¹⁰ He comes from a middle-class background, enlists in World War I, and wanders listlessly in America's post-war aftermath. Overall, Amory's crisis derives from a feeling of purposelessness from the pitfalls of the American Dream—a mythos that promises men and women to find purpose in the land of opportunity. However, Amory strives to find meaning beyond the tragedy of his generation—in which he “[tests] the validity of the genteel conceptions of heroism he and his generation had inherited” and, more importantly, discredits Western ideals during his journey (Sklar 36). In *This Side of Paradise*, Amory's journey illuminates the youth's need to find truth amid the decadence and waste of 1920s America.

In this chapter, I explore two sections of research. First, I demonstrate the influence and misinterpretation of Nietzschean philosophy in *This Side of Paradise* through biographical

¹⁰ Thousands of American men enlisted in WWI once America entered the war in April 1917. Fitzgerald, along with a majority of his Princeton peers, helped in the war effort. Considered the most transformative event in Fitzgerald's generation, WWI left the American youth feeling purposeless and lost in its aftermath (Meredith 140-42). Fitzgerald, although he didn't serve in WWI, explores the restlessness of his generation in his fiction.

evidence—such as Fitzgerald’s letters, interviews, and conversations—to provide a connection between Nietzsche’s ideas and the novel’s themes. This helps establish a solid foundation for my argument. Second, I appropriate a Nietzschean framework (i.e., the camel’s metamorphosis from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*) to reveal the intention of Amory’s quest. My research on Amory’s transformation in *This Side of Paradise* suggests that there are similarities between Nietzsche’s desire to diagnose the corruption of twentieth-century Western culture and Fitzgerald’s concern with the breakdown of 1920s America.

The Influence of Nietzschean Philosophy in *This Side of Paradise*

By age 24, Fitzgerald was greatly influenced by profound authors he read in his childhood and at Princeton. During this time, he also experienced his own ““metamorphosis of amateur into professional”” while reading philosophers like Nietzsche (qtd. in Bruccoli, *Epic* 105). Fitzgerald grew into a serious writer who understood the hopelessness of his generation, a notion that Nietzsche explores in his philosophy. The author’s personal reading lists and mentors contributed to his interest in Nietzsche at the start of his career. Mencken, an advocate of the philosopher’s ideas, is mostly responsible for Fitzgerald’s reading of Nietzsche.¹¹ Although Fitzgerald was introduced to Nietzsche at Princeton between 1915 and 1917, Mencken’s correspondence, which began in January 1920, encouraged the author to consider the philosopher’s idea of the Nietzschean individual more closely (Sklar 61). Fitzgerald read about this notion in Mencken’s *The Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche* (1908) and Nietzsche’s *The Genealogy of Morals*. The critic’s advocacy of Nietzsche quickly influenced Fitzgerald’s *This Side of Paradise*, which was published in March 1920. Fitzgerald even sent a copy of the book to

¹¹ See the Introduction chapter for more details on Fitzgerald’s reading of Nietzsche’s works.

Mencken and wrote: “‘As a matter of fact Mr. Mencken, I stuck your name in on Page 224 in the last proof—partly I suppose as a vague bootlick and partly because I have since adapted a great many of your views’” (qtd. in Bruccoli, *Epic* 106-07). Thomas Alexander Boyd, a reviewer of *This Side of Paradise*, agreed that “Mr. Mencken’s influence on. . .*This Side of Paradise*. . .was too obvious to be overlooked” in the novel (Bruccoli, *Conversations* 9). Apart from mentioning Mencken, Fitzgerald also references Nietzsche in *This Side of Paradise* due to the critic’s influence.

It is important to note that Mencken’s misinterpretation of certain philosophical ideas affected Fitzgerald’s understanding of a few in particular. In *This Side of Paradise*, Fitzgerald examines the Nietzschean concepts of democratic failure in society, the questioning of the cosmic order, and the power of individual. Amory disputes the failure of American democracy with his Princeton peers after their experience from the war (Berman, *Fitzgerald’s Mentors* 17). They question societal beliefs, such as the patriotic duty of serving in WWI, as they encounter the illusions of post-war America. Another idea that Fitzgerald observes is “Nietzsche’s epigrammatic promise that ‘God is dead’ coldly questioned the idea of cosmic order” (Brown 84). This inquiry especially appealed to the author, since his practice of and belief in Catholicism waned in the early 1920s. Most importantly, Fitzgerald’s interest in Nietzschean heroism (e.g., the Nietzschean individual) reveals itself in his first novel. The author discovered this notion in Mencken’s chapter on *Beyond Good and Evil* (Berman, *Fitzgerald-Wilson* 18). Mencken argues the Nietzschean individual “would occupy himself with the most noble and sublime task possible to mere beings: the overthrow of superstition and unreasoning faith, with their long train of fears, horror, doubts, frauds, injustice, and suffering” (98). The critic’s summarization of *Beyond Good and Evil* focuses on the eradication of weaker beings, which stems from his racism and sense of

superiority. Although his exposure to this notion is biased, Fitzgerald's fascination with "the Nietzschean notion that the individual could free himself from social constraints" conveys the growing uneasiness of the individual within post-war America. (Canterbury and Birch 49).

Amory discusses the characteristics of the Nietzschean hero throughout his journey in *This Side of Paradise*, although his interpretation is flawed. The narrator first mentions Amory's debate of "the other logical necessity of Nietzsche's" philosophy with Burne Holiday, a pacifist who challenges Amory's thinking (*TSOP* 140). His discussion of Nietzsche reveals his fascination with finding a philosophy that explains the identity crisis of his generation from America's rising industrialization and war efforts. Amory also contemplates the Superman's will to power.¹² The Superman, according to Amory, is an entity that can possibly save the future of his generation. He also, at the end of the novel, wonders why "Shaw had sugar-coated Nietzsche" while wandering in the aftermath of his quest for knowledge (*TSOP* 244). Overall, Amory reflects on Nietzschean philosophy with his "co-philosophers" at Princeton, and by himself, to challenge the established customs and institutions in America. I argue that Amory's Nietzschean references affirm that his quest is indeed a philosophical journey of truth-seeking in *This Side of Paradise*.

Amory's quest, when analyzed within a Nietzschean framework, is to "[seek] liberation from a set of codes that no longer work" (Brown 88). He must encounter "the rapid urbanization, expansion of education, explosion of new industries and technologies, and emergence of a popular culture constructed from materialism, consumption, and leisure" in order to understand their effects on American society (McDonald 254). R. V. A. S., a contemporary reviewer of

¹² The term "Superman" is synonymous with the *Übermensch*, as mentioned in the Introduction chapter. Amory refers to the Superman throughout *This Side of Paradise*.

Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise*, agrees that Amory experiences "spiritual and intellectual metamorphoses" while navigating the consequences of disillusionment in twentieth-century Western culture (50). Fortunately, Amory's earnest desire for seeking truth guides his quest of transformation; his belief in the Superman forms his desire to become a new Amory—one who finds truth amid crumbling American values and beliefs (Sklar 50). Amory's discussion with Burne reveals his aspiration to understand the purpose of the *Übermensch*:

"Burne, I disagree with you altogether; how about the superman?"

"Well?"

"He's evil, I think, yet he's strong and sane."

"I've never met him. I bet, though, that he's stupid or insane."

"I've met him over and over and he's neither. That's why I think you're wrong."

(*TSOP* 125)

Although Amory lacks *complete* understanding of the *Übermensch*, he still *strives* toward becoming a "strong and sane" version of himself. Amory, once he unveils and denounces the listless behavior of his generation, aspires to become a "personage" during his quest.

The Camel Accepts His Journey: Amory's Desire for Transformation

Amory's quest follows steps similar to the first metamorphosis of the camel's journey. Overall, the purpose of this stage is to seek knowledge and truth. In the first step, the camel begins by accepting its journey: "What is difficult? asks the spirit that would bear much, and kneels down like a camel wanting to be well loaded" (*TSZ* 16). In the second step of the metamorphosis, the camel must accept his burdens. However, the pursuit of knowledge comes at a cost; the burden of truth isolates the weary camel from others, since they are not aware of the purpose of the journey. Lastly, despite its isolation and weariness, the camel discovers the truth

after *carrying* his burdens. For example, the camel must acknowledge his foolishness in order to become wise. Only through these experiences can the camel learn the truth about life.

So, too, does Amory discover the truth during his journey. The structure of *This Side of Paradise* even shows Amory's quest from ignorant boyhood to disillusioned adulthood. Along the way, Amory learns from his mentorship with Monsignor Darcy, relationship with women, and his previous ignorant conceptions of society. While contemporary critics believe *This Side of Paradise* to be a frivolous *bildungsroman* of the 1920s, the novel, however, captures the philosophical crisis of the American youth.¹³ Examining the resemblance between Amory's transformation and the camel's metamorphosis offers new insight into understanding the crisis of searching for identity and purpose amid a collapsed Western society.

