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Comparison of the book *The Great Gatsby* with its film adaptations

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# 1 Introduction

Francis Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* belongs to typical representatives of Jazz Age in American Literature. There must be something special about this novel that is still so popular during ages and received many film adaptations. *The Great Gatsby* won several awards, Baz Luhrmann was even nominated for Best Direction in AACTA Awards (aacta.org, n.d., online). This might be the reason why so many people like it for decades.

I have read the book for the first time when I got it as a present for my 17<sup>th</sup> birthday. I thought that it would be a story about love, entertainment and the height of the Roaring Twenties. This thesis will look into the novel more deeply.

The focus of this thesis is to introduce, compare and analyse two film adaptations of the novel *The Great Gatsby* and find out and specify the main differences between the novel and the adaptations.

This thesis is divided into chapters. The first part concentrates on the time period, when Francis Scott Fitzgerald lived, his life and his most filmed novel *The Great Gatsby* that has five film adaptations.

The second chapter includes general information about the novel and the film adaptations of *The Great Gatsby*. I will mainly concentrate on the differences in both the films and which film was more successful for audience. For the bachelor thesis, two film adaptations were chosen that will be analysed.

The practical part is based on events from the novel *The Great Gatsby*. The aim of this thesis is to compare the main characters and the chosen events – the opening scene and the Gatsby's funeral - from Francis Scott Fitzgerald's novel with two chosen adaptations: Jack Clayton's from 1974 and Baz Luhrmann's from 2013.

## 2 Contextualization

### 2.1 The Roaring Twenties, inventions that came into existence

*“The Great Gatsby was classified as a book about the Roaring Twenties...”*(Brucoli, New Essays on The Great Gatsby, 1985, p. 6).

The following text deals with Francis Scott Fitzgerald as one of the well-known author of The Great Gatsby and one of the representatives of the Roaring Twenties.

The twenties in USA went by such names as Roaring Twenties, the Jazz Age. This era represented the beginning of modern America. The Roaring Twenties is time of changes for everyone (O’Callaghan, 2006, p. 92-95).

The years 1920s were considered as a decade of big changes. Great technological innovation – in this period saw many new inventions including, for example electricity – electric lightings, telephones, photography, movies, cars (O’Callaghan, 2006, p.92). All these inventions are also presented in film adaptations for a better idea of that time.

This period is presented as very opulent for man of fortune who lives an eventful life. It was a decade of great cultural, political and social changes. However, economic situation was not so perfect for everybody. People are moving from the countryside to the cities. People are more thinking about gender roles and the position of women in society getting better; they got the right to vote. This period was perfect just for the minority of people. For the rest, it had a devastating impact, bringing many people to poverty. It has its positive but also negative side. These years are considered bad for the majority of people, because of the end of the World War I., which has a big impact on common people. But on the other hand, the women get rights to vote, which is considered as a big step forward (O’Callaghan, 2006, p. 92-93).

According to history.com, *“it was a time of many technological innovations, when many of the inventions of previous thirty years finally achieved a common currency in American society...”* (history.com, n.d.). This period ended in October 1929 with

the widely known Wall Street crash. The economy collapsed, more than 13 million people lost their job and they were forced to live in very bad conditions. Many people starving, and famine became a very big problem. (bbc.co.uk, n.d.)

The year 1920 is also called Golden Age. America had won a war, the first world war had just ended, the economy grew up dramatically, and Flappers were introduced. It was a completely new kind of human that was forbidden before. Flapper is a kind of a young Western woman, who wore make-up, spent all her time in clubs, smoked and danced, had a hair-cut and behaved freely (ushistory.org, n.d.).

Moreover, speakeasies were opened. There were places that were illegal and where people drank alcohol and have a fun (O'Callaghan, 2006, p.95).

To sum it up, 1920s was the age of freedom and relaxed morality. People moved from villages to the cities and enjoyed more freedom than before. The nation's total wealth increased and the way of living of the American society starts to be named "Consumer society". People want more and more stuff, which they do not really need. Women start working in white-collar jobs. The term white-collar job was firstly used by Upton Sinclair already in 1930s, and nowadays is still used with the same meaning. The meaning of this term is very well described by following words: "*White-collar job is used to characterize non-manual workers, they used more their knowledge and they are working in an office*" (businessdictionary.com, n.d.). White-collar jobs are for example controller, stenographer, development officer. This was unimaginable before. Another important thing that characterizes the period of Golden Age is the fact that women start giving birth to fewer children and they start living a more free life. Regarding the inventions, many of them also made women's life easier. Washing machine, vacuum cleaner are just few of them, which presented a substantial help for women in their households (history.com, n.d.).

### **2.1.1 Music of 1920s**

The second very important key of 1920s was music. The main stream of this time was jazz. Jazz has its roots in blues, European harmony, brass band tradition, gospel music, ragtime music, classical music as well as in work songs whose characterised very well music of that time. But mainly jazz reflects the life of Americans, it celebrates the human life.



Jazz, as we know it nowadays, came to the surface in the early twentieth century in New Orleans. *“Jazz music was as inter-racial as the melting pot of New Orleans”* (scaruffi.com, 2005). Everybody could play jazz, not only African Americans. That was the freedom. All European immigrants, Italians, Creols were members of jazz bands. White musicians who played jazz got a special name. Special name for this kind of jazz performed by them was *“dixieland jazz”* (scaruffi.com, 2005). The worldwide known dixieland jazz band was called The New Orleans Rhythm Kings, where jazz was played by only white people. The best word which describes the jazz style in general, is improvisation. Undoubtedly, the best in improvisation was Buddy Bolden and his band. The very first jazz player was Buddy Bolden, an African-American cornetist, who improvised with his horn. Importantly, the founder-father of jazz was exactly Buddy Bolden (Williams, 2011, theguardian.com). On the other hand, the best known artist who played jazz was Louis Armstrong. Armstrong was a jazz trumpet player, and he is still known even nowadays with his hits, such as *“What a Wonderful World”* or *“Hello Dolly”*.

### **2.1.2 Fashion of 1920s**

Jazz influenced not just music, but also the fashion industry. It was the time period after the war, and people gained more freedom compared to that they had had before. People wanted to show that they were no longer under the control. The fashion item that was a must for every girl to wear in those times was a skirt or dress. Very popular was a banana skirt. It was one of the best examples how more freedom changed the fashion of that time. People started improvising, they were more spontaneous and wild (Poiger, 2000, p.16). Skirts, dresses and hair are getting shorter, women gain self-confidence and they start to become more independent. Trousers are not just a privilege of men, but also of women. Furthermore, Josephine Baker became the first black jazz style icon (fashiongonerogue.com, 2015). To confirm that 1920's are mainly about improvisation and freedom not just in music, but also in fashion, Josephine Baker, the fashion icon of that time, said the unforgettable quote that characterized the fashion style of that time very well.

*“I wasn't really naked. I simply didn't have any clothes on”* (en.thinkexist.com, n.d).

This Baker's sentence becomes one of the signs of freedom in clothing. Josephine was a singer, dancer, actress and civil rights activist, but one more important thing is that thanks to her, the banana skirt became famous. It was a kind of skirt and it looks like leaves of bananas connected together at the waist (biography.com, n.d). It was the best example of the freedom in fashion in that time.

## **2.2 Literature of 1920s, "The Lost Generation"**

As it was time after the war, freedom is shown in every part of human livings. Literature is no exception. Authors start writing more openly and taboos do not exist for them anymore. From this period, authors write about sex, drugs, alcohol as there vices were part of their lives. What's more, many writers travelled to Europe from America, where they wanted to stay, because they felt useless and lost there. These authors have experienced the 1<sup>st</sup> World War, they lost their ideals about world, they were doubtful about future.

This kind of literature came into awareness as modernism and Gertrude Stein gave name to a group of American writers born around 1900 a "The Lost Generation". They were lost that *"its inherited values were no longer relevant in the postwar world..."* (Clack, 2009, p. 211).

Era of "The Lost Generation" was presented mainly by Ernest Hemingway, John Dos Pasos, E.E. Cummings, Hart Crane, and F. Scott Fitzgerald is also one of them. They were not a literary school. The authors start using new vocabularies, new language, they were using stream of consciousness (thehistoryofenglish.com,n.d.). Fitzgerald as one of the members of "The Lost Generation group" is using in his novel "The Great Gatsby" some features of modernism, too. He started using words like business, bonds or gasoline which are considered new in that time (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 53). He started writing about taboos like alcohol, parties and sex. All of his characters represents that time. Division into social classes is also typical for 1920's (Clack, 2009, p.207).

