

5. Arthur Mizener, *The Far Side of Paradise: A Biography of F. Scott Fitzgerald* (New York: Vintage Books, 1959), p. 330.
6. John F. Callahan, *The Illusions of a Nation* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1972), p. 201.
7. Michael Millgate, "The Last Tycoon," in Kenneth Eble's *F. Scott Fitzgerald: A Collection of Criticism* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1973), p. 130.
8. Richard Lehan, *F. Scott Fitzgerald and the Craft of Fiction* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1966), p. 160.
9. Robert Sklar, *F. Scott Fitzgerald: The Last Laocoon* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 329.
10. F. Scott Fitzgerald, *op. cit.*, p. 310.
11. Richard Lehan, *op. cit.*, p. 163.
12. Both Mizener and Sklar noticed this link to Lincoln.
13. Michael Millgate, *op. cit.*, p. 134.
14. Leo Marks, *Machine in the Garden* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 360.

self to the surroundings of Hollywood, or even to the American society. She recognizes that "she is never to be part of it" (133). What is exposed here is the spritual sterility of the modern American society, which is a dark side of American culture concealed beneath the economic prosperity of the nation. Kathleen's trip to this country is, after all, nothing but a brief rough voyage to the spiritually sterile American society. However hard we may hope, we cannot regain spiritual maturity in America. To borrow Fitzgerald's own words, there are "no second acts in American lives" (163). It will be an appropriate phrase for American society of his time.

Fitzgerald's protagonists with innocent idealism struggles with the severe reality of the modern world so bravely as to recapture something valuable and meaningful. But almost always they are defeated, when they turned back to the past of the nation with nostalgic feeling. Yet nostalgia is only nostalgia and the past is lost forever. We can do nothing to the lost past. We can find no hope in our time without the thorough revision of our consciousness. But it was hard for Fitzgerald to change his consciousness because he was a child of his time. This was his tragedy.

#### NOTES

1. F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Crack-up with other Pieces and Stories* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1965), pp. 49-50. Fitzgerald referred to Edmund Wilson as his "intellectual conscience" and to Hemingway as his "artistic conscience."
2. Such opinions have been expressed by the critics, as Richard Lehan, James E. Miller and Arthur Mizener.
3. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Letters of F. Scott Fitzgerald* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1963), ed. Andrew Turnbull. p. 303.
4. F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Last Tycoon in Three Novels of F. Scott Fitzgerald* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948; reset, 1954), p. 3. Henceforth all the page references to *The Great Gatsby*, *Tender Is the Night* and *The Last Tycoon* are to this *Three Novels* edition.

*studio*. They were unhappy about being in pictures, but the men in the car with us kept saying:

"Swell?"

"Is that what you wanted, Dick?"

"Isn't that swell?" And the man named Dick kept standing up in the car as if he were Cortez or Balboa looking over that *grey fleecy undulation*. (9)  
[Italics mine]

These might be the sentences which were casually written by the author, but we know that they give a vital meaning to Fitzgerald's vision of America if we carefully analyse them. What is significant about the two quotations is that they bring out a striking contrast between the pastoral and the civilized. Nick is a Westerner, a simple man in the complex society of the East. So his fantasy in the East shows "the curious state of the modern American consciousness."<sup>14</sup> In other words, it explains the tragic destiny of the nation because there are no pastoral landscapes in modern America. A "great flock of white sheep" have no pastures to be bred in the East. Ironically speaking, they are not real sheep but imaginary ones. This is a curious combination of the pastoral image and the modern city.

It is a sorrowful situation that the nation lost its primitive forests, pastoral landscape and great frontier. Moreover, interestingly enough, the "white sheep" in Nick's fantasy are changed into "the grey fleecy undulation" in Cecilia's recollection. It can safely be said that the author's vision of his nation had taken on a darker aspect by the time when *The Last Tycoon* was written. The sheep "of old Laemmle studio" suggests a tragic situation of them used as a prop by the movie-making industry. Not being bred in the American pastoral landscapes, they are so artistically used in the mechanized Hollywood society as to give some romantic dreams, folklores and myths to the people. As Fitzgerald says, there is "no Daniel Boone to hack trees"(150) any more. In modern America frontiersmen like Daniel Boone have no places to cut trees in; because there is no wild West left. And, as we have studied, Monroe Stahr the modern American dreamer had to share his fate with a mechanical airplane.