Amory, a boy who is "marked for glory," prepares for his spiritual quest at the beginning of *This Side of Paradise* (TSOP 24). He is described as "a fortunate youth, capable of infinite expansion for good or evil" and a man who romanticizes "it was the becoming he always dreamed of" (TSOP 11, 24). Amory's interest in embarking on a philosophical journey displays the makings of a Nietzschean hero: "In the 'quest' book the hero set off in life armed with the best weapons and avowedly intending to use them as such weapons are usually used, to push their possessors ahead as selfishly and blindly as possible, but the heroes of the 'quest' books discovered that there might be a more magnificent use for them" (TSOP 115). However, Amory embarks on this journey blindly at first. In his ignorance he creates "his first philosophy, a code to live by, which, as near as it can be named, was a sort of aristocratic egotism" (TSOP 24). This "philosophy" stems from growing up amid the American bourgeoisie, a group of people who

¹³ The American youth of the 1920s experienced the rise of industrialization, consumerism, mass media, and WWI aftermath. All of these events threatened their sense of identity, as young men and women tried to understand their new role in American society. (See McDonald's essay on youth culture in *F. Scott Fitzgerald in Context* for further reading.)

upholds traditional Western values like rationality and morality. Critic Barry Gross also comments on the necessity of Amory's philosophical journey: "[He] does not begin to appreciate the redeeming things or understand what he should struggle for until the end of the novel" since Amory lacks the maturity to understand the purpose of his journey (Gross 51). He has yet to crack the illusion of society to see "how superficial was the recent overlay of his own generation" (*TSOP* 26).

Amory, though, soon desires to become a man who rejects the constraints of societal values and beliefs. His development of "the slicker" embodies the qualities that he himself strives toward. He describes the slicker as a man who "was good-looking or *clean*-looking; he had brains, social brains, that is, and he used all means on the broad path of honesty to get ahead, be popular, admired, and never in trouble" during his conversation with Princeton peers (*TSOP* 39-40). Furthermore, Sklar claims Amory's interest in the slicker indicates his awareness of society's corruption and the need for change: "Amory's intellectual resistance took form first as the philosophy of the slicker...to set apart their form of self-proclaimed superiority from the conventions of prep school popularity" (44). I extend Sklar's argument and declare that "Amory's intellectual resistance" essentially guides his desire of becoming the Superman. Consequently, Amory's development of the slicker rebuffs Princeton's glorified "Big Man," an ideal that embodies the characteristics of the American bourgeoisie. However, Amory's creation of the slicker is a flawed interpretation of Nietzsche's *Übermensch*, a being who strives to find wholeness in himself. Magnus agrees with this characterization that the *Übermensch* "is to possess or exhibit certain traits of character, traits which in the typical cases are associated with notions of self-overcoming sublimation, creativity, and self-perfection" (633). Nevertheless, Amory's aspiration to embody the slicker begins his journey of transformation.

“Do the Next Thing!”: Monsignor Darcy Prepares Amory for the Journey

Monsignor Darcy, Amory’s mentor, prepares the young protagonist for his quest. While at St. Regis, Amory seeks advice from the priest before beginning his spiritual and intellectual transformation. First, Monsignor Darcy teaches him to acknowledge the necessity of his transformation. As an example, Amory complains about St. Regis’s lifestyle and education, but Monsignor Darcy asserts that the institution prevents “democracy” from hitting him so early (*TSOP* 30). Amory’s morose attitude toward the school and his peers changes when Monsignor Darcy admonishes him to accept and learn from all life experiences along his journey:

Perhaps in itself. . .but you’re developing. This has given you time to think and you’re casting off a lot of your old luggage about success and the superman and all. People like us can’t adopt whole theories, as you did. If we can do the next thing, and have an hour a day to think in, we can accomplish marvels, but as far as any high-handed scheme of blind dominance is concerned—we’d just make asses of ourselves. (*TSOP* 100)

Amory’s “old luggage,” as Monsignor Darcy points out, is his initial attitude and immature perspective on society and, interestingly, Nietzsche’s Superman. More importantly, Monsignor Darcy challenges Amory’s adaption of “whole theories.” He believes Amory should test a philosophy or idea thoroughly before accepting it. This is a crucial lesson for the protagonist; Amory learns to test the preestablished beliefs and codes of American society during his quest.

Second, Monsignor Darcy discusses the difference between a “personality” and a “personage.”¹⁴ A personality, according to Monsignor Darcy, “is what you thought you were. . .it lowers the people it acts on,” whereas a personage “is never thought of apart from what he’s

¹⁴ While at Princeton, Fitzgerald himself “wanted to be both a personality and a personage, a magnetic individual and an achiever” (Brucoli, *Epic* 61). This aspiration follows Fitzgerald throughout his writing career and personal life.

done. . .he uses those things with a cold mentality back of them” (*TSOP* 101). Essentially, a personality accepts the corruptive behavior of American society; a personage is a master of his own destiny, similar to the *Übermensch*. However, Amory does not understand the difference until the middle of his journey. Barry Gross agrees that “Amory does not realize the implications of the personality-personage distinction because, at this point, he does not have to. The spiritually married-spiritually unmarried distinction, however, will be the product of a painful passage through disillusionment and of deliberate and necessary search for meaning” (53). In other words, Amory must experience the disillusionment of society in order to become a personage. Monsignor Darcy warns of this at the beginning of his mentorship. He declares that Amory’s friends, Kerry and Sloane, are “personalities” because each boy accepts the superficiality of society and Western values of rationality and morality. He cautions Amory to avoid following their behavior and beliefs while at St. Regis and Princeton. Overall, Monsignor Darcy’s sage advice on the personality-personage dilemma is crucial for Amory to transform beyond the disillusion of his generation.

Lastly, Monsignor Darcy forecasts the loneliness of Amory’s journey: “When you feel that your garnered prestige and talents, and all that, are hung out, you need never bother about anybody—you can cope with them without difficulty” (*TSOP* 101). He also encourages Amory to endure his burdens alone. The purpose of these burdens, according to Monsignor Darcy, is to learn from and transform into a wiser man. He affirms that Amory will have the ability to cope with these hardships “without difficulty,” although Amory may not realize it yet. Monsignor Darcy also encourages Amory to gain a new perspective after enduring a burden: “Now you’ve a clean start. . .you brushed three or four ornaments down, and, in a fit of pique, knocked off the rest of them. The thing now is to collect some new ones, and the farther you look ahead in the

collecting the better. But remember, do the next thing!” (*TSOP* 101). Amory’s transformation rests on Monsignor Darcy’s invaluable advice. The protagonist must learn from his life experiences in order to grow along his journey. Fortunately, Amory heeds Monsignor Darcy’s advice throughout his life experiences, even after his mentor perishes.

Luckily, Amory identifies detrimental consequences if he does not enter his quest. Dick Humbird, a character who “seemed to Amory a perfect type of aristocrat,” serves as a warning sign (*TSOP* 78). Amory, at first, admires what Dick represents: a successful American “aristocrat” who had “servants [who] worshipped him, and treated him like a god” (*TSOP* 78). Amory is tempted by Dick’s lifestyle of popularity and wealth. More importantly, Dick also represents Amory’s initial philosophical code of aristocratic egotism (Sklar 45). He contributes to the overall moral decline of society in his pursuit of lawlessness. However, “Dick is a false ideal” for Amory (Gross 54). His corrupted lifestyle dooms him to a premature death since he “wouldn’t give up the wheel” (*TSOP* 86). Amory views Dick’s incident of drunk driving and death as a grim warning of refusing to complete his quest for truth.

Dick’s “ghost” later haunts Amory after a night of drinking with Axia Marlowe, Phoebe Column, and Fred Sloane, who are friends he met while at Princeton. Amory, drunk and alone in an alley, has “a sense of reality such as material things could never give him” as he hallucinates “*the face of Dick Humbird*” (*TSOP* 111). Amory’s drunkenness mimics Dick’s drunk driving before his fatal ending. Amory realizes that their similar paths only lead to death. Amory finally “confronts his inheritance, that perfect type of aristocracy Dick Humbird represents, and the dangers inherent in what the upper class tries to be. By an act of will, he rejects the path Dick Humbird followed” (Gross 54). I argue that Dick’s behavior and death highlight the growing corruption of American society—and Amory takes heed to becoming another Dick in his

generation. While Dick physically dies, Amory *spiritually* perishes as he reassesses his philosophical code of aristocratic egotism. Amory's newfound commitment to the quest for truth is a result from the warning signs of Dick's death and his "ghost."

