CHAPTER III

THE BEAUTIFUL AND DAMNED
The great success of This Side of Paradise brought Fitzgerald a sense of ecstatic feeling and also money. Fitzgerald's life was filled with a series of parties and celebrations. As Kenneth Eble rightly says, "An intoxicated life in both the literal and figurative sense, it was indulged in as if Fitzgerald were trying to sustain the ecstatic feeling that came with his first success." But the success of This Side of Paradise also made Fitzgerald take himself more seriously as a writer. So in spite of the seemingly endless parties Fitzgerald as a professional writer was at work.

After This Side of Paradise, the immediate question that faced Fitzgerald was what he should write next. Soon after the acceptance of This Side of Paradise for publication, Fitzgerald wrote a letter to Maxwell Perkins in which he indicated his literary plans for the immediate future. In his letter he proposed "a very ambitious novel ... which will probably take a year and this novel would be called The Demon Lover." The novel was not written, but the title appears in The Beautiful and Damned as the novel that brought Richard
Caramel sudden fame. In the summer of 1920 Fitzgerald started writing *The Beautiful and Damned* and completed it in May 1921.

As in *This Side of Paradise* there is a lot of autobiographical element in *The Beautiful and Damned* also. It is interesting to note that Anthony and Gloria on the jacket illustration of the novel look very much like Fitzgerald and Zelda. As Kenneth Eble says, "Anthony seems to be more Fitzgerald than the self-consiously created fictional person he was supposed to be in the novel. Particularly is this true of Anthony after his marriage, and the shifting of Fitzgerald's experiences as a best-selling young novelist to Dick Caramel in the novel does not disguise the fact." ³

It is generally assumed that Gloria Gilbert is modelled completely on Zelda. But it will be nearer to truth to say that like Rosalind in *This Side of Paradise*, Gloria is a composite personality created from the characters of Ginevra King and Zelda. Even as Ginevra King used to surround herself constantly with her three classmates, Gloria surrounds herself with two classmates. These friends of Ginevra's as well as Gloria's were flirts. Fitzgerald considered Lake Forest the most glamorous place in the world and Ginevra King and her family came from Lake Forest. In describing Anthony's first meeting with Gloria's parents, Fitzgerald seems to be describing his own experience with Ginevra King and her family. Anthony describes Gloria's father as unfavourably as Fitzgerald thought of Mr. King. William Mitchell whom Ginevra King married appears as Joseph Bloeckman in *The Beautiful and Damned*. He is shown as Anthony's fiercest competitor in love. William Mitchell was in the banking business and was also a friend of Ginvera King's father.
Joseph Bloeckman is in the movie business and is a close friend of Gloria's father. Fitzgerald also made Anthony's competitor vulgar and socially unacceptable and this is the way Fitzgerald would have naturally liked it to be in his own life.

Fitzgerald was quite aware of the extensive autobiographical material that was getting into The Beautiful and Damned. He also knew that the conditions under which the novel was written forced him to record experiences almost as they happened. He was afraid that this would be a source of the novel's weakness, and this is revealed in his letter to John Peale Bishop in which he raised a number of specific questions about the plot, characters, style, humour, and so on in The Beautiful And Damned. This also shows Fitzgerald's increasing self-consciousness as an author. It is this self-consciousness as an author that makes The Beautiful and Damned, in a technical way, a better novel than This Side of Paradise. But the difficulty was that Fitzgerald set himself deliberately to write a serious novel in a very short time out of experiences which had little time to work within him. Arthur Mizener observes, "The story of Gloria and Anthony is full of precisely observed life, and Fitzgerald makes us feel the grief they suffer; but he is able to provide neither an adequate cause for their suffering nor adequate grounds in their characters for the importance he gives it." 4 Though The Beautiful and Damned is considered a failure in this sense, a closer examination of the theme, plot, and characters will reveal how Fitzgerald had departed from the tradition of the saturation novel and was searching for and experimenting with a new set of criteria under which he was trying to develop himself as a novelist.
The Beautiful and Damned is told mainly from the point of view of Anthony Patch. The novel begins with an introduction to Anthony Patch and his personality. Anthony is a young man of twenty-five and this mention of age in the very first sentence of the novel suggests one of the themes of the novel. Anthony considers himself “rather an exceptional young man, thoroughly sophisticated, well adjusted to his environment, and somewhat more significant than any one else he knows” (503). This is his healthy state of mind and it makes him cheerful, pleasant, and very attractive to intelligent men and to all women. Anthony has his own ambition in life though he is not quite clear what it is: “he considered that he would one day accomplish some quiet subtle thing that the elect would deem worthy and, passing on, would join the dimmer stars in a nebulous, indeterminate heaven half-way between death and immortality” (503). This sounds a positive attitude on the part of Anthony though he is said to have turned ironical at twenty three. As the novel unfolds we see Anthony tending more towards the idea of meaninglessness of life.

Anthony is the grandson of Adam Patch, a well-known millionaire and this gives him a sense of social security. But Adam Patch in his old age represents a system of rigid values, which goes clearly against Anthony’s view of life. Adam Patch, at fifty seven, is dedicated to “the moral regeneration of the world” and from an armchair in the office of his Tarrytown estate he directed against the enormous hypothetical enemy, unrighteousness, a campaign, which went on through fifteen years, during which he displayed himself a rabid monomaniac, an unqualified nuisance, and an intolerable bore” (504). So, in spite of the sense of social security that he derived from being the grandson of
Adam Patch, Anthony is inwardly in revolt against the old man and all that he stands for.

Anthony experiences a very lonely boyhood because he loses both his parents in his early boyhood. His mother dies when he is five and a year later his father dies of a heart attack. Anthony sees his father die and this creates in him a great horror of death and "a vague melancholy that was to stay beside him through the rest of his life" (505). He comes to feel life to be a struggle against death and to overcome this oppressive sense he forms the habit of reading books. He also develops a favourite diversion in the form of stamp collection and his stamps are his greatest happiness. He continues his stamp collection till the end and it is interesting to note that he turns to his stamps when he suffers a mental breakdown towards the close of the novel.

Till the age of sixteen Anthony leads a very lonely life and some change begins to take place when he goes to Harvard. He spends much money in buying the first editions of Swinburne, Meredith, and Hardy, and an autographed letter of Keats. Fitzgerald himself liked these writers and naturally he makes Anthony go to these writers who provide a tragic and romantic view of life. At Harvard, Anthony begins to realize that he is looked upon "as a rather romantic figure, a scholar, a recluse, a tower of erudition" (506). It is at Harvard that he develops a bond of strong friendship with Maury Noble and Dick Caramel.