It is nicely shown in the example of Daisy, Nick Carraway and Jay Gatsby, the main characters of the novel, and their social status in the story. These characters will further be analysed in the following chapters.

The novel as well as the movie show how people live without censorship that was normal in literature before. Even Jay Gatsby organizes tremendous parties with a lot of alcohol, cigarettes and modern music. It is not just the background to be illustrated in the novel. It is also the relaxed atmosphere of that time that Fitzgerald wants to highlight.

## **2.3 Francis Scott Fitzgerald**

This chapter introduces the time when this novel was written and basic information about the author's life and his family background. In this thesis will be shown also author's other literary works to prove how excellent writer Fitzgerald was.

Francis Scott Fitzgerald was known as the representative of the 1920s and the Jazz Age. In the novel or in the film adaptations, we can find the musical influences of Jazz Age.

He is also known as a representative of the lost generation. Fitzgerald was born on September 24, 1896 in St. Paul, Minnesota. He came from a catholic family of Irish immigrants, which also reflected his work (Meagher, 2005, p.252, 253). His first literary achievement came when he reached just 13. It was a detective story called "The Mystery of the Raymond Mortgage" and was published in the school magazine (Brucoli, 1972, p.27).

In 1913, Fitzgerald was accepted at Princeton University, but sadly he did not finish his studies and left the school before graduation, because he had poor academic record.

### **2.3.1 Fitzgerald's muse**

Francis Scott Fitzgerald met his future wife Zelda Sayre, a daughter of a Supreme Court judge, at a country club dance in Montgomery in Alabama in 1918. Zelda fascinated him at the first sight and she became his muse for the rest of his life. They were engaged a year later, but Zelda cancelled the engagement. He was discharged from the Army and started living in New York City. He married Zelda in 1920, just after he had earned more money for living (online-literature.com, n.d.). From that time on, they started living together a life full of reckless behaviour. Their life together was quite strange, it was an extravagant life, full of irresponsibility. There is no doubt that they were running short of cash, so

Fitzgerald had to write stories for magazines (Brucoli, 1983, p.209). Zelda became his inspiration for his works.

### **2.3.2 Fitzgerald's works**

His first work of fiction came into existence when he just reached 13. It was a story "The Mystery of Raymond Mortgage" published in the St. Paul Academy Now and Then magazine in October 1909 (Brucoli, 1972, p.207) where we can see the influence of the popular mystery writers of that time, Arthur Conan Doyle and Edgar Allan Poe (goodreads.com, 2012, online). Fitzgerald also wrote humorous stories, to give an example the amusing story "How They Head the Chapters" written in September 1915 for the Princeton Tiger, XXVI (Brucoli, 1972, p. 209) on the basis of clipping in Fitzgerald Papers. To show that Fitzgerald also had a sense of humour, for instance his prose parody called "Our Next Issue" published in The Nassau Literary Magazine, LXXII on December 1916 (Brucoli, 1972, p.210). Being a student at Princeton University, Fitzgerald wrote the lyrics for the musicals "Safety First" or "The Evil Eye" musical comedies in two acts, published by The Princeton University Triangle Club (Brucoli, 1983, p. 12). In 1920, when Fitzgerald reached just 22 years, was published his debut novel "This Side of Paradise".

This novel was preceded by the breakup with Zelda Sayre, his later wife. Fitzgerald hoped that if he became a famous novelist, Zelda would come back to him. Finally, Zelda and Scott married in New York on April 3, 1920 (Brucoli, 2002, p. 109) The Fitzgerald's book "Flappers and Philosophers" published in 1920, includes eight stories. It was the first collection of short stories that he wrote (Brucoli, 1972, p. 25). But for the novel "The Great Gatsby" Fitzgerald is still famous and well-known even nowadays. In the following, this thesis will focus on this very novel.

Even if readers did not mostly appreciate the novel The Great Gatsby during the author's life, in the fifties, when it was reissued, it gained wide popularity. Nowadays, this novel is often referred to as one of the greatest English-language novels of the 20th century, as well as America's leading literary work that has ever been written. Woolfe (2013) wrote in his article that in 1999, the opera The Great Gatsby by John Harbison came into existence and had its premiere at The Metropolitan Opera (Woolfe, 2013). It also indicates

the excellence of Fitzgerald's work. The Great Gatsby came into being as Fitzgerald is third book and it is considered as the biggest achievement of his career (reading.cornell.edu, n.d.).

The book is a model novel of the Jazz Age. Maybe this is the next reason why so many people have been liking it for decades and why this book is still debated. The novel "*The Great Gatsby*" is from the time when "gin was the national drink and sex the national obsession" (Reynolds, 1993, p. 3). It is nicely shown in both the film adaptations.

## 3 The Great Gatsby

### 3.1 The novel

The following text gives basic information about the novel “The Great Gatsby”, its protagonists, setting and style of living of people in the society of that time.

“The Great Gatsby” was first published in April 1925 by Charles Scribner's Sons (Brucoli, 1972, p. 59).

When Fitzgerald wrote any of his books, he was mainly influenced by surroundings where he was dwelling and by people who were close to him. It is not surprising that the character of Daisy was inspired by his wife Zelda Fitzgerald (Brucoli, 2002, p. 327).

The author chose rightly the setting of the novel to New York, because in that time there was an economic boom in the United States so the novel might not be so sorrowful. The protagonist, Nick Carraway goes there with the vision of learning how business functions.

Most of the population was influenced by advertisement and materialism. In “The Great Gatsby” there are lots of reminders of materialism. The richer people have their own butlers who took care about house properties. They also drink a lot of alcohol and have a limousine driven by a white chauffeur, which characterises the higher sophisticated society (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 44, 73). In the novel “The Great Gatsby” were shown many inventions of that time, especially phone, car, music. The phone plays a very important role throughout the novel. Perhaps, Fitzgerald wanted to emphasize the importance of inventions for people. The phone was used in a very vital moment when the phone call was aborted in time of Gatsby’s criminality (Reynolds, 1993, p. 10).

The novel received little popularity during the author’s life. The novel was not selling well to Fitzgerald imaginations. Only some of critics find something good in this book Corrigan said about this novel following: “*He never stopped trying to get “The Great Gatsby” republished and recognized as the masterpiece he knew it to be*” (washingtonpost.com, 2015). The novel “The Great Gatsby” should be different than the other

Fitzgerald works. This novel should be simple, modern with a complex pattern. Corrigan (2015) cited for example that in every chapter Fitzgerald wants to focus on some party. The final party was the Gatsby's funeral.

Corrigan stated that Fitzgerald was a poet and being better in tighter forms – for example in short novel, short stories and the letter (washingtonpost.com, 2015). Kathryn Schulz wrote in her article using words of the critic Jonathan Yardley, that “*it is the American masterwork*” (vulture.com, 2013). T. S. Eliot appreciated this novel with following words “*the first step that American fiction has taken since Henry James*” (vulture.com, 2013).

### 3.2 The adaptations

In this chapter, I want to highlight the fact that for every author the adaptation meant something else. I want to describe the term “to adapt” for better understanding of how film adaptations are made.

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines the word adaptation as: “*A film/movie, book or play that is based on a particular piece of work but that has been changed for a new situation*” (Hornby, 2010, p. 16).

Fitzgerald's novel “The Great Gatsby” gained many adaptations which means that Fitzgerald did it well even if in his time this novel was not so popular.

Hutcheon (2006) explains very nicely what the term “*to adapt*” means. “*In its dictionary the meaning “to adapt” is to adjust, to alter, to make suitable*” (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 23).

The same author describes the term adaptation as: “*An adaptation is an announced and extensive transposition of a particular work or works*” (p. 23). In addition to that, Gerghy (2008) adds to this explanation that “*The adaptation might be accompanied by a reprinting of the novel with a cover that carries a picture from a new screen version...*” (Gerghy, 2008, p. 15).

The novel “The Great Gatsby” by Francis Scott Fitzgerald was not so popular during the author’s life. This novel was completely forgotten during the Depression and World War II. until the 50s, when it was reissued and has gained great popularity (Macura, 1989, p.243).

Afterwards, have been made several film adaptations from just one novel. And surprisingly, the films are very well received. In the following, some selected movie adaptations will be discussed.

The very first film adaptation of the novel “The Great Gatsby” was a silent drama film from 1926. This film adaptation was based on a stage version. It was directed by Herbert Brenon (imdb.com, n.d.). This notice is here just to show when the novel gained its first film appearance. The thesis will study a later adaptation from 1974 and the latest adaptation from 2013.