The Camel Accepts His Burdens: Amory's Pride, Folly, & Ignorance

Amory then wanders into periods of burden. He experiences the burdens of pride, folly, and ignorance during his journey. These burdens test and shatter his initial philosophical code, which at first inhibits Amory from completing his quest. Biographer David S. Brown examines Amory's awareness of the need to transform from his burdens. He believes "Amory, eager to avoid the false promises inherited from his elders, is anything but lost. He is engaged, rather, in deliberate revolt from the set of muggy Victorian social values handed down to him at youth and more or less sustained through a misbegotten education" (Brown 87). Essentially, he endures the consequences of his mistakes only to learn from them. Amory's burdens, although destructive, help him conquer the decadence and waste of his generation.

Amory's pride is the first burden to overcome in his journey. Monsignor Darcy, of course, indicates this to Amory: "'you've lost a great amount of vanity and that's all'" (*TSOP* 100). His flaw immediately appears in his youth. He believes himself to be superior over his peers ("I adapted myself to the bourgeoisie. I became conventional") and seeks for admiration from others ("he surprised himself by saying it and pictured how Froggy would have gaped") while at St. Regis and Princeton (*TSOP* 22). Monsignor Darcy also warns about the consequences of his pride. Amory's "moodiness, his tendency to pose, his laziness, and his love of playing the fool" hinder his quest for truth (*TSOP* 31). Amory's pride falls apart while courting Isabelle Borges and Rosalind Connage at different stages in his life.

Isabelle is Amory's second female interest in the novel.¹⁵ She assesses Amory's superiority, only to put it in check. After attaining Amory's interest, Isabelle is satisfied that "it put them on equal terms, although she was quite capable of staging her own romances, with or without advance advertising" (*TSOP* 54). However, she is appalled by Amory's increasing vanity, despite her own sense of pride ("she was glad that she had high color to-night, and she wondered if he danced well") in the novel (*TSOP* 66). The shirt-stud incident highlights her disgust with his pride. Isabelle calls Amory conceited "because [he's] always talking about [himself] and [she] used to like it; now [she doesn't]" (*TSOP* 90). Amory ironically confirms this when he revels in the scenario "with a touch of vanity" (*TSOP* 91). However, he does not relinquish his pride until he falls in love with Rosalind Connage.

Rosalind tests Amory's pride during his quest—in which he absolutely fails. Amory comes back from WWI, already feeling "temperamental" and disillusioned by the romanticizing of America's involvement with the war, when he meets Rosalind. Rosalind's behavior is known to "[treat] men terribly... she abuses them and cuts them and breaks dates with them and yawns in their faces—and they come back for more" (*TSOP* 159). She even keeps scores with Amory every time she "wins" a dispute: "Home Team: One Hundred—Opponents: Zero" (*TSOP* 166). Interestingly, Rosalind's intentions for Amory are much more than injuring his pride. She thrives in a society that Amory seeks to discount, so, in effect, he threatens to take away her freedom from consequences for her lawless behavior. She "is, of course, a bundle of contradictions. Fundamental honesty vs. petty dishonesty, courage vs. cowardice—these are conflicts between her identity as Rosalind and her identity as woman" (Gross 55). Feeling threatened, she decides

¹⁵ Isabelle is a fictional representation of Ginevra King, Fitzgerald's first and lifelong love interest. King's rejection wounded Fitzgerald's pride. In a letter to Scottie, he admits that he wanted "to keep [Ginevra's] illusion perfect, but she ended up throwing me over with the most supreme boredom and indifference" (Brucoli, *Life in Letters* 338).

to wound Amory's pride. Rosalind's decision to marry Dawson Ryder reveals the deep desire to have wealth and stability over Amory's loyalty and fervent ardor. Amory's pride shatters, and Rosalind's exclamation depicts that she knows this: "Oh, Amory, what have I done to you?" (*TSOP* 184). In his humiliation, Amory realizes the flaw of his pride. Rosalind's rejection serves as a reminder for the burden of his pride, in which he takes heed for the rest of the quest.

Vanity is not the only flaw that burdens Amory's journey. Amory's folly with alcoholism burdens his quest for truth. Despite the progress along the journey, Amory's alcohol consumption causes him to stumble. This burden comes right after Rosalind's rejection. Amory binge-drinks with Jim Wilson at a bar: "Wilson had another; Amory had several more" (*TSOP* 186). His drinking continues the next day, "as the new alcohol tumbled into his stomach and warmed, the isolated pictures began slowly to form a cinema reel of the day before" (*TSOP* 188).¹⁶ However, Amory finally comes to terms with his drinking addiction toward the end of his journey.

Next, Amory must also overcome the burden of folly, so he realigns himself and reenters his quest. Clara, Amory's sensible cousin, challenges his other burden—ignorance. At Monsignor Darcy's longing, Amory visits Clara, who "impresses the temperamental Amory with her ability to combine a rich imagination with a hard, smart realism" (Brown 88). He believes that her goodness will direct Amory into the right direction. During their brief time together, Clara acts as a moral compass for Amory amid his spiritual quest. She challenges his ignorant assertion that he has no willpower, when Amory laments that he is "a slave to my emotions, to

¹⁶ Fitzgerald's struggle with alcohol provides biographical material for Amory's dilemma. The author's drinking habits can be seen as an aftereffect of the disillusion of the Jazz Age. In the essay, "My Lost City," Fitzgerald reminisces on the dissipation of New York City "had become a horror and though I returned to it, alas, through many an alcoholic mist" (107).

my likes, to my hatred of boredom, to most of my desires” (*TSOP* 135). Clara claims Amory is a slave to his *imagination*, rather:

You never decide at first while the merits of going or staying are fairly clear in your mind. You let your imagination shinny on the side of your desires for a few hours, and then you decide. Naturally your imagination, after a little freedom, thinks up a million reasons why you should stay, so your decision when it comes isn’t true. It’s biased.

(*TSOP* 135)

She states that Amory lacks judgment, rather than willpower. Ultimately, Clara helps him understand that he must harness that willpower for the rest of his journey. Amory’s ignorance previously inhibits him from growing spiritually and emotionally from his experiences at St. Regis and Princeton. However, now Amory knows that he must gain wisdom in order to transcend above this burden.

Amory’s Spiritual Quest Concludes

At first, Amory’s burdens of pride, folly, and ignorance challenge his quest for truth in *This Side of Paradise*, yet he conquers these obstacles. In the beginning, Amory’s vain, ignorant beliefs and actions reveal the need for spiritual and intellectual transformations. Amory’s newfound knowledge leads to cynicism through the “casting off a lot of [his] old luggage” (*TSOP* 100). Sklar argues that Amory’s progressive transformation releases him from the bondage of American values, after he “[completes] his metamorphosis into a personage. What little that remains of Amory’s genteel heroism has evaporated into air. He is floating free of all encumbrances at last” (55). Brown, from another perspective, declares that Amory found “beauty without principles, license without control, [which] led to a trivial, superficial civilization that was perhaps more menacing in its Nietzschean pretensions than the one it had replaced” (Brown

93). Although the conclusion of Amory's quest is unsettling, his final epiphany in of *This Side of Paradise* sums up the crisis of his identity:

Amory stopped. He began for the first time in his life to have a strong distrust for all generalities and epigrams. They were too easy, too dangerous for the public mind.

Yet all thought usually reached the public after thirty years in some such form: Benson and Chesterton had popularized Huysmans and Newman; Shaw had sugar-coated Nietzsche and Ibsen and Schopenhauer. The man in the street heard the conclusions of dead genius through someone else's clever paradoxes and didactic epigrams. (*TSOP* 244)

Amory's misinterpretation of Shaw and Nietzsche refers to his newfound perspective on American society. His Nietzschean viewpoint has "no system to preserve" and "must seek one, not merely for the sake of having a system but in order 'to guide and control life.' In Fitzgerald's terms, that is always the hero's struggle and Amory commits himself to it" (Gross 58). So, Amory must seek the comfort of knowledge amid the harrowing emptiness of truth.

Amory's exclamation is either perceived as a cynical or candid statement. This chapter agrees with the latter. Amory's philosophical journey reveals the desperate desire to find truth in the illusive nature of 1920s America. He "proves emotionally stronger, more mature, and less tolerant of received wisdom after surviving the 'predatory' world of eastern schools and eastern women" (Brown 85-86). The truth, essentially, sets Amory free from the anxiety of American societal values. Although he wanders alone at the end of *This Side of Paradise*, Amory is prepped for another quest of navigating the bleak reality of the Jazz Age: "in self-reproach and loneliness and disillusion he came to the entrance of the labyrinth" (*TSOP* 245).