Anthony rents an apartment in New York and settles comfortably. His income is slightly under seven thousand dollars a year, the interest on the money inherited from his mother. Though this income is not big, Anthony
considers it to be enough and lives with the fond hope of inheriting his grandfather's millions someday. His hopes of an early death of Adam Patch are belied and the old man comes, in fact, to enjoy better health. He wants Anthony to do something and to accomplish something. So during one of his encounters with the old man, Anthony tells him that he is planning to write *A History of the Middle Ages*. But this is never done and Anthony's unwillingness to work is one of the puzzles of the novel.

Anthony has two good friends in Maury Noble and Dick Caramel and the three meet frequently and exchange ideas on life, literature, and many other topics. Dick Caramel is a writer and he is shown as working on a novel called *The Demon Lover*. Even as *This Side of Paradise* brought Fitzgerald sudden fame and money, *The Demon Lover* brings fame and money to Dick Caramel. But it is Maury Noble whom Anthony considers his best friend and admires him more because, at Harvard, Maury Noble was considered a very unique figure in his class, the most brilliant and the most original. Though Anthony does appreciate Dick Caramel's creative abilities, he still looks at him from an ironical stance. Anthony cannot fully approve of any creative impulse because, for him, life is essentially meaningless. He tells Dick that he is "playing before a grand stand peopled with ghosts", and adds, "... I would feel that it being a meaningless world, why write? The very attempt to give it purpose is purposeless" (514). He seems to consider the world condemned to meaninglessness, and literature is an attempt at foisting meaning on a meaningless world. Anthony goes to the extent of saying that to try to give the world a purpose is itself purposeless. Though his view is consistent, it is not
consistent with his dream of "some golden day" when he would have many millions inherited from his grandfather.

Anthony's conversation with Dick Caramel on their way to Gloria's house throws light on Anthony's idea of himself. Here, Anthony suggests that he is wiser than Dick Caramel and that he is forced to remain inarticulate for want of talent: "I can imagine a man knowing too much for his talent to express. Like me. Suppose, for instance, I have more wisdom than you and less talent. It would tend to make me inarticulate" (520). But Fitzgerald does not make it clear to the reader what this supposed superior wisdom of Anthony consists in. In fact, Anthony's life after his marriage can be described as anything but wise. Continuing in this vein, Anthony tells Dick, "Say I am proud and sane and wise - an Athenian among Greeks. Well, I might fail where a lesser man would succeed... This hypothetical me would be too proud to imitate, too sane to be enthusiastic, too sophisticated to be utopian, too Grecian to adorn" (521).

Anthony seems to ascribe several qualities to him, and these qualities explain his view of life. Success in the ordinary sense does not appeal to him because his very failure may be a result of his sanity and wisdom. Like the other heroes of Fitzgerald, Anthony considers himself an aristocrat. For Fitzgerald aristocracy meant a way of living and experiencing which is of a superior nature. Wealth and money may support an aristocrat but they do not necessarily influence his sense of values and view of life. Anthony does not want to go to work as everybody else does because it would mean imitating the common world. Irony and pessimism form an important part of his outlook of his life because he considers himself too sane to be enthusiastic. But as the course
of events show, neither Anthony's estimate of himself nor his view of life seems to lead him on the right path of action.

Anthony's first visit to Gloria's apartment ends up only in meeting her parents because Gloria is away somewhere dancing. Anthony does not like them at all and he even feels a sense of repulsion when he shakes hands with Mr. Gilbert. His sense of repulsion may be for old age itself because Fitzgerald always looked upon old age in terms of decay and degeneration.

Fitzgerald adopts an interesting narrative technique in having Gloria presented from four different points of view before she actually makes her appearance. Anthony gets an opportunity to listen to Dick Caramel, Mr. Gilbert, Mrs. Gilbert, and Maury Noble talk about Gloria before he actually meets her. In "A Flash-Back In Paradise" Fitzgerald has already told his readers that Gloria is an incarnation of Beauty herself. Through "The Voice" he says that Gloria will be "a sort of bogus aristocrat" and that she "will do much that is bogus." The voice also informs Beauty that "You will be known during your fifteen years as a ragtime kid, a flapper, a jazz-baby, and a baby vamp. You will dance new dances neither more nor less gracefully than you dance the old ones" (517). It is a pity that Anthony is not aware that Gloria is an avatar of Beauty and also that she is a bogus aristocrat. What he learns about Gloria from others only excites his interest to meet her, though he would not like his interest to be obvious. Anthony gets interested in Maury Noble's account of Gloria. Maury is impressed by Gloria's beauty and observes that she is exclusively interested in her own beauty. When Anthony suggests that he is drawn to Gloria's beauty, Maury rejects the idea and says, "We are growing old, Anthony. I am twenty-
seven, by God! Three years to thirty, then I am what an undergraduate calls a middle-aged man" (528).

Anthony becomes conscious of the passing of time, which inevitably leads to the disappearance of youth. For him also youth ends at thirty. In the conversation that follows Maury Noble draws a self-portrait in which he presents himself as an unmoved witness of all movement. He declares that he is moved only by his lack of emotion and that he would sit listening to the disillusions and cynicism and emotions of the younger generations that follow. Though this sounds very superior, it is only an egotistic projection of Maury Noble because we see him later turn out to be an efficient, successful businessman. All his supposed cynicism disappears, and money and status become too important for him to take notice of his good old friend Anthony.

At his first meeting with Gloria, Anthony is struck by her beauty, though he manages to maintain his cool. He notices that “She talked always about herself as a very charming child might talk, and her comments on her tastes and distastes were unaffected and spontaneous” (533). It is at their second meeting that certain important points of view become obvious. Anthony discovers that Gloria hates “getting old and every thing. Getting married” (536). Fitzgerald’s romantic view of life consisted in considering youth to be the best part and the very essence of life. His heroes and heroines represent the same view of life and they also strongly feel that to lose youth is to lose everything in life. Life appears to be tragic and meaningless for them mainly because youth is transient and inevitably so.
Anthony is struck by the casualness that Gloria shows towards everything except herself. With the aim of disturbing her from her casual attitude, he tells Gloria that he does nothing. But Anthony's words neither surprise Gloria nor even draw her attention sharply because she has no idea of work herself and she is quite prepared to approve of lazy men. As Anthony finds Gloria in agreement with him regarding work, Anthony goes on to say. "I don't understand why people think that every young man ought to go downtown and work ten hours a day for the best twenty years of his life at dull, unimaginative work, certainly not altruistic work" (537).