### **3.2.1 Awards and reviews of the chosen film adaptations**

As it was mentioned in the introduction, the film adaptations were such a success that the adaptations gained many awards. The following chapter is about awards, but mainly about reviews to show what critics think about the chosen films.

#### **Clayton’s adaptation from 1974**

This adaptation gained seven prizes and three nominations. This film adaptation won two Academy Awards – the first for the Best Costume Design – won by Theoni V. Aldredge – this costume designer is also known for her work on a drama “Network”, the second for Best Music – won by Nelson Riddle – he made legendary recordings in collaboration with for instance Frank Sinatra (imdb.com, n.d.). This film adaptation won Golden Globe, Bafta Awards and The Best Cinematography Award.

Even if this film gained so many awards, there are some critic reviews. The review in The New York Times from 1974 disparages Clayton’s adaptation with these words:

*“The plot has been dismantled like an antique engine and photographed, piece by piece, preserved in lots of pretty, glistening images that bathe the film in nostalgia as thick as axle grease”* (Candy, 2013).



This chosen review shows that Clayton's adaptation was not as good as the director expected. Even though this adaptation is more accurate with a book than the later chosen adaptation by Luhrmann.

While watching both the films, viewers can better imagine what is going on in this adaptation. According to critic Roger Ebert: "...Clayton only plundered Fitzgerald's novel literally that quoted so much of the narration and dialogue..." (Ebert, 2013).

When the processing of film adaptations it is going mainly about accuracy with a book. And Clayton succeeded in doing this. Which points to the fact how many times this adaptation was awarded a prize.

### **Luhrmann's adaptation from 2013**

This romantic drama adaptation directed by Baz Luhrmann received many awards but also many reviews from critics. Luhrmann's adaptation gained forty one prizes and seventy nominations.

The adaptation won awards in Best Production Design and Best Costume Design in March, 2014 which suggesting the good taste of Catherine Martin, the Art Director. Baz Luhrmann won the Academy Awards for the best direction and together with Craig Pierce, they won the AACTA Awards for the Best adapted screenplay, in January the same year.

The cast is chosen also rightly according to AACTA Awards. One of the main characters, Leonardo DiCaprio, who played Gatsby, won the award for the Best Actor in a Leading Role and Carey Mulligan, who played Daisy Buchanan, was nominated for the Best Actress in a Leading Role.

In Luhrmann's adaptation, Craig Armstrong won award in AACTA Awards for the Best Original Music Score. This declares quality of background music too (IMDb.com, n.d.)

Unfortunately, critics see mistakes in this adaptation too. One of the critics was Matt Zeit. Zeit (2013) wrote in his review the following: "*Alas, this "Gatsby" is so immense and overwrought — lumbering across the screen like the biggest, trashiest, loudest parade*

*float of all time — that its intimacies feel like shared secrets between the director and the viewer” (Ebert, 2013).*

Even if this adaptation gains so many awards it has not got such success for the audience. Scott (2013) wrote in his article the following: *“The Great Gatsby” is rated PG-13 (Parents strongly cautioned). Cigarettes, adultery, illegal hooch and other jazz age vices”*.

## 4 Comparison of the chosen film adaptations

This chapter introduces two chosen adaptations of the Fitzgerald's novel "The Great Gatsby" and a comparison of them.

Hutcheon (2006) thinks that *"Most theories of adaptation, assume that the story (the fabula) is the common denominator"* (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 9).

It will compare the main characters, the opening scenes and Gatsby's funeral scene and the bachelor thesis tries to detect which film adaptation is more credible and accurate to the Fitzgerald's novel.

### 4.1 The Clayton's adaptation from 1974

This adaptation of The Great Gatsby was directed by Jack Clayton and has a overall budget of \$6,500,000 (imdb.com, n.d., online), which might seem too much. On the other hand, Roger Ebert (2013) states that *"The Great Gatsby is a superficially beautiful hunk of a movie with nothing much in common with the spirit of F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel"*. That means that the adaptation from Clayton is not good enough when taken from the perspective of the main idea of the book. Even if the spirit is different, the main characters are chosen well to the viewers.

#### 4.1.1 The main characters

Jay Gatsby (Robert Redford) and Daisy Buchanan (Mia Farrow) are faithfully chosen according to the original novel. Nick Carraway (Sam Waterson) also better fits in the story than the protagonist from the newer version. Robert Redford *"made the phrase "old sport" sound almost natural"*...wrote Periale (2013) on her blog.

While watching the film, Sam Waterson reminds more the character portrayed in the book. He was a typical gentleman of old times. In the book, Nick mentioned the Carraways' family tree and said that they might have descended from the Dukes of Buccleuch family (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 4). Sam Waterson looks more credibly as their descendent, because of the Fitzgerald's description of Carraway's character in the novel. Fitzgerald (1971) described him as a bond salesman and a graceful and tolerant person. He

is familiar with his own life (Fitzgerald, 1993, p.5), he rent a house in West Egg where he started his career. Before he settled down there, he had participated in the Great War (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 4). People believe him so much and tell him everything about them and about their private life (Fitzgerald, 1993).

On the other hand, Robert Redford is not a bad choice to play Jay Gatsby. Vincent Canby (2013) used these words to describe Redford: *“He's a good enough actor to carry the role without damaging the film. He'd make a much better Dick Diver in "Tender Is the Night”*“(Canby, 2013).

Even if Redford is an older, sophisticated and charismatic person, exactly the one who was described in Fitzgerald’s book, some critics think the exact opposite (Fitzgerald, 1974, p. 5). Despite all, this film adaptation has also gained many awards.

A good idea was surely Mia Farrow. She perfectly fits to the Fitzgerald’s description of Daisy. The film critic Canby (2013) described Mia Farrow as *“lovely, eccentric and unfathomable as Daisy”* (Canby, 2013). Daisy, Mia Farrow, is a young woman with the face of an angel. She has a blond curly hair, blue eyes and a beautiful smile (Fitzgerald, 1974, p. 8). Fitzgerald described her as a fearful and tender person, who needs a strong man beside her (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 8). All this represents Mia Farrow.

#### **4.1.2 The themes**

The major theme of “The Great Gatsby” is unfulfilled love of the main protagonists, Jay Gatsby and Daisy Buchanan. In the novel, and even in each of the adaptations one can see how Jay Gatsby wants to get his love back (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 7-188).

Friendship plays very important role, too. If it was taken from this perspective, Gatsby needs a real friend with whom he can share his richness and feelings. It is a very common problem that rich people do not have real friends, even though they need them like everyone else (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 7-188).

The next very visible theme is the mood of “the Roaring Twenties”. Gatsby organized parties, showing people being themselves, they do not know each other, they even do not

know who Jay Gatsby is, but they want to have a fun and feel a relaxed atmosphere during the party (Fitzgerald, 1993, p.54-188).

One of the other themes might be the fulfilment of the American Dream. From every part of the film, we can feel the desire for pleasure and money and people believe that life should be better and richer for everyone (Fitzgerald, 1993, p.7-188).

The very visible theme is the division into classes. In the beginning of the film, we can recognize it thanks to Carraway father's advice which he gave to his son Nick (Fitzgerald, 1979, p. 3). Throughout the film, there are also indications of the division into lower and upper society class. We can observe it from the behaviour, from the way of clothing, from the way of speaking. As an example, I quote Tom Buchanan's behaviour. He is pressing Daisy's hand when he wants to go with Daisy. He behaves really badly, he speaks contemptuously, arrogantly and harshly to each other. He behaves like he owns the world (Fitzgerald, 1993, p.7-188). And it is the same with his wife Daisy. He behaves to her as if she were his property. This is an example of the behaviour of the upper class. They think, they can have everything and everyone, what they want, because they have money (Fitzgerald, 1979, p. 7-188).

## **4.2 The Luhrmann's adaptation from 2013**

Luhrmann's adaptation has been nominated for more awards than the previous adaptation. This adaptation won forty-seven times and gained sixty-four nominations. Most of them are from Australian Film Institute and surprisingly, this adaptation has even been nominated for Gay and Lesbian Entertainment Critics Association as Visually Striking Film of the Year (imdb.com, n.d.). On the other hand, critics also see some negatives in this film adaptation as in the Clayton's adaptation but they like the chosen cast so much.

*"DiCaprio's Gatsby is the movie's greatest and simplest special effect: an illusion conjured mainly through body language and voice"* (Ebert, 2013).

However, what the audience admire, is the Luhrmann's sense of vulgarity. David Denby (2013) from New Yorker magazine wrote in his article these words: *"Luhrmann's vulgarity is designed to win over the young audience, and it suggests that he's less a filmmaker than*

*a music-video director with endless resources and a stunning absence of taste”* (Denby, 2013).