Stahr's lover Kathleen, after she has lost her lover, cannot adapt her-

the present with the past was severed, and he was obliged to recognize the great distance of the two—the degradation of national heritage and vision. It may safely be said that the tradition, heritage and history of the nation are not to be understood by the modern man who has ignored and corrupted them. Therefore, in the chaos of modern America Stahr had to struggle to give permanent order and value, by giving his loyalty to “an imaginary past”(118).

After all *The Last Tycoon* is a novel that showed Fitzgerald's growing concern with the American theme through the three levels of progression—the hero Stahr's decline, Hollywood's debasement of the past values, and the nation's ignorance of the cultural heritage. It shows us the cultural and historical meaning of the nation much more than any other of Fitzgerald's fictions. It might have been correct that Michael Millgate defined this novel as “the best of the social novel in this century in America.”<sup>13)</sup> Of course, when he defined thus, he must have noticed the fact that the historical trend greatly influenced Fitzgerald's creative imagination. America had a great boom after the First World War, but in 1929 she was damaged in policy and economy by the Wall Street crash and great panic. At such a historical turning point of this nation Fitzgerald must have felt a crisis of this nation, because he was endowed with a keener sense of things than any other writer of his time. Therefore, it may well be said that *The Last Tycoon* is a product of his sense of the American situations.

I want to conclude this paper with the two descriptions which may illustrate the loss of the American past. In *The Great Gatsby* Nick Carraway describes the scene of Fifth Avenue of New York as follows :

We drove over to Fifth Avenue, so warm and soft, *almost pastoral*, on the summer Sunday afternoon that I wouldn't have been surprised to see *a great flock of white sheep turn the corner*. (28) [Italics mine]

And the next is from *The Last Tycoon*, seen through the narrator Cecilia's eyes :

I thought of *the first sheep* I ever remember seeing — hundreds of them, and *how our car drove suddenly into them on the back lot of the old Laemmele*

have been impossible for an incompetent man like him to get back his vitality even in Jacksonian democracy of the nation's past. So Cecilia narrates :

He [Schwartz] had come a long way from some Ghetto to present himself at that raw shrine. Manny Schwartz and Andrew Jackson — it was hard to say in the same sentence . . . . At both ends of life man needed nourishment : a breast — a shrine. Something to lay himself beside when no one wanted him further, and shoot a bullet into his head.(13)

After the first scene at Nashville, the link with the past is followed by an analogy to another presidential figure, Abraham Lincoln. Here he is a symbol of the great past. The analogy to him gradually adds the deeper meaning to the contrast of the present and the past of the nation. As Arthur Mizener and Robert Sklar have noticed, Lincoln's symbolic and historic values are brought to life in the struggles and aspirations of Monroe Stahr.<sup>12)</sup> Cecilia explains as follows :

Boxley knew he could sit with Wylie White tonight at the Troc raging at Stahr, but he had been reading Lord Charnwood and he recognized that Stahr like Lincoln was a leader carrying on a long war on many fronts ; almost single-handed he had moved pictures sharply forward through a decade, to a point where the content of the "A productions" was wider and richer than that of the stage. Stahr was an artist only, as Mr. Lincoln was a general, perforce and as a layman.(106)

Only Stahr with his efforts and values could make the connection with the past meaningful, and establish a link between Hollywood and the nation's past. But Cecilia has to narrate sympathizing with Stahr : "The old loyalties were trembling now, there were clay feet everywhere"(27). There is a great gap between Stahr and his environments.