CHAPTER 2: ANTHONY PATCH AS NIETZSCHE'S LION IN *THE BEAUTIFUL AND DAMNED*

Anthony: (*To Maury*) On the contrary, I'd feel that it being a meaningless world, why write? The very attempt to give it purpose is purposeless. (*B&D* 27)

Anthony confronts the meaninglessness of life in *The Beautiful and Damned*. He and his wife, Gloria, are restless socialites who live in New York City. Eventually, their selfish and immoral actions disgrace their social status. During their downfall, Anthony searches for purpose amid the brokenness of their relationships, marriage, and greed. The protagonist, who once valued aesthetics, the arts, and wealth, finds them worthless at the end of his journey. Anthony's restless behavior represents the lawlessness of 1920s American culture. His quest, then, represents the search for finding value in life in order to have purpose. During his transformation, Anthony must denounce all meaningless values in his life while striving to find meaning. Although he succeeds, Anthony develops a pessimistic outlook on not only his life but also the future of his generation. Examining the cause of Anthony's cynicism in *The Beautiful and Damned* offers insight into Fitzgerald's critique of the decadence in 1920s America.

In this chapter, I continue to explore two sections of research. First, I highlight the influence and faulty reading of Nietzschean philosophy while Fitzgerald wrote *The Beautiful and Damned*. I use biographical evidence to suggest the connection between Nietzsche's ideas on Western culture and ideas in Fitzgerald's second novel. Second, I argue that Anthony's quest in *The Beautiful and Damned* mimics Nietzsche's second metamorphosis of the spirit (the lion) in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Conducting this analysis through the appropriation of a Nietzschean framework reveals Fitzgerald's awareness of the decline in twentieth-century Western culture.

The Influence of Nietzschean Philosophy in Fitzgerald's *The Beautiful and Damned*

Critics argue that Fitzgerald mostly explores the Nietzschean ideas of the bourgeoisie and the illusion of society in *The Beautiful and Damned*. Mencken's correspondence with the author is the primary cause of this. In particular, Sklar contends that *The Beautiful and Damned* is "a slap at bourgeois conventions" because of "H.L. Mencken's views" (91-93). During the winter of 1920–1921, just months after the publication of *This Side of Paradise*, Mencken attacked the American bourgeoisie in letters written to Fitzgerald (Sklar 86). The critic's mishandling of this notion affected Fitzgerald's own interpretation of it in *The Beautiful and Damned*. The author, who wanted to write something different from *This Side of Paradise*, explored the detrimental consequences and waste of the American upper class—a group he struggled to enter during his adulthood. Fitzgerald's bitterness toward the American bourgeoisie affected his interpretation of Nietzsche's stance on this group of people.

Anthony's disillusionment with New York City displays Nietzsche's argument that the illusion of society should be conquered. Brown agrees that the novel showcases the detrimental effects of this idea, specifically through the fates of Gloria and Anthony (Brown 137). Berman also declares that existential values explored in *The Beautiful and Damned* stem from Nietzsche's viewpoint on the illusion of society (Berman, *Fitzgerald's Mentors* 25). Anthony's confrontation with the meaning of aestheticism, wealth, and even his marriage to Gloria exemplifies Nietzsche's condemnation of values in Western culture. Despite Mencken's bigoted interpretations, Fitzgerald was greatly interested in these Nietzschean ideas in *The Beautiful and Damned*—even if the public was not.¹⁷

¹⁷ Critics were "put off by Fitzgerald's naturalistic material" in *The Beautiful and Damned* partly because they expected a sequel of *This Side of Paradise* (Brucoli, *Epic* 163). The book was met with failed sales and disappointed reviews.

What truly provoked Fitzgerald's limited understanding of Nietzsche's ideas were his personal struggles with meaninglessness and purposelessness. In "The Crack Up," Fitzgerald reminisces on his experience in 1920s as a time when "things were getting thinner and thinner as the eternal necessary human values tried to spread over all that expansion" not only in American society, but also in his personal life (*MLC* 22). The author's rising debt from partying and public, drunken fights with Zelda, which occurred while writing *The Beautiful and Damned*, made him question what is meaningful. Money made from the sales of *This Side of Paradise* was spent on booze, parties, and fashion for Zelda. In "How to Live on Practically Nothing a Year," Fitzgerald reflects "exactly where the money went we don't know—we never do" (*MLC* 55). However, Fitzgerald's already troubled marriage to Zelda was the main source of inspiration in *The Beautiful and Damned*. In 1938, Fitzgerald admitted in a letter to Scottie that "I was sorry immediately I had married [Zelda]" after their tumultuous relationship began affecting his writing career and personal happiness (*Letters* 32). The girl he wooed from Montgomery, his muse, had disappointed Fitzgerald's hope for his future. In *The Beautiful and Damned*, Fitzgerald turns toward his protagonist to cope amid these debilitating dilemmas. Anthony's quest for meaning results in a cynical attitude toward life in 1920s America.

On one hand, Anthony embodies the Nietzschean characteristic of individuality in his search for finding value in *The Beautiful and Damned*. His characterization represents Fitzgerald's developing notion of the Nietzschean hero. Sklar argues that Anthony encounters "the 'meaninglessness of life' and the borrowed disdain for middle-class values so dominant in the novel" through his observation of the corruptive natures of wealth, alcoholism, and beauty (96). On the other hand, Gloria exudes the Nietzschean quality of autonomy in her attitude toward life: "the terse yet sincere Nietzscheanism of Gloria's defiant 'I don't care!'" displays her

dissent against the conventionalities of society (*B&D* 197). Gloria's development "into a consistent, practicing Nietzschean" results from her disappointing marriage to Anthony (*B&D* 139). Gloria finds life meaningless since "beautiful things grow to a certain height and then they fail and fade off, breathing out memories as they decay" (*B&D* 143). Despite Fitzgerald's faulty reading of Nietzsche's outlook on the bourgeoisie and the individual, I argue Anthony strives to find purpose beyond the listlessness of his generation. His transformation from a privileged heir to a disillusioned man reveals the necessity of finding purpose in an age of meaninglessness.

The Lion's Isolation in the Wilderness: Anthony's Journey Begins

Anthony's journey mirrors each step of the lion's metamorphosis. The purpose of the lion's transformation is to confront and establish his own freedom from restrictive beliefs. In the first step, the lion must reside in isolation: "But in the loneliest desert the second metamorphosis occurs. Here the spirit becomes a lion, it wants to hunt down freedom and be master in its own desert" (*TSZ* 16). The lion prepares for transformation during the stage of isolation. In the second step, the lion must defeat all obstacles that hinder his journey:

For victory it wants to battle the great dragon. Who is the great dragon whom the spirit no longer wants to call master and god? "Thou Shalt" is the name of the great dragon. But the spirit of the lion says "I will." (*TSZ* 16-17)

The great dragon is an oppressive figure, entity, or ideal that controls the lion's way of living. Since he resides in a metaphorical trap between constraints and freedom, the lion must renounce the great dragon's beliefs and power. In the last step, the lion creates his new values after gaining freedom from the oppressive great dragon: "My brothers, why is the lion required by the spirit? Why does the beast of burden, renouncing and reverent, not suffice? To create new values—not even the lion is capable of that: but to create freedom for itself for new creation—that is within

the power of the lion” (*TSZ* 17). The “beast of burden” must establish new values in the place of old ones. So, what was once valued no longer has meaning. This marks the end of the lion’s transformation. Anthony, too, endures each step in his journey to become master of his own life.

Anthony is prophesied that he “would one day accomplish some quiet subtle thing that the elect would deem worthy and, passing on, would join the dimmer stars in a nebulous, indeterminate heaven half-way between death and immortality” at the start of the novel (*B&D* 11). His awareness of his transformation helps prepare him for the journey. However, Anthony lives in a “sense of drift and self-despair” during the period of isolation (Sklar 93). His isolation begins at a young age since he has “lived almost entirely within himself” by the age of sixteen and is “thoroughly un-American, and politely bewildered by his contemporaries” (*B&D* 14). While entering adulthood, Anthony is “looked upon as a rather romantic figure, a scholar, a recluse, a tower of erudition” from peers (*B&D* 15). Interestingly, his lineage also plays a role in his preparation through his grandfather—Adam Patch—who dedicates his life “to the moral regeneration of the world” as a prohibition reformer for the national prohibition movement (*B&D* 12). Ironically, Anthony is expected to advocate for moral reformation, yet he does not uphold his grandfather’s beliefs. Instead, Anthony contemplates “The Meaninglessness of Life,” as a justification for rejecting his grandfather’s values (*B&D* 51). Anthony’s understanding of his legacy is vital to prepare him for his metaphorical transformations.