In this film adaptation, there are many differences compared to the novel. Denby writes in his review of the novel that Nick went home from New York to Midwest and he tells us his memories about Gatsby and Daisy, while Luhrmann puts Nick into a sanatorium, where he is recovering from alcohol and where he started writing a novel about Jay Gatsby. He named the manuscript by Nick Carraway. Luhrmann used and copied parts of Fitzgerald novel and put them into this film adaptation that looks chaotically (Denby, 2013).

To sum Luhrmann’s adaptation up, the audience is full of praise for Luhrmann’s adaptation thanks to the chosen cast, but critics see more mistakes in this adaptation. Despite this fact, this adaptation was successful and became one of the most tracked adaptations in cinemas in the Czech Republic for the year 2013 (cervenykoberec.cz, 2013). And as Giardina (2014) from holywoodreporter.com wrote in the article called “Why The Great Gatsby May Be the Most Influential Film of 2013” ...*”it is Luhrmann’s most commercially successful release...”*.

#### **4.2.1 The main characters**

For this adaptation, Luhrmann chose very good actors. Leonardo Di’Caprio plays the mysterious millionaire Jay Gatsby, Carey Mulligan as Daisy Buchanan and Nick Carraway was played by Tobey Maguire.

All of them are perfect actors. Mohan (2013) from Oregonlive.com, even claimed about the actor who played Nick Carraway the following: *“Casting Maguire as the wide-eyed naif among the decadent and corrupt is almost too perfect, as if Peter Parker had travelled in time back to the Roaring 20s”*.

What are the other main characters concerned, their choice was as good as Nick Carraway. It is also proved by critics. Charles Moore (2013) from telegraph.co.uk declare that Carey Mulligan, who plays Daisy, *“She looks bewitching rather than strictly beautiful, which is surely right”*. Moore (2013) presents the character of Gatsby with these words: *“He*

*has that power of watchability, of automatic, inexplicable interest which Carraway's narrative establishes".*

If it is taken from the point of gained rewards, Leonardo Di'Caprio was awarded for Best Actor in Leading Role and Carey Mullighan was nominated as Best Actress in a Leading Role by AACTA Awards in 2014 (Giardina, 2013).

#### **4.2.2 The Themes**

The themes stayed the same as it was presented in Clayton's adaptation. The main theme is unfulfilled love of Gatsby and Daisy. In addition to these themes, here is more visible the consumerism of society and the division into classes. Also friendship is presented quite differently in this adaptation. The friendship between Gatsby and Nick is more powerful than it is presented in Clayton's adaptation. Nick did not want to hurt Gatsby, even if he saw Tom and Daisy in close distance. Another example of real friendship between Gatsby and Nick, might be the fact that Gatsby told Nick who is really driving when Myrtle was killed. Even if everybody thoughts that it was Gatsby, Daisy was driving.

In Luhrmann's adaptation it was also shown that Nick is the only one, the only real friend, who stayed with Gatsby till his death. Nick is the only one who organised Gatsby's funeral.

### **4.3 Comparison of the opening scenes**

#### **4.3.1 The Fitzgerald's opening scene**

In the novel the plot starts with the narrator's introduction of his father's advice given to Nick Carraway. The advice was: *"Whenever you feel like criticising anyone, just remember that all the people in this world haven't had the advantages that you've had"* (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 3). It is the same opening scene as in the adaptation by Clayton. In the film (1974), the narrator Nick Carraway is considering about his father advice while he is sailing. The setting is happier and the opening scene takes place on the sea.

What can be found as a positive sign of reading the novel is the fact that while reading this novel it is up to you to think of place, where the opening scene takes place. The author

of the novel did not mention it in the beginning. Fitzgerald started to analyse the given advice of Nick's father. Then he moves smoothly to the description of characters. We even know from the beginning who the narrator of the story is. Nick is descendant of the Dukes of Buccleuch, "*the factual founder of his line was his grandfather's brother who was sent to the Civil War...*" (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 4). Nick even calls his family as a clan. Nick described himself as his great-uncle. Nick is also well educated. He graduated in New Haven school and he was a member in the Great War. He decided to be in bond business, because everybody was. After describing the narrator's life, Nick tells us how he first met his rich neighbour – Gatsby. Nick also introduced Daisy, his cousin, who lives nearby him. These three people are the main characters in the novel. Daisy is married with Tom Buchanan, they belong to rich families, they have their own servants, they live in wonderful "*red-and white Georgian colonial mansion*" they have everything what they want.

The story starts when Nick travelled to Daisy's and Tom's mansion to visit them. When he arrived, he saw Tom Buchanan in riding clothes in the porch of their home. They were talking about usual things as men do, about nice place that Tom has and then he invites Nick inside. The house was fair with French windows and long curtains. When Daisy saw Nick, she shouts: "*I'm p-paralysed with happiness...*" (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 9) Here Nick first meet Daisy's friend who was later introduced as Miss Baker. Daisy behaves as a child. She asks silly questions when Nick told her, that he was in Chicago before he came here: "*Do they miss me?*" To present Daisy's childishness, she uses short illogical sentences: "*You ought to see the baby...Haven't you ever seen her? Well, you ought to see her...Don't look at me...*" (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 8). After this conversation Daisy learns about Gatsby. "*You must know Gatsby.*" "*Gatsby? What Gatsby?*" (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 9).

Then they moved to have a dinner in porch where they can see the sunset. The table is decorated with candles. "*I love to see you at my table, Nick. You remind me - of a rose, an absolute rose.*" This is another sign of Daisy's infantilism. When they start eating their dinner, Tom has to go inside to pick up the phone, because someone calls him. It is Tom's mistress. Mrs Baker tells Nick that Tom has a woman in New York and everybody know it. When it comes time, Nick leaves them and goes back home (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 3-13).



### 4.3.2 The Clayton's opening scene

In Clayton's adaptation, there are signs of older times. The film starts with wonderful melody that brings us to the older times. There was shown an interior of Gatsby's mansion. There were a lot of things with Gatsby's initials "JG". Gatsby lives in a mansion with a wonderful big private pool. Every piece of furniture looks precious and expensive.

Nick Carraway speaks about his father's advice while he is sailing on the sea with a small yacht. He travelled to the Daisy and her husband Tom Buchan to visit them in their mansion – "*white palace*". Meanwhile, Nick speaks about himself, where he came from and how he got known his neighbour and later friend Gatsby. He brings us to the time where he lives, describing what people did in that time. He said that the upper classes played polo and how they enjoyed their leisure time. Nick clearly belongs to the upper class but he is much poorer than Tom and Daisy, because he paid "only" eighty a month for his apartment. He wears a white fitting suit and he knows how to drive a yacht. He also mentioned how Daisy, his cousin, had spent her life before he visited her in her palace. Nick described Daisy's life as well. He said that Daisy travelled a lot with her husband Tom Buchanan before. It is other hint that Daisy with her husband belongs to the upper class. They have money for the travelling (Clayton, 1974).

When Nick came to Daisy, they started to talk about usual things like what they had done when they had not seen each other and about where Nick lived. He mentioned that he decided to spend the summer 32 kilometres eastwards from New York. Nick lives on a less fashionable side of Courtesy bay. This bay separates East and West Egg – it separates two societies – the higher and the lower. It is another hint of difference between two the societies. Daisy has many servants, so she does not need to do anything (Clayton, 1974). Nick was "just" a businessman with stocks.

Clayton's opening scene is more descriptive. It is focusing more on details. It begins with a shot, when Tom came to Daisy's house. Daisy lies on a couch with her friend Jordan Baker. They were relaxing, when Nick came. There were wonderful white flying curtains which resembled a heaven in the house. "*I'm paralysed with happiness!*" exclaimed Daisy, when she noticed Nick coming in. She introduces Nick to Jordan, who is still lying on the couch next to Daisy. In the meantime, Jordan examines Nick. Daisy is developing

conversation with Nick. *"Tom says you've come from Chicago. Tell me everything."* Nick says that the whole town is desolated and that there was a persistent wail all night. *"I love a persistent wail"*, confirms Daisy. Tom was leaving. *"Let's go back tomorrow, Tom."* Suddenly, Tom answered *"Well, I love a drink. Come on, let's all have a drink."* Only Jordan stands up quickly from the sofa and starts speaking with Tom about the place where he lives. He does not know anyone who lived there, but Jordan does. She mentioned Gatsby for the first time. When Daisy hears the name she stands open-mouthed. *"What Gatsby?"* They all move to the terrace where Daisy blows off the candles which were on the table. This moment is precisely described in the book, too (Fitzgerald, 1993, p.9).

