

Example of book review on history: the great gatsby

[Countries](#), [United States](#)



In the end of the first quarter of the XX century the world of literature was highlighted with the most famous novel by F. Scott Fitzgerald ' The Great Gatsby'. The action takes place in 1922, so we can say for sure that the author's modernity is described. The novel appears to be as a kind of a bridge between two of the most major events in the history of America - the World War I, which came to end in 1918 and the Great Depression which was to break out in several years. The period between them was known to be as the ' Roaring Twenties' or the ' Jazz age', characterized by leading a lifestyle, full of wild parties and rivers of bootleg alcohol (History learning site).

The key word here is ' bootleg' since it directly insinuates to the era of ' the Dry Law' in America, introduced in 1919. The fighters for sobriety won a victory over alcoholic oblivion. However, the laws exist to be broken and this one did not become an exception. The whole underground manufactures producing the forbidden drink appeared. Smugglers and alcohol dealers turned out to be the richest ' business owners' at that time. The ones with special business intuition could in no time make a fortune (Curtis).

' Ours was a generation grown up to find all gods dead, all wars fought, all faiths in man shaken' (Fitzgerald). These words have a strong connection to one of the major themes in ' the Great Gatsby' - the theme of American dream. The devastating consequences of any war represent not only huge human losses, broken fates and damaged environment it is also an immense impact on the world outlook, which once having been shattered, inexorably changes. The battle field always exposes the world as it really is, and mostly this newly perceived truth crashes all dreams, hopes, values and expectations. Having once experienced it, a person will never be the same.

He has to find something new to believe in, otherwise a whirlwind of life will simply devour him. Under such circumstances a concept of the 'American dream' developed. It was based on the belief that every person, even of the most modest origins, can achieve a high social position and gain a fortune through his talent and individual aspiration.

The novel portrays all the above mentioned topics, disclosing them through the life of Jay Gatsby, the protagonist.

Jay Gatsby is described as a young man in his thirtieth. Having grown up in a poor family of a farmer, in the rural areas of North Dakota, Jay managed to achieve success and make a fortune. This rise from rags to riches was impelled by the desire to become worth of the young lady Daisy, whom he met in his early twenties. Love to her was fateful, since it predetermined the course of his life. Still being a poor military man, though marked with several honors during the World War I, he started his road to wealth, participating in different sorts of crimes connected with illegal alcohol. Here we see a direct association with the era of 'The Dry Law' and 'the Jazz twentieth' as the historical background of the story. Jay is a self-made man, who views money only as a tool for survival. However, there was no place for the man of values in the society, which measured happiness, love, friendship only with money. What's more, this shock was not the worst one that shattered Gatsby's dream. The love of his life turned out to be one of 'them'. Having drawn the picture of ideal Daisy, Gatsby came across the real one, who was a far cry from his dream. Lost hope and crashed illusions brought to an end Jay Gatsby's life.

Nick Carraway is another major character. A quiet, tolerant and open-minded

man, being a good listener, has become a perfect narrator able to give a comment and objective appraisal to a person or an action. However, Nick appears to be Jay's only one true friend, who did not leave him even after the first one's death. Being mostly a passive character, he however, is also involved in a conflict of inner nature. As every young man Nick is attracted to the fast-moving, lively pace of life of New-York, but at the same time he is averted to it, because it seems to have a devastating effect. Such a twofold relationship is represented in the affair with Jordan Baker. He can't but resist her vivacity and sophistication, but lack of consideration for other people and dishonest behavior bring these unnatural relationships to an end. Gatsby's death showed the decline of the dream and induced Nick to seek for traditional moral values.

The last major character is Daisy, a young woman, with whom Jay Gatsby, being a poor military man, fell in love. Daisy promised to wait for Jay, but soon after the war she married Tom Buchanan, who won her heart with handsomeness, aristocratic origin and luxurious life he could offer. The ideal image of romantic, non-materialistic and charming girl runs counter to the real Daisy, who thinks money makes the world go round. She can't understand Gatsby's values because the shallowness of her soul does not allow doing it. We can say that Daisy was a femme fatal, who deprived Jay of his dream and broke his life into pieces.

Works cited

F. Scott Fitzgerald. ' The Great Gatsby' 03 March 2013

Wayne Curtis. ' Bootleg Paradise' May 2007. 03 March 2013.

History learning site. ' The Jazz Age' 03 March 2013