Lastly, the link with the past is pursued during Stahr's trip to Washington. Soon after the interview with Brimmer the Communist Party member, Stahr makes a trip for the first time to Washington the metropolis of America with an intention of seeing the city. Washington is the starting point of American culture and history. Stahr tries to find some clue to connect the present with the past. But he suffers "a daze of fever and heat" there, and never "succeeds in becoming acquainted with it as he had hoped to"(129). Here again the spiritual link connecting

Maxell Perkins on June 6, 1940 :

Did you ever read Spengler - specifically including the second volume? I read him the same summer I was writing *The Great Gatsby* and I don't think I ever quite recovered from him.<sup>10)</sup>

There is very little doubt that Fitzgerald had already read Spengler's *The Decline of the West* by the time of publication of *The Great Gatsby*, and had been greatly influenced by the book. Oswald Spengler is a modern German philosopher who predicted the disintegration of Western cultural values. The pessimistic philosophy of the book will be no guide for a man like Stahr, who has risen from poverty to a position of wealth and power. Fitzgerald must have recognized the resemblance between Spengler's vision and his own. Richard Lehan comments on *The Last Tycoon*: "The story of Monroe Stahr is the story of Hollywood — and, by implication, the story of America as well."<sup>11)</sup> He also appreciates the influence of Spenglerian theory of the inevitable decline of Western culture on Fitzgerald's *The Last Tycoon*.

The theme of the nation's destiny in history is introduced at the very start of the novel, related with the flight metaphor of a transcontinental plane, as I have stated before. The airplane, on which Cecilia and the three movie men are, landed at Nashville, Virginia because of a heavy storm. Here the author refers to historically famous figure of the American past. Wylie White invites Cecilia and Manny Schwartz to a drive to Andrew Jackson's old home, the Hermitage. Schwartz, the former studio executive now down on his luck, goes along with them. Andrew Jackson, America's 7th president, opposed himself to the National Bank and invented the Spoils System, but after that he lost the credit of his people. In spite of his later decline, he followed his own political beliefs to the end. Then he made an ideal society where even the poor can rise to the top of the society, the so-called Jacksonian democracy. But now his old home, the Hermitage, seems itself impenetrable and formless in the dark night, "the great grey hulk"<sup>(10)</sup>. They are the people who do not deserve the weight of moral values it has. Schwartz has come to get back his own life in the hope of finding some connections with the past; but it would

## II

The idea of writing a Hollywood novel may have come to Fitzgerald when he was working at Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer. He worked rather seriously as a scenario writer at M-G-M from 1937 to 1940, where he met Irving Thalberg, the M-G-M producer. As Robert Sklar points out, "the possibility of a Hollywood novel" was probably "suggested to him by the death of Thalberg."<sup>9)</sup> Though Fitzgerald himself wrote such screen plays as *The Three Women* and *The Three Soldiers* and won a fair success, he spent unsatisfied days because of the group workings with the other scenario writers, as we have seen in *The Last Tycoon*. Fitzgerald must have thought that a moving picture is the most glittering art among the popular arts. Hollywood not only speaks for the nation's dreams, but manufactures them, so it is of much importance to Fitzgerald more than any other art. As the movis materialize the dream Americans dream, they are not just an art, but it can even be said that they are the focal point of the national culture. In his synopsis of this novel, Edmund Wilson says:

...the author had meant to return here to the motif introduced in the first chapter with the visit of the Hollywood people to the home of Andrew Jackson and their failure to gain admittance or even to see the place clearly; the relation of the moving-picture industry to *the American ideals and traditions*.  
(129) [Italics mine]

We may well say that the relation between the movie industry and the "American ideals and traditions" is a main concern for the author in *The Last Tycoon*. Of course, it goes without saying that the "ideals and traditions" have inseparable relations with the cultural and historical background of the nation. The author must have tried to express, through Stahr's heroic actions, not only his hope of reflecting them into the movies, but also the nation's inability to revive them into the present. The great gap of the American past and present is easily discovered everywhere in the novel.

Kathleen Moore, Stahr's lover, is educated by an English "who wanted her to read Spengler"(91). As to Spengler, Fitzgerald wrote a letter to

(105). After all Stahr believes that the movie industry is a spokesman of the nation's dream and it forms the newest type of American culture and it even makes great influence on the spirits of the American people. So the movies should be produced to be an ideal model or an exemplary principle of life for all Americans.