Jordan makes a suggestion to plan something. *"All right. What'll we plan?"* *What do people plan?"* asked Daisy thoughtfully. As if suddenly she forgot what amused her, she looked at her little finger and said: *"Look at that...my little finger is all black and blue! You did that Tom. You did not mean to, but that's what I get for marrying a brute of a man, a great, big, hulking physical specimen of a - ."* Daisy's behaviour is nicely depicted here when she and her husband are arguing. They are arguing not about trivial things like this, but also because Tom has a mistress in New York who gives him regular phone calls to his home. *"She might have the decency not to phone him at dinner time."* Nick was sitting in the terrace with Jordan, a friend of Daisy, when it happened.

The Clayton's scene ends with Nick being on the boat in the sunset and looking back (Clayton, 1974). The scene ends with Daisy and Tom waving Nick goodbye and Tom shouting at Nick *"Come back soon!"*(Clayton, 1974).

#### **4.3.3 The Luhrmann's opening scene**

In this latest film adaptation, there are many elements of the modern era –more freedom, new illnesses and different behaviour of people are shown.

The opening scene in the film starts more chilling. The sea is dark and scary covered in mist. Only a shining lighthouse shines through. The opening scene is the same in the book that the father of the narrator gave him the advice, but the advice sounds differently: *"Always try to see the best in people..."* (Luhrmann, 2013). Not only this moment illustrated that

the older film adaptation from 1974 is more accurate to the novel than the newer adaptation from 2013.

The setting is also different from the novel. Nick was in Perkins Sanitarium in the film adaptation from 2013. He speaks about how much all of them drink in the crucial moment. And that thanks to alcohol they did not reach anything new. When Nick returned from New York, he was disgusted with everything and everyone. He was in Perkins Sanitarium at the doctor and the doctor found all Nick's illnesses. "*He was morbidly alcoholic, Insomniac, Fits of Anger and anxiety*" (Luhrmann, 2013).

We discover who the narrator is and how he became aware of Jay Gatsby. Jay Gatsby was the narrator's neighbour. According to the narrator and protagonist - Nick Carraway: "*Gatsby represented everything for which Nick has an unaffected scorn*" (Luhrmann, 2013).

This newest adaptation of The Great Gatsby was directed by Baz Luhrmann and had a much bigger budget than the Clayton's adaptation. It is, among other things, caused by modern costumes, modern music and more effects that are shown in the Luhrmann's adaptation than in the Clayton's.

For this adaptation, Baz Luhrmann chose actors for the modern world. Actors who gain attention with their youthful appearance and sex appeal (telegraph.co.uk, 2013).

Luhrmann chose Leonardo DiCaprio for playing Jay Gatsby, Carey Mulligan for Daisy Buchanan and Tobey Maguire for Nick Carraway.

All of them are perfect actors, but they are too modern for the 1920s. Even if this adaptation is all put in the modern world, they are not so authentic with a novel and with the main characters in the previous older adaptation from 1974. They are chosen rightly if we think about the nowadays viewers. Director Luhrmann embedded the popularity of actors in this film adaptation. And he managed it, according to audience.

Journalist O'Scott (2013) in his review for this movie remarked that Mr. Baz Luhrmann's "*a peculiar genius*". Another important fact is that in the Czech Republic this film adaptation won first place in attendance in Czech cinemas just for one weekend (Dvořák, 2013). Furthermore, a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in criticism Matt Zoller Seitz (2013)

commented on Luhrmann's chosen cast with these words: "*The director is genuinely interested in his actors' performances, and in the characters' psyches*". It also testified to the fact that this film adaptation and the selection of cast by Luhrmann were a success.

## **4.4 Major differences between first scenes**

This part will focus on the differences of the main characters in the novel and in two chosen adaptations. The analysis is based on the book (1993), the older version (1974) with Robert Redford, Mia Farrow and Sam Waterston and the latest version (2013) with Leonardo DiCaprio, Carey Mulligan and Tobey Maguire. It will concentrate on visual differences of these characters.

### **4.4.1 Main characters in Fitzgerald's novel**

From the beginning, we can find an introduction to the narrator Nick Carraway. According to Nick's description of his surroundings, it seems probable that Nick is from the higher society. Nick even used sentence where he is directly saying it: "*My family have been prominent...*" (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 4). Carraway came originally from Minnesota, from the Midwestern United States, but he moved to New York to fulfil his dream (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 4). On the other hand, Nick seems much older in the novel, because the novel started like his memories and he used phrase like "*In my younger and more vulnerable years...*" (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 3).

Daisy Buchan is described like Nick's second cousin. She looks like a weak girl, because her husband Tom Buchanan was described like the dominant one. Daisy spent most of the day lying on the couch and wearing white dress, which means that she did not have hard work. Her face was bright, she had bright eyes, bright passionate mouth and a singing voice. At one moment she was smiling and the other crying. Her only interest was about herself. She even did not have any plan what to do in her "leisure time". She asked: "*What do people plan?*" because she did not know it.

Jay Gatsby is described by Nick like someone who represented everything for which Nick has "*an unaffected scorn*" (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 1). But Gatsby finally gained Nick's liking. Gatsby was a neighbour of Nick. Gatsby lives alone in a mansion that was imitation

of Hôtel de Ville in Normandy (Fitzgerald, 1993, p.5). Even though he is alone, he organizes big parties in his mansion, so Nick thought that Gatsby can never be alone. Money is not everything. Jay Gatsby is rich, but on the other hand he has only one real friend in the end, his neighbour Nick Carraway.

#### **4.4.2 Main characters in first scene in Clayton's adaptation**

From the beginning we can also find an introduction to the narrator Nick Carraway as in the novel.

Nick is a good-looking awesome young man who returned from the war to New York and there he became a bond salesman. Even his clothes show us how gentleman Nick is. He wears white suit with a tie and has a fitting hairstyle as a real gentleman.

Daisy Buchanan is a cousin of Nick Carraway. It is no surprise, that she also has a good taste for clothes. She lives in a glittering white palace in East Egg with her husband Tom Buchanan. In Clayton's adaptation, Daisy has a short blond curly hair and blue eyes and looks like an angel. Daisy thinks that girls are beautiful little fools in this world (Clayton, 2013). She married a man who is cheating on her and she does not truly love him. And she does not want the same fate for her daughter.

Fitzgerald described Daisy similarly in his book. While writing this novel, Fitzgerald was inspired by his wife Zelda who was very similar to Daisy in his novel. There could be found many similarities with Zelda and Daisy. They have many common traits – they both have a Southern upbringing and they both are from prominent families. Fitzgerald draws inspiration from his wife's diaries and their own life for his stories (telegraph.co.uk, 2013).

Jay Gatsby is a neighbour of Nick Carraway. Jay Gatsby is mysterious for everyone. Jay looks like a typical millionaire. He lives in luxury in his manor and organises tremendous parties for the high society. But he is like a phantom. Nobody sees him. Gatsby just sends an invitation to chosen people for his parties.

#### 4.4.3 Main characters in first scene in Luhrmann's adaptation

In this film adaptation from Luhrmann, the beginning is quite different from the beginning in the Clayton's adaptation. The film starts with Nick Carraway and his psychiatrist. Nick is speaking with a psychiatrist about his problems with alcohol. When he came from the war back to New York, he was disgusted – *“disgusted with everyone and everything”* (Luhrmann, 2013).

Nick describes himself as an ambitious man who rented a house in West Egg. West Egg is an area on Long Island in New York City. Long Island's communities were home of rich people (Fitzgerald also lived in a small house in West Egg – we can see the similarity here with Nick and Fitzgerald). People who lived in this part of New York have a lot of free time. Nobody from this community seems interested in politics, religion or education. In his study years at Yale, he dreamt to become a writer, but he gave all that up and instead, he bought many books about investment and credit-banking to work on Wall Street to start living an American dream.

Nick describes Jay Gatsby as *“the single most hopeful person he has ever met”* (Luhrmann, 2013). Although Nick was Gatsby's neighbour, he did not know him for a long time. Nick saw Gatsby for few times in the window of Gatsbys' mansion. Gatsby was a mysterious for everybody. *“He had waited five years and bought a mansion...”* (Luhrmann, 2013) just to be nearer to his love “Daisy”. Nick sees Gatsby as a sensitive person. He cannot imagine that Gatsby just abused him for his own benefit. According to his lifestyle and his wealth, he belongs to the high class.

