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The Struggle to Achieve the American Dream in Two Americas

Case of study: “*The Great Gatsby*” by F. Scott Fitzgerald

“*The Grapes of Wrath*” by John Steinbeck

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for Master Degree in Literature and Civilization

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Dedications

We would like to dedicate this humble work to our teachers, our families, friends
and classmates

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Abstract

This humble work is a comparison between two of the most prominent authors in American literature; Scott Fitzgerald and John Steinbeck. The basis of the research shows that Fitzgerald and Steinbeck write about a similar topic which is “the American Dream”. Although they belong to different backgrounds and periods of time, they have the same interest through their writings and they develop approximately similar themes. The two American novels *the Great Gatsby* by Scott Fitzgerald and *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck make the reader aware about people’s struggle and determination to achieve the American Dream. Even though the two novels have features in common, they have some differences that are going to be discussed in this project.

This dissertation contains three chapters. The first chapter deals with the origins of the American dream; starting from the first settlers in the colonies till the beginning of the Great Depression. The second chapter treats the differences between Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby* and John Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath* in terms of their views about the American Dream and their protagonists’ perseverance to achieve it. In the third chapter, we have further carried our analysis by showing the causes that lead to the failure of the American Dream and its corruption. This chapter will demonstrate the effect of the failure of the American Dream on characters.

We have a long and arduous road to travel if we are to realize the American Dream in the life of our nation, but if we fail, there is nothing left but the eternal round.

— Adams James Truslow, *The Epic of America*.

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I/General Introduction

Since the past, America was regarded as a nation of immigrants because it welcomed foreigners from any place. America accepted a large amount of immigrants because it is considered as a land of freedom and liberty in people's minds. Due to this claims, people from different places immigrated to this country to achieve their dreams. From that asserts the notion of the American Dream was born. Nevertheless, not all the immigrants share the same dreams, rather each one carry his own dream and hope to fulfill it in America. Thus, because of the different dreams that people have in their minds it is hard to give an exact definition to the American Dream.

The American Dream holds different meanings; finishing a study, finding a job, having a nice car, owning a big house, gaining money or starting a successful business.... All the previous and other aspects of the dream refer to the belief that everyone can succeed in achieving his dreams through hard work, patience and perseverance. This means that people depend on their own efforts and hard work to gain their success. However, with the development of America especially after Industrialization, the American Dream took new form and lost its ethics of hard work. Thus, the loss of ethics and morals in achieving the American Dream led to the collapse of that dream for many people.

In this dissertation, we will study the American Dream in the world of literature as we are going to examine two of the most well known novels in American literature. These two novels are *The Great Gatsby* by Scott Fitzgerald (1925) and *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck (1939). The two authors' works share a similar theme which is the American Dream. While the former novel is set in the 1920's, the later takes its setting during the Great Depression of 1930's. Hence, the notion of American Dream is not the same in the two novels. Thus, this humble work is titled "The Struggle to Achieve the American Dream in Two Americas".

In fact, our choice to study and compare *The Great Gatsby* with *The Grapes of Wrath*

comes from our concern in comparative literature. We have studied comparative literature in the third year License when we learnt to compare two or more works. As comparative literature aims to draw similarities as well as differences between two works, our dissertation falls within this category. This dissertation's intention is to compare the theme of the American Dream and its failure in *The Great Gatsby* with that of *The Grapes of Wrath*.

The two works *The Great Gatsby* and *The Grapes of Wrath* reflect the failure of their protagonists to attain the American Dream though they belong to different social status. Neither the upper class nor the lower class characters are able to achieve their dreams. Hence, this dissertation aims to answer the question "is there an American Dream, since both protagonists fail to achieve it although socially different?" This research paper tries to put an emphasis on the causes that lead to the failure of the characters' dreams and the aftermath of that failure.

Our analysis will be conducted on three main hypotheses. The first one is Scott Fitzgerald and John Steinbeck's portrayal of the theme of the American Dream in their works and the characters' perseverance to achieve their goals. This hypothesis will show that the characters could partly achieve their dreams through their persistence. However, their happiness after they achieve their dreams does not stay for long. The second hypothesis will discuss this issue when characters face outside forces that lead directly to the failure of their dreams. Finally, the third hypothesis will suggest that the American Dream exists but it is corrupted.

The present work is divided into three main chapters. The first chapter gives a historical view of the concept of the American Dream. It will study the evolution of the American Dream throughout history from settlement to depression. It attempts to show the changes that happened to the American Dream during the puritan stage, during the

Industrial Revolution, during the Roaring Twenties and finally during the Great Depression. Previous to the Industrial Revolution the dream was to be virtuous and to work hard to achieve goals. However, following the Industrial Revolution the dream lost its morals and it changed to be the materialistic search for wealth.

The second chapter will be devoted to the analysis of the theme of the American Dream in two novels; *The Great Gatsby* by Scott Fitzgerald and *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck. The endeavor of this chapter will be to show the Characters' ambition and struggle to achieve their dreams. Then, it will display the obstacles that face the characters and their constant persistence and determination to overcome those obstacles. Finally, it will show the characters' temporary happiness after they achieve part of their dreams which are crushed sooner due to different causes and make the dream in doubt.

The failure of the American Dream is the final chapter's concern. This chapter will demonstrate the reasons behind the failure of the American Dream and the outcome of that failure on the characters. It will focus on capitalism, materialism, deception and hostility as the main causes behind the corruption of dreams in both novels. Then it will offer the lies and the deceptions of the dream which makes it just "a dream" rather than reality. Finally, the general conclusion will give a brief summary of what has been seen in this dissertation and it will open the door of questions for further research.

In review of literature of this dissertation, it is essential to know other scholars' view about the dream. In analyzing the American Dream, we deal with some writers and books related to this dissertation which help us, and will help the reader as well, to understand the notion of the American Dream. John Winthrop in his *City Upon a Hill*, described the American Dream as a religious freedom. Whereas, Martin Luther King had a dream of social equality for all people regardless to the skin, color, religion or any other differences that would make people unequal. The American Dream is stated in the Declaration of

Independence as well, which describes that dream as “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”.

In fact, the term American Dream was first coined by the author Adams James Truslow in his book *The Epic of America* (1931). For him the American Dream is:

Dream of a better, richer, and happier life for all our citizens of every rank, which is the greatest contribution we have made to the thought and welfare of the world. That dream or hope has been present from the start. Ever since we became an independent nation, each generation has seen an uprising of ordinary Americans to save that dream. (Truslow qtd in Cullen 4).

Truslow’s vision about the American Dream is that all people from all classes should enjoy their lives as being happy. Unlike Truslow, Jim Cullen lists several dreams that have shaped the American identity from the pilgrims to the present. Jim Cullen’s book *The American Dream: A Short History of an Idea that Shaped a Nation* explores six instances of the dream; dream of the good life, the dream expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the dream of upward mobility, the dream of equality, the dream of home ownership and the dream of moving to the coast and he devotes one chapter for each.

Furthermore, John Tebbel puts the point more concisely about the American Dream. In his book *From Rags to Riches: Horatio Alger, Jr, and the American dream*, Tebbel states that: “*the United States is a place where anyone, no matter what his origins, no matter how poor and obscure he may be, can rise to fame and fortune.*”(4). Tebell emphasizes that everyone no matter what his background is, can rise from being poor to being rich. Thus, Tebbel wants “all” people to have the opportunity to achieve their dreams.

The methods of investigation that are implemented in this dissertation are the description method and the historical criticism theory. The first method aims to describe

the different steps that the American Dream passed by through history; from puritan stage to the Great Depression. The second method, the historical criticism, is based on “*the context in which a work was written including facts about the author’s life and the historical and social circumstances of the time*” (www. britannica.com). This means that this theory is going to study the literary work through its historical context. Thus, we use this theory to study *The Great Gatsby* and *The Grapes of Wrath* in their historical background.

The above mentioned novels have different editions by different houses of publication. Therefore, it is essential to define the editions that are going to be used in this dissertation in order not to disturb the reader when s/he checks the pages. The edition of *The Great Gatsby* that is going to be used is the Talantikit edition published in 2008. Concerning *The Grapes of Wrath*, the edition that is going to be used is the Penguin Books published in 1992.

II/ Chapter One

A Historical View on the American
Dream

1/ Introduction:

The idea of the American Dream was born after the discovery of the New World by Christopher Columbus in 1492. This discovery was marked by the establishment of a new country and new population of pilgrims coming from Europe. The pilgrims came to the New World with their dreams of liberty and freedom of religion. The main reason behind the Pilgrims' immigration was their persecution in Europe due to their religious beliefs. Hence, immigration to America, that was then a tabula rasa, was a good opportunity to worship God freely.

The founding definition of the American dream is grounded in the second part of the Declaration of Independence of 1776. It describes the “unalienable rights” which are not granted by government but by God to all people since birth. The rights that the declaration promised to establish are equality, life, freedom and happiness. In his book *The American Dream: A Short History of an Idea that Shaped a Nation*, Jim Cullen explains:

The key to the Declaration, the part that survives in collective memory and which underwrites the American Dream, is the opening clauses of the second paragraph: “We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness (38).

It is remarkable that at the beginning, the conception of the American Dream focused on attaining a true spirit in God. However, this pure religiousness of the American Dream changed from time to time to the materialistic search for a utopian world. The dream which was an ordinary wish during the first settlement transformed to be a complex one with the development of the American nation. So, this chapter will display the evolution of the American Dream throughout time.

Since the past, Americans believed that the American Dream will be as a road map that they will use in the future courses of their lives. One cannot understand the American Dream without referring to its history. Hence, in our introductory chapter, we will state historical evidences of the formation of the notion of the American Dream in the history of U.S.A. Examining American Dream at the first puritan settlement, during the Industrial Revolution, during the Roaring Twenties and finally during the Great Depression.

2- The American Dream during the Puritan Stage:

2.1. Dream of the First Settlers in the Colonies:

The American Dream can be traced all the way back to the first colonists that settled in the New World. The dream of the first settlers was freedom for everyone to practice his own religion and beliefs. Puritans saw that Newfoundland is a land of freedom where they can practice their religion freely. Those pilgrims suffered from bad conditions and persecution in Europe because of their religious beliefs. So they escaped to the New World claiming that they are God's chosen people and the Newfoundland is the Promised Land.

John Winthrop, the leader of the pilgrims, said to his followers that they are called upon by God to be an example and a light to the world, he asserts:

for we must consider that we shall be a City Upon a Hill, the eyes of all people are upon us; so that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken and so cause him to withdraw his present help from us... we shall shame the faces of many of God's worthy servants and cause their prayers to be turned into curses upon us (Winthrop).

First, John Winthrop referred to this new place in the New World as "a City on a Hill" that is surveyed by the world. As a result, those puritans would be in a plain view, unable to hide their faults and failures from all the eyes that watch them. Second, if those pilgrims

serve their God correctly, God would reward them. Third, pilgrims had a deep trust that God had rewarded them for their faith and service. So, the idea that they are “selected people from God” encouraged them to walk towards the greatness.

