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## HEDONISM IN FITZGERALD *THE GREAT GATSBY*

By

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**Abstract:** *This research aimed to describe hedonistic characters in everyday life. The novel studied was entitled *The Great Gatsby*. Writer focused on the impact of hedonism based on Jay Gatsby's character in this fictional novel. In this study, the writer used genetic structuralism approach, a literary research method that includes intrinsic and extrinsic aspects. Intrinsic aspect contained the elements of characters, plot, settings, and the themes analysis. The extrinsic aspect described as an outside elements of the intrinsic aspect. In this literary work, life and lifestyle was truly depicted in the jazz era. This research data were analyzed using qualitative research method and described descriptively. The study found that the hedonistic lifestyle carried out by the Jay Gatsby in the novel has impacts towards losing identity, being betrayed by someone he loves and death.*

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## INTRODUCTION

A collection of literary works containing written and non-written narratives, including texts and spoken language, is referred to as literature. It demonstrates that literature is a person's expression expressed via words, deeds, and written works. Literature may be defined as a piece of textual art created by a certain author in general (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019). Defines literature as "art that expresses meaning and conveys the beauty of words", (Arafah, 2018). A literary utterance is an act performed by a speaker or character in connecting with other characters (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019).

*The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald is a novel which takes place in New York in the 1920s after the First War. *The Great Gatsby* is a tragic love story and social commentary on American life. This novel tells about Gatsby who is the first character in the novel and this novel talks about Gatsby and Daisy's love story in the past time. Gatsby is a protagonist character in the novel. He is wealthy and a rich young man. He lives in a Gothic mansion in West Egg. He is famous because his lavish party always does in every Saturday night, but no one knows who he is, where he comes from, what he does, and how he can be a rich person.

and get his wealth because everyone just enjoyed the party. Gatsby is obsessed with wealth, power, position, and Daisy. Daisy is someone who loved by Gatsby, always be his love and Gatsby hope Daisy can be a part of his life. Even they had been intimacy with each other but they can be together because on that day Gatsby doesn't have much money and Daisy choose to marry with Tom Buchanan. But after that he lived glamorous lived of parties and money spending. Gatsby made fabulous parties all the time, but nobody knew much about him or who is he. Gatsby's lifestyle and lavish parties was an attempt to impress Daisy and hope one day Daisy can come back to him (Yoanita et al., 2019).

Collins Gem (1993, p. 97) stated that hedonism is a doctrine which states that pleasure is the most important thing in life, or hedonism is the understanding embraced by people who seek solace of life solely". the characteristics of people who embrace hedonism, as long as they still think that matter is the ultimate goal to get pleasure, whether by way of obtaining kosher or halal material that is forbidden religion.

This lifestyle grow caused by their milieu or surrounding where their life full of competition among their community. Therefore this style can not be avoided, it becomes their priority in life. Their happiness shows identic with glamourist.

Hedonism is also reflected in personality, especially in a trait called 'sensation seeking', which is the tendency to pursue varied and intense experiences (Gorman et al., 1971). Hedonism appears from environment. They need full attention, acknowledgment from society, to get their happiness. Existence in any era and any background, politic, education, love affair and common life.

This study is important to conduct because it is kind of a satire of the society at that moment, happened in society this history educate husband and wife or family to keep their relationship story one and another. Lifestyle like hedonism give bad effect, it could change one's character into arrogant and to easy on everything.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Goldmann (1981, p. 103) stated that genetic structuralism is a literary study technique that examines both internal and extrinsic variables outside of the literary work. Characters, point of view, topic, story, and place are all intrinsic elements. The author's life and social context at the time the literary work was composed are examples of extrinsic elements. Swingewood and Laurenson (1972, p. 68) defines genetic structuralism as a method of application in concrete study that aims to first discover certain patterns inside specific texts, and then to tie them to real historical and social conditions, to a social group and social class associated with the writer, and to that class's world vision. Iswanto in Jabrohim (2014, p. 80) stated that genetic structuralism is an approach in literature research that developed as a reaction against pure Structuralism which anti historical and causal. This approach was introduced by Lucien Goldmann, a France philosopher and literary theorist, in his book entitled *The Hidden God: A study of Tragic Vision in the Pensees of Pascal and the Tragedies of Racine* in 1956. According to Ratna (2013, p. 122),

Goldmann begins to critic pure Structuralism in 1960s, by combining Piaget's Genetic Psychology as assimilation and accommodation and Marx's Dialectic Theory as infrastructure and superstructure. Goldmann (1981, p. 40) mentioned that the fact of humanity, the concept of collective subject, the author's worldview, and the concept of

understanding- explanation are several supporting elements of genetic structuralism. Goldmann intends to bridge the gap between structuralism approach (intrinsic) and sociological approach (extrinsic).