Daisy Buchanan is a cousin of Nick Carraway – the narrator. She lived across the bay in a wonderful mansion with her husband Tom Buchanan. Daisy is a petite woman with short straight blond hair and she looks like an angel. She lives in luxury – she has many servants, so she does not have to do anything. What can be surprising is the fact that Luhrmann cast also black men in to the roles of servants. (He wanted to show the audience the division into classes and southern origins of Daisy). Daisy is wearing the most beautiful jewellery and great-fitting hairstyle and dress. Daisy belonged to the higher society as well as Nick Carraway. They drink champagne from gold-plated glasses, eat using silver cutlery. All these

details show that her family belongs to the higher class. Even the fact that her husband Tom Buchanan, has a mistress show us what the behaviour of the higher class was like (Luhmann, 2013).

## **4.5. Comparison of the final scenes - Gatsby's funeral**

### **4.5.1 The final scene by Fitzgerald**

This scene is very well described in the ninth chapter (1971). It starts with Nick's Carraway memories of his friend's funeral. After two years *"I remember the rest of the day, and that night and the next day, only as an endless drill of police and photographers and newspaper men in and out of Gatsby's front door"* (Fitzgerald, 1971, p. 103).

Nick described how a detective investigated the Gatsby's death, how many reporters were there and how Gatsby's former friends testified. Catherin Michaelis even swore that: *"...her sister had never seen Gatsby, that her sister was completely happy with her husband..."* (Fitzgerald, 1971, p. 104).

Only Nick stands by Gatsby's side. He phoned to West Egg village about it but he found out that no one else was interested. Finally, he phoned to Daisy, but she and her husband had left the town without any new address left. Nick swore to Gatsby to get somebody for him. *"Don't worry. Just trust me and I'll get somebody for you..."* (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 104). He tried to contact Meyer Wolfheim, but unsuccessfully. Wolfheim just answered by letter, where is written: *"...I am tied up in some very important business and cannot get mixed up in this thing now. If there is anything I can do a little later let me know in a letter by Edgar"* (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 105).

Nick found Gatsby's father, Henry C. Gatz. Mr Gatz wrote him a telegram, asking the funeral to be postponed until he came (Fitzgerald, 1993, p.106). When Mr.Gatz calls Nick, Nick says that he will show him his son's body. Nick asked him if he wanted to take the body to the West, but Mr Gatz replied: *"Jimmy always liked it better down the East. He rose up his position in the East. If he 'd of lived, he'd been a great man. He'd of helped build up the country"* (Fitzgerald, 1993, p.107). They talked about the funeral and Nick asked him if he would stay there until Gatsby's funeral. But, Mr Gatz makes excuses: *"the truth*

*of the matter is that I'm staying with some people up in Greenwich, and they rather expect me to be with them tomorrow*" (Fitzgerald, 1993, p.107). Nick hung up the receiver and he was sad that even Gatsby's father does not want to come to Gatsby's funeral.

On the day of the funeral, Nick goes up to New York to speak with Meyer Wolfsheim, Gatsby's friend. His secretary said that Mr Wolfsheim was not in his office, but it was false. When Nick mentioned Gatsby, Mr Wolfsheim appeared in the doorway. He took Nick into his office and started remembering. *"My memory goes back to when first I met him. A young major just out of the army and covered over with medals he got in the war..."* *"I raised him up out of nothing, right out of the gutter"* (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 109). Nick said that Mr Gatsby died. *"You were his closest friend, so I know you'll want to come to his funeral this afternoon."* Mr Wolfsheim denied it with these words: *"Let us learn to show our friendship for a man when he is alive and not after he is dead. After that, my own rule is to let everything alone"* (Fitzgerald, 1993, p.109). On the way back, Nick met Mr Gatz. Mr Gatz talked about his son's generosity. *"He came out to see me two years ago and bought me the house I live in now"* (Fitzgerald, 1993, p.111).

The funeral takes place about 5 o'clock. Mr Gatz and the minister came in a limousine, then five or four servants, the postman from West Egg, and Nick came to the Gatsby's funeral. In the last minute came the man with owl-eyed glasses whom Nick had caught a side in the Gatsby's library three months before. He did not know him, he saw him for the second time. Nick thinks of a Daisy. *"Daisy hadn't sent a message or a flower"* (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 111) and this is very sad for Nick.

Fitzgerald nicely illustrated the situation when someone died and how the others behaved. It is sad, but on the other hand, it is quite common even nowadays. Maybe, Fitzgerald wanted to give a lesson to us how we should not behave to others. Nowadays people are more selfish and big-headed and take care just about themselves. They do not want to make any problems to themselves and this is bad.

#### **4.5.2 The final scene by Clayton**

The scene of Gatsby's funeral starts with similar worlds that are written in the book. Nick says: *"I'll remember the rest of the day as an endless drill of police and photographers*



*and newspapermen, in and out of Gatsby's house...*" (Clayton, 1974). While Nick is saying this, the camera shot on Gatsby's dead body covered with a white sheet, showing three white-suited men carry his dead body to the car. Nick is calling on Mrs Buchanan, but she is not at home and her servants do not know where she is. They just know that she left this afternoon.

Then the camera moves from Nick to Gatsby's dead body under the sheet. From the sheet only Gatsby's left hand can be seen with a ring on his little finger. *"All I could think of was his extraordinary gift for hope. A romantic readiness such as I have never found in any other person..."* (Clayton, 1974). Nick thought when he noticed Gatsby's dead body. Nick is the only one who really misses Gatsby: *"...I shall ever find again"*. The next day Nick called Wolfsheim. Nick was sure he would come to the Gatsby's funeral, but sadly, Wolfsheim said just *"let us show friendship for a man when he's alive, not after he's dead"* (Clayton, 1974). After that Nick's decision was to let everything alone. But he still waited and hoped that Daisy will call. While he is thinking about it, an unknown elderly man appeared at the door of Gatsby's house and asked sorrowfully: *"Is this my son's house?"* (Clayton, 1974) Nick invited him in surprise inside.

The man said that he had seen it in the Chicago newspapers. Nick recognised that the unknown elderly man is Gatsby's father and he apologized for not having contacted him, because he didn't know how to reach him. *"We were broke up when he went from home..."* (Clayton, 1974) but his father understood it. *"He knew he had a big future in front of him"* (Clayton, 1974). Gatsby's father was very proud of his son. He even said that Gatsby was very generous to him and *"if he'd lived, he'd have helped build up the country,"* said while he was looking at all the medals that his son had (Clayton, 1974). Besides the medals, Mr Gatz noticed a photo of a young girl. *"Who is this girl?"* asks he (Clayton, 1974). But Nick does not know what to say. Then the camera moves from the house to the view of moving cars where Nick and Mr Gatz driving are one of them. And Nick asks Mr Gatz: *"I thought you might want to take the body West"* (Clayton, 1974). But Mr Gatz replied: *"Jimmy always liked it better down East. He rose his position in the East..."* (Clayton, 1974). Mr Gatz read aloud the diary of Mr Gatsby in the car and Nick realised how clever his friend, Mr Gatsby, was.

In the book, there is a very similar description of his father's behaviour. Mr Gatz sent a telegram to postpone the funeral until he came. The Gatsby's father was described as a *"helpless and dismayed old man"* (Fitzgerald, 1993, p.16) in the same way as Clayton's described Gatsby's father in his adaptation.

#### **4.5.3 Comparison of the book with the Clayton's adaptation**

If it is taken from emotional point of view, in the book, Gatsby's father was described more heartless than in the Clayton's adaptation. In Clayton's adaptation, when Nick asks Mr Gatz to come to Gatsby's funeral, he really came. Meanwhile, he used to picnic with some people in Greenwich as an excuse in the book. Finally, Mr Gatz also comes to the Gatsby's funeral.

The following scene takes place at the cemetery. Only three people were standing at the grave of Mr Gatsby: Nick, Gatsby's father and a man with his back to the camera. It was probably one of Gatsby's servants. Other two servants were waiting near to the car. It was a foggy and cold day. While standing at the Gatsby's grave, Mr Gatz heard in his head his son's rules that were written in the Gatsby's diary.

The scene moves from the cemetery to a restaurant, where Nick was with Michaelis and told her angrily that Daisy *"didn't send flowers, no message, nothing"* (Clayton, 1974). Michaelis asked *"How could she?"* *"She could, if she'd wanted."* replied Nick. Nick called Tom and Daisy as *"careless people"*. Michaelis knows, where they are. *"They're going to Europe for a few weeks while their new house is being prepared"* (Clayton, 1974). Nick was planning to go away, too. His plan was to go back to the West (Clayton, 1974).