In spite of Stahr's unwavering faith in movies, there are some ambiguous attitudes on them on the side of a large public. Cecilia says that "not half a dozen men have ever been able to keep the whole equation of pictures in their heads"(3). When she was in a convent, she was asked to lend a script of a screen play by a sweet nun, but returned with "an air of offended surprise and not a single comment"(3). This is the very attitude that shows clearly a great distance between movies and people. Hollywood is, in fact, a society filled with phoniness, incompetence and promiscuity which makes people say ironically of it as a beautiful "mining town in lotus land"(11). The movie men wander about without order, direction and principle. As was the case with the high society of East Egg in *The Great Gatsby*, Hollywood is a place where identity of each person comes to naught and an air of anonymity spreads over everywhere. A free lance scenario writer Wylie White, who has a mixture of jealousy and admiration toward Stahr, feels as follows:

"I didn't feel I had any rightful identity until I got back to the hotel and the clerk handed me a letter addressed to me in my name."(11)

Furthermore there naturally rises the power of labour union, with which Stahr has to struggle, in parallel with the rise of Marxism of his time. It would not be necessarily a bad aspect of Hollywood but a current idea of his time; yet it must have been thought as a bad one at least for Stahr. Laborers' feeling toward the producer is "like the farmer's resentment of the city fellow"(120). Now that vital, romantic Hollywood of the past Stahr cherishes in his mind as an ideal has already been lost long ago, Fitzgerald tries, by showing a model of older Hollywood, to indict the modern Hollywood on a charge of the degradation of the older values.

Stahr's dilemma of life and death just as Richard Lehan remarks: "Stahr's destruction is contained in the very moment of promise, in the very hope for a new life."<sup>8</sup>) Like the house without roof at Malibu, he cannot give himself to his love for Kathleen and leads his life to violent death. Here we must not overlook the fact that this ironical symbol has an important meaning in the wider context of American culture and history. The author attributes Stahr's destruction not to his loss of love but to the sham of Hollywood.

Accordingly, I would like to verify the reality of Hollywood movie industry in the context of American culture and history. Hollywood society, over which Stahr reigns as a mythic American hero, stands for the furthest reach of the American Dream that started three hundred years ago three thousand miles away from the birthplace of America, New York. It would be more accurate to say that Hollywood is the far end of the New World where about three hundred years ago Dutch sailors held their breath and cherished romantic dreams. Therefore, the motion-picture industry of Hollywood epitomizes American culture and dream. It does not necessarily follow that there is merely a hopeful aspect in Hollywood. It is true that it presents a hopeful one when it produces America's dream, folklore and myth. In other words, it may safely be said that it forms the up-to-date type of American culture. But we can also say that there is an ugly one in it when it brings forth the phoniness and the inhuman nature of American movie men.

Here it will be useful for us to think what kind of idea the author has on movies, considering the above-mentioned two aspects of Hollywood in *The Last Tycoon*. Cecilia says of their influence on her spirits:

Some of my more romantic ideas actually stemmed from pictures - *42nd Street*, for example, had a great influence on me. It's more than possible that some of the pictures which Stahr himself conceived had shaped me into what I was. (18)

We can see at a certain studio that "dreams hung in fragments at the far end of the room, suffered analysis, passed — to be dreamed in crowds, or else discarded" (56). Stahr says to Boxley that "we have to take people's own favorite folklore and dress it up and give it back to them"

American pioneer or pathfinder : tremendous energy and vigor, a variety of skills in spite of his poor education, immense resources of craft, and a fundamental sense of fair play. As Cecilia describes, he is nothing but an "emperor" or the "last of the princes"(27) who, with romantic idealism, reigns over his kingdom, Hollywood. Millgate has offered comment :

Stahr seems to align himself with the great American capitalists. But the tone of his answer works together with Wylie White's admiration to prevent our thinking of him entirely in these terms, and when we see him at lunch with the financiers we quickly realize his isolation among them.<sup>7)</sup>

When he added this comment, Millgate probably noticed Stahr's traits of a mythic American hero.