Anthony, while questioning societal beliefs and values, discovers the need to challenge them. However, Anthony still must overcome his weakness for decadence. Anthony indulges himself in New York City with Maury Noble, Anthony’s philosophical friend, and Dick Caramel, the romantic novelist, at the start of his journey. Anthony’s laziness and avarice for his grandfather’s wealth represents the rising youth of 1920s America, who were in search for

money, parties, and alcohol. His inclination toward these values eventually makes Anthony despair. Critic Joyce Morrow Pair agrees that “Anthony’s search for a mode of existence based on money results in a despair and defeat that reflects the mood of the American wasteland” (114). To relinquish despair, Anthony renounces the corruptive natures of wealth, alcohol, and social status during his quest for meaning in the Jazz Age.

The Lion Defeats the Great Dragon: Anthony’s Attack on His Grandfather

In the next step, Anthony confronts his grandfather, the great dragon in his quest. Anthony first realizes his grandfather is the greatest obstacle to overcome after a visit to Tarrytown. The protagonist’s disdain for his grandfather is apparent during their interactions. Anthony “had hoped to find his grandfather dead,” yet he miraculously recovers (*B&D* 19). Anthony’s disdain derives from his grandfather’s “sheer indomitable strength and tremendous feats of will” that dominates every aspect of Anthony’s life, such as his education, trust fund, and lifestyle (*B&D* 20).¹⁸ For example, his grandfather chastises Anthony’s vocational desire to be a historian of the Middle Ages. His adamant stance against The Middle Ages (which represents paganism) clashes with Western values like truth, rationality, and God. Anthony’s grandfather declares “nobody knows what happened, and nobody cares, except that they’re over now” to dissuade Anthony from further considering that career (*B&D* 21). His oppressive “will to power” stifles Anthony’s freedom to live by his own will (*B&D* 20).

Anthony then seeks emancipation by challenging his grandfather’s beliefs. He first

¹⁸ Fitzgerald’s animosity toward his father resembles Anthony’s disdain for his grandfather. The author, who considered himself “not Edward Fitzgerald’s son,” calls him “a failure for the rest of his days” after he loses his job and brings financial burdens to the family (Brucoli, *Epic* 22-4). Fitzgerald rejects his father’s upbringing (a middle-class Midwesterner) in favor for something different (a successful writer in the East).

renounces his grandfather's piety. While drunk, Anthony belittles his grandfather as "all shrunken up and he's got the remains of some gray hair that always looks as though the wind were in it. He's very moral" (*B&D* 79). Anthony also calls his grandfather "a pious ass" who treats his life like "a Methodist parsonage" (*B&D* 79).¹⁹ Anthony's attack on his grandfather's religious views is his first step toward freedom, yet Anthony must contest the ideals of morality, temperance, and rationality in order to defeat his grandfather's will.

The Lion Attains Freedom: Anthony Renounces Morality, Temperance, & Beauty

Anthony challenges the ideal of morality during his transformation by rejecting the practice of Christianity and entertaining indiscretions with women. Upholding morality, to Anthony's grandfather, is the most important value in one's life.²⁰ His own moral behavior is a result of participating in the American prohibition movement and the Methodist Church. His grandfather's pious manner conflicts with Anthony's immoral behavior. The protagonist rejects the notion of God and does not practice faith in the Methodist Church. Instead, Anthony acts as "a pretentious fool, making careers out of cocktails and meanwhile regretting, weakly and secretly, the collapse of an insufficient and wretched idealism. He had garnished his soul in the subtlest taste and now he longed for the old rubbish. He was empty, it seemed, empty as an old bottle" (*B&D* 36).²¹ However, his indiscretions with women, especially his mistreatment of

¹⁹ Interestingly, Fitzgerald struggled with his Catholic faith in his adulthood. He reportedly uttered "God damn the Catholic Church, God damn God" while passing a Cathedral, yet he still had Scottie baptized in her infancy (Mayfield 74). As late as 1935, Fitzgerald still has "a specifically Catholic cast to that conscience" (Allen 132).

²⁰ The name "Adam" reinforces the character's adherence to morality; Fitzgerald's use of the name comes from the biblical character Adam from the Garden of Eden.

²¹ Fitzgerald himself "wrote of the moral values he had formulated in his Catholic youth" were cast aside during his wild, lavish lifestyle New York City (Allen 136). The loss of moral values perhaps provides material for Anthony's behavior in *The Beautiful and Damned*.

Geraldine Burke, reveal his practice of immorality. Anthony, who has no intention of marrying her, ruins Geraldine's reputation after entertaining her alone and mocks "how completely moral she would be still after the inevitable wave came that would wash her off the sands of respectability" (*B&D* 79). Anthony's immoral behavior spurns his grandfather's practice of morality, even at Anthony's own expense.

Anthony also contests his grandfather's stance on temperance through excessive drinking habits. Interestingly, he "[quickens] only under the stimulus of several high-balls" and challenges his grandfather confidently only when drinking (*B&D* 164). Adam discovers that his stance on alcohol is defeated when paying an unexpected visit to Anthony. He and Gloria, while drinking with Dick, Maury, and Muriel Kane, Gloria's naïve friend, raise their glasses "to the defeat of democracy and the fall of Christianity" as they slip into drunkenness (*B&D* 229). During this party, Adam walks in and is "*rendered inaudible by the pandemonium in the room*" (*B&D* 231). He realizes that Anthony has completely rejected his ideals. Adam then writes Anthony out of the will, which releases all ties between the grandfather and grandson.²² Ironically and incidentally, Anthony's alcoholism is a result of rejecting temperance. He, at first, casually drinks with Maury and Dick at social events, but soon spirals into alcoholism as "one high-ball" turns into him into becoming "disgracefully drunk" (*B&D* 200, 320).²³ Anthony's perspective on the meaninglessness of life also increases while drinking: "He hated to be sober. It made him conscious of the people around him, of the air of struggle, of greedy ambition, of hope more

²² Judge Sayre, Zelda's father, was part of the generation that believed in temperance. He had "not so much as a dram of blackberry wine in his house," so Fitzgerald and Zelda drank cocktails in teacups when visiting her family in Montgomery (*Mayfield* 70).

²³ Fitzgerald's own struggle with alcoholism spiraled his career and personal life. He "drank excessively to block his puritan conscience" from his loss of respect from fellow authors, his doomed marriage, and loss of Catholic faith (*Allen* 132). Anthony's alcoholism resembles this, too.

sordid than despair” (*B&D* 320). Overall, Anthony succeeds in renouncing his grandfather’s stance on temperance to gain freedom.

Lastly, Anthony challenges the ideal of rationality. His grandfather encourages him to marry a good-natured wife, yet Anthony irrationally chooses Gloria, and she becomes a great hindrance in Anthony’s quest.²⁴ Gloria’s growing unhappiness and restlessness derives from her awareness of the meaninglessness of life. Interestingly, she approaches life differently than Anthony; while he strives for meaning, Gloria cynically accepts the meaninglessness of her life: “Beautiful things grow to a certain height and then they fail and fade off, breathing out memories as they decay. And just as any period decays in our minds, the things of that period should decay too, and in that way they’re preserved for a while in the few hearts like mine that react to them” (*B&D* 143). Unlike Anthony, Gloria indulges in selfishness and greed throughout the narrative since, from her perspective, there is no meaning in life. Her obsession with material entities inhibits Anthony from transforming, so he must isolate himself from Gloria and their marriage to find enlightenment. Rejecting Gloria’s decadence is Anthony’s last obstacle in his journey.

Anthony’s Spiritual Quest Concludes

Anthony’s quest for understanding the validity of values and beliefs comes at a cost. In the first step, Anthony is isolated to prepare for his journey, then, in the second step, he rejects his grandfather’s application of morality, temperance, and rationality. Finally, in the third step, Anthony creates new meaning in his life during a second period of isolation. Once again, he

²⁴ Zelda acts as the perfect model for Fitzgerald’s creation of Gloria. Both mishandle money, become intoxicated frequently, and disregard people’s opinions. Zelda “wanted everything” but Fitzgerald struggled to fulfill her desires (Mayfield 65).

secludes himself from Gloria and his friends as he sails to Europe. Anthony himself contemplates how “he had been alone, alone—facing it all” through the obstacles in his path (*B&D* 369). Interestingly, it is necessary for Anthony to be “alone” in order for his transformation to be complete—despite the deterioration of his identity and perspective on life. Pair agrees that “Anthony’s will to live leads him to moral compromise, isolation from and rejection by his society (the socially elite), and to a form of death-in-life” that “creates instead a static illusion that denies reality” (116). After relinquishing his grandfather’s control, Anthony also renounces Gloria’s indulgences and his friends’ careless actions. He wallows in unhappiness since he has yet to find new values in life in another period of isolation.