#### **4.5.4 The final scene by Luhrmann**

The final scene by Luhrmann starts a bit earlier in this film adaptation. However, it starts the same way as the scene by Clayton and by Fitzgerald. Nick as a narrator in Luhrmann's adaptation used very similar words as Clayton in his adaptation. The last word that Gatsby said was "Daisy". He thinks of her in his last moment, because he is waiting the phone call from her, which would signalise that she is still in love with him. Then the camera moves from the pool to Nick, where he is calling to Gatsby and how he hears

the shot in the receiver. *"Hello! Hello! Is everything all right?"* shouted Nick into the receiver (Luhrmann, 2013).

The difference is where the scene takes place. While Nick's saying *"I remember the rest of that day as an endless drill of police and photographers and tabloid reporters..."*, there was camera showing us Gatsby's shot dead body floating in the pool and outside there were many reporters looking at his body in the pool. *"The headlines were a nightmare"*. One of these headlines was showing in this scene: *"Bootlegger kills mistress"* (Luhrmann, 2013).

The camera moves from the pool to the coffin where Gatsby lies in white suit with many photographers around him who were taking photos of his dead body.

The other difference is where the scene moved to afterwards. In Luhrmann's adaptation, the scene continues in Buchanan residence, where Daisy is speaking with her daughter. *"Darling, daddy's taking care of his two favourite girls."* The camera shows how servants are taking the suitcases to the car. *"Where are we going?"* asked the girl. *"We're going on holiday... Just you, me and daddy."* They were moving from the house, but Daisy told her that they were just going on holiday. Nick is calling to Daisy's house to tell her about Gatsby's death, but the answered the phone one of Daisy's servants: *"Madame is not available - monsieur Carraway."* Nick wants to tell her that the Gatsby's funeral takes place tomorrow. Even if Daisy heard the phone call from Nick, she just stood there and did nothing.

She travelled with Tom Buchanan and their daughter somewhere far away from New York to forget about everything what had happened. *"It was careless people, Tom and Daisy."* *"They smashed up things and people and then retreated back into their money and their vast carelessness."* thought Nick when he put the phone down. But it is not Daisy's mistake. It was Tom's decision. He did not want to lose her again. It was the reason, why he took her on the holiday, to escape from Gatsby even after his death. Daisy just obeyed her husband. That was normal at that time.

Then the camera moves to the Gatsby's coffin. There were a lot of reporters around the coffin and everyone took a picture of Gatsby's dead body. *"Get the hell out of here!"* shouted Nick at them but no one listened to him. After it, camera moves to the Nick's body lying on the stairs by the Gatsby's coffin. He was the only one who stayed with Gatsby after

his death. Nick tried to contact Daisy, but without success. *“Not a single one of the sparkling hundreds that enjoyed his hospitality attended the funeral.”* Daisy did not send even a flower. *“I was all he had.”* considered Nick (Luhmann, 2013).

The scene moves from Gatsby's house to Nick's house, where Nick is sleeping on the sofa in his study and around him there is a lot of typed sheets telling about Gatsby.

*“After Gatsby's death New York was haunted for me.”* My once golden shimmering mirage, now made me sick.” thoughts ran through his mind. Nick, the one, who loved New York changed his mind. It became the place where he lost his friend (Luhmann, 2013).

#### **4.5.5 Comparison of the book with the Luhmann's adaptation**

In the book, there is a reference of Gatsby's father, but in Luhmann's adaptation is not. The last minutes of the film were taken as fragments of memories of Nick. Nick is speculating about Gatsby's kindness, about Gatsby's love to Daisy when he entered the Gatsby's empty house. Everything in Gatsby's house was covered with dust.

*“I rang, I wrote, I implored. But not a single one of the sparkling hundreds that enjoyed his hospitality attended the funeral.” “From Daisy not even a flower”* (Luhmann, 2013).

In the Luhmann's adaptation, Nick was the only one who stayed with him even after the death. For Luhmann, friendship between Gatsby and Nick plays more important role, because during the film, there were many reminders of their friendship. Even in the end, Nick said: *“I was all he had”* (Luhmann, 2013).

While the deep friendship between Nick and Gatsby was not in the book so intensive as in the Luhmann's adaptation.

The very last scene in the Luhmann's adaptation was a view on Nick lying on the sofa and surrounded by papers described the story of his neighbour and friend Gatsby, The Great Gatsby as he later added to the title of his story.

In the end of the film Luhmann used the exact words as Fitzgerald did. There is some hope in the end. *“Gatsby believed in the green light, the orgastic future that year by year recedes before us...”* (Luhmann, 2013).

## 5 The final summary of the chosen film adaptations

### 5.1 The final summary of Clayton's adaptation

Cahir claims that Clayton's adaptation catches rightly the mood of 1920s well enough, but as for the character of Jay Gatsby, he states that he is not a good choice. *"He is never convincing as bootleggers who has business connections with the gambler who fixed the World Series of 1919"* (Cahir, 2006, p. 26).

As for the other characters, Daisy was described as a naive and stupid person in the adaptation. In the book, she seems much cleverer and she knows what she wants. Nick Carraway was not well described in Clayton's adaptation. He is narrator, so the story is taken from his point of view and he described others more than himself.

Clayton also mentioned the difference in classes much more vividly. In one of the scene, where Gatsby was talking with Daisy, why she did not wait for him and married Tom Buchanan, she answered: *"Rich girls don't marry poor boys! Haven't you heard?"* (Clayton, 1974). In Clayton's adaptation, Daisy knows about her husband's romance affairs and takes it with self-confidence. She even gave Tom a pencil and paper to write any of addresses of the other girls. *"Go ahead. If you want to write down any addresses, here's my pencil...You have my permission"* (Clayton, 1974).

When Fitzgerald (1971) wrote this novel, he wanted to illustrate not only the time but also the characters rightly. From this point of view, Clayton did it differently. On the other hand, Clayton's scenes are very similar with the book. It looks like he just copied parts from the book and used them in his adaptation. There are some differences in places, but they are not as crucial as the rest. In some scenes, it is described differently in the book as we can see in the Clayton's adaptation. From the very beginning, Nick is sailing on a boat to his cousin Daisy Buchanan in the film, but in the novel there is not this scene. In the book, it starts with Nick's description of Nick's father advice and with description of his family tree and with description of the place where he moved to. Later on, Nick drove over to Daisy's house. The scene in the book continues inside the house.

The settings of the Clayton's adaptation are chosen rightly as the Fitzgerald (1971) intended in his novel. It is set in 20 miles due east of New York, the same as in the novel.

From the point of view of translation models, according to Cahir (2006), this Clayton's adaptation is considered to be "*traditional*", because this adaptation follows particular details from the book (Cahir, 2006, p. 12).

## **5.2 The final summary of Luhrmann's adaptation**

Luhrmann's adaptation (2013) is taken as "*radical*", according to Cahir translation models (2006). Luhrmann extremely and revolutionary changed the novel and make it as his independent work.

For example the narrator, Nick Carraway is described, in Luhrmann's adaptation, as an morbidly alcoholic and insomniac meanwhile he is at the doctor in the Perkins Sanitarium, where he is speaking about Gatsby's story. In this adaptation, he is described as an ill person. In the book, Nick is described as a normal man who is a descendant from the Dukes of Buccleuch, one of them was a leader of a failed rebellion against James II. Not as an alcoholic as Luhrmann (2013) portrayed him.

The settings, The City of New York, is described by Nick as a fast city, full of hysteria. Nick Carraway also mentioned that he met Gatsby at a party in New York. In the novel, he met him as his neighbour. It refers to the radical point of view of Luhrmann. New York is described here as an American dream for everyone. "*Stocks reached, record peaks and wall street boomed in a steady Golden roar...*" The whole atmosphere is enhanced by modern music. Luhrmann takes the novel from modern point of view, which attracted more young viewers. He focuses on details. Luhrmann did not show the class differences so often as Clayton did.

The costumes were different from the Clayton's adaptation as well as the appearance of characters.

In Luhrmann's adaptation Tom has also mistresses, but he wants to hide it before Daisy. Luhrmann takes it more tactfully than Clayton.

During the film, there are scenes showing us "The Owl-Eyed-Man" on the billboard. It might be the symbolism of God. He is looking at everything that is happening in the city. This billboard is present neither in the Clayton's adaptation nor in the book.

Luhrmann takes his adaptation from the point of view of nowadays viewers. He makes a modern film with many special effects. Which points to the fact that in his adaptation were used gigantic fireworks and modern music. Even the usage of words is more modern than in Fitzgerald's or Clayton's adaptation. Luhrmann is rather focusing on the golden rush in The New York City than Fitzgerald or Clayton did.