On the bases of the previous ideas, people related the success and failure of their works with blessing and curse of God i.e. if anything happened in their favor; it is because of God’s blessing only. But, if the opposite happens, this means that they were cursed from God. Hence, religious values encouraged people to work hard to attain the success and ultimately to fulfill the American Dream. This means that the American dream during the puritan period was a spiritual dream.

Furthermore, the American Dream was considered as spiritual, because Americans felt the value of success as a sacred task. They believed that their talents and hard work will bring them a reward. Additionally, they worked hard to be respected by others and to be useful; gaining money was not their purpose. So, this means that the American dream in the beginning was much more associated with ethics.

Puritans had a dream that the New World will provide equality of opportunity for everyone. James Truslow Adams affirms this in his book *The Epic of America*:

that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement...it is not a dream of motor cars and high wages merely, but a dream of social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position (404).

Truslow’s statement, explains that the American Dream is related to the ability of individuals no matter where she/he comes from. In sense, it is not related to the luxurious

things such as cars and money, but it is about freedom, gender equality and being able to live life to its fullest extent. To summarize this, one can say that the America Dream is on its spiritual level and money has no influence on it.

2.2. Ideas of Progress in the Colonies:

The first settlers' mission was to spread their religion in the colonies, but this religious mission changed later to become the materialistic search for wealth. The reason behind that shifting in the American Dream was the luxurious description of the colonies by the first governors. One example of this is Captain John Smith who described the New World as an Eldorado, i.e. a place of fabulous wealth.

Moreover, governors claimed that the colonies need population for working in plantation and searching for gold. This propaganda pushed more Europeans to immigrate to the colonies. After that, when agriculture became more advanced, they started the trade of their products forgetting totally about the first puritans' believes of hard work and ethics and they looked only for money and wealth.

The puritans' ideas can be explained in terms of continued ideals; so that they would be a good example for their children. The dream of those puritans was to "*build a society of believers for themselves and their children*". They believed that their children would keep the principles of their ancestors' way of life. However, these principles were not what the next generation kept. On the contrary, the new generation forgot who they were and they wanted only to accumulate money no matter what the cost was. Even if this cost was their beliefs and cultural identity (Cullen 15-16).

The idea of progress at that period was much more related to materialism, because with the exportation of goods and development of trade economy increased. Thus, people built a strong interest in money forgetting completely about their ancestors' spiritual beliefs. To

encapsulate this, the mass Europeans' migration to the New World was the lust to achieve their dreams of becoming wealth, while the spiritual aspect of the dream was slowly lost.

2.3. Collapse of the Puritans' American Dream:

The first European settlers in the New World had a dream to find freedom, liberty and the opportunity to pursuit happiness through hard work. Moreover, they tried to establish equality for everyone in the colonies; men and women are equal without discrimination of people classes as it is stated in the Declaration of Independence. That was what the first settlers created and believed in.

Nevertheless, these dreams by the years faced many challenges and this paved the way to the collapse of the earlier dreams to the new dream; being rich and searching for wealth. This materialistic new system was totally different from the fundamental early dreams of hard work and spread of religion. As a result, the pilgrims' mission was corrupted and then failed.

Regardless to the puritans' natural and ethic dreams, the new generation of the population in the colonies destructed all these dreams. The idea of progress in the colonies which started with trade is the result that the new generation changed their old dreams to the new one of seeking for wealth.

The new population in the colonies wanted only one thing which was gaining money and becoming rich even if it was at the expense of their cultural identity and spiritual beliefs. As a result, this loss of identity and the idea of accumulation of money led to enmity, materialism and the breakdown of the original dream of the first settlers.

To review, the puritans' dreams evolved by time and what were dreams of religious freedom, liberty and pursuit of happiness turned into a dream of material wealth, which led to the collapse of the original dream. The figure in the next page illustrates changes that

happened to the American Dream during the puritan stage.

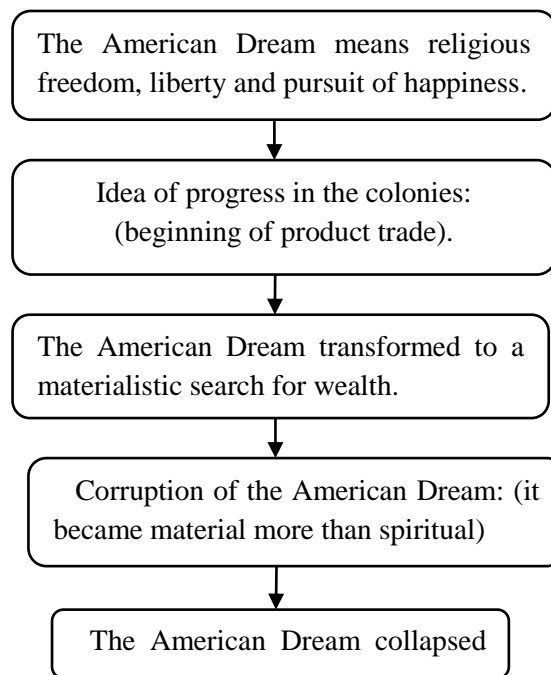


Figure.1. Evolution of the American Dream during the Puritan Stage

When the American Dream failed, it was transformed into a nightmare as if the puritans' first dreams were never a reality at the beginning of the first settlement in the colonies. But, the new generation believed that the American Dream will be realized in the future with a new opportunity in the New World like Industrial Revolution. This will be tackled in the following pages.

3- The American Dream during the Industrial Revolution:

3.1. The American dream with the Onset of the Industrial Revolution:

The Industrial Revolution started first in Britain in the late eighteenth century and later spread in many other countries. During the nineteenth century, it witnessed more development in North America. However, the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in America was seen as a signal of economic development that would benefit the

entire nation. Thus, Americans saw the Industrial Revolution with great promises, hopes and opportunities through which they can realize the American Dream.

People's dreams during the onset of the Industrial Revolution was to become rich, powerful and more prosperous, so as they can lead good living conditions. Whereas the puritans' American Dream was to improve individual's life, the Industrial Revolution seemed to improve society and life for all in a community. That was man's duty "*to improve not only his own condition, but to assist in ameliorating mankind*" (Lincoln Qtd. in Cullen 94). This means that the success of the Industrial Revolution was not personal, but for all mankind and not only America but all over the world. So, with the beginning of Industrial Revolution, the American Dream was not limited in America only, but it spread in vast geographical areas in the world. As a result, the American Dream was universal and common dream that everyone wanted to fulfill.

The first Industrial Revolution, generally the period between 1760 and 1840, started with textile industries. These industries contain spinning wheel machines where women, typically farmers' wives and daughters, did the spinning and the weaving which were done in households. In fact household manufacturing was almost universal in colonial days, with local craftsmen providing products for their communities. These products were shipped and sold to other countries. However, "*between 1830 and 1860, women remained a key labor force for this growing industry.*" (Dublin 2).

After that, the first textile manufacturing was built in 1790's by Samuel Slater, who brought a new technological invention from England "the cotton- spinning mill" run by water power. What is more, there were other innovations brought from Britain to America such as steam power and metallurgy. (Dublin 1). Nevertheless, these industrial manufactures could not work without one important element –people. As a result, millions of immigrants went to the new world having the dream that virtues such as hard work,

perseverance and honesty would be paid in the end. So, the American Dream during the First Industrial Revolution was to be virtue and to work hard in order to gain money.

3.2. American Dream within the Development of Industrial Revolution:

Industrial Revolution started to develop from first to second step. The Second Industrial Revolution, generally the period between 1870 and 1914, marked changes on both American economy and society. However, the economic progress continued with the development and invention of many technological machines. As a result, there was a transformation from manual labor to machines manufacture. (Mokyr 1). This means that humans were replaced by machines.

The American Industrial Revolution changed the nation and also transformed steel, oil, agriculture and other industries such as canals and railroad. However, these canals and railroads needed thousands of people to build them, which created thousands of jobs. Immigrants from different places in the world came to America to work, until the demand for labor was satisfied.

Furthermore, those immigrants had a dream of moving up to the New World in order to work hard and gain money. That was the American Dream in the beginning of Industrial Revolution; gain money through hard work. So, the American Dream was an ordinary dream which intended that success and gaining money were a reward for being virtue then respected by community.

By contrast, when Industrial Revolution's development increased, the American Dream took a new form; chasing wealth and running after money. Honesty and hard work were slowly lost and people dream only for instant wealth. This could be seen as a result when the moral values of the dream were lost.

Whereas, the first puritans had dreams of religious freedom, liberty and pursuit of

happiness through hard work, Industrialization seemed to destroy all these dreams and transformed them into the materialistic search for money and wealth. This diminish of values and morals led to the corruption of the American Dream. Hence, the American dream declined.

3.3. The Break Down of the American Dream during Industrialization:

The American Dream during Industrialization transformed from being virtue to the dream of reaching to the top before others no matter what. Unlike the past when hard work was the road to attain dreams, the Industrial Revolution was the key to reach wealth with as little effort as possible. This lust for wealth corrupted the principles of virtue that used to be existed in the dreams of the first settlers in the colonies. Thus, this led to the downfall of the American Dream.

The American Dream was collapsed during the Development of the Industrial Revolution for many reasons such as economic, social and political. Concerning the economic reason, people had the dream to rise from poverty to wealth; but this idea was corrupted by the new ideology of capitalism. Furthermore with this new ideology, rich people had more privileges and poor people became more miserable. Cullen explains this idea by saying:

The acceleration of industrial capitalism in the late nineteenth century, combined with the growing application of the Darwinian theory of “the survival of the fittest” to human affairs, popularized a notion of freedom as the right of the individual entrepreneur, like John D. Rockefeller, to make as much money as he could (107).

The second reason is related to the social side, when Industrial Revolution led to the growth of population. There was a mass of immigrants who came to America with their

dreams of getting a job and becoming rich as soon as possible. But when they arrived there, they were hired for long hours, at very low wages and in very dangerous conditions. Hence, they realized that the Industrial Revolution was a Utopian idea.

The third reason, which was political, was related to the majority of Anglo-Saxons who were given more opportunities to achieve their dreams, while the minor ethnic groups were kept out from these opportunities as they suffered from discrimination. This hostility was due to Americans' thought that new immigrants would harm them especially when they accepted lower wages. In spite of achieving equality and liberty which were stated in the Declaration of Independence by Thomas Jefferson, this dream was transformed into a mythical idea rather than real. Hence, the American Dream was not attainable for all Americans. The figure below shows how the American Dream had collapsed with the evolution of Industrial Revolution.