Anthony's romantic perception of life makes him consider work and especially work-for-one's living utterly dull, colourless, and wasteful. Perhaps he would like to do some work that will not disturb his romantic poise, but since there does not seem to be any such work, he concludes that there is nothing he can do that is worth doing. Gloria seems to say much the same thing when she says: "I just think of people whether they seem right where they are and fit into the picture. I do not mind if they don't do anything. I don't see why they should; in fact it always astonishes me when any body does anything" (537). But Anthony and Gloria speak from very different points of view. Anthony is romantic and aristocratic and so he is reluctant to work, as millions of other common people do in the world. Gloria is beautiful but selfish and she wants some of the people around her to be doing things because that would make her feel comfortable and safe. She wants some of them to be doing nothing at all, "because they can be graceful and companionable for me" (537). Work or no work, everything should serve and support her selfish little world.
She also acutely feels that the world is hers only as long as she is young. Youth is the centre that holds her world and once she attains the age of thirty, which is supposed to end youth, the centre would fail to hold her and her world would crumble. This fear haunts Gloria and this becomes apparent in the later part of the novel.

Anthony falls seriously in love with Gloria though he declares to his casual friend Geraldine that he has no intention of marrying anyone at all. But Anthony is too weak to hold himself against the pitiless and overwhelmingly powerful attraction of Gloria's beauty. Anthony is simultaneously attracted by Gloria's beauty and intrigued by her behaviour. Like Amory in *This Side of Paradise*, Anthony considers Gloria essentially clean and unspoiled. He also appreciates the point that Gloria has neither submitted to his will nor tried to please his vanity. But he can only put a romantic aura around the lack of warm response in Gloria for his passionate love. Gloria's coolness and silence seem to evoke a deep sense of romantic appreciation in Anthony. He feels that Gloria's silence is more eloquent than all emotion she might have felt: "... all words she might have uttered would have seemed inadequate beside the adequacy of her silence, ineloquent against the eloquence of her beauty- and of her body, close to him, slender and cool" (557). But all this highly imaginative interpretation of Gloria's silence may not have anything to do with Gloria at all. In fact, Anthony subconsciously seeks a stable and immobile state. This may have been a reaction to his childhood horror of death and the frightening sense of loneliness caused by the death of his parents in his early boyhood. Even as Anthony is driven to a state of infatuation by Gloria's beauty, he is equally drawn
by her casualness and self-absorption which signify to him certain "immobility": "He had realized at last what he wanted – to kiss her again, to find rest in her great immobility. She was the end of all restless all malcontent" (560).

There are moments when Anthony is able to see Gloria's unresponsiveness and silence to be her hard selfishness and indifference. But he also knows that there is no escape for him and that "he would come back eternally" to her. He is almost like the knight in Keats' "La Belle Dame Sans Merci". Anthony almost suggests this when he says, "She was beautiful – but especially she was without mercy. He must own that strength that could send him away" (565).

At times Anthony strongly feels that he should beat down Gloria's will by the force of his own and also has a passionate craving to hurt and mar her, but he knows that this is not love and tells himself that he was not so much in love with Gloria as mad for her.

Anthony encounters a rival to his love in the form of Bloeckman, a wealthy and successful man in the cinema business. He is a middle-aged man who is quiet and steady and seems to be very much in love with Gloria. The idea of Bloeckman's marrying Gloria drives Anthony childishly frantic and makes him intensely jealous. Setting aside the obstacles like his limited income and his desire to be irresponsible and independent, Anthony comes to the conclusion that he should marry Gloria: "The things that a week before would have seemed insuperable obstacles ...had in this forty hours become the merest chaff before the wind of his infatuation. If he did not marry her his life would be a feeble parody of his own adolescence" (566).
We also notice that Gloria categorizes husbands under four general types and that Anthony belongs to the fourth type which is a reason for Gloria's deciding to get married to Anthony. Gloria does not sound romantic at all in making up her mind to marry Anthony and, on the other hand, she sounds very practical. Gloria's casualness, self-absorption, and lack of jealousy puzzle Anthony, but Gloria seems to be rather clear in herself: "Incessantly she puzzled him: one hour so intimate and charming, ... the next, silent and cold, apparently unmoved by any consideration of their love or anything he could say" (573).

Gloria does not consider marriage a way of settling down and bringing up a family. In fact she hates the women who "crawl on their bellies through colourless marriages" (581). She expects her marriage to be an outstanding one in the sense that "it is going to be the performance, the live, lovely, glamorous performance, and the world shall be the scenery" (581). She is not being romantic but quite practical when she thinks that her married life would be a lively performance with the world serving as the scenery. This attitude fills Anthony's life with misery.

The first six months of the married life pass as "enraptured hours" and suddenly Anthony and Gloria discover that "the breathless idyll of their engagement gave way, first to the intense romance of the more passionate relationship. The breathless idyll left them, fled on to other lovers; they looked around one day and it was gone, how, they scarcely knew" (586). Gloria begins to find that other men no longer bore her and Anthony discovers that he is able to sit once again late into the evening talking with Dick. Certain hard realism begins to enter the mutual estimate of Anthony and Gloria and the romantic
colours that surround their relationship begin to fade and disappear: "Anthony found that he was living with a girl of tremendous nervous tension and of the most high-handed selfishness. Gloria knew within a month that her husband was an utter coward toward any one of a million phantasms created by his imagination" (586). The reader is not taken by surprise at this because Fitzgerald through his comments keeps giving a glimpse to his readers of what is likely to happen. For instance, when Gloria tells Anthony a few days before the marriage that "I would give my right hand to save you one little moment's pain! ... in that instance her eyes were brimming and she was not aware that she was voicing an illusion" (573). Though Gloria becomes aware that Anthony could be frightened and terrified easily as in the incident of the non-existent midnight visitor at the window, she also feels that Anthony has a sort of dashing recklessness. This makes her sometimes admire Anthony, but this does not last long.

Fitzgerald looks at the discordant notes that begin to sound in the relationship of Anthony and Gloria mainly from the point of view of Anthony. In doing so, he seems to come rather too close to Anthony. It is understandable that Anthony feels that the management of Gloria's temper has become almost his primary duty everyday. But Fitzgerald makes a heavily charged comment on the whole thing:

It was in her angers with their attendant cruelties that her inordinate egotism chiefly displayed itself. Because she was brave, because she was 'spoiled', because of her outrageous and commendable independence of judgement, and finally because of
her arrogant consciousness that she had never seen a girl as beautiful as herself, Gloria had developed into a consistent practising Nietzschean. (588-589)

By suggesting that Gloria's behaviour has taken Nietzschean overtones, Fitzgerald, perhaps, means that Gloria has a dominating will because "will" is the most important concept in Nietzsche's philosophy and ethic. When Nietzsche refers to his "Noble man" with a will to power, he does not consider including women under this category because he had nothing but contempt for women. As Bertrand Russel says about Nietzsche, "He is never tired of inveighing against women. In his pseudo-prophethical book, Thus Spake Zarathustra, he says that women are not, as yet, capable of friendship; they are still cats, or birds, or at best cows." By calling Gloria "a consistent practising Nietzschean," Fitzgerald, as a narrator, puts himself in bad light. This interference into the narrative adversely affects the theme as well as the technique of the novel.