## 6 Overall assessment

The both film adaptations (1974) and (2013) focused on a fidelity to the original novel from Fitzgerald (1993). Two scenes and main characters have been evaluated according to McFarlane's *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation*.

The difference in Luhrmann's adaptation is that Gatsby was in the coffin in his house. Meanwhile in the Clayton adaptation, Gatsby has his funeral in the cemetery. The funeral was one of the taboos in those times. Maybe, this is the reason, why Clayton does not want to illustrate the funeral in details as Luhrmann does. The all Luhrmann's adaptation is taken as memories and narrating by Nick. In the last moment, it is shown that Nick wrote the all story about Gatsby in his typewriter and named the all story "Gatsby" and added to the title "The great" by hand. He wrote the story as a kind of treatment.

If we look at the clothes, we can find a greater accuracy with the Jazz Age in Clayton's adaptation than in the newer version of Luhrmann (Clayton, 1974). Even this small difference in Clayton's adaptation illustrates the atmosphere of the Jazz Age much better.

The settings play a more important role. The setting is The New York City in the both film adaptations. But it is taken from different points of view.

In Clayton's adaptation, there are not so many reminders of the city. It was more focused on the fate of the characters and storyline. While in Baz Luhrmann's adaptation, the New York City was portrayed several times and plays a big role in the story, in Clayton's adaptation, the New York City is only mentioned as the place, where the story takes place.

In Clayton's adaptation, women were wearing jewel neckline and longer dresses, which is more accurate with the clothing of the Roaring Twenties. People were friendlier to each other, they talked politely with other people, they were dancing the Charleston (Clayton, 1974). Meanwhile in Luhrmann's adaptation, people were wearing modern clothes, similar to the nowadays clothing. Women were wearing shorter dresses with plunging necklaces, having bold make-ups, men were wearing not only black suits but also different colours. Luhrmann used special effects to illustrate the atmosphere of parties that organized



Gatsby in his mansion. He used fireworks during the parties, he presented them as astonishing events with modern music.

On the other hand, Clayton stayed more accurate to the book and used dresses and music more identical to the jazz era (Clayton, 1974).

## 7 Conclusion

As has been said before, the novel “The Great Gatsby” has many film adaptations that are different in some points. For this bachelor thesis two of them were chosen, one adaptation more than forty years old and the latest one from 2013 on the purpose to compare them also in the point of view of the different time period. As is to be expected, the two adaptations show differences. Some of them are analysed in this bachelor thesis. Furthermore, one of the aims of the bachelor thesis was to introduce Francis Scot Fitzgerald’s life and his famous novel. Fitzgerald’s life and his muse are part of this thesis, too, to clarify the reason why this novel was written.

The historical background was also part of this thesis to illustrate some situations in this novel. There are also described the plot for more concrete idea about the novel. The bachelor thesis contains information, why it gains so many adaptations from one novel.

The practical part is based on the comparison of two chosen adaptation with the book. The main characters from Clayton’s and Luhrmann’s adaptation were described, too. The analysis suggests that both the adaptations have different point of view to the chosen actors, but Luhrmann’s choice seems more suitable according to critics. According to critics, Luhrmann casts really good actors. The same scenes were used from the film adaptations and from the novel are compared. The chosen scenes are the opening scene and final scene – The Gatsby’s funeral.

Cahir (2006) classified the Clayton’s adaptation as Traditional according to translation models. There were some changes in the film adaptations, for example the way how the New York City was expressed in each adaptation and how behaviour of chosen actors was presented in each adaptation.

Clayton described New York City just briefly in his adaptation, meanwhile Luhrmann portrayed New York City and described it in a more deep way. According to behaviour, viewers can imagine that men have a leading role in the society much better in Luhrmann’s adaptation than in Clayton’s adaptation. Furthermore the depiction of the Wall Street Crash and its impact on the society is much vivid in Luhrmann’s adaptation than in Clayton’s adaptation. Despite all these differences, the plot stayed the same.

The Luhrmann's adaptation was classified as Radical, according to Cahir (2006). The adaptation of *The Great Gatsby* is taken more revolutionary than Clayton's adaptation. He changed more details in his adaptation to make it modern for nowadays viewers. The biggest change might be taken the settings – The New York City. In Clayton's adaptation, there were not as many reminders of The Twenties as in the Luhrmann's adaptation. Above that, Luhrmann's adaptation is more like a love story without happy ending.

Luhrmann used more glittering effects, to present mood of The Twenties. The description of Golden Rush as well as the behaviour of then society made Luhrmann's adaptation better than Clayton's. To conclude, both adaptations from Clayton and also from Luhrmann made films from their points of view of that time. Each of them has a different point of view and was made with different goals, so both of them are worth watch in and might appeal to different audiences. The Luhrmann's version might be better for younger audience, because of the usage of effects, because of the modern music and because of presenting the historical background in the modern way. Meanwhile, the Clayton's adaptation is presenting the historical background in a softer way. Clayton did not show all the bad sides of that time. He did not mention the Wall Street Crash as much as Luhrmann did, nor trading with alcohol.

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## 9 Appendix



Figure 1: Banana skirt (pinterest.com, 2015)

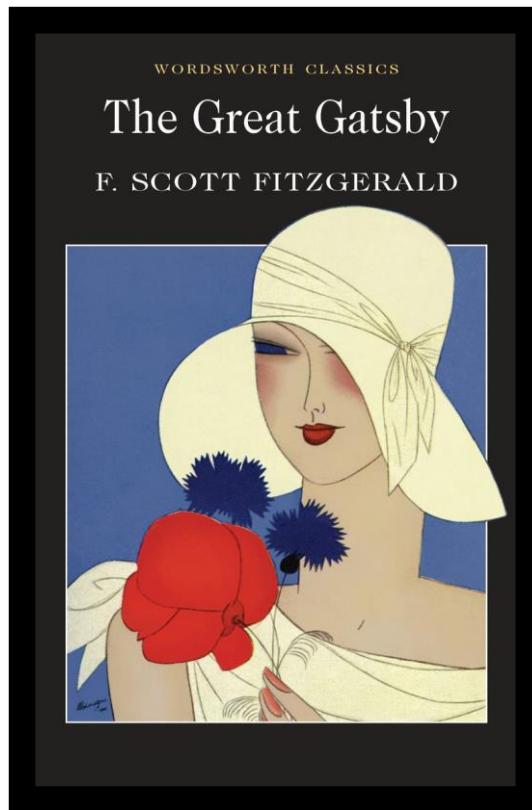


Figure 2: The cover of The Great Gatsby from 1993 (pinterest.com, 2015)



**Clayton's adaptation (1974): Main characters**



Figure 3: Jay Gatsby – Robert Redford (pyxurz.blogspot.cz, 2012)



Figure 4: Daisy Buchanan – Mia Farrow (pinterest.com, 2015)



Figure 5: Nick Carraway – Sam Waterson (frockflicks.com, 2015)

### **Luhrmann's adaptation(2013): Main characters**



Figure 6: Jay Gatsby – Leonardo DiCaprio (fjackets.com, 2015)



Figure 7: Daisy Buchanan – Carey Mulligan (dasiywall.wordpress.com, 2015)



Figure 8: Nick Carraway – Tobey Maguire (moarpowah.com, 2013)

## 10 Annotation

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<b>Název práce:</b>	Velký Gatsby- porovnání knihy s filmovými adaptacemi
<b>Název v angličtině:</b>	The Great Gatsby- the comparison of the book with its film adaptations
<b>Anotace práce:</b>	Předkládaná bakalářská práce pojednává o životě a literárním díle světoznámého spisovatele Francise Scotta Fitzgeralda. Hlavním cílem v praktické části je porovnat knižní verzi s vybranými filmovými verzemi Velkého Gatsbyho. Jedna kapitola je také věnována životu ve společnosti ve 20. letech.
<b>Klíčová slova:</b>	Francis Scott Fitzgerald, Velký Gatsby, filmová adaptace, jazzová doba, Gatsby, Nick Carraway, Daisy Buchanan, srovnání
<b>Anotace v angličtině:</b>	This bachelor thesis deals with the life and literary works of world-famous writer Francis Scott Fitzgerald. The main aim of the practical part is to compare the book version with selected film versions of The Great Gatsby. One chapter is devoted to life in society in the 20's.
<b>Klíčová slova v angličtině:</b>	Francis Scott Fitzgerald, The Great Gatsby, chosen film adaptations, jazz age, life in society, comparison
<b>Přílohy vázané v práci:</b>	Fotografická příloha (8 obrázků)
<b>Rozsah práce:</b>	50 stran
<b>Jazyk práce:</b>	anglický jazyk