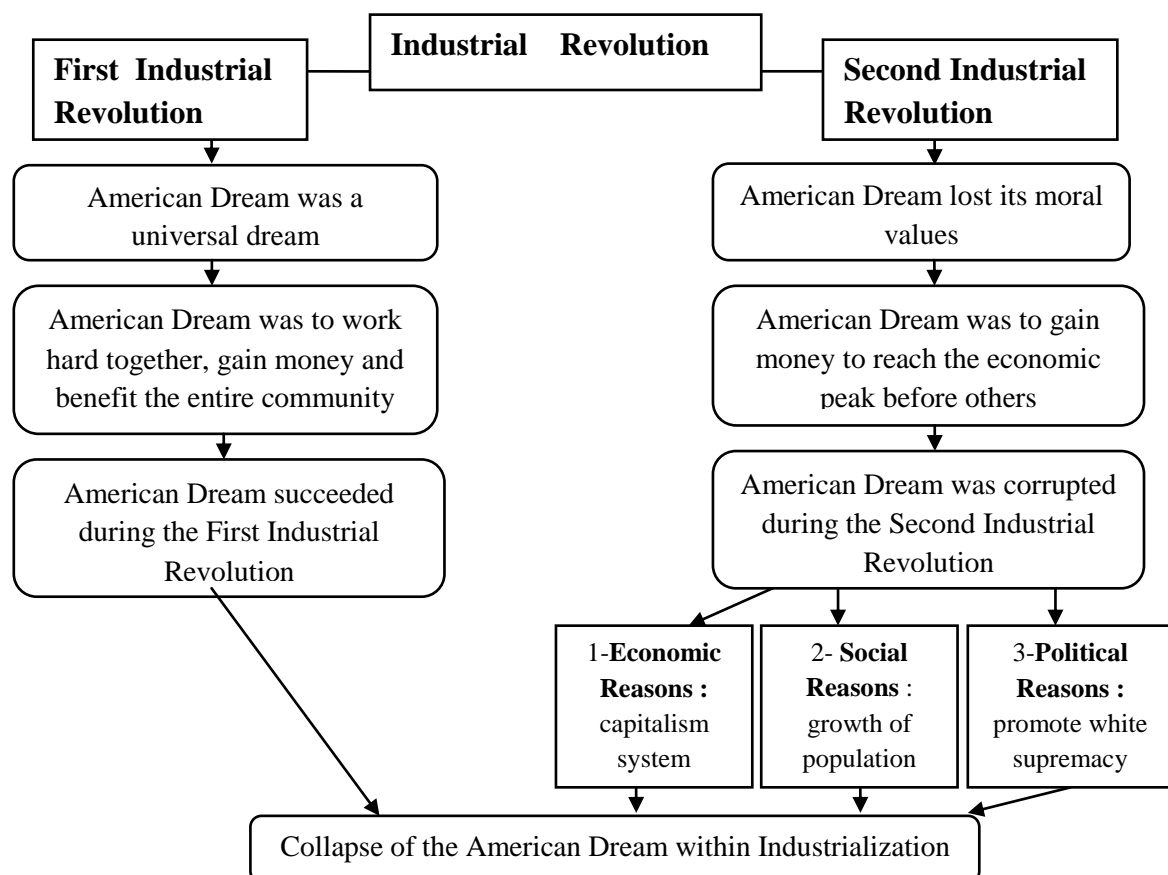


Figure.2. Advancement of the American Dream during the Industrial Revolution

Finally, it can be said that the Industrial Revolution turned technological development into a global phenomena. However, this new system of globalization led to the failure of American Dream under different reasons that are mentioned in the previous paragraphs. So, Industrialization changed it into a nightmare with the introduction of the ideas of rivalry, corruption and capitalism. As a result, the American Dream took a new form. The next title includes the American Dream in the decade following the First World War which was called “The Roaring Twenties”.

4. The American Dream during the 1920's:

The 1920's collectively known as the Roaring 20's or the Jazz Age, was a notable era in the United States history. Following the World War I, America knew enormous economic and social changes. The economic growth and the social changes during this period made Americans' lives so prosperous. Many people left rural areas to settle in urban cities to enjoy a higher standard of living. Additionally, the United State was “*very rich in these years and its national income was much higher*” (O'Callaghan 92). Hence, these changes led to the birth of modern America and a new American Dream.

4.1. Portrayal of Life in 1920's:

The Roaring Twenties was a period of great change in American society and economy; modern America was born at that time. At the level of economy, there was an extreme optimism due to the financial and technological development. But socially, urbanization was increased, prohibition was enforced and women got more freedom. For the first time, people preferred living in the big cities like New York where there was electricity, automobiles, telephones, bars, flapper, etc. In the book of *An Outline of British and American History* it is stated that:

During these so-called Roaring Twenties the East brought in new standards

and values and a completely new image of America. It was a time of wild parties, speakeasies (illegal saloons) and automobiles, in which ‘flappers’... could be casually kissed by their suitors, away from the sight of their prudish mothers (112).

Unlike urban cities, rural areas were less populated because of many traditional constraints such as the prohibition of alcohol and the negative attitudes towards women. As a result, many people had the dream of moving up to cities where life was more flourishing. However, urban America became more modern and this can be seen in the changing role of women. Based on the fact that people preferred living in cities, America faced many economic and social changes.

4.2. Economic Changes during the 1920's:

4.2.1. The Impact of Automobiles:

During the roaring twenties, President Warren Harding and his successor President Calvin Coolidge were pro- business, which led to economic progress for most Americans. Many companies grew larger which created many new jobs and people began to have enough money due to their high wages. Moreover, there was a mass production and people spent more money on buying new kinds of products. Thus, these factors led to the economic booming and life prosperity. In the book of *U.S.A History in Brief* it is mentioned that “*The United State enjoyed a period of prosperity. Many families purchased their first automobile, radio and refrigerator.*” (55).

The major factor that helped build the economy in 1920's was the automobile. Henry Ford's Ford Motor Company played a big role in the economic growth due to its quick sales of the Model T. Henry Ford developed the assembly line which involved many parts and many workers at different stations. Ford's assembly line reduced manufacturing costs,

allowing him to sell cars for much less money and making high profit. *“The assembly line is a system of workers and machinery in which a product is gathered in a series of consecutive operations; typically the product is attached to a continuously moving belt.”* (wiktionary).

The conveyer belt moved the products while the workers stay in one place and do the same job .i.e. instead of workers going to the parts, the parts come to the workers .Hence, this reduce time and human efforts. In his book *An Illustrated History of the US*, Bryn O'Callaghan states that *“Making a car in this new way took 1 hour and 33 minutes. Making one previously had taken 12 hours and 28 minutes.”* (75).

Before cars were introduced, the everyday peoples' travels were limited as it included few forms of transportation like foot, train or trolley. Therefore, the complication of transportation made it difficult for workers to find jobs near their homes. However, the introduction of cars increased transportation and helped people who lived in suburbs and had a job in the city to drive to their works. Hence, each American had a dream of owning his own car.

The car gave people more freedom as they used it in shopping, traveling and racing. In addition, it allowed people in rural areas to take their children to school, because their children did not attend school before since it was too far from home. Cars helped people with medical conditions as well in order to go to the hospital easily and in minutes. Since the car eased daily challenges and allowed people to go wherever they wished, it became a necessity and a major dream for everyone.

Finally, previous to 1920's cars were seen as something that only the wealthy could own. However, Ford's easiest methods and cheapest prices, made the car affordable for everyone. Consequently, people with stable salaries had a dream of possessing their own

cars. Hence, thanks to Ford's plans, the American Dream of owning a car was attainable for many people. By the year of 1927 millions of cars were sold throughout the country which contributed greatly to the economic growth at that period.

4.2.2. The Growth of New Industries:

The automobile helped so much in the creation of other Industries. Cars gave people freedom to go wherever they wanted which called for new roads and highways. Road construction was essential to the automobile industry; several roads and highways were built in order to facilitate vehicles' traffic. In turn, highways needed gas stations and rest stops. Due to the traveling of people by car around the country and along the major roads, businesses like service stations, motels and restaurants benefited from that and tourism grew dramatically as well. Thus, the automobile changed the lives of many people.

Moreover, the automobile industry contributed in the development of other industries that made products used in cars like steel, rubber, glass and oil industries. The automobile industry makes a high demand for these materials because of the mass consumption of cars. Furthermore, progress in technology and new management techniques helped in the creation of other industries such as electric, radio and motion pictures industries. However, the establishment of these industries led to the creation of many jobs. Thus, making people dreamed to earn money through working in these industries.

4.2.3. Mass Production Vs Mass Consumption:

New techniques and the improvement of technology in manufacturing and the industrial production allowed industries to produce more. Efficient production techniques made large quantities of goods available, thus, led to mass consumption. In fact, mass production was more efficient due to the assembly line that was first introduced by Henry Ford. Industries' use of the method of the assembly line changed the way goods were

manufactured. As a result, products reached to a large scale and people spent more money to purchase and use these products. Mass consumption was encouraged through a combination of advertising which created a demand for a particular product. In his book *Spreading the American Dream*, Emily Rosenberg states that the American Dream means “*high technology and mass consumption.*” (7).

After all, in 1920's –two years after WWI– the economy began a steady growth that lasted nearly for a decade. The growth of the industries, the impact of the automobile, mass production and mass consumption and the assembly line all contributed to the standardization of American life. Although many people experienced economic prosperity, there were others who did not prosper from the economy. For example farmers did not make a profit because of low prices of products and African Americans as well because of racial discrimination. Hence, only the wealthy people and the big corporations benefited the most from the economy.

4.3. Social Changes during the 1920's:

The 1920's was not just a decade of economic prosperity, but also a decade of profound and dramatic social changes. The most obvious causes of change were mass entertainment and radio broadcasts, which helped to bring a revolution in morals and manners. Mass entertainment was related to movies which affected people, because young Americans tried to copy what they saw in these movies. They had a dream to live like movie stars, because “*movies showed people a world that was more exciting, more free, and more equal than their own*”. For example boys imagined themselves as heroes like Douglas Fairbanks, or comedians like Charlie Chaplin, whereas girls could imagine themselves as the beautiful Mary Pickford. (O'Callaghan 94).

While movies were watched in theatre, radios found its way into every home in America. Thousands of people, following the first public station KDKA, were listening to

the same radio programs. They laughed at the same jokes, listened to the same music “Jazz” and heard the same news although far from each other. Radio became a national pastime; therefore each family had a dream of owning a radio in house. In fact, these mass media did more than just entertain; they fostered and spread new ideas and attitudes which led to many social changes especially for women.

4.3.1. The Role of Women in 1920's:

The woman of 1920's was called a flapper which was a nickname given to modern and rebellious woman during that period of time. This modern woman was so different from the traditional woman because she had more freedom in her life style. The flapper wore short sexy dresses, had bobbed hair, danced and drank alcohol all night, smoked cigarettes in public and admired the youthful look of movie stars. This description of the flappers is mentioned in Miller Nathan's book *New World Coming: 1920's and the Making of Modern America*. Concerning his description of the flapper, he asserts: “*She flirted because it was fun to flirt and wore a one piece bathing suit because she had a good figure, she covered her face with paint and powder (...) and she refused to be bored because she wasn't boring*” (254).

In addition, flappers wore unbuttoned boots that made a flapping sound when they walked, hence, got the name flapper. With this new look came new values including a more open attitudes toward premarital sex; many flappers had sexual partners before marriage. Thus, the flapper was “*unconventional and without decorum*” which showed that they were rebelling against social norms imposed on women. This type of woman was exemplified by the heroine of Scott Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby*.