Jay Gatsby went to ruin because of his lack of a sense of reality. Dick Diver could not face the changing world because of his rather old moralism — "'good instincts,' honour, courtesy, and courage"(221). Monroe Stahr does not have such weakness in his nature. It is true that Fitzgerald's protagonists are almost preoccupied with love on their way to the goal of their ideal dream, but Stahr does not lose his own heart to love for women because he has a rationalistic sense of reality. In fact he has both passion and coolness at a time for his love affair with Kathleen Moore, a woman encountered by chance during a flood caused by the earthquake on the studio back lot, where he notices in her some resemblances to his dead wife Minna Davis. We can find out some important meanings in this scene. As a natural force the earthquake destroys a part of the studio. In its wake, the flood comes, bringing Kathleen clinging to "a huge head of the Goddess Siva"(25). This image "Goddess Siva" performs several important functions with relation to the theme of this novel. It is, in a sense, merely a movie-property, a part of artistic world Hollywood ; yet it saves Kathleen's life. Ironically, by bringing her, it also affords the means of offering Stahr a new life. Interestingly enough, it is the head of the goddess Siva, "the destroyer" of the trio of gods which has Brahma as "a creator" and Vishnu as "a preserver". As a symbol of a destroyer, it is grotesquely oversized and dominates the figure of Kathleen. Hence the head of Siva becomes a foreshadowing of

ed on nothing more than a night-school course in stenography), he is to occupy, at only twenty-three, an authoritative position as movie producer by his own talent and intelligence with his idealism intact. Another producer Billy Brady is an incompetent man who does not know "ABC's of dubbing or even cutting"(28), while Stahr is "a paternalistic employer" (125) of great influence on the movie men in spite of his inevitable conservatism of self-made man. He tries to spread his belief that the movies should be treated not as a show but as art which has permanent values and ideals of its own, though the idea seems to be a little out-of-date in the changing world of our time. He insists that an ideal picture should have "shine and glow"(39) in it, and for this belief he orders his scenario writers to do group working. As a matter of course, there rise among them some complaints about it, but he would never give it away, believing he has "more brains than a writer has"(125). Cecilia narrates he is "the only sound nut in a hatful of cracked ones"(19). It is even said that he is "a marker in industry"(28) who has "a long time ago run ahead through trackless wastes of perception into fields where very few men were able to follow him"(18). As he is putting his life and soul into the moving pictures, he insists on fulfilling his duty to the public at the risk of losing some money :

"It'll lose money," he [Stahr] said as he stood up, his jaw just slightly out and his eyes smiling and shining. "It would be a bigger miracle than *Hell's Angels* if it broke even. But we have a certain duty to the public, as Pat Brady has said at Academy dinners. It's a good thing for the production schedule to slip in a picture that'll lose money."(48)

Standing on the shore of Santa Monica, moreover, Stahr has a strong sense of responsibility to make "a quality picture" (48) after having heard a negro's unfavorable comment on the picture.

He [a negro] had said that he did not allow his children to listen to Stahr's story. He was prejudiced and wrong, and he must be shown somehow, some way. A picture, many pictures, a decade of pictures, must be made to show him he was wrong. Since he had spoken, Stahr had thrown four pictures out of his plans - one that was going into production this week.(95)

Therefore, it might as well be said that he has the traits of a mythic

they wish, he had set his psychological clock to run hour.(37)

*The Last Tycoon* opens from the scene in a transcontinental plane carrying Cecilia and the three other movie men across the continent to Hollywood. Wishing to "marry Stahr"(17), Cecilia gathers some information about Stahr's personality from his talk about the railways with the chief pilot of the airplane. He speaks to the pilot that he "can't test the best way — except by doing it"(19) when he has to send a train through somewhere and his surveyor's reports are almost the same ones. He shows his transcendence all over those people. Cecilia's portrait of Stahr offers the closest analogy with Icarus, a son of Deдалus in Greek mythology. Icarus flew up with his father from Crete; but the sun melted the wax with which his wings were fastened on, and he fell down into the sea. The flight of Stahr and Icarus is a symbol of transcendence, imagination and aspiration. So Cecilia describes Stahr as follows:

He [Stahr] had flown up very high to see, on strong wings, when he was young. And while he was up there he had looked on all the kingdoms, with the kind of eyes that can stare straight into the sun. Beating his wings tenaciously — finally frantically — and keeping on beating them, he had stayed up there longer than most of us, and then, remembering all he had seen from his great height of how things were, he had settled gradually to earth.(20)

Interestingly enough, Monroe Stahr, a modern Icarus, is now flying high up in the sky not with the waxed wings but by a mechanical flying machine. Furthermore, we cannot but recognize the ironical destiny of a modern man who lives in a highly developed machine civilization when we are told at the end of the novel that he is doomed to death in the crash of the same airplane. Thus the flight metaphor was used to show the tragic end of Stahr's romantic idealism in our time.