The reader finds in the events that follow that Anthony and Gloria, in spite of the growing differences of opinion, have an "uncanny pull at each other's hearts" (593). The discussion that Anthony and Gloria have after their visit to the halls of General Lee shows that Gloria has a serious outlook on life. Anthony is for preserving old things, but Gloria is sure that they can't be preserved. She clearly sees that "beautiful things grow to a certain height and then they fail and fade off, breathing out memories as they decay ... Trying to preserve a century by keeping its relics up to date is like keeping a dying man alive by stimulants" (592). Gloria is sad at the inevitable effect of time on life.
and things, but at the same time she realizes the futility of any attempt at preserving the past from decay and disappearance. She sees beauty in this very sad truth of transience of all created things: "There is no beauty without poignancy and there is no poignancy without the feeling that it is going, men, names, books, houses—bound for dust—mortal—" (592). It is only natural that Gloria is unable to practise this view of life in her own life because she is too young and beautiful. Anthony's romantic outlook wants all beautiful things, especially, love, to continue indefinitely, unaffected by the passage of time. Gloria knows that this cannot be, and she tries to extract "poignancy from the memorable things of life and youth" (593). It is important to note that neither Anthony nor Gloria tries to look upon the present as it should be. Before they go to Marietta, Gloria tells Anthony, "Everywhere we go and move on and change, something's lost something's left behind. You can't quite repeat anything" (602). She becomes acutely aware that she is twenty-three and that time's winged chariot is flying by. One day she will be thirty, which she dreads most because it will ring down the curtain upon her wonderful youth. So Gloria wants to make the most of the intervening years and this naturally leads to several practical problems. Having spent their first summer at Marietta in a pleasant way, Anthony and Gloria return to Marietta for another summer. But this second summer at Marietta brings certain problems for Anthony and Gloria. Fitzgerald calls them "a simple wealthy leisure class" but they are growing restive and lazily extravagant with their limited income. Of course, Adam Patch's millions are looming in the background. Still with "a sort of lassitude" and with a view to practising economy, they make a return to Marietta.
Though Anthony and Gloria celebrate their first anniversary in a very pleasant way, the incident at the railway station at a village near Porchester horrifies Gloria and frightens “her bright soul back half a generation” (608). When Gloria suddenly takes a decision to go to town, she almost commands Anthony to go with her. Anthony feels hurt and considers Gloria's attitude most inconsiderate. He feels that he was made to submit himself to the same attitude of Gloria several times before. A sense of strong ill - will begins to rise up within him: "Then Anthony knew what he wanted – to assert his will against this cool and impervious girl, to obtain with one magnificent effort a mastery that seemed infinitely desirable” (608). So, at the railway station, Anthony very stubbornly opposes Gloria's idea of going home by train. There is a heated exchange of words and Anthony prevents Gloria's journey with sheer physical force, which borders on violence. Gloria cries out that she hates him, calls him a coward. But for Anthony it is a victory because he has been able to prove that he can sustain his will even if it were to involve violence. Still, his victory is not without its shadow of doubt. Anthony feels that Gloria will not cease to love him, but he is not certain whether a submissive Gloria would be the girl he loved: ".... It was yet problematical whether Gloria without her arrogance, her independence, her virginal confidence and courage, would be the girl of his glory, the radiant woman who was precious and charming because she was ineffably, triumphantly herself" (611).

Thus the very qualities for which Anthony loves Gloria begin to create practical problems for Anthony. But the pity is that these qualities are the very essence of Gloria's personality. Gloria very concisely tells the repentant
Anthony that "all the part of me you loved ... all the pride and fire, was gone" (611). What is left of her would always love Anthony but never in quite the same way.

Even after this triumph of will over Gloria, Anthony is not able to steer the course of the family on the right lines. Nor is he able to check the drain on his limited income. Anthony and Gloria follow a way of living that is "reckless and careless, taxed by drinking and parties. Anthony begins to think even of work to the great surprise of Gloria. She remarks, "How you have changed! ... Once you told me that you didn't see why an American couldn't loaf gracefully" (616). Anthony feels somewhat awkward at being caught on this point and he tries to rationalize his change of attitude: "...I wasn't married. And the old mind was working at top speed and now it is going round and round like a cog-wheel with nothing to catch it. As a matter of fact I think that if I hadn't met you I would have done something" (616).

Anthony does not realize the contradiction involved in his words. On the one hand he says that his marriage to Gloria compels him now to take himself to some work. On the other hand he says that he would have done something if he had not met Gloria at all. Gloria quite easily sees the shallowness of Anthony's argument. But this talk about work leads Anthony and Gloria nowhere.

But destiny is waiting to strike, as it were, and this brings about a decided change in the way of living of Anthony and Gloria. Their attitude has been "to seek the moment's happiness as fervently and as persistently as possible" (625). The weekend parties become their chief source of
entertainment. Anthony and Gloria also begin to hate their sense of loneliness and this becomes yet another strong reason for having parties. But, most unfortunately for Anthony and Gloria, Adam Patch makes a sudden appearance at one of their drinking parties at Marietta. He is profoundly shocked by the disarrayed state of things in the house and the drunken behaviour of the people and walks away from there in great disdain.

The unexpected visit of Adam Patch leaves Anthony and Gloria fear-stricken and dispirited. Still there is no great change in their attitude, and they are unable to come to grips with the realities of life. Gloria still desires, fiercely and passionately, to be young and beautiful for a long time, to be gay and happy, and to have money and love. But money and love begin to grow more and more scarce. Gloria feels that Anthony can be utterly indifferent towards her though it may be a temporary indifference. Anthony and Gloria begin to lose whatever control they have had over themselves and liquor becomes a practical necessity to their amusement. They discuss often the final outcome of Adam Patch's unexpected visit. But Anthony doesn't lose hope. Adam Patch's death clears away all the suspense, and Anthony and Gloria realize, to their great horror, that the old man has not left anything for them but made a man named Shuttleworth heir to his entire property.

Anthony and Gloria return to New York and continue with their reckless parties. They are too weak-willed to put an end to these parties which have become a regular part of their existence. Anthony files a suit contending Adam Patch's will and several rumours begin to be spread about Anthony and Gloria. But outwardly Anthony and Gloria do not show any signs of
deterioration: "... She was still a thing exquisite and unbelievable beauty. And for his part Anthony had rather gained than lost in appearance. His face had taken on a certain intangible air of tragedy, romantically contrasted with his trim and immaculate person" (663). Fitzgerald leaves his reader wondering how Anthony and Gloria have been able to perform such an extraordinary feat. This is only one of the instances, which shows that Fitzgerald was not able to separate himself from his characters.