In fact, not all women were flappers; there were women with normal roles in society like nurses, teachers, secretaries or telephone operators. In contrast to flappers who

pursued a social freedom, these women sought financial independence by entering the labor force along with men. Therefore, many businesses and fields of work were hiring women at the same rate as men. Unlike the flappers who wore sexy clothes, the working women wore comfortable and simple clothes which signified a return to domestic circumstances.

Furthermore, there were some women who contributed in the field of science, medicine, literature and law. For example: in medicine, Florence Sabin's medical research helped in the decrease of tuberculosis' death rate. In the field of law, the public health nurse Margaret Sanger founded the American Birth Control League in 1921 which made it possible for women to have fewer children. There were other eminent women figures who contributed in society like the famous five. This was a group of five women who fought for the right of women to be considered as persons so that they could be appointed to the Senate. This case was known as the "Persons Case" (Wikipedia).

As a final point, the idea of "New Woman" pleased some people who welcomed this change as progress to improve society, whereas others were upset by this idea and called for a return to old fashioned ways. This was considered as a serious topic for debate at that period. In her article in the newspaper of *New York Times*, Margaret O'Leary wrote about the dispute over flappers in which she declares:

The world is divided into those who delight in her, those who fear her and those who try pathetically to take her as a matter of course. Optimists have called her the hope of the new era, pessimists point to her as ultimate evidence of the decadence of the old (49).

As O'Leary indicates, on one hand, critics of flappers argued that they were irresponsible, thoughtless consumers of fashionable clothes and cosmetic and out of control. On the other

hand, defenders of the flappers maintained that they were independent and worthy of admiration. Hence, this debate grew steadily until it involved writers, artists, critics, politicians and historians.

4.3.2. Fundamentalists and Prohibition:

The Roaring Twenties witnessed a loss of traditional values due to the introduction of alcohol which led to the spread of crimes, violence and corruption. Many people, especially in rural areas, believed that urbanization and the mass media led to the decline of the nation's morals. As a result, those people preferred to join the religious movement that was known as Fundamentalism. This movement opposed the introduction of alcohol and called for the application of prohibition. In the book of an *Outline of U.S History* it is states that:

Fundamentalism and Prohibition were aspects of a larger reaction to a modernist social and intellectual revolution most visible in changing manners and morals that caused the decade to be called the Jazz Age the Roaring Twenties, or the era of "flaming youth (210).

In addition to the loss of values, alcohol damaged the public health and led to many diseases as well. At work, workers could not do their work properly because they were drunk and the absence of workers led to a decrease in production. Moreover, husbands spent their money on buying alcohol rather than spending them on their family's needs like food and clothes. Because of these bad effects of alcohol on society and people, the 18th Amendment was passed which prohibited the sale, manufacture and consume of all liquor beverages. Bryn O'Callaghan states this in his book *An Illustrated History of the USA*:

In 1919 the American people voted in favor of a new amendment to the Constitution. The Eighteenth Amendment prohibited the making or selling of

alcoholic drinks in the United States. People who supported “prohibition” claimed that it would stop alcoholism and drunkenness and make the United States a healthier, happier country (95).

Beside the 18th Amendment, the Congress passed The National Prohibition Act by bringing in outside police officers in order to enforce Prohibition and establish public health and welfare. Although Prohibition was imposed, alcohol was still sold by people known as bootleggers. Many people went to secret bars known as speakeasies, while others found some ways to smuggle alcohol or to make it inside their homes. Finally, the 21st Amendment repealed Prohibition and made the alcohol consumption legal again, thus, welcoming the collapse of the nation’s ethics and morals. O’Callaghan states that:

Many Americans were not willing to give up alcoholic drinks. Millions began to break the prohibition law deliberately and regularly. Illegal drinking places called speakeasies opened in basements and backrooms all over the country... Speakeasies obtained their alcoholic drinks from criminals called "bootleggers." Bootleggers worked together in gangs or mobs. The best known mob was one in Chicago led by the gangster “Scarface” Al Capone (95).

To encapsulate, the Roaring Twenties symbolized a major economic and social turning point in the history of America. Economically, America experienced a high growth in its economy; because of the growth of many industries especially the automobile industry in addition to mass production and mass consumption. Socially, America witnessed a complete change in the life style of people particularly women who became known as flappers. During this decade, America became more modern and the American Dream took a new form. The following diagram points up the new conception of the American Dream.

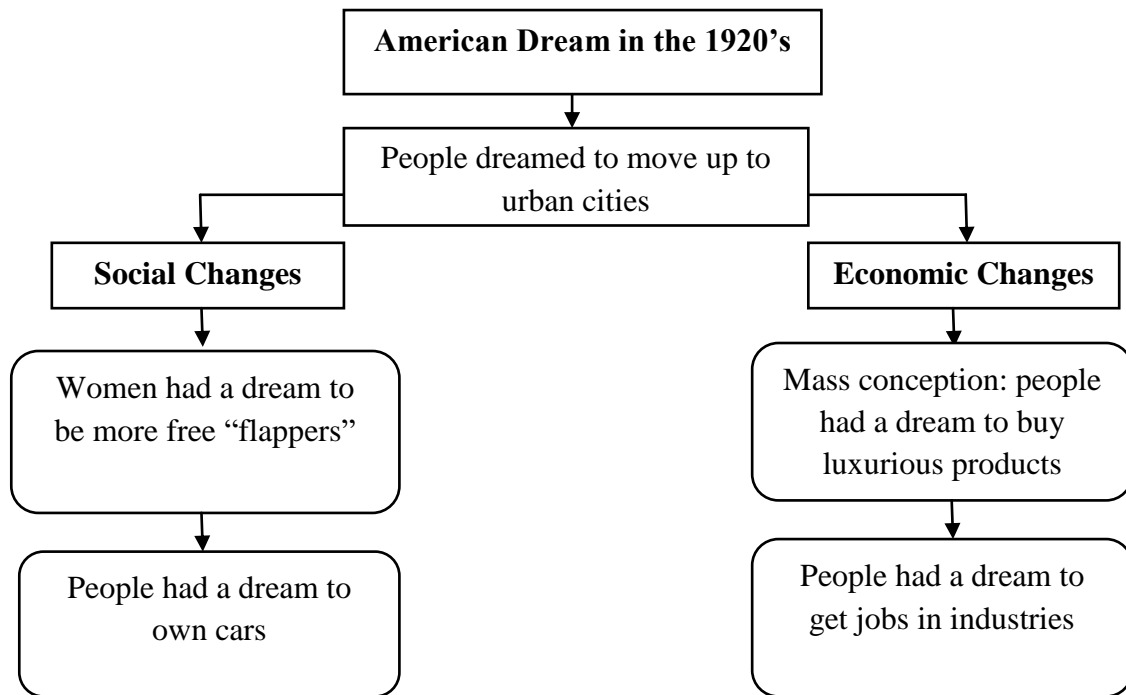


Figure.3. The New Conception of the American Dream in the Roaring Twenties

Finally, the American Dream of the first half the 1920's was associated with economic prosperity that everyone wanted to benefit from. This economic booming was the major fact that led people to immigrate to America with their dreams to find jobs. However, this economic prosperity of 1920's was wrecked due to the Great Depression of 1929. The next Title will explain in details the American dream during the Great Depression.

5. The American Dream during the Great Depression:

The stage of economic and social prosperity of the 1920's did not last for a long time. Yet, the 1930's began with a severe economic collapse or what is known as "the Great Depression". The stock market's booming turned into a crash during this period of time. In 1920's there was an increase in products, factories and jobs, while in 1930's a lot of people lost their jobs as many factors close their doors due to the depression. In his book *An Illustrated History of the USA*, Bryn O'Callaghan states:

The Depression was easiest to see in the towns, with their silent factories, closed shops and slowly moving breadlines. But it brought ruin and despair to the farmlands also. Farmers simply could not sell their produce. With the number of people out of work rising day by day, their customers in the cities could no longer afford to buy. If anyone did buy, it was at the lowest possible prices (98).

The devastating depression of the 1930's replaced the economic optimism of 1920's, which led to a disorder in United States. Putting all their trusts in their President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, people had a dream that this president will bring back prosperity. As a result, they changed their way of thinking and started to question the reasons that led to this disaster in order to find solutions.

5.1. Causes of the Great Depression:

There were a lot of factors that contributed in the creation of the Great Depression. In fact, *"The Great Depression is a critical event in American History. Many issues contributed to the magnitude of this recession, so it is difficult to identify the causes and underlying mechanisms contributing to the Great Depression"* (Byrne 2). However, the main reasons were; agricultural overproduction, manufacturing overproduction, the stock market crash and unequal distribution of wealth and drought.

Throughout the WWI (1914-1918), America was exporting food and other goods to European Allies. During this period, the federal government's food administrator "Herbert Hoover" supported the overproduction of American agriculture. So, the U.S farmers increased their production using the new farm technologies. They used to produce 690,000 bushels of wheat yearly before the war. However this product increased to 945,000 bushels per year by the end of the war (McNeill et al). In 1930s, the farmers continued to

overproduce different crops but these later was less demanded by the European after the war. As a result the farm products declined and the farmers were deeply indebted.

In the Roaring Twenties Americans consumed their money on buying cars, refrigerators, electric machines, radios, etc. Thus, there was an overproduction of the industrial goods. But, the necessity of these items and goods had been decreased in the late 1920's which forced many factories to reduce their products and laid up many workers. Also, the plummeting stock prices and the less demand on them caused the stock market crash on October 29th, 1929. Bryn O'Callaghan affirms:

By the end of the 1920s not enough people were buying the products of America's expanded industries... The most important cause of the Wall Street Crash was simply this – that too few Americans were not earning enough money to buy the goods that they themselves were producing (97).

Furthermore, the stock market was popular in 1929; people used to buy stocks in lower prices then sell them for profit. Usually, buying stocks was on credit or margin. However, in the late 1920's the stocks increased rapidly which caused over stocked goods. When the stock market crashed in 1929, many companies and people could not pay for these stocks and faced debts. Many investors hold on their shares and had a dream that prices will rise again, but in fact it did not. In the same page Bryn O'Callaghan states:

A panic began. On Thursday, October 24, 1929- Black Thursday - 13 million shares were sold. On the following Tuesday, October 29 Terrifying Tuesday - 16.5 million were sold. By the end of the year the value of all shares had dropped by \$40, 000 million. Thousands of people, especially those who had borrowed to buy on the margin, found themselves facing debt and ruin (97).

In fact, during the years of economic prosperity in 1920's, there was a mal distribution of wealth between the Americans; a lot of people had limited capitals and materials. Those people were not able to develop their situation, while only a few people were rich. The government caused the unequal distribution of wealth by cutting taxation for the wealthy. In 1920s, the rich people were able to increase their products and profits. However, workers who represented the majority of American society were less able to buy the overproduced goods.

During the Great Depression, the international economic situation was affected by the Great War. Many European and postcolonial countries were facing economic problems because of the war costs and damages. As a result, those countries could not pay their debts to America which, in turn, contributed to the depression. Bryn O'Callaghan says:

Countries such as Britain and Germany had not prospered after the war as the United States had. They had often paid for their purchases with money borrowed from American banks. After the Wall Street Crash the banks wanted their money back. European buyers became short of cash and American overseas sales dried up almost completely (98).