Based on explanation about Genetic Structuralism above, the writer concludes that structuralism is an approach in literary research that focused only on the literary work itself, on the other hand, Genetic structuralism was completed structuralism by adding genetic factors such as author's biography and social background in understanding the literary work. In some cases, the author who experienced certain events sees the reality and tries to complaint the situation at the time by producing a literary work (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019). This theory emphasizes the relationship between literary work and its social environment. Based on Endraswara (2003, p.20), the research of genetic structuralism approach could be formulated below:

- a. The analysis should be started from intrinsic elements, such as characters, point of view, theme, plot, and setting.
- b. Then, studies about author biography.
- c. Last, studies about social condition that influence the work literary creation which created by the author. As mentioned above, genetic structuralism includes three things: (1) intrinsic elements of literary work, (2) author's biography, and (3) social background. Wellek and Warren (1990, p. 283) defines intrinsic aspect is the part that build literary creation itself. Intrinsic aspects includes characters, point of view, theme, plot, and setting.

## METHODOLOGY

The writer used descriptive qualitative with structuralism genetic approach to analyze the data. The writer observes the phenomenon occur in literary text. There were some Process to analyze the data. The first process to be analyzed by used of some particular theories of literature, namely intrinsic and extrinsic approaches. The second writer was exposing the hedonism that is portrayed in the novel through its intrinsic aspect and searching the extrinsic aspect from the social condition of American life. Finally, the writer was concluding all hypothesis and analysis that have been studied, and then put the result into thesis form.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In the novel *The Great Gatsby*, the character of Jay Gatsby is characterized as being full of luxury, riches, and American romanticism that is inextricably linked to money. *The Great Gatsby* depicts the transmission of hedonism from generation to generation. The author wishes to observe and analyze how hedonism emerges in the most famous novel, *The Great Gatsby*, in accordance with the title and objective of this research. 1. Drinking and smoking, 2. Dancing.

A hedonistic lifestyle may be characterized as a way of living manifested in the way individuals go about their everyday lives.

### **-The Hedonism Proofs Are Contained in Novel *The Great Gatsby***

#### *1. Drinking and Smoking*

Most of the female visitors have a small glass at the Gatsby's party. The glass is filled with alcoholic beverages, according to Nick Carraway at the party. That means the

glasses held by women are alcohol-drinks. The part in which the party finishes is also supported by certain female characters. Two of the female major characters, Daisy Buchanan and Jordan Baker are often seen smoking chic cigarette. Jordan is still relatively young at 22 yearsold, but she does not hesitate to smoke. Even in the scene, it is shown as if Jordan has been used to smoke because she does not seem awkward. By using the medium shot, it can be seen that Jordan Baker looks very chic and elegant with cigarette in her hand as if she knows how to behave while smoking.

'Where are we going?'

she cried. 'How about

the movies?'

'It's so hot,' she complained. 'You go. We'll ride around and meet you after.' With an effort her wit rose faintly, 'We'll meet you on some corner. I'll be the man smoking two cigarettes.' (Fitzgeralds, 1925, p. 147)

## 2. *Dancing*

In some part in Gatsby's party, it is seen very clearly that the women and men dancing to the lively song. It is also clearly mentioned by a male character that the dance brought by a dancer named Gilda Grey is 'The Charleston'. The moves of the dance are also consistent with the explanation on the previous chapter, which are the combination of kicks, crossing hands over the knees, and bending and straightening up to the beat of the music. This proves that in the movie 'The Great Gatsby', the woman characters that come to Gatsby's party, which has been categorized as the flappers, make dance as one of their Entertainment at a party, in addition to smoking and drinking. the music had died down as the ceremony began and now a long cheer floated in at the window, followed by intermittent cries of 'Yea—ea—ea!' and finally by a burst of jazz as the dancing began. '*We're getting old,*' said Daisy. '*If we were young we'd rise and dance.*' (Fitzgerald, 1925, p. 149)

In the novel, Jay Gatsby is not a wealthy guy. He worked for a Jew after retiring from the army. It is unclear what he did or how he accomplished it. He was able to earn money and create a luxury house with a lovely garden despite his early age. This is where Gatsby's error lies. Money is not a means of attaining pleasure. it is evident that having money is one of the methods to From the preceding explanation, there is an image that I want to emphasize: Jay Gatsby's character is a person who frequently spends money, giving the impression that he is a materialist and a wasteful of money. Gatsby's enjoyment of hosting parties at his homemight be the result of behaviors passed down from his wealthy family. And what a person undertakes to build an ideology is inextricably linked to all other social activities. As a result, a person's actions are justified not just by the individual himself, but also by the others around him. Obtain happiness. Traveling to attractive areas, engaging in hobbies, purchasing food, clothing, and other items all require money. He desperately desired to appear wealthy and handsome in the eyes of others in order to conceal the reality of his circumstances.