Anthony, forced by the immediate need for money, goes to Dick Caramel for advice. After the big success of his first novel, The Demon lover, Dick has been producing some very inferior short stories. When Anthony draws Dick's attention to this point, Dick merely justifies himself. After his meeting with Dick, Anthony works hard to write some short stories that can be accepted by popular magazines. But his stories are all rejected because he has never before made a consistent effort to write anything. Fitzgerald himself wrote a few short stories of very poor quality after the success of This Side of Paradise. But they were accepted for publication because he had gained reputation with his first success. Dick Caramel, similarly, is able to get his inferior short stories published as he has made his name already, but Anthony fails as he has no record as a writer at all.

All the efforts of Anthony and Gloria to keep down expenses fail mainly because of "sheer inertia" on their part. A complicated struggle goes on continuously between them. Gloria is still obsessed with her age and she even makes a reckless suggestion that they should take all their money and go on a real spree while it lasted. For her, there is no life after thirty and she would like
to enjoy every minute of her life before she attains the age of thirty: 'Everything I do is in accordance with my ideas; to use every minute of these years, when I am young, in having the best time I possibly can' (667). But Anthony is able to see that one has to pay for this attitude of life. He tells Gloria, "After a fashion, we have had our good time, raised the devil, and we are in the state of paying for it" (667). But the realization has no perceptible effect and there is no check on expenses: "There would be two days of gaiety, two days of moroseness - an endless, almost invariable round" (668).

When the war is declared with Germany, Anthony, Maury Noble, and Dick Caramel send in their applications for officers' training camps. Maury and Dick feel strangely exalted and reproachless, and though Anthony doesn't share this feeling, he also takes on a new glamour. Anthony is drafted for officers' training though he suffers from low blood pressure. He wants to get killed in the war, but this is only out of his self-pity rather than to attain some romantic glory: "It was all very purposeless and sad when Anthony told Gloria one night that he wanted above all things, to be killed. But, as always, they were sorry for each other for the wrong things at the wrong times"(669).

While in the officers' training camp, Anthony starts an affair with a girl of nineteen, called Dorothy Raycroft, "as an inevitable result of his increasing carelessness about himself: He did not go to her desiring to possess the desirable, nor did he fall before a personality more vital, more compelling than his own, as he had done with Gloria four years before. He merely slid into the matter through his inability to make definite judgements" (676). Anthony's carelessness about himself and his inability to make definite judgements may be
the reasons for his affair with Dorothy, but the more compelling reason is Anthony’s longing to find an escape from his own torturing mind: “The girl promised rest; the hours in her company each evening alleviated the morbid and inevitably futile poundings of his imagination” (677).

Fitzgerald comments that the collapse of the authentic devotion to Gloria, that has been protecting Anthony against his insufficiency is the main reason for Anthony’s becoming “the slave of hundred disordered and prowling thoughts” (677). But this is not clearly seen in the events that follow the marriage of Anthony and Gloria, and sounds rather romantic and less convincing.

Even as Anthony continues his affair with Dorothy, he begins to grow suspicious about Gloria. He notices that Gloria’s letters to him are tending to lack any warmth of feeling and the words “dearest” and “darling” scattered through her letters are quite perfunctory. Then it occurs to him that Gloria may have found someone even as he has. With his suspicion of Gloria, he begins to find the company of Dorothy becomes tedious and almost intolerable. At this point of time Anthony has a nightmare-like experience and he begins to strongly feel that he is going mad: “It was as though there were a quantity of dark yet vivid personalities in his mind, some of them familiar, some of them strange and terrible, held in check by a little monitor, who sat aloft somewhere and looked on” (691). It is interesting to note that Amory, under a moral shock caused by the presence of a woman, experiences a frightening hallucination and feels that he is going mad. The ghost of Dick Humbrid closely looking at Amory is the central point of importance in the hallucination in This Side of Paradise.
Similarly Anthony experiences a terrifying hallucination in which someone
seems to be watching him: "Then one afternoon, in the second week, he had a
feeling that two eyes were watching from a place a few feet beyond one of the
guards. This aroused him to a sort of terror "The eyes were leering at him. Out
of a hot silence he heard his name called in a tragic voice, and the earth tipped
absurdly back and forth to a babel of shouting and confusion" (691). Anthony,
of course, recovers from this experience soon, and even considers this
"providential".

After the surrender of Germany and the declaration of armistice,
Anthony, rushes back to New York and meets Gloria at the Armistice Ball. He
realizes that his suspicions about Gloria are totally baseless and he feels
ashamed of himself. In the absence of Anthony, Gloria feels herself "wonderfully
revived" because there is not "continual drain upon her moral strength" caused
by Anthony. But all her attention is directed only towards herself, and with the
return of Anthony, she tries to nurse "an illusion of happiness and security she
had not thought that she would know again"(702).

Gloria's illusion of happiness and security is shattered very soon
and she is confronted with the harsh reality of life. Anthony takes to drinking
regularly and turns himself into an alcoholic. Anthony and Gloria go to some
sort of a party practically every night and this begins to affect severely the
financial position. Though the need to save becomes inevitable, they are
unable to save and they indulge in endless quarrels and mutual accusations.
Anthony makes a few efforts to find work but in vain. On the one hand Gloria is
greatly worried because she is almost twenty-nine now and on the other hand
she is horrified by the financial danger-mark looming up in the near distance. But the fear of losing her beauty is the more dominant of the two. Hence in an effort to sustain the illusion of beauty, she thinks of entering the celluloid world. She meets Bloeckman, who arranges a screen test for her. But the letter of Bloeckman that follows the screening test effectively ends Gloria's illusion: "We had the test run off yesterday afternoon, and Mr. Debris seemed to think that for the part he had in mind, he needed a younger woman. He said that the acting was not bad, and that there was a small character part supposed to be a very haughty rich widow that he thought you might"(719). This letter which reaches Gloria on her twenty-ninth birthday makes her heartbroken: "Oh! My pretty face, " she whispered, passionately grieving " Oh my pretty face! Oh, I don't want to live without my pretty face! Oh! What's happened?" (720).

The deterioration of Anthony and Gloria continues without any check and they "had become like players who had lost their costumes, lacking the pride to continue on the note of tragedy" (720). Anthony's attitude to work continues to be the same though he is compelled by circumstances to make efforts to find work. This becomes clear in his conversation with Muriel, who visits Anthony and Gloria. He says to her, "Does it bother you particularly that I don't want to work?" And reproachfully tells her, " I am sorry but really Muriel, you must not talk like a lady slum worker even if you are visiting the lower middle classes" (721). Muriel protests and says that Anthony and Gloria do not belong to the middle class and then there is a reference to aristocracy. Anthony clearly defines what aristocracy means to him: " Aristocracy is only an admission that certain traits which we call fine-courage and honour and beauty
and all that sort of thing – can best be developed in a favourable environment, where you don’t have the wrappings of ignorance and necessity” (721). Though there is no direct reference to money, it is implied because an aristocrat is said to be above “necessity”. The financial position of Anthony and Gloria goes down to such a state that they begin to find it difficult to meet the necessities of life. So a favourable environment for the flowering of aristocracy cannot be imagined under the circumstances.