America was affected too by these international changes; during the war the American income relied on food exports to European countries. But after the war European countries had produced and consumed their own food, since they had not enough money to buy the American products. In addition, it was difficult for U.S to sell meat and cereal crops on the world market, because there was a competition with other producers from other nations like Argentina and South Africa.

In 1930's a severe drought swept the Plains states and decreased the productivity of these lands. Million acres of lands in the middle portion of America experienced an

extended drought and these areas became known as the Dust Bowl. American farmers who were struggling with these conditions moved from Oklahoma, Colorado, Kansas and Texas to the California with their dreams to find better life conditions there. This was reported in John Steinbeck's third novel, the Pulitzer Prize-winning. *The Grapes of Wrath*, which portrays the harsh conditions experienced by a family of sharecroppers as they are forced to leave the Dust Bowl of Oklahoma and move to California. (Brenda 6 and 90).

5.2. Life during the Great Depression:

Everyone was affected by the great depression due to the economic crisis that shifted from prosperity to poverty. The rate of unemployment rose terribly and a lot of jobless people migrated to other places with their dreams to find a better life and a good job. In addition, hundreds of families were struggling to survive and the middle class people had to adapt with the new harsh life and poverty. In his book *An illustrated history of the USA*, Bryn O'Callaghan reports: "*Many were soon without homes or food and had to live on charity. Millions spent hours shuffling slowly forward in "breadlines." Here they received free pieces of bread or bowls of soup, paid for by money collected from those who could afford it*" (98).

Furthermore, many pupils had cut their studies, while others were still learning in very difficult conditions. Those pupils were dropped from school during 1932-1933 because many communities closed their schools for economic problems. Consequently, big rates of teenagers (nearly 80%) held the responsibility of finding jobs and helping their families instead of learning. Throughout the height depression, 250.000 teenagers who were labeled as "riding the rails" left their homes in search for employment and better life around America (<http://academic.mu.edu>).

In 1932, the department of Health in New York City declared that 20.5 % of children were suffering from malnutrition especially, those who were living in the rural areas. Poor

families were not able to buy adequate food like milk; fruit, fresh vegetables and eggs. As a result, the majority of poor children were losing their stamina and they had no strength to fight disease. Thus, the rate of children death increased drastically during the Great Depression.

Concerning women, their mission became very hard and nearly impossible during the depression. In the 1920's, women used to live a life of freedom and prosperity. However, this situation changed during the 1930's when women struggled to adapt the new way of life during the depression. They had to feed their families while there was no enough food or ingredients for preparing a dish. Those women were even working in dangerous conditions beside men in order to support their families.

Different areas in U.S like Oklahoma, Colorado, Kansas and Texas became known as the Dust Bowl because they were affected by the drought. In these areas, farmers found themselves without lands, money or crops. So, they were obliged to migrate with their families to the urban areas. Life there was too difficult for the migrant farmers who were homeless and jobless. It was very hard to find a job like a cotton picker and if it is found, workers would not be paid enough to feed their families.

Just before the Great Depression, the middle class accounted for 15 to 20 percent in American society. However, by the 1930's, this class felt the losses of the depression. Many people of the middle class descended to the lower class when almost all banks close and the stock market crashed. *“Those who had bet everything on the continued success of the stock market, believing that stock values would continue to rise at an astronomical pace, found themselves and their families penniless”*. As a result, people of the middle class were bankrupted and they sold all their belongings in order to live. (Brenda 98).

Finally, due to the dramatic change of economical and social life in the 1930's in America, the American Dream had changed too. What was a dream of gaining luxurious

products as cars and clothes during the 1920's, became a difficult and a complex dream of struggling to survive during the 1930's. Hence, as the depression extended for a decade, the dreams of many Americans were only to find a job that would help them to support their families and a shelter to survive. The schema below illustrates the development of the American Dream within the Great Depression.

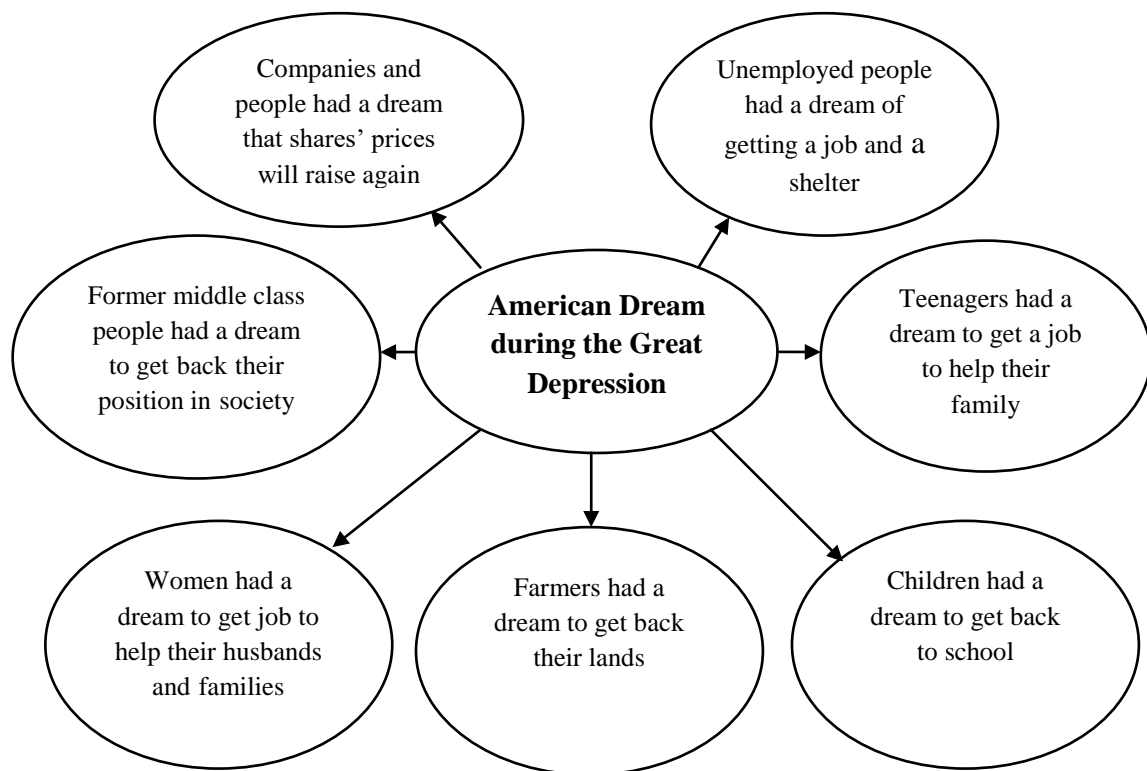


Figure.4. The Notion of the American Dream during the Great Depression

To sum up, the Great Depression was marked by an increase rate of unemployment and a decrease in economy which led to the change in people's way of thinking about the American Dream. What was a dream of freedom, liberty and pursuit of happiness that was stated in the Declaration of Independence became a dream of struggle to survive. However, Franklin Roosevelt's policy of The New Deal helped in solving the depression's problems. The Great Depression was finally ended with the entry of America to WWII in 1941.

6- Conclusion:

In conclusion, the idea related to the term of the American Dream dated back to the first settlers in the New World in 1492. The spirit of the American Dream at the beginning was based on freedom of religion, liberty, equality and the pursuit of happiness as it was stated in the Declaration of Independence. The way to achieve the American Dream for the first settlers was to be virtuous and to work hard in order to please their God.

However, few years later, the American Dream passed through different stages and the notion of that dream changed through time and within different generations. As the American nation progressed, the American Dream took a new form and changed from virtue to materialism. During Industrialization and the Roaring Twenties, the American Dream became the materialistic search for money or the constant race to find a job like in the depression days.

The development of the American Dream inspired many writers to include it in their works, thus bringing the American Dream into literature environment. This dissertation will examine two novels from the 20th century that they will point out the ways in which the American Dream has changed. The next chapter will analyze Scott Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby* which represents the Roaring Twenties and John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* which represents the Great Depression.

The Great Gatsby and *The Grapes of Wrath* both explore the changes of the American Dream, but they represent very disparate models of society. The first novel portrays life during the economic prosperity, while the second is set during the devastating depression of the 1930's. By analyzing the two novels, with the American Dream as a main theme, one can understand how the American Dream was shaped and how the changes in society have changed Americans' conception of the American Dream over time.

III/ Chapter Two

Ambition and Strife to Fulfill the

American Dream in *The Great*

Gatsby* and *The Grapes of Wrath

1/ Introduction:

In addition to what it has been recalled in the first chapter about the background and evolution of the American Dream over time, this chapter will analyze the American Dream in the world of literature. In fact, the great impact of the American Dream on the literary works appeared during the 20th century after it was coined by James Truslow in 1931 in his book *The Epic of America*. Many writers of that period used the theme of the American Dream in their works which contributed widely in shaping their writings. So, As far as the 20th century novels are concerned, *The Great Gatsby* by Scott Fitzgerald and *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck are two prominent works of that period.

This chapter will deal with the two abovementioned novels which are very celebrated in American literature since they deal with a very important issue; the American Dream. The two novels are set during different periods of time, thus, they have different views about the American Dream. On the one hand, Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* is set during times of prosperity known as the Roaring Twenties. On the other hand, Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* takes place during the Great Depression. The shift of American life from prosperity of the 1920's to the depression of the 1930's, led to a change in the concept of the American Dream.

This chapter will be devoted to a comparative analysis of the American Dream in two different epochs presented in two different works by two different authors. It will study the American Dream in the 1920's in Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and the American Dream in the 1930's in Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*. This chapter will explore the American Dream as a main theme in the two novels. Then, it will afford a comparative analysis of characters' dreams in both works and how they struggle hardly to achieve their dreams. Finally, it will show the characters' perseverance to overcome all the obstacles that stand in their way.

2/ Theme of the American Dream in *The Great Gatsby*:

The Great Gatsby is a novel written by the American author F. Scott Fitzgerald and first published in April 1925. The story sets in different places of New York during the summer of 1922. Through this novel, Fitzgerald criticizes American society of the Roaring Twenties. That Decade is known of extraordinary economic prosperity and social changes like the spread of jazz music, flapper women, extravagant parties and illegal activities. All these changes are reflected in *The Great Gatsby* through which Fitzgerald introduces a set of themes like love, wealth, materialism, social class, and gender to portray the 1920's. However, the most dominant theme is that of the American Dream.

Scott Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby* explores the American dream of the Roaring Twenties. Almost all characters in *The Great Gatsby* have goals and visions, but the main idea of the novel is centralized on the protagonist Jay Gatsby's great dream. In his Bloom's Modern Critical Interpretations, the Professor of Humanities at Yale University Harold Bloom says: "*Whatever the American Dream has become, its truest contemporary representative remains Jay Gatsby.*" (5) This passage is evidence that *The Great Gatsby* is not only an ordinary love story. However, it depicts the modern American Dream through its reliable character Gatsby. In exploring the American Dream, Fitzgerald also uses other literary strategies including the geographical settings and symbols.