Essentially, Anthony’s transformation links to the next metamorphosis of the spirit: the child’s transformation. Anthony enters an infantile state of mind at the end of *The Beautiful and Damned*. Gloria and Dick, after winning Adam Patch’s inheritance, find Anthony sifting through “a great pile of stamps” that he collected as a child (*B&D* 367). Anthony demands them to not enter the room in case they “muss up” his prized collection (*B&D* 367). Disturbed, Dick asks if Anthony is “going back to childhood” since he has not looked at this collection for years (*B&D* 367). Simply put, Anthony completes the cycle of his life after finishing his transformation.

CHAPTER 3: JAY GATSBY AS NIETZSCHE'S CHILD IN *THE GREAT GATSBY*

Only Gatsby, the man who gives the name to this book. . .[had] an extraordinary gift for hope, a romantic readiness such as I have never found in any other person and which it is not likely I shall ever find again. (GG 5-6)

Jay's "extraordinary gift for hope" mimics the nature of the *Übermensch* through Nick's narration in *The Great Gatsby*. During his journey, the protagonist reinvents from James Gatz of the Midwest to Jay Gatsby of West Egg in hopes of becoming a successful man. Jay's renewal, at first, causes guests to speculate whether "he killed a man once" or was "a German spy during the war," while others declare "he's a bootlegger" or "second cousin to the devil" (GG 36, 49). However, his new identity portrays the opposite: he begins to embody the altruism of the *Übermensch*. Fitzgerald's creation of Jay serves as a deeper commentary on the American self-made man.²⁵ The protagonist strives to become the *Übermensch* through a lifelong transformation that ultimately fails. However, Nick's forgiveness of Jay's corruption reveals that there is hope in man becoming the *Übermensch* in the future. Overall, I argue that Jay's physical, intellectual, and emotional transformations, although they ultimately fail, illuminate Fitzgerald's desire for the American self-made man to overcome the disillusion of America.

In this chapter, as in previous examples, I continue to examine two parts of research. First, I demonstrate Fitzgerald's limited understanding of the *Übermensch* in his third novel by presenting evidence from Fitzgerald's letters, correspondences, and criticism on *The Great*

²⁵ Fitzgerald pursues the myth of the American Dream and the role of the self-made man. Jay embodies the effects of this myth in *The Great Gatsby*: "Gatsby becomes an archetypal figure who betrays and is betrayed by the promises of America" (Brucoli, *Epic* 223). Society's rejection of Jay and his death portray the collapse and detrimental consequences of pursuing the American Dream myth.

Gatsby. Second, I parallel Jay's quest of becoming a new creation to Nietzsche's third metamorphosis of the spirit. This allows me to highlight not only Jay's initial failure to become the *Übermensch*, but also reveal how Nick's romanticized narration of the protagonist's journey corrects his failures in *The Great Gatsby*.

The Influence of Nietzschean Philosophy in *The Great Gatsby*

Fitzgerald's fascination with the *Übermensch* appears the most in *The Great Gatsby*. Although the novel's style and length vary from Fitzgerald's first two novels, the author nevertheless expands his ideas on Nietzschean heroism and the *Übermensch*. Sklar agrees that *The Great Gatsby* "was not a novel of new ideas, but of new insights into old ideas" (164-65). Fitzgerald's reading list between 1922 and 1925 deepened his knowledge—and misinterpretation—of the Nietzschean individual and the *Übermensch*. He read Joseph Conrad's *Nostromo* in 1923, a novel that reiterates the artist's rise from the aristocratic class. Conrad discovered this notion while reading Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* (Sklar 153). In *Nostromo*, Conrad declares that the artist was meant to reject the practices of judgment, resentment, and revenge (Sklar 153). Instead, the artist must break free from the corruptive nature of society.

Fitzgerald's familiarity with Nietzsche was not only intensified by his reading of Conrad, but also from his reading of another German philosopher—Oswald Spengler (Piper 180). Spengler's *The Decline of the West* (1918), which Fitzgerald called his "bed-book," further shaped the author's knowledge of Nietzsche's will to power (Brucoli, *Authorship* 111). Fitzgerald, who first read Spengler in the summer of 1924, declared to Maxwell Perkins in a letter "I read [Spengler] the same summer I was writing 'The Great Gatsby' and I don't think I ever quite recovered from him" (qtd. in Brucoli, *Epic* 206-07). The author started writing *The Great Gatsby* in May 1924, just a month before reading Spengler. Spengler, who admires

Nietzsche's ideas, contends that "Western culture began and evolved from a cosmic force that adhered to exceptional individuals whose actions personified the modern quest for power" (Canterbury and Birch 194). The individual, from Spengler's perspective, has the power to navigate his own destiny. He agrees with Nietzsche that the individual must take back his autonomy in order to move beyond the nihilistic state of Western culture. Both Spengler's emphasis on the destiny of the individual and Nietzsche's desire for a solution of Western nihilism are central ideas in *The Great Gatsby*.

Fitzgerald's interpretation of Nietzsche's *Übermensch* was flawed by his understanding of the American upper class. At a young age, Fitzgerald desired to be seen as a man of wealth and social status—not a boy from the Midwest. His struggle to climb the social ladder was due to his lack of understanding the upper class. Fitzgerald believed he could enter the American upper class by ambition, new money, and clothes. However, he was never able to establish himself in this social class during his lifetime. His failure to court Ginevra and his constant struggle for a steady stream of income reveals Fitzgerald's lifelong defeat by the American upper class. Unfortunately, Fitzgerald mistakenly believed the *Übermensch* could succeed this way as well. Jay, however, proves this wrong.

So, Jay begins to possess the characteristics of the Nietzschean hero in *The Great Gatsby* in two ways, but never fully attains becoming the *Übermensch*. First, he portrays tremendous willpower throughout his transformation. The *Übermensch* attains willpower to find meaning and wholeness within himself, not from society. In his analysis of the novel, Berman highlights how Jay's willpower appears in his "gorgeous" characteristics:

[Menken] uses the word "gorgeous" to describe the Nietzschean hero—who does indeed in *Gatsby* have "something gorgeous about him." This is a Nietzschean characteristic, not

a display of bad taste. Gatsby lives up to Mencken's requirements of superiority to (mere) norms. To be "gorgeous" is not to wear a particular kind of suit but to manifest essences: personality and will are the qualities that are "gorgeous." (Berman, *Fitzgerald-Wilson* 18)

Jay's "gorgeous" willpower appears to fit the mold of the Nietzschean hero, yet he fails to transform into the *Übermensch*. Second, he also begins to represent man's desire for self-perfection. Magnus claims that the being "has generally been constructed as a heroic ideal, as a higher type who must be bred by all-too-human humankind, as the great man, the superior individual whose self-perfection—half genius, half saint—places him at a far remove from the mediocrity and stagnation of the crowd, 'the herd'" (Magnus 637). Magnus's discussion of the *Übermensch* as "half genius, half saint" begins to resemble Jay's personality, but Jay falls short. However, Nick "receives" the message that man must keep combatting the lawlessness of life. Thus, the retelling of Jay's story allows readers to understand the protagonist's struggle to overcome the meaninglessness of life.

Again, Jay's journey attempts to mimic the child's metamorphosis in Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, and Nick's narration serves as the corrective of his failure. In the first step of this stage, the child reinvents his identity: "But say, my brothers, what can the child do that even the lion could not do? Why must the preying lion still become a child? The child is innocence and forgetting, a new beginning, a game, a self-propelled wheel, a first movement, a sacred 'Yes'" (*TSZ* 17). The child must forget the past by abandoning its former name and identity. In the second step, the child must become a new creation: "For the game of creation, my brothers, a sacred 'Yes' is needed" (*TSZ* 17). Therefore, the child creates a new self apart from his former being. In the third step, the child creates his own world: "The spirit now wills his own will, and

he who had been lost to the world now conquers his own world” (TSZ 17). Unlike Jay’s failure, the child transforms into the *Übermensch* once he establishes his own autonomy from society.