Anthony’s outlook becomes more and more bleak and pessimistic. He is thirty-two and has lost his handsomeness and there is no physical or moral strength in him: “He was heavier now, his stomach was a limp weight against his belt; his flesh had softened and expanded. He was thirty two and his mind was a bleak and disordered wreck” (721).

Anthony and Gloria become aware that they are being avoided by friends. And they stop going to parties because “it’s no fun to go around when you have the sense that the people are looking at you in a certain way” (722). But Anthony continues to drink day in and day out and he comes to a point where he hates to be sober. On her part, Gloria continues to feel terribly oppressed by a life without hope and without happiness. Anthony tries to borrow money from all and sundry and his encounter with Maury Noble who has been making “Piles of money” shows that an old friendship is shattered on the rocks of money. Anthony even goes to Bloeckman, his rival, to borrow money but it results in a quarrel and he gets beaten up in the process.

When everything seems to go to pieces, there is a sudden reversal and Anthony wins the lawsuit against his grandfather’s will which has
been dragging on all these years. Suddenly he finds himself a millionaire and this makes his mind go off its hinge. He goes back to the stamps that he collected as a boy to overcome the horrifying sense of utter loneliness.

The millions that Anthony has got now do not seem to make any sense. The passengers on the ship in which Anthony and Gloria sail observe that Anthony has turned somewhat crazy and Gloria has lost her beauty and has become "sort of dyed and unclean" (744). But the passengers are wrong in supposing that Anthony's mind is preoccupied with the thoughts of his millions. In fact he is mentally looking back:

He was thinking of the hardships, the insufferable tribulations he had gone through. They had tried to penalize him for the mistakes of his youth. He had been exposed to ruthless misery, his very craving for romance had been punished, his friends has deserted him – even Gloria had tuned against him. He had been alone, alone - facing it all (744).

Though these reminiscences bring tears in the eyes of Anthony, he feels victorious because he whispers to himself in a tremulous voice: "I showed them," he was saying. "It was a hard fight, but I didn't give up and I came through!"(744). It is very interesting to note that Anthony includes even Gloria in the group of those who have been the cause of the great misery in his life. The sense of victory that Anthony feels sounds very ironical against the background of the observations made by the passengers on the ship.

The very last words of Anthony on the ship give rise to certain important questions. Anthony refers to a "hard fight", his not yielding to the fight,
and his final victory. The important questions are, what is the nature of the fight? How does Anthony fight back? What is his victory? To answer these questions we will have to consider the theme of *The Beautiful and Damned*. Critics have expressed different opinions regarding the central theme of the novel, and these well-considered critical opinions do not seem to contradict one another. They are sometimes complementary, and this again suggests a certain thematic complexity of the novel. We are aware that Fitzgerald deliberately set himself to writing a serious novel. Fitzgerald's own outlook of life, his romanticism, and the influences of writers like Dreiser, Joseph Conrad, and especially Mencken went into the making of *The Beautiful and Damned*, on the thematic as well as structural level. As in the case of everything else he wrote, Fitzgerald liberally transposed many of the immediate experiences of his own life. What Zelda Sayre says, referring perhaps to Gloria's diary, sounds very interesting and also throws light on the way Fitzgerald used the details of their life in the novel: "It seems to me that on one page I recognize a portion of an old diary of mine which mysteriously disappeared shortly after my marriage and also scraps of letters which, though considerably edited sound to me vaguely familiar. In fact, Mr. Fitzgerald...seems to believe that plagiarism begins at home." 6

Fitzgerald had fulfilled his dream of becoming a famous writer by the time he started writing *The beautiful and Damned*. But Fitzgerald was aware that the "fulfilment destroys the dream." He wanted to enjoy his success knowing that he had become a hero to his generation, but at the same time, he knew that the bright sensation of success would recede gradually, and that he
should not waste his time and gift. So there was a conflict going on in Fitzgerald between the man who wanted to “achieve... to be wise, to be strong, and self-controlled” and the man who wanted “to enjoy, to be prodigal and open-hearted— to miss nothing.” The kind of life that Fitzgerald and Zelda began to lead in the months that followed their marriage also seems to have aroused the “spoiled priest” in Fitzgerald. The Fitzgeralds went about New York spending money and doing what they had always wanted to do. Though Fitzgerald enjoyed social life, he was often lonely and confused. He was not a shy man but he was never quite at ease socially. As Fitzgerald himself says in My lost City, “Within a few months after our embarkation on the metropolitan venture we scarcely knew anymore who we were and we hadn’t a notion what we were.” So a state of delight and confusion continued in Fitzgerald’s life at this point of time. He and Zelda went to Westport with a view to achieving peace. But they were not able to achieve peace; on the other hand, they were more disturbed by the increased visits of the weekend guests. Fitzgerald and Zelda felt bored, at times quarreled, but at the same time they loved each other desperately and passionately. We see Anthony and Gloria living in very similar situations and doing much the same things in The Beautiful and Damned. As Arthur Mizener says, “Gradually the division in Fitzgerald’s nature was being reinforced by the life they were living, by Zelda’s delight in it and her appeal to the old feeling, left over from his wooing, that her love required it.” That Fitzgerald felt like “a man divided” becomes clear in his letter to his daughter in which he says, “but I was a man divided -, she (Zelda) wanted me to work too much for her and not enough for my dream.” Fitzgerald says that “the idyll passed” after the marriage of
Anthony and Gloria, but this applied very much to the life of Fitzgerald and Zelda as well. Fitzgerald was worried about his career as a writer but he was forced to earn money by turning out inferior fiction.

In the midst of all this confusion and bewilderment, Fitzgerald's ambition of proving himself as a serious writer began to assert itself through his writer's conscience. This was the reason for Fitzgerald's deliberate attempt at writing a serious novel. He felt so strongly about the situation of his life at that time that Anthony and Gloria come out as the projections of Fitzgerald's conscience of himself and Zelda. In his letter to Mr. Scribner, his publisher, Fitzgerald says that his new novel concerns. "... the life of Anthony Patch between his twenty fifth and thirty third years (1913 - 1921). He is one of those many with the tastes and weaknesses of an artist but with no actual creative aspiration. How he and his beautiful young wife are wrecked on the shoals of dissipation is told in the story." 10

Fitzgerald's statement about the theme of *The Beautiful and Damned* is straight enough because the story is essentially about What the spoiled priest in Fitzgerald thought the Fitzgeralads might become. But Fitzgerald brought in other elements, which added to the complexity of the theme though they did not go well with his original intention. For instance, the blurb on the dust jacket of the novel says," ... It reveals with devastating satire a section of American society which has been recognized as an entity- that wealthy, floating population which throngs the restaurants, cabarets, theatres, and hotels of our great cities." 11 Fitzgerald did not in fact intend this to be the real purpose of *The Beautiful and Damned*, though the life of Anthony and
Gloria is presented against the background of the section of American society that the blurb refers to. His intention of writing "a painstakingly thought-out book" led to the mixed purpose seen in the novel. Serious minded reviewers were able to see these mixed purposes to constitute the weakness of the novel.