The novel's main events take place in different areas of New York; each one is populated by a particular group of people who have a specific economic status. Both of New York district, the East Egg and West Egg are inhabited by riche people. However, there is a distinction between these two places. The first, is a fashionable area populated by the established rich or "*the old money*" people like Tom and Daisy Buchanan. In describing this place Nick says "*Across the courtesy bay the white palaces of fashionable*

East Egg glittered along the water” (11). While, the second is a less fashionable place and it is settled by the new rich like Jay Gatsby (11).

The nouveau rich are a group who do not inherit their economic status i.e. they are derived from the working class. But their passion to be wealthy and equal to those old money people motivates them to compose wealth illegally. They reflect the American Dream of the 1920's which is about having money, a good job, a big house, nice clothes and being happy. In *The Great Gatsby*, the protagonist Jay Gatsby is an example of many new rich Americans during the Jazz Age. Those people take advantage of the years of prohibition in America to build riches through bootlegging or smuggling Alcohol and other organized crimes.

In his novel, Scott Fitzgerald shows Gatsby's dream as a great desire to be rich in order to gain Daisy his lover. In explaining Jay's dream to gain Daisy, Nick says:

I decided to call to him. Miss Baker had mentioned him at dinner and that would do for an introduction. But I didn't call to him for he gave a sudden intimation that he was content to be alone—he stretched out his arms toward the dark water in a curious way, and far as I was from him I could have sworn he was trembling. Involuntarily I glanced seaward—and distinguished nothing except a single green light, minute and far away, that might have been the end of a dock. When I looked once more for Gatsby he had vanished, and I was alone again in the unquiet darkness (27- 28).

One who reads the above quotation, s/he will learn that the green light on the end of the Buchanan dock indicates Gatsby's love of Daisy and symbolizes his hope and dream of acquiring her. Gatsby is not the only dreamer in the novel. However, there are other characters that portray the 1920's American Dream.

Gatsby's neighbor in the West Egg, the narrator Nick Carraway, moves from Minnesota to New York in the summer of 1922 to pursue a career as a bond salesman. He has a dream of getting an important job. In the novel, Nick tells the readers that he has enrolled in the military service during the Great War. But after the end of this later, he moves to New York for learning the bond business. According to Nick it is a good job, because the majority of his family members and friends practice it. Therefore, this work can support him too (08).

Moreover, in the East Egg, Fitzgerald portrays the old money dream of being happy. Though these people have an important economic position, however they are always looking for happiness. Tom for example, is a wealthy man who has a beautiful wife, Daisy, whom he loves so much but he is cheating on her. He has an affair with other woman Myrtle who provides him happiness. The author introduces Myrtle as Tom's enjoyable toy. During this period a lot of women were still considered as a property. This portrays the American dream of many rich men in 1920's when businessmen are not looking just for having expansive automobiles or wonderful houses. Rather they pretend to possess more than one beautiful woman or flapper.

The Valley of Ashes is another area mentioned in *The Great Gatsby*. It is where Mrs Wilson and his wife Myrtle are settling. Nick portrays this region as a gloomy place where the working class people are struggling to survive. He uses the gray color in describing the Valley of Ashes to reflect poverty:

This is a valley of ashes--a fantastic farm where ashes grow like wheat into ridges and hills and grotesque gardens; where ashes take the forms of houses and chimneys and rising smoke and, finally, with a transcendent effort, of men who move dimly and already crumbling through the powdery air. Occasionally a line of gray cars crawls along an invisible track, gives out a ghastly creak,

and comes to rest, and immediately the ash gray men swarm up with leaden spades and stir up an impenetrable cloud, which screens their obscure operations from your sight (29).

In the Valley of Ashes, the working class characters are dreaming too. On the one hand, George's dream is to have enough money that enables him to reorganize a comfortable life with his wife away from the miserable situation in the Valley of Aches. On the other hand, Myrtle like any other American woman, is dreaming to have the luxurious life of the upper class.

Unlike George, Myrtle is unsatisfied in her life with her husband George, because he has not enough money to please her. Myrtle says:

The only crazy I was when I married him. I knew right away I made a mistake. He borrowed somebody's best suit to get married in, and never told me about it, and the man came after it one day when he was out ... I gave it to him and then I lay down and cried to beat that band all afternoon (41).

Myrtle's American Dream makes her cheating on her husband, George, and practicing adultery with another rich man, Tom. She has a dream that Tom can provide her the money and gifts she wants. Myrtle hates Daisy because she thinks that she is stealing her dream of being a wife to the old rich Tom, she says: "*Daisy! Daisy! Daisy!*" shouted Mrs. Wilson. *'I'll say it whenever I want to! Daisy! Daisy'*" (43). This quotation shows Daisy as an obstacle that prevents Myrtle from achieving her dream of marrying Tom.

The female characters in *The Great Gatsby* like Daisy, Myrtle and Jordan depict the modern American women and their American dreams. During this period women like to be more flappers and seek to date or marry with rich men. In Fitzgerald's novel, all of Daisy, Myrtle and Jordan are flappers; they are attending parties, smoking and drinking alcohol in

public. Though they are married, Daisy and Myrtle have affairs with other men. Daisy marries Tom because he is wealthy, while Myrtle is dating him for the same reason. Daisy tells Nick that she wants her daughter to be a “*beautiful little fool*” (24). Being beautiful is the dream of any American woman in 1920’s as Daisy asserts: “*the best thing a girl can be in this world, a beautiful little fool.*”(24). One may understand that beauty and fullness are important qualities that serves the Roaring Twenties woman and helps her to achieve her dreams.

When WWI ends, many Americans start looking for happiness during the Roaring Twenties. Those people are exemplified by the guests who attend Gatsby’s parties. In chapter four, Nick mentions a long list of Gatsby’s guests and ends his list by saying: “*All these people came to Gatsby’s house in the summer.*”(69). In fact, the majority of them are coming without an invitation. Nick says: “*People were not invited—they went there. They got into automobiles which bore them out to Long Island and somehow they ended up at Gatsby’s door*” (47). Those people are coming from different places just to have enjoyable times in Gatsby’s big house. They like to drink alcohol, dance on the Jazz music and constitute new relationships with rich men.

In *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald uses a lot of symbols that indicate the 1920’s American Dream plus to the colors of silver and gold that indicates wealth. The narrator Nick, describes Gatsby’s and Tom’s possessions like; their large beautiful houses, expensive automobiles and luxurious life. However, this is the life that many Americans are dreaming of and wish to possess it.

3/ Theme of the American Dream in *The Grapes of Wrath*:

In *The Great Gatsby* we have seen the characters' dreams to accumulate money as much as possible. Now, moving to *The Grapes of Wrath*, the characters’ dreams are very

different from that of *The Great Gatsby* since they live during the most difficult period in America; the Great Depression. However, the depression of 1930's was associated with a drought and dust storms known as the Dust Bowl. *The Grapes of Wrath* is written by John Steinbeck during that harsh period and published in 1939. The novel narrates the story of many families' dreams to reach California during the Dust Bowl Migration, focusing on the Joad family as a main example.

The main plot of *The Grapes of Wrath* focuses on the Joads who, like many other proletariat families, are obliged to leave their lands due to the economic crises and the drought. During the Dust Bowl, farming was a source of life for many people, but the drought destroyed agriculture particularly in Oklahoma. This natural disaster cut down production of crops and forced the banks to evict farmers from their lands; because those farmers could not pay their loans. This resulted in the migration of many Oklahoman families to California with their dreams to find a job and a house there. Thus, the American Dream of searching for a job and a house will be discussed in the following paragraphs, focusing on the main characters of the Joad family.

The Joads have seen an announcement which said that fruit pickers are needed for a good wage. The Joads, then, as well as a lot of families, set out to California after they see the proclaimed opportunities. In fact, they have no other choice but to leave their lands believing that their dreams will be found as soon as they reach California. There is a *gold rush* for work and the Joads had a dream that if they will be able to attain a job all their problems will be fixed. However, already before they set out on their journey, each member of the family has his own dream after getting a job.

Unlike women of the 1920's who have the lust of gaining money and being wealthy, women of 1930's dreams exceed that of accumulating money to that of finding a job and house in order to live. In *The Great Gatsby*, Myrtle cheats on her husband because he is

poor and wants to be with Tom Buchanan to gain money from him. By contrast, In *The Grapes of Wrath*, Ma Joad never leaves her family despite their poverty. Rather she tries to courage them and pushes them to find a work. Ma Joad has a dream that if they get a job when they reach California, they will be able to get a house when she asserts: *“I wonder—that is, if we all get jobs an' all work—maybe we can get one of them little white houses”* (Steinbeck 95). Later on, she says excitedly:

With four men a-workin' maybe I can get some credit right off. Fust thing I'll get is coffee, 'cause you been wanting that, an' then some flour an' bakin' powder an' some meat. Better not get no side-meat right off. Save that for later. Maybe Sat'dy. An' soap. Got to get soap ... An' milk. I'll get some milk 'cause Rosasharn, she ought to have milk (382).

The above quotation shows Ma joad's desire to get a job. She thinks that if four members of her family can get a job, they will have enough food to eat and all the things they need to survive.

Furthermore, Rose of Sharon has a dream that if her husband Connie will get a job, they will have a luxurious life and will be able to live in a town rather than a country. Before they reach California, she says to her mother:

Connie gonna get a job in a store or maybe a fact'ry. An' he's gonna study at home, maybe radio, so he can git to be a expert an' maybe later have his own store... An' we'll go to pitchers whenever ... An' we'll have a car, little car... An' we'll live in town an' go to pitchers whenever an'—well, I'm gonna have a 'lectric iron (171- 172).

Unlike Daisy who wants her daughter to be a beautiful girl in the future, the pregnant Rose of Sharon thinks of her baby's future and wants him to have a prosperous life. She

emphasizes that her baby should be born in a house, have a place to study and obtain all the toys he wants to play with. She says to Connie: "*the baby'll have all new stuff... but—well, when the baby comes, maybe he'll be all done studyin' an' we'll have a place, little bit of a place. We don't want nothin' fancy, but we want it nice for the baby—*" (172). Later in the novel she tells her husband that he has to insure a house for the baby coming (264).

Moreover, the protagonist of the novel Tom Joad, has a dream to get a work in California. After being released from jail, Tom returns to his family to work in his father's land. But, once he arrived he finds that the family is leaving to California after being evicted from their land. However, Tom joins his family in their journey, even though is dubious, because Ma Joad convinces him to go with them. During the journey, Tom thinks that if they get a work in California, they will have money and a house to live in (175).

In fact, Tom is introduced as a strong and well build character, thus, he can "*take any kind of work*" (255). When Tom is asked by another man about how many of them are going to work, Tom answers: "*They's four men. Is this here hard work?*" (387). Additionally, Tom wants to work hard to have meat for the dinner, he says to his father, his uncle and his brother: "*Come on, let's hurry. I want ta get some meat an' bread in me tonight*" (387). Therefore, Tom believes in hard work in order to gain his food not like Gatsby who accumulate his wealth illegally.