Nick’s narration of Jay’s transformation is arguably the most important detail of the novel. His retelling, essentially, represents the rhetorical triumph of Jay’s transformation. Nick romanticizes Jay’s life as something other men should strive to become: “Only Gatsby, the man who gives his name to this book, was exempt from my reaction—Gatsby, who represented everything for which I have an unaffected scorn” (GG 5-6). Nick’s retelling provides a corrective of what Jay fails to do in his quest of becoming the *Übermensch*. It is important to note that Jay does not become the *Übermensch*; yet, through Nick’s narration, it is still worthwhile to understand the failure of his transformation.

The Child Begins His Journey: Jay’s Chance for Renewal

First, Nick narrates that the goal of James’s quest is to forget his past.²⁶ He is born as James Gatz into a family of farmers “who gave him a past to forget” (Berman, *World of Ideas* 131). In a larger context, James represents the restlessness of the Midwest. His longing for a fresh start in the East conveys the growing sentiment of the youth in the Midwest. James’s discontent with his identity comes from his familial background and poverty. He hails from generations of Midwesterners who work in the farming industry, which James refuses to continue since his “imagination had never really accepted. . .his parents” (GG 76).²⁷ James’s experience with poverty also motivates him to change his circumstances. For a young James

²⁶ I refer to the protagonist as “James” in this section, since I discuss his former identity.

²⁷ After publishing *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald reflects that Jay “was perhaps created on the image of some forgotten farm type of Minnesota that I have known and forgotten” (FSFP, b50; Brown 17). Fitzgerald, embarrassed by his father’s failures, rejects the Midwest and his childhood. During college, he lied to a friend that Edward was a Western railroad engineer instead of a failed salesman (Brown 24).

Gatz, that is the East—a place that offers the opportunity to obtain wealth and success. Before arriving in the East, he instills a regimented daily routine to become a more successful man than who he would be in the Midwest.

Nick then discusses James’s commitment to self-improvement. His copy of *Hopalong Cassidy* reveals the most about James’s motivation to transform. Berman examines the purpose of Jay’s daily routine as “a list of rural commandments, designed around not only utilitarian virtues but also a sense of national character” (Berman, *World of Ideas* 131). These “commandments” convey James’s early inclination toward self-improvement, a desire that helps build his character. With it, he essentially *develops* an aptitude for becoming a self-made man (but does not fully attain its actuality). Nick notes that James scribbles in a schedule on the back cover of the book:

“Rise from bed.....	6.00	A.M.
Dumbbell exercise and wall-scaling.....	6.15–6.30	“ ”
Study electricity, etc.....	7.15–8.15	“ ”
Work.....	8.30–4.30	P.M.
Baseball and sports.....	4.30–5.00	“ ”
Practice elocution, poise and how to attain it.....	5.00–6.00	“ ”
Study needed inventions.....	7.00–9.00	“ ”

(GG 135)

James’s schedule faintly emulates Benjamin Franklin’s philosophy on the self-made man in *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* (1771–1790). Franklin’s list, which includes 13 virtues such as temperance, moderation, and order, focuses on self-improvement. The purpose of Jay’s schedule, similar to Franklin’s virtues, is to prepare him for transforming. James’s likely

exposure to Franklin instills the lifelong practice of discipline when he becomes Jay: “As a young boy he jotted Franklinesque resolutions in his copy of *Hopalong Cassidy*, proving to his father’s satisfaction that he ‘was bound to get ahead’” (Steinbrink 161). James’s regimented schedule furthers his goal of becoming a self-made man. He improves his physical abilities (“Dumbbell exercise and wall-scaling”), intellectual capabilities (“Study needed inventions”), and appearance (“Practice elocution, poise and how to attain it”) with the help of the schedule (*GG* 135). James believes that developing discipline at such a young age will prepare him for his transformation. However, while practicing exercises from his schedule helps him *act* like a self-made man, James’s lack of opportunity hinders him from *being* a self-made man. Thus, the next step is to assume a new identity.

The Child Forgets His Past: Becoming Jay Gatsby

Nick narrates the meeting between James and Dan Cody, a wealthy entrepreneur and traveler. James believes, according to Nick, that having an apprenticeship under Cody will give him the tools he needs to become a self-made man. Shortly after, Cody begins mentoring young James, “the day that [his] yacht dropped anchor in the shallows alongshore” (*GG* 76). At this time, James is now “a seventeen-year-old combing the beaches of Lake Superior who readied himself for the future by fashioning a wholly new identity” (Steinbrink 161). He realizes that meeting Cody is a chance opportunity to develop a new image of himself, since “he acquired the experience which began turning his romantic musings into hard realities” (Steinbrink 161).²⁸ Up

²⁸ Monsignor Fay began to motivate a 16-year-old Fitzgerald to pursue his dreams as a writer in 1912. The priest “encouraged Scott to think of himself as one of the brilliant young men who would make American Catholicism socially and intellectually respectable” through his writing (Bruccoli, *Epic* 38).

until this point, James practices how to act like a self-made man, yet does not embody one. However, his apprenticeship under Cody still fails to transform him into a self-made man.

Initially, Cody represents what James aspires to become: he “was fifty years old then, a product of the Nevada silver fields, of the Yukon, of every rush for metal since Seventy-five” (*GG* 77). He represents an example of the American self-made man, which is James’s goal for his transformation. James begins emulating Cody’s confidence and personality as he forms his new identity. However, he chooses to live differently from Cody through the practice of self-control: “it was indirectly due to Cody that Gatsby drank so little” (*GG* 78). Cody’s frequent intoxication causes him to stumble, which James views as a warning sign. James’s self-control ultimately serves as a foundation for his identity as Jay Gatsby. Berman agrees that “the first measure of his new life is self-control. In that he will be set against other distinctively American heroes who take the road of excess to no particular destination” (Berman, *World of Ideas* 132). Nick also observes Jay’s sobriety in the novel: “sometimes in the course of gay parties women used to rub champagne into his hair; for himself he formed the habit of letting liquor alone” (*GG* 78). As a partaker of alcohol, Nick does not understand why Jay chooses not to drink. However, James chooses to practice self-control in hopes of emulating the American self-made man.

Nick later describes James’s creation of Jay, an entrepreneur who lives in West Egg. He ingeniously sums up the image of Jay Gatsby: “the truth was that Jay Gatsby of West Egg, Long Island, sprang from his Platonic conception of himself. He was the son of God” (*GG* 77). The “Platonic conception” of Jay emerges during his pilgrimage to the East. Moving to New York City represents his rejection of the Midwest and also his past. In his new life, James determines to reap wealth and success in New York City.²⁹ James believes that he “enters another stage of

²⁹ Similarly, Fitzgerald’s gravitation toward the East displaces his childhood in the Midwest. Despite that “his values and judgments were inextricably tied up with late-Victorian attitudes of Mollie’s upper

biography and identity” in the East (Berman, *World of Ideas* 132). Even after his death, James’s father buries his body in the East because “Jimmy always liked it better down in the East. He rose up to his position in the East” (GG 131). James starts to form his identity in New York City—a city full of opportunity for Jay.

Once in the East, Jay *believes* that he physically and intellectually fulfills his new identity. Nick describes Jay’s appearance as “an elegant young roughneck, a year or two over thirty, whose elaborate formality of speech just missed being absurd” and who has “one of those rare smiles with a quality of eternal reassurance” (GG 40). Jay tells Nick that he hails from a deceased wealthy family in San Francisco, has an education at Oxford, and is a decorated soldier from World War I (GG 52). His “punctilious manner” and parties are also physical representations of his new identity (GG 53). He seeks to please guests, such as purchasing a new gown to replace a torn one for a female guest (GG 36). Even “the bar is in full swing, and floating rounds of cocktails permeate the garden outside, until the air is alive with chatter and laughter” (GG 34). Intellectually, Jay plays the role of his new identity well, too. His library is filled with books like “Volume One of the ‘Stoddard Lectures’ that are “absolutely real—have pages and everything” (GG 38). However, Jay does not know how to make people believe in his fictional self-made story. His use of “old sport” clashes with the actual vernacular of men his age. Nick’s hesitation to believe Jay’s story reveals this. He declares that “young men didn’t. . . drift coolly out of nowhere and buy a palace on Long Island” (GG 41). Jay’s failure to make others believe in his identity contributes to the overall failure of his transformation.

Middle West,” Fitzgerald’s move to New York City “could not be denied” (Brown 153). The East represents “the center of American art, finance, and ideas,” which opens up a new world for Fitzgerald (Brown 153).