Stahr's idealism is, like Gatsby's, based on the American Dream of wealth-success. Monroe Stahr, a Hollywood producer, is a self-made man who has earnestly followed the pattern of the Horatio Alger hero rising "from rags to riches". At fifteen he was "a gang of kids in the Bronx" (15), and then at twenty-two he went to Hollywood with a dream of success. Poorly educated as he was (his education was, in reality, found-

counted. The same is also true in the rest of the novel. Therefore, we must say that she participates only limitedly in *The Last Tycoon*.

We can find out another flaw as regards to the validity of Cecilia's moral judgement. She is so immature and "hopelessly in love with Stahr"(139) that she cannot pass a fair judgement on Stahr's action. This is also true of her judgement on other figures in this fiction. It is this emotional involvement with the people and actions she describes that makes her unable to maintain a detached position. Such awkwardness in technique must have been caused from Fitzgerald's characterization of Cecilia ; partly her weakness in nature and partly her inability to grasp the complex system of the movie-making industry of Hollywood. Perhaps it may also have been difficult for the author to show us the whole events of Hollywood by way of the first person point of view. So, in order to give us godlike knowledge of all events that happen to his characters, he uses the omniscient point of view in some part of the novel. Yet, no matter what complaints we may make about his use of technique, they may be qualified by the fact that *The Last Tycoon* is unfinished.

First we must consider the significance of Stahr's heroic actions in contrast to Fitzgerald's other heroes, and then define the essential qualities of the moving-picture business in American culture and history. In his notes on this novel, the author says that much attention should be paid to the protagonist: "Don't wake the Tarkington ghosts"(163). This warning to himself suggests that he has an intention of choosing a new type of hero, who goes on strenuously toward the ideal with sharp responses to realities instead of the romantic but sentimental heroes of his earlier works. More than any other of Fitzgerald's protagonists, Monroe Stahr is an almost perfect character, saved from Gatsby's poor recognition of reality and Dick's moral weakness. Stahr is an idealist, a monopolist and a "rationalist"<sup>6)</sup> who saw the whole world around him complacently in so early a period of his youth. In other words, he is a typical business executive who feels emotional satisfaction by devoting all his energies to his work, so Cecilia tells us:

If he could go from problem to problem, there was a certain rebirth of vitality with each change. And like those sleepers who can wake whenever

(1951). Neither of the authors made the narrators' illnesses clear for the reader at the beginning of their novels. Perhaps they were afraid of making the opening scene too depressing.

Cecilia is given by the author some qualifications as a sympathetic narrator who can understand both Billy Brady and Monroe Stahr. In 1935 she is a junior of Bennington College in the East, and she begins Stahr's story as follows :

Though I haven't ever been on the screen I was brought up in pictures. Rudolph Valentino came to my fifth birthday party - or so I was told. I put this down only to indicate that even before the age of reason I was in a position to watch the wheels go round.<sup>4)</sup>

She is intelligent and cynical but compassionate and kindly toward Hollywood people ; because she is "*of* the movies but not *in* them" (138), and accepts Hollywood society "with resignation of a ghost assigned to a haunted house" (3). Moreover, she is "obstinately unhorrorified", whatever dirty opinions and impressions the people outside Hollywood would put forth. When we are offered this kind of characterization of Cecilia, we are quite likely to believe her to be a perfectly qualified narrator. Arthur Mizener makes an admiring comment on this technique :

It [Cecilia's qualification as a narrator] was a perfect situation for writer who simultaneously knew experience as a participant and judge it as an uninvolved observer. Only now, perhaps for the first time in his life with complete understanding, he undertook to cultivate and control this double view of his subject.<sup>5)</sup>