In the 1930's, most Americans were affected by the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl as they lost their jobs and lands. As a result, when they migrated to California they had a dream to re-establish their former lives. In *The Grapes of Wrath*, the kind of home that the Joads dreamed of is a home similar to the one they used to own in Oklahoma. Their vision of a home is a piece of land that they can both live in and work in. Unlike Gatsby who wants to buy a big house just to please Daisy, the Joads want a land where they can both live and work. Pa Joad for instance has a dream to get a house with a land

when he says: *"We'll get out west an' we'll get work an' we'll get a piece a growin' land with water."* (196). Yet, this suggests exactly the type of home the Joads desire.

When the Joads set out to California they take Jim Casy with them who meet with Tom after he is paroled. Casy has a dream that if he works he will find happiness when he says: *"I got to get goin' west... I can't stay here no more. I got to go where the folks is goin' [California]. I'll work in the fiel's, an' maybe I'll be happy"* (98). Unlike the guests who come to Gatsby's house just to have fun and enjoy and then leave uninterested about how these parties cost, the Joads' guest Jim Casy cannot stay for free. He says: *"I'm a-eatin' your food an' a-takin' up room. An' I ain't give you nothin'. Maybe I could get a steady job an' maybe pay back some a the stuff you've give me."* (262). Therefore, he wants to get a work in order to be able to help the family who helped him before.

Another character in the novel is Al Joad who is a skilled mechanic and wishes to work in a garage rather than a land. He has a dream that if he works in a garage, he will get a little car to drive and meet with pretty girls in the road. (320). Well, after Al falls in love with Aggie Wainwright, he plans for his life with her when he says to his family: *"Well, me an' Aggie Wainwright, we figgers to get married, an' I'm gonna git a job in a garage, an' we'll have a rent' house for a while"* (443). Al thinks that if he gets a job, he will afford everything he needs for himself and his wife and he will be able to pay rent for a house as well. Through deep reading of *The Great Gatsby* and *The Grapes of Wrath*, one can notice that Al Joad and George are somehow similar. Both of them are mechanics and both want to work hard to please their wives. Thus, they share the same dreams.

Unlike Fitzgerald who describes West Egg and East Egg as a place for the rich men to achieve their dreams, Steinbeck portrays California as a place for the poor to attain their dreams. California becomes as the Promised Land where characters can go to fulfill all their hopes. After seeing the handbills which state that they need men for work, people

have one destination in their minds that is California. Those people are searching for better life and they have a dream that they “*can start again, in the new rich land—in California, where the fruit grows*” and that they “*can start over*” (91). Steinbeck wants to tell us that people believes that opportunities existed in California can compensate their losses in Oklahoma. However, nothing comes easy and people have to struggle in order to attain their dreams.

4/ The Characters’ Strife to achieve the American Dream:

4.1. Jay Gatsby’s Struggle to achieve his Dreams:

The Great Gatsby is a historical portrayal of the 1920’s and a biographical overview of the author. Through this novel, Fitzgerald reflects the Roaring Twenties’ American Dream as well as his personnel dream. Just like the author, the protagonist Jay Gatsby cannot marry his wealthy lover Daisy, since he is not a rich man. By contrast, Daisy who is a rich and a beautiful girl marries the bourgeois Tom Buchanan instead of Gatsby. Hence, Jay Gatsby decides to struggle to achieve his dream and tries to gain Daisy back.

Fitzgerald’s novel describes the struggle of the character Jay Gatsby to attain his dream. Throughout the plot of the story, Gatsby is trying to recall his past with Daisy. One may notice that Nick tries to show Gatsby the impossibility of his dream; “*You can’t repeat the past*”, Nick says. Nevertheless, Gatsby responds: “*Yes you can, old sport*” (117). When Gatsby first met Daisy, he experiences a wonderful feeling of love. But, Gatsby is not able to marry his flower Daisy because he is a poor boy. All what he has is hope and readiness to work hard and constitute the money that Daisy needs. However, establishing a wealth requires time and effort. But, Daisy is not ready to wait Gatsby for the whole of her life and she marries with another rich man Tom Buchanan. “*She only married you because I was poor and she was tired of waiting for me*”. (137) Gatsby says to Tom.

After the marriage of Daisy and Tom, Gatsby does not give up at all. Moreover, he determines that the only way to get back her is through being wealthy at any price. As a result, he is transformed from a soldier who defends his country in the war to a bootlegger who challenges the American law and rules. *"He's a bootlegger, said the young ladies moving somewhere between his flowers and cocktails."* (67). In fact many Americans become bootleggers and criminals during the period of prohibition; they want to gather a big amount of money in a short period of time. For Gatsby and all other bootleggers and criminals of 1920's, it doesn't matter how to gather money but how much you can gather. According to them the end justifies the means.

Gatsby's American dream of being a rich man becomes real. Now and after five years full of hard work and risk, he is a new rich man who inhabits the West Egg. However, his original dream of getting Daisy is still unattained yet. That is why Gatsby continues struggling to achieve his goal and he lives near from her: *"Gatsby bought that house so that Daisy would be just across the bay"*, Nick says (85). Also, Jay throws extravagant parties each Saturday in an attempt to meet Daisy again:

There was music from my neighbor's house through the summer nights. In his blue gardens men and girls came and went like moths among the whisperings and the champagne and the stars... in the afternoon I watched his guests diving from the tower of his raft, or taking the sun on the hot sand of his beach while his two motor-boats slit the waters of the Sound, drawing aquaplanes over cataracts of foam. On week-ends his Rolls-Royce became an omnibus, bearing parties from the city between nine in the morning and long past midnight, while his station wagon scampered like a brisk yellow bug to meet all trains. And on Mondays eight servants, including an extra gardener, toiled all day

with mops and scrubbing-brushes and hammers and garden-shears, repairing the ravages of the night before (45).

Gatsby consumes his accumulated wealth in such lavish parties to establish an important social status for himself. Therefore, he will be the man that Daisy would leave the world just to be with.

The last expression in *The Great Gatsby* is “*So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past*” (188). Fitzgerald uses this metaphor to highlight on the necessity of struggling to achieve the American dream. Here, the current are the obstacles that prevent characters from achieving their past dreams. But they are supposed to challenge these barriers through working hard. In *The Great Gatsby*, Jay Gatsby is struggling against the current that enables him to get Daisy.

Although Gatsby accumulates a great fortune, he knows that his money does not make him in the same status as the Buchanan because he is still the inferior new rich man. Moreover, Daisy does not attend any of Gatsby’s parties that are held for the purpose of meeting her. But, Jay continues struggling, planning and trying other ways to reencounter his lover and keep her for himself. Just like the Joads do.

4.2. The Joad Family’s Struggle to achieve their Dreams:

In *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald describes West Egg and East Egg as an area that people want to join in order to accomplish wealth. By contrast, John Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath* depicts California as a nice place that everyone dreamed of in order to find a work and a house. Unlike Oklahoma which becomes a deserted land due to the Dust Bowl, California has a fertile land and a perfect weather for growing crops. In fact, Oklahomans are informed by handbills that 800 fruit pickers are needed in California (154). So, they make their way to California to benefit from the opportunities available.

People become convinced that California is a land of plenty that will allow them to gain a good job, a nice house and a fertile land. These are the main reasons that drive people to migrate to California in order to achieve their dreams. Unlike characters of *The Great Gatsby* who struggle to attain their dreams during the most prosperous period in American history, characters of *The Grapes of Wrath* struggle to achieve their dreams during the most turbulent period in America. However, they cannot reach to their dreams rapidly and easily, rather they will face obstacles in their ways and they have to struggle to make their dreams become true. The Joad family is a good example of that.

When the Joads set out West to California, each member carries his own dream with hopes to fulfill it when reaching there. Actually, with dreams come responsibilities which in turn lead the one to struggle toward those dreams and this is just what the Joads do. After the Joad family decides to go to California, the first thing they did is to sell their extra possessions in order to gain some money and buy a car for the trip. The next day they start for California, things begin to change when they face many obstacles in their trip.

The first obstacle is the car that breaks down midway, because the salesman sells them an old car for a low price. Subsequently, they meet and befriend the Wilsons who agree to take some pieces from the Joads' car and use them in their car. In turn, the Joads go along in the Wilsons' car which soon after breaks down as well. Nevertheless, they did not stand there watching it, rather they try to find the replacement parts for the broken ones. Al Joad is a skilled mechanic and he suggests repairing the car with the help of Tom. (145).

When the car breaks down, Pa Joad agrees on Tom, Al and Casy's decisions to stay with the broken car, while the others carry on. But Ma Joad refuses her husband's decision to separate family members; because her main concern is to keep family unity. She wants her family to stay together in order to be able to struggle and help each other to reach California. However, Ma Joad cannot prevent her family from separating apart. The next

obstacles that the family has to face are death and loss of family members.

The first day of the trip, Grampa becomes very ill and he passes away and the family members have to stand on their feet without him. Afterward, Granma's health declines as she is affected by Grampa's death and she dies on the way to California. When Granma dies, Ma Joad does not tell her family in order not to panic. She does not tell the guard in the borders as well; because if she did the family would not be allowed to enter to California. Ma Joad struggles with her own psyche when she stays all the night lying back beside the corpse of Granma, waiting for the right moment to tell her family.

Ma Joad has to do such a struggle because if she tells the guard, all the family will be prevented from crossing the border and achieving their dreams. The family wonders Ma Joad's powerful strength to keep Granma's death secret all that time. Tom is astonished and he says: "*Jesus Christ! You layin' there with her all night long!*" (239). Ma Joad replies: "*The fambly hadda get acrost*". (239). She did the right thing for her family although it was not easy for her to stay beside a dead body, but she is obliged. Thus, her strength and struggle allow the family to pass to California and achieve their dreams.

The loss of family members is another obstacle that the Joads have to face. At the Colorado River, Noah leaves the family to live in his own and the family has to carry on without him. Then, Connie abandons the family and his pregnant wife who struggles to reach California for the baby's sake. When Connie leaves the family, Pa joad starts blaming Connie for his negligence but Ma Joad stops him by saying: "*Rosasharn gonna have a little fella an' that baby is half Connie*"(285). Ma Joad says that in order not to hurt her daughter and also to show her that she is not alone after her husband leaves her.

Ma tries to support Rose of Sharon emotionally and helps her to forget Connie and move on to California without him. In his *Extended Essay: What was Great Depression's*

Effect on John Steinbeck's Grapes of Wrath and Of Mice and Men?, Metin Çalış says: “There isn't any information about what happened to the quitters in the novel. This lack of info can be interpreted as: what is important is to fight against obstacles, the leavers are sentenced to be forgotten” (6). This explains that characters should not stand and cry for those who quit the family. Rather, they have to forget them and carry on their way toward their dreams. Unlike Gatsby who tries to recall the past with Daisy, the Joads have to forget the past in order to carry on. In fact, this is just what the Joad do; they try not to recall the loss of the other members like Noah and Connie or the death of Grampa and Granma. Thus, the family fights the barriers that face them and continue their way.