The author will discuss how hedonism impacts the main character of Jay Gatsby in the novel based on the aforementioned biographical history.

### **-The Hedonism Affects Main Character Gatsby in The Novel**

#### *1. Tries to increase his social status with lies of his own*

He lies about things that could influence his social status. Belonging to an "old family" with "old money" generates a higher social status than self-earned money does (Warner, Meeker & Eells, 74) The lie of Gatsby's background is linked to Gatsby's own view of society. Gatsby attempts to transform his "fresh wealth" into "old money," as he wants to be the beneficiary to a San Francisco family, which will make the case more hissy. As this descendant, his supposed schooling and background definitely will not be far from the social standing of Tom and Daisy.

Fitzgerald reduces the question of social status by rendering Gatsby a soldier. Gatsby will conceal his social history in a military uniform and that is the secret to his recognition in the upper class. When Gatsby wears his uniform, it is equal to all the other officers, irrespective of their social background. Around the same moment, Gatsby's first visits to her house illustrates the importance of social status in the world of Daisy.

He went to her house, at first with other officers from Camp Taylor, then alone. It amazed him –he had never been in such a beautiful house before. But what gave it an air of breathless intensity was that Daisy lived there –it was as casual a thing to her as his tent out at camp was to him. (Fitzgerald, 1925, p. 139).

Although a soldier Gatsby is only briefly welcomed in the top level culture of Daisy because of his uniform. Gatsby's real social status is concealed by the uniform and may be any individual. Because of modern military norms, his history is less relevant as a soldier

He may not have the same social standing as the Buchanans, but Gatsby's heritage's ability to act like a gentleman and all his wealth. The distinction is not just the way they behave, but the context of their families, where they come from.

Gatsby's attempts to stay out of Oxford's mouths can be viewed as hidden behind the curtains of the upper class culture, and obviously Daisy is part of "I was brought up in America but educated at Oxford because all my ancestors have been educated there for many years. It is a family tradition." He looked at me sideways –and I knew why Jordan Baker had believed he was lying. He hurried the phrase "educated at Oxford" or swallowed it or choked on it as though it had bothered him before" (Fitzgerald, 1925 p. 65).

#### *2. Spent Money for Extravagant Party*

Jay Gatsby uses his money to throw extravagant parties, with the purpose of attracting Daisy's interest. The parties are spectacular with orchestras and bars filled with gins, liquor and cordials, despite the Prohibition (Fitzgerald, 1925, p. 43). The parties of Gatsby demonstrate that his wealth is no more than a useful tool for winning Daisy's dream. Gatsby is mysterious and it's good for him to play the part of a mystery person with a social status in mind. Gatsby's role amongst gossip some of his guests at one of his parties is dramatized by Fitzgerald:

"Somebody told me they thought he killed a man once." A thrill passed over all of us. The three Mr. Mumbles bent forward and listened eagerly. "I don't think it's so much that," argued Lucille skeptically; "it's more that he was a German spy during the war."



One of the men nodded in confirmation. "I heard that from a man who knew all about him. Grew up with him in Germany," he assured us positively (Fitzgerald, 1925, p. 46).

## CONCLUSION

Gatsby, that changed her lifestyle be glamourist just to get her love back. This novel describes a period which Fitzgerald himself calls the "Jazz Age". The love and chaos of World War I, during the 1920's, American society enjoyed an unprecedented level of prosperity when the economy was booming. At the same time, the prohibition on the sale and consumption of alcohol mandated by the "Eighteenth Amendments to the United States," caused millionaires to shun alcohol and encouraged an increase in organized crime. Back then, Gatsby was very uncomfortable with the unrestrained materialism and low morality that prevailed. Gatsby works harder than other people even sacrificing valuables, for the sake of glamorous appearance. This lifestyle develops because of the environment or environment where their life is full of competition among their communities.

Hence this style cannot be avoided, it becomes their priority in life. Their happiness looks synonymous with glamourist. Tries to increase his social status with lies of his own Fitzgerald reduces the question of social status by rendering Gatsby a soldier. Gatsby will conceal his social history in a military uniform and that is the secret to his recognition in the upper class. When Gatsby wears his uniform, it is equal to all the other officers, irrespective of their social background. Around the same moment, Gatsby's first visit to her house illustrates

the importance of social status in the world of Daisy.

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HALAMAN INI SENGAJA DIKOSONGKAN