If we closely read the novel, however, we might easily notice the fact that there is technical irrelevance in Fitzgerald's use of a point of view and of a narrator. His plan of making Cecilia narrate the whole story from her point of view is broken too early in Chapter II, where she has to reconstruct Robby's information and explains for the reader as follows : "For it was Robby who later told me how Stahr found his love that night"(25). And in some other places she is obliged to say thus : "This is Cecilia taking up the story"(98), or "This is Cecilia taking up the narrative in person"(77). On one occasion she confesses, "I knew nothing about any of this"(117), referring to an episode that had just been re-

nation's present; finding it difficult, however, he could not but feel a strong nostalgia for the lost past.

## I

Fitzgerald's intentions in *The Last Tycoon*, in which he is trying to deal with the whole movie-making industry of Hollywood, are surely more complex than those in any other novels he has written before. Many critics are of the same opinion when they say that if it had been finished, the novel would have been his best one in his use of literary techniques and themes.<sup>2)</sup> Surely the frame of *The Last Tycoon* is broad enough and its world is wide enough and its protagonist is big enough. And, more than *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender Is the Night*, this novel is Fitzgerald's "American" novel. Everything — the allusions, the characterizations, the actions and the themes — points in this direction. My aim in this chapter, therefore, is to explain why this posthumous novel has in it the possibilities of a great masterpiece.

As a first person narrator-character *The Last Tycoon* makes use of Cecilia Brady, a daughter of Billy Brady the shrewd producer, to show us the heroic life of another Hollywood producer, Monoe Stahr the idealist in the motion-picture industry. This is, of course, the same technique that the author used in the case of Nick Carraway in *The Great Gatsby* in 1925, though there is a little difference in his use of it. By using this technique the author would have planned to produce so intrinsically compressed a work as *The Great Gatsby*, in which he cut down the residual words, descriptions and scenes effectively. In 1939 he wrote a letter to Maxwell Perkins, an editor of Charles Scribner's Sons: "I would have to write 10,000 words on it to make it as big as *Gatsby* and I'm not sure that it would have a great unity."<sup>3)</sup> Just as Nick Carraway, after having returned to the West, wrote about a series of events that had happened in the East in retrospect, so now in this novel Cecilia Brady is reflecting on her depressing memories of Hollywood. Staring up at the brilliant Arizona sky in the tuberculosis sanatorium, a twenty-five-year-old girl Cecilia writes Stahr's story in despair five years after, as did Salinger's Holden Caulfield in a lunatic asylum in *The Catcher in the Rye*

*THE LAST TYCOON*  
— FITZGERALD'S TRAGIC  
VISION OF AMERICA —

Hirotoshi Baba

F. Scott Fitzgerald died of a heart attack on December 21, 1940. The day before he died, he had written the first episode of Chapter VI of his last novel, *The Last Tycoon*. In 1941 Edmund Wilson, an "intellectual conscience"<sup>1)</sup> of the author, published this novel with a synopsis of the incompleting portion of it and a number of the author's notes for it. Surely it will be difficult to comment on an unfinished novel, but we will be permitted only to see how the author wrote fiction and intended to give it a form and a meaning. Therefore, I read this novel in the hope of doing justice to it. What I noticed about it then was that it bore almost the same theme as *The Great Gatsby* (1925) and *Tender Is the Night* (1934). And the theme is Fitzgerald's tragic vision of American culture and history.

It is generally admitted that Fitzgerald was a spokesman of the Jazz Age: yet he is a novelist who did not see merely the glittering surface of his time, but had already noticed the disintegration of his time and nation beneath it. His protagonists — Jay Gatsby, Dick Diver and Monroe Stahr — were the idealists in the materialistic world. They all shared almost the same tragic destiny on their way to the ideal. What the author intended to express through their tragic lives was not only their personal declines but also the collapse of their nation. He clearly contrasted the present of the nation with the past, and in doing so he tried to show us the true values of the nation's past. He was, by nature, a writer who had been greatly influenced by the current of his time. The more influenced he was, the more keenly he sensed the crisis of his nation. So he wished to give a certain permanent order and value to the