At the time when Fitzgerald was writing *The Beautiful and Damned*, he was very much under the influence of H.L. Mencken. He had high regard for Mencken and wanted to write what Mencken called "Superior Fiction." Such fiction could present "conflict between a salient individual and the harsh and meaningless fiats of destiny, the unintelligible mandates and vagaries of God. His hero is not one who yields and wins, but one who resists and fails." 12

So, all superior literature must reflect a certain tragic attitude towards life. Fitzgerald wanted to depict the story of Anthony and Gloria against the background of the harsh and meaningless ways of the contemporary American life. He was also very much impressed by Mencken's dictum that "the theme of the great bulk of superior fiction is character in decay." Fitzgerald meant to show in this novel the "decay" of his hero, "Anthony Patch," a man of delicate organization in revolt against the inexplicable tragedy of existence." But at the level of the form of the novel, Fitzgerald did not totally succeed in dramatizing this effectively.

It is difficult to determine what the "general scheme" of the novel is because of Fitzgerald's inability to evolve a unified vision in the novel. On the one hand the decay of Anthony Patch seems to express the main theme of the novel, but as Fitzgerald himself said in his interview with Thomas Loyd, the novel tries to "show the effect on a woman after her once legitimate beauty had
passed. That is what I am trying to do with Gloria." Both Anthony and Gloria seem to be in revolt, which is an important element in the novel. But again the theme of revolt is not central to the novel and so one cannot say that Fitzgerald was trying to turn the gesture of indefinite revolt in *This Side of Paradise* into an explicit revolt in *The Beautiful and Damned*. On the other hand Fitzgerald introduced another desperate theme which makes the theme of revolt look ambiguous, if not absurd.

In *The Beautiful and Damned* Anthony Patch, the hero tries to exemplify the philosophy of the meaninglessness of life. He is also able to maintain this attitude consistently at least on the level of argument though not in practice. Anthony Patch goes to the extent of saying, "I would feel that it being a meaningless world, why write? The very attempt to give it purpose is purposeless!" (514). This significant expression seems to suggest that Anthony had a vision of the meaninglessness at the centre of all existence. As Fitzgerald wanted to show the deterioration of Anthony and Gloria as tragic, he might have thought that the philosophy of the meaninglessness of life would accentuate the tragic sense. But he was in a sense, running into a contradiction because life can be considered tragic only when it has meaning, and no sense of tragedy is possible when everything is meaningless. Also this theme of meaninglessness undercuts the value of the theme of revolt because in a state of meaninglessness there cannot be anything to revolt against and the very concept of revolt would lose its meaning and significance.

There can be several reasons for Anthony's view of the meaninglessness of life. Maybe it gives him a sense of intellectual superiority
over others because he thinks that he is an "exceptional young man" (503). He is also aware that he was looked upon, at Harvard, as "a rather romantic figure, a scholar, a recluse, a tower of erudition" (503). Anthony's philosophy of the meaninglessness of life is belied in practice because he does not seem to be very impractical in his daily life. He regularly visits his broker once a week and derives a sense of safety from the solidarity of the big trust company. He also wistfully looks forward to the "golden day" when he would have millions inherited from his grandfather Adam Patch. But the roots of Anthony's philosophy may be in his temperament, deeply colouring his view of life. So the question of a consistent practice of philosophy need not be made a yardstick of Anthony's philosophy.

Anthony loses both his parents in his boyhood and was in fact a witness to his father's death, an event which strikes him with "a panic of despair and terror" (505). He is continually haunted by the horror of death and life seems to him to be "a struggle against death that waited at every corner" (505). Till his sixteenth year, he lives almost entirely within himself and suffers a terrific sense of loneliness. The sense of loneliness did not leave him even in his later life and he is easily frightened by any noise in darkness and silence. On the night after the bridal dinner the hysterical laughter of a woman in darkness, heard by Anthony at his apartment, sounds strangely terrible to him and thoroughly upsets him. This experience "aroused his old aversion and horror toward all the business of life" (582). This is perhaps at the root of Anthony's philosophy of the meaninglessness of life, which he tries to rationalize at the conscious level. Yet another reason for Anthony's philosophy could be in
Fitzgerald himself though it has been pointed out that Fitzgerald had as little belief in the meaninglessness of life as he had in prohibition.

It is an accepted fact that Fitzgerald was greatly influenced by the romantic poets and that a romantic vision which characterizes all his writings. Edwin Fussell rightly remarks that "none of our major writers is more romantically empathic than this avatar of Keats". Like all romantic poets, Fitzgerald had an oppressive sense of time and of the inevitable mutation that time brings about. Time is the enemy of a romantic vision of life because it destroys, in its relentless course, youth and beauty which are the very essence of life for a romantic.

The passage of time and the loss of youth are the refrain of the painful song of life in *The Beautiful and Damned*. Anthony and Gloria are almost constantly conscious of the passage of time and they know that they would soon lose their youth and beauty. Even Maury Noble, a cynic, feels that he would soon be thirty and become a middle-aged man. Man's helplessness in the face of the devastating effect of time is felt to be very tragic by all the romantic poets. This helplessness against time can influence a sensitive mind so deeply that it begins to look upon life as meaningless. Youth and beauty are the very meaning of life for a romantic and he deeply wishes them to continue forever. But this wish can never be fulfilled because all things are under the sway of time. All things have to change and perish. This irrevocable fact which is very disturbing to a romantic view of life can even lead one to a view of Nihilism.
As already mentioned, Fitzgerald was very much influenced by Keats and it is interesting to note that the third stanza of "Ode to a Nightingale" clearly expresses the basic theme of *The Beautiful and Damned*:

The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs:
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Incidentally, one may notice that Fitzgerald took the title for his fourth novel "Tender Is the Night" from the fourth stanza of "Ode to a Nightingale." In the above lines the poet is painfully aware of the weariness, the fever, and the fret of the world in which he lives. In *The Beautiful and Damned* we see Anthony and Gloria surrounded by the same kind of world. They have to face a man like Adam Patch who represents the narrow and inflexible traditional system of values. The deterioration of Anthony and Gloria is greatly accelerated because Adam Patch cuts them off his legacy. They wage a prolonged legal battle contesting the old man's will and win it finally, but only after an irreparable damage has been done to their lives. By the time Anthony wins the suit, Gloria has become prematurely old and looks "sort of dyed and unclean," and Anthony has gone "a little crazy."
Anthony finds himself in a world where people are running after success and money. After his visit to a firm on Wall Street to find work, Anthony describes that experience which reveals American psychology during the boom period: "... such was the stuff of life, a dizzy triumph dazzling the eyes of all of them, a gypsy siren to content them with meager wages and with the arithmetical improbability of the eventual success" (627). Anthony feels that to succeed here the idea of success must grasp and limit his mind. It seems to him that the essential element in these men at the top is their faith that their affairs are the very core of life. Anthony is too sensitive and intellectual to allow the idea of success to grasp and limit his mind. Naturally success is not for him in such a world and he can only be "an authority of failure" Nor is Anthony so self-centred as to think that his affairs are the very core of life. But it is different with Gloria who is totally self-centred. She never wants to think of anything else but of her own youth, beauty, and happiness: "Not for anything or anybody", she said, "except myself and, by implication, for Anthony. That is the rule of all life and if it weren't I'd be that way anyhow. Nobody would do anything for me if it didn't gratify them to, and I would do as little for them" (611). These words of Gloria clearly reveal best her attitude to herself and the world. For her all actions in the world are motivated by the goal of self-gratification and she finds the same principle operating in her. She also knows the importance of money in the quest for happiness in life. And it is not surprising to find her advising Dick Caramel to go ahead and make as much money as he can. Anthony's life is made miserable by this attitude of Gloria and the way she allows money to slip through her fingers like water. But we cannot perhaps find fault with either
Anthony or Gloria because Fitzgerald's romantic vision of life had two essential characteristics: One, the search for eternal youth and beauty, and the other, the search for wealth. Though these two characteristics appear to be different, they are intimately related to each other: "But the two dreams are, of course, so intimately related as to be for all practical purposes one. The appearance of eternal youth and beauty centers in a particular social class whose glamour is made possible by social inequality and inequity. Beauty, the presumed object of aesthetic contemplation, is commercialized, love is bought and sold. Money is the means to the violent recovery or specious arrest of an enchanting youth".  

Edwin Fuzzel's analysis very clearly brings out the implications of Fitzgerald's romantic vision. But we must note that Fitzgerald himself was critical about this dream and that he exposed the corruption of that dream in industrial America. He also deeply felt that the quest for romantic wonder is "universally seductive and perpetually damned." Naturally this fate overtakes the lives of Anthony and Gloria. The full significance of the title "The Beautiful and Damned" stands out clearly when looked at from the point of view of Fitzgerald's romantic vision.

Fitzgerald intended to show the decay of Anthony and Gloria as tragic. But several critics have pointed out that he failed to achieve his intention because of this disregard for the form of the novel. Arthur Mizener says that the real purpose of the novel is "Constantly being obscured by its literary purpose, and Fitzgerald's conscious efforts to be ironic and superior". Milton Hindus says, "The theme of The Beautiful and Damned is failure, but with unintentional appropriateness, it is also a failure as a literary experiment". But in spite of these observations, we can say that 'The Beautiful and Damned' shows a
growing awareness on Fitzgerald's part of the importance of method, and that he had moved some distance from the tradition of the saturation novel. Though Fitzgerald mainly uses the conventional omniscient point of view, telling the story mainly from the point of view of Anthony and Gloria, he also reveals the thoughts or adopts the perspective of various minor characters. In delineating the decay of Anthony and Gloria, he presents what is going on in their minds alternately. For instance, Anthony and Gloria look at the wedding ceremony from very different points of view. Anthony tries to feel the conventional emotions of a man being married, but ends up with the ironic query "If a clergyman could perform his own marriage service" (581). But Gloria feels "a sense, coloured with delirious wild excitement, that the ultimately important thing was happening" (586). Fitzgerald also deftly portrays the complex hysteria of Anthony and Gloria when they learn that Adam Patch had not left anything for them in his will. In the very last scene Fitzgerald makes two detached and disinterested persons look at Anthony and Gloria from their own points of view and make a comment about them. They sound like the chorus in a tragedy. Then, Fitzgerald shows Anthony musing over the past and talking to himself. Finally, he says that he has won the fight. Fitzgerald makes the conclusion of the novel ambivalent. He does not expect the readers to sympathize with Anthony's view. The pathetic plight of Anthony, a bundled figure, seated in a wheel chair, makes his assertion of victory look farcical. We have perhaps to estimate Anthony and Gloria from the point of view of the two passengers on board the ship. As James Miller rightly points out, that in spite of certain drawbacks, "The Beautiful and Damned reveals... an advance in technique in
as much as it represents the subjection of method to action, motivating purpose or theme."\(^{17}\)

It cannot be said of course that there are no elements of a saturation novel in 'The Beautiful and Damned'. What is significant is Fitzgerald's growing concern for finding the right technique for a particular subject. That the concern for technique was growing in Fitzgerald is evidenced by his craftsmanship in such stories as "May Day" and "The Diamond as Big as the Ritz." As James Miller rightly points out, "In The Diamond as Big as the Ritz", Fitzgerald discovered a method to extend meaning, to universalize experience, and this story represents a step further toward the novel of selection."\(^{18}\)

In 'The Beautiful and Damned' Fitzgerald could not fully succeed in discovering the right kind of form which could express his meaning mainly because of the way he brought in different themes into the novel. The problem became more complex for Fitzgerald to deal with because the themes of "meaninglessness" and "revolt" do not go together. Fitzgerald was unable to evolve a unified vision in terms of the novel though in his romantic vision he must have seen these different themes as one.

Lack of passion is one of the things that is clearly felt by a reader who has also read 'This Side of Paradise'. This is mainly because of the deliberate effort made by Fitzgerald to create a serious novel in the line of Mencken and Dreiser. But, as Edmund Wilson says, Fitzgerald was able to make Anthony and Gloria convincing and he was also able to create "the atmosphere of failure" in an effective way. Wilson observers,
The hero and heroine of this giddy book are creatures without method of purpose: they give themselves up to wild debaucheries and do not, from beginning to end perform a single serious act; Yet some how you get the impression that inspite of their fantastic behavior, Anthony and Gloria Patch are the most rational people in the book. Wherever they come in contact with institutions, with the serious life of their times these are made to appear ridiculous, they are subjects for scorn or mirth. We see the army, finance and business successively and casually exposed as completely without point or dignity. The inference we are led to draw is that in such a civilization as this, the sanest and most honourable course is to escape from organized society and live for the excitement of the moment. 19

These words coming from Edmund Wilson, a severe and unsparing critic of Fitzgerald, pay a real tribute to the success of ‘The Beautiful and Damned’ as a novel though the success may be a limited one.

As Fitzgerald, was consciously tending towards the novel of selection it is not surprising that after, ‘The Beautiful and Damned’ Fitzgerald was able to attain greater clarity in his own romantic vision and also discover the right technique or the objective correlative to express his vision in his next novel, ‘The Great Gatsby’.
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94