The Child Says “Yes”: Jay Pursues Daisy

In the third step, Nick narrates Jay’s destructive desire to court Daisy. Essentially, attaining Daisy is Jay’s sole purpose. He, ironically, declares this his mission while creating the fictional past of his new identity; in other words, creating a *new* old past of Jay Gatsby, not James Gatz. Jay becomes obsessed with the continuous pursuit of an ideal, not an actual person. He believes he must strive toward something in his new identity—and Daisy fills this void. Nick witnesses this one night as he “stretched out his arms toward the dark water in a curious way, and, as far as I was from him, I could have sworn he was trembling” at the green light (*GG* 20). Berman claims “behind the conception of Jay Gatsby lay the Jamesian belief that the energy of individual desire is a social good. . .these ideas matter in Fitzgerald; they force us to ask why Jay Gatsby became great” (“Fitzgerald’s Intellectual Context” 76). Jay’s fixation on Daisy also causes him to fail in his transformation.

Jay sacrifices his willpower while chasing Daisy: he “would never again romp like the mind of God,” yet he still chooses to pursue her (*GG* 86).³⁰ Nick acknowledges that “it is what preyed on Gatsby, what foul dust floated in the wake of his dreams,” which causes him to fail (*GG* 5). He attempts to win Daisy over through a series of steps. His first step is to move to West Egg. He buys “that house so that Daisy would be just across the bay” (*GG* 62). In his next step, Jay also tries to lure Daisy’s attention with his wealth and prized possessions. He “half expected

³⁰ Both Ginevra and Zelda serve as models for Daisy in *The Great Gatsby*. In 1915, Ginevra confesses in a letter to Fitzgerald, “I *know* I am a flirt and I can’t stop it. . .I am pretty good on the whole, but you know how much alike we are” (Brown 57). The unattainability of Ginevra transforms her into a muse for Fitzgerald, just as Daisy becomes a muse for Jay. Zelda exudes the unconventionality and whimsical nature of Daisy. The author meets Zelda in 1917, just after Ginevra ends their flirtation. At first, Zelda’s “reckless and impulsive” behavior intrigues Fitzgerald (Brucoli, *Epic* 94). However, Zelda’s mental illness, along with Fitzgerald’s alcoholism, eventually leads to the breakdown of their marriage.

her to wander into one of his parties, some night,” as he throws party after party all summer long (GG 63). When Daisy finally tours his house, he takes “out a pile of shirts and began throwing them, one by one, before us, shirts of sheer linen and thick silk and fine flannel” (GG 72). He also invites Daisy—along with Tom and Nick—to the last party of the summer to display the glamor of his world. In the last step, Jay portrays his unyielding dedication to Daisy’s happiness and safety by protecting her reputation after she kills Myrtle. He waits outside her home “all night, if necessary” to make sure Tom does not harm Daisy (GG 113).

Nick’s narration reveals the unraveling of Jay’s transformation. This is most apparent in Jay’s interactions with Tom Buchana. Tom’s refusal to believe in Jay’s identity also causes his transformation to fail: He calls him “Mr. Nobody from Nowhere” (GG 101). Nick “was startled at [Gatsby’s] expression. He looked . . . as if he had ‘killed a man’” (GG 105). Tom also slanders Jay’s character by questioning whether ““that drug-store business was just small change . . . but you’ve got something on now that Walter’s afraid to tell me about”” (GG 104). Overall, Jay can only thrive if those around him accept and believe in his identity. Since his new identity fails, Jay’s aspirations “break up against the hard realities of human experience” (Steinbrink 165). Jay’s paranoia reveals a sense of vulnerability in his identity just before his death. He mistakenly believes that the mansion, the parties, and his “Oxford education” were the only means he needed to transform into the *Übermensch*: “having managed so well at apparent self-creation and recreation, [Jay] allows his sensitivity to life’s promises to blur into a belief in its limitless possibilities” (Steinbrink162). Jay has created this new identity out of his own understanding of

the American upper class and self-made man. Because of this, Jay fails to complete his transformation into the *Übermensch*.³¹

Jay's Spiritual Quest Concludes

However, Nick celebrates the effort of Jay's quest. He not only forgives his corrupted behavior, but also commends Jay's unwavering commitment to his transformation. In fact, Jay's death and failure allow Nick to avoid the same fate. Readers are aware that Nick returns to the West in the beginning of the novel. By the end of *The Great Gatsby*, Nick reveals that Jay's mistakes and failure serve as a warning for staying in the East. He immediately leaves to avoid the greed, materialism, and corruption. Jay's effort to transform, through Nick's retelling, reveals how the *Übermensch* is still something to strive for, even if it comes at a cost. In other words, Jay becomes "great" through Nick's narration.

Fitzgerald's flawed interpretation of Nietzsche's *Übermensch* somehow still makes Jay Gatsby "great." Sklar declares that "he conceived the novel, not as a solid artifact, but as an act; and its fullest meanings may be most completely uncovered by approaching the novel as a process—a process whereby Fitzgerald transformed old values and experience in the crucible of his developing art and ideas" (164). Fitzgerald's failure to understand the purpose and possibility of the *Übermensch* still offers hope in man finding wholeness and truth in themselves. Fitzgerald's creation of Nick (who believes in the goodness of Jay) proves this.

³¹ Fitzgerald experiences a similar identity crisis. In the essay "The Crack-Up," he reflects on this: "there is another sort of blow feel until it's too late to do anything about it" (*MLC* 139). Fitzgerald believed that *The Great Gatsby* was his last chance to reclaim his status as a famous author.

CONCLUSION

One should, for example, be able to see that things are hopeless and yet be determined to make them otherwise. This philosophy fitted on to my early adult life, when I saw the improbable, the implausible, often the “impossible” come true. (Fitzgerald, *MLC* 139)

In the essay “The Crack-Up” (1936), Fitzgerald confesses that he vacillated between emotions of hopefulness and pessimism throughout his life. Not only does Fitzgerald’s behavior demonstrate this, but also the behaviors of the protagonists in his literary works. Each protagonist in *This Side of Paradise*, *The Beautiful and Damned*, and *The Great Gatsby* simultaneously hopes and despairs during their quests. Overall, Amory, Anthony, and Jay look toward their transformations as a means for transcending beyond the decay of their generation. There remains a seed of hope in each character at the conclusion of each novel, despite Amory’s listless wandering, Anthony’s harrowing isolation, and Jay’s tragic death. In another essay, “My Generation”, Fitzgerald states that his generation “inherited two worlds—the one of hope to which we had been bred; the one of disillusion which we had discovered early for ourselves” (*MLC* 194). Essentially, he portrays this experience through his protagonists. They represent how the post-war aftermath affected the American youth: “men of our age in Europe simply do not exist. I have looked for them often, but they are twenty-five years dead” (*MLC* 194). Fitzgerald’s desire to overcome the meaninglessness of life appears in the characterization of his protagonists to understand the perils of 1920s America.

In Chapter 1, I demonstrated the similarities between Amory’s quest and the camel’s metamorphosis in order to show the necessity of finding truth in the corruption of post-war America. Amory’s transformation portrays that searching for knowledge will eventually lead one

to a more enlightened (although more cynical) way of life. In Chapter 2, I analyze the resemblance between Anthony's quest and the lion's metamorphosis to reveal the exigency of enduring burdens in order to gain freedom. Anthony's transformation conveys that learning from these experiences helps one seek autonomy. In Chapter 3, I examine the failure of Jay's quest compared to the child's metamorphosis. Nick's handling of Jay's transformation teaches readers that one should always strive to find truth and wholeness in himself. In general, each quest and metamorphosis tie back to the desire of finding meaning in Western society.

This thesis investigates a non-dominant reading of Fitzgerald's limited understanding of Nietzschean philosophy. Overall, there were some limitations that affected the conclusions of this thesis. First, Fitzgerald's failure to understand the depth of Nietzsche's purpose for the individual and *Übermensch* was affected by Mencken's bigoted translations and the author's own biases. In effect, this misinterpretation trickles down Fitzgerald's portrayal of his characters in *This Side of Paradise*, *The Beautiful and Damned*, and *The Great Gatsby*. Second, this thesis only focuses on the author's misinterpretation of Nietzschean philosophy through his exposure to the philosopher; in other words, the scope of the thesis does not extend and investigate if America and other Western countries misinterpreted Nietzschean philosophy due to external conditions (i.e., mistranslations). However, I argue that it is valuable to understand Fitzgerald's misinterpretation of the Nietzschean individual and *Übermensch* and how it affects Fitzgerald's portrayal of the individual's crisis in Western society. In the future, I would like to explore the misinterpretations of Nietzschean philosophy in Fitzgerald's fourth novel—*Tender is the Night*. Along with establishing Fitzgerald's interest in Nietzsche's philosophy at the time of writing this book, I would also explore how Dick Diver characterizes the *Übermensch* throughout the

narrative. There is much more to discover about the peculiar effects that Fitzgerald's misinterpretation of Nietzsche's ideas had on his writing.

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