When the Joads take up again the way to California, they meet people returning from California claiming that there is no work available. Nonetheless, these claims do not stop the Joads from carrying on their trip. The Joads believe that California is like Garden of Eden, where they can fulfill their dreams as Owens Louis states in his book *The Grapes of Wrath: Trouble in the Promised Land*:

The settlement of America may be seen as a process of ever westward expansion in search of that Eden...Surely, if there were ever to be a Garden [Garden of Eden] it must be at the western edge. And the beauty and fecundity of California seemed to fulfill that promise (47- 48).

In order to reach that Garden, the family has to ignore the negative claims that people tell them about California. They have to struggle to reach there and see by themselves rather than listening to others.

Moreover, Ivy Wilson tells Pa Joad that may be they do not need workers in California anymore, because the handbills say 800 pickers needed but there are more than that number. However, Pa Joad still believe in his dream and he says that California is a big

state and if he does not find work in one part of it he can find it in another part where he can pick any fruit he wants. (154). This shows that Pa Joad has a strong will enough to fight any obstacle that would prevent him from achieving his dreams.

The Joads fight against all these obstacles to reach to the Promised Land where they can gain a job and a house. However, as soon as they reach there; they find it hard to gain a job with a good wage. But the Joads do not give up and they are still persisting to achieve their dreams. Just like Steinbeck who tries to show the reader the strong insistence of the Joads to attain their dreams no matter what the cost is. Scott Fitzgerald similarly attempts to show Gatsby's constant persistence to gain Daisy back. Thus, both Steinbeck and Fitzgerald depict their protagonists' perseverance to reach their goals.

5/ Characters' Perseverance to attain the American dream:

5.1. Jay Gatsby's Passionate Determination to get Daisy:

Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby* reflects its protagonist as a stubborn person who refuses to surrender. He is still persisting to meet Daisy and steal her heart again. As an upper class woman who inhabits the East Egg, Daisy does not attend Gatsby's parties in the West Egg. So, Jay decides to arrange a meeting with her. In chapter four, the readers learn that Gatsby asks Jordan Baker and Nick Carraway help to encounter Daisy.

Jordan informs Nick that Gatsby knows Daisy from a long period of time and he is deeply in love with her. Now, Nick is supposed to arrange a reunion between them "*He wants to know—*" continued Jordan "*—if you'll invite Daisy to your house some afternoon and then let him come over.*", she says (85). Gatsby does not ask this favor directly from Nick, however, he lets Jordan doing that. Miss Baker says: "*He's afraid. He's waited so long. He thought you might be offended. You see he's a regular tough underneath it all*" (85). One may note that even asking help from the others is not easy for Gatsby. It requires

a long waiting and a careful planning from him. At the end Nicky invites her to have tea at his house without mentioning the presence of Gatsby.

Jay Gatsby is not only a persistent character who wants to achieve his dream; this man seems so smart as well. He knows when and where he should meet Daisy. When Nick asks Gordon why Gatsby wants him and not her to arrange the meeting, she answers: *'He wants her to see his house, '... 'And your house is right next door''* (85) this quotation shows that Jay wants Daisy to come and see his possessions in the West Egg. Gatsby is planning to show Daisy that he is no more that poor boy who makes her tired from waiting him. Now, Gatsby is a rich person who has a big house and a lot of money.

In their meeting, Gatsby asks Daisy and Nick to make a tour around his house: *"I want you and Daisy to come over to my house"* he demands, *"I'd like to show her around."*(96). Jay intends to display and show off his wealth to Daisy when he says: *"My house looks well, doesn't it?"* *"See how the whole front of it catches the light."* *"Do you like it?"* *"I love it"*, Daisy replies (97). Through these expressions, the novel's protagonist is trying to lure his lover and attract her. He shows her almost everything he owns even his exported shirts (99). By doing so, Gatsby succeeds to revive his love with Daisy and following this meeting they begin an affair.

In *The Great Gatsby*, Jay's dream is not about having an affair with a married woman. However, his aim is to separate Daisy from her husband and recall his past with her *'I'm going to fix everything just the way it was before'*, he says (117). Jay is assured enough to face Daisy's husband and tell him that his wife does not love him: *"Your wife doesn't love you, '.* *"She's never loved you. She loves me"*, Gatsby says (137). Jimmy does not stop pursuing his dream Daisy. Even when this lady refuses to say that she *"never loved"* her husband (139) Gatsby still desires her. He follows and accompanies her as she is leaves the Plaza hotel where her lover Gatsby and her husband face each other.

In chapter seven, when Gatsby's car strikes and kills Myrtle, Nick asks Jay if Daisy is the murder. He says: "*Was Daisy driving?*" (150) and Gatsby replies: "*Yes, 'but of course I'll say I was'*" (150). Jay's answer shows his readiness to take the blame of killing Tom's mistress. Although he knows that the punishment could be so harsh, Jay would protect her. Therefore, his love of Daisy drives him to do anything to please and win her. Gatsby makes a great and hard work in order to achieve his dream. This effort allows him to be close from his lover. Moreover, Daisy now says that she loves Gatsby 'too' in the presence of Tom. And now his American Dream is seem so close to fulfill.

After the murder of Myrtle, Nick advises Gatsby to leave away. He says: "*you ought to go away,*" "*It's pretty certain they'll trace your car.*"(153) Nicky knows that his friend Gatsby is in a big trouble and he may spends the rest of his life in the prison. But Nick Carraway is also aware that it is so hard for Jay to leave without Daisy. He says: "*He couldn't possibly leave Daisy until he knew what she was going to do. He was clutching at some last hope.*"(154). This Speech indicates that it is still only one step for Gatsby to achieve his dream.

5.2. The Joad's Passionate Persistence for Work:

In the previous two pages we have seen Gatsby's persistence to gain his lover Daisy. Moving now to *The Grapes of Wrath*, we will see the Joads' persistent determination to achieve their dreams despite having problems. In the novel, the Joads face many obstacles during their journey and they struggle hardly to overcome these obstacles. However, their dreams are still unattainable and they have to persevere to achieve them. Although the difficulties they face, the Joads refuse to give up their desires of getting a job and a house. In order to show the Joads' perseverance to make their dreams become true, Steinbeck uses symbolism as an example of their perseverance.

The first symbol is route 66 through which the migrants have to pass in order to escape the oppressions they faced in Oklahoma. This highway is two hundred miles long, thus, it is going to be a long trip for the Joads to pass. Steinbeck represents road 66 as “*the path of people in flight*” (123). This road has only two directions; one takes forward to California and the other backward to Oklahoma. Since the Joads are seeking for a new beginning in California, they have to go forward and never look back. Thus, the road represents a challenge to the family and the only way to win that challenge is through steady perseverance.

Moreover, by presenting road 66 as “*the road of flight*” (123), Steinbeck wants to show that it is the only road toward freedom and happiness. As a result, thousands of migrants set out to California passing through the same road in order to reach the haven that waits for them there. The road become very crowded and the Joad family have nothing else than perseverance and struggle to pass that crowd toward their destination. Although they met people who warn them about harshness in California, the Joads continue their way normally and this is due to their constant persistence.

The second symbol, which is very significant, is the turtle that is described in chapter three. Steinbeck uses the entire chapter to portray that animal’s perseverance to cross the road. In the novel, chapter three narrates the journey of a land turtle slowly trying to cross the road by passing through a highway embankment (16). The turtle’s journey becomes very difficult as it encounters many obstacles in its way, just like the Joads do. However, the turtle continue toward its goal and never surrenders exactly like the family who encounters many obstacles but their strong will and determination allow them to go on and never give up. Thus, the turtle’ persistence foreshadows the Joads’.

Furthermore, the turtle is threatened by crazy drivers who try to throw it out of its way. As it tries to cross the road “*a sedan driven by a forty-year-old woman approached. She*

saw the turtle and swung to the right, off the highway, the wheels screamed and a cloud of dust boiled up” (17). The turtle avoid this attack, but suddenly another driver comes closer and “*saw the turtle and swerved to hit it. His front wheel struck the edge of the shell, flipped the turtle like a tiddly-wink, spun it like a coin and rolled it off the highway*” (17). After this attack, the turtle is thrown on its back but it manages to turn itself over and it carries on its way down the embankment on the other side of the road. Hence, the turtle is a good example of persistence that Steinbeck uses to show similarities between the turtle and the Joads.

The turtle’s persistence in the face of hardships is a sign of the perseverance of the Joads who, like the turtle, receive both kind and cruel treatments from the humans they encounter (www.LitCharts.com). But, their persistence is the path of the achievement of their dreams. For example, the Joads find that it is not easy to find a job in California since there are too many Okies there. So, their perseverance to find a job begins as soon as they reach California. First, the Joads settle in a Hoovervill near Bakersfield but they cannot find a job. As a result, they move to another camp at Weedpatch which is an organized government camp where the Joads find themselves very comfortable.

When the family settles at Weedpatch camp, they persist to find a work but only Tom gets a job laying pipe at a farm. Without enough money to earn, the Joads keep on their perseverance to find a better job. In *The Great Gatsby*, the protagonist Gatsby tries to reach his dream of getting Daisy by organizing constant parties. By contrast, in *The Grapes of Wrath*, the Joads move around the fields and compounds to find a good job. The family passes by a peach picking compound where they pick peaches and get enough money to buy some food. But soon after, they leave that compound forcing them to persist again to find another work. Thus, due to their persistence, they start a new job picking cotton in the fields.

One can say that their perseverance brings a result as they are able, fortunately, to find a shelter in a boxcar. In fact, they are very lucky to live in a boxcar which becomes a sign of high status since other families, who do not persevere enough, are forced to camp in tents. As a family, the entire members cooperate to work in the cotton fields, even the pregnant Rose of Sharon, which helps them to make enough money for their needs. Thus, the Joads' cooperation, perseverance and courage help them to survive and show that nothing can stand in their way.

With a good job and a safer shelter that protects family members, Steinbeck wants to show that the Joads' persistence to achieve their dreams finished after such a long struggle. Actually, Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* as well as Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* tries to show that persistence is the first step toward success. Although each protagonist in both novels has his private way to achieve his dreams, both persevere and insist to achieve them. Without persistent determination characters would not have the strength to attain their dreams. As a result, persistence helps them to work hard and to overcome all difficulties in their way.

6/ Conclusion:

To conclude, the American Dream is a main theme in both Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*. However, they portray the wide contrast between the dreams of the rich and the poor's. On the one hand, *The Great Gatsby* depicts the upper class dreams to accumulate money like Jay Gatsby who gathers wealth to gain Daisy's heart. On the other hand, *The Grapes of Wrath* gives a picture of the working class dreams to find a job and a house like the Joads who migrate to California to find a job in order to survive.

Jay Gatsby tries to gain money for passionate matters, while the Joads try to gain money in order to survive. Despite the different goals and views of the American Dream in

both novels, they share one point which is the hope to attain their dreams however costly. In *The Great Gatsby*, the protagonist Jay Gatsby hopes to get Daisy through the lure of wealth. Similarly, in *The Grapes of Wrath*, the Joads hope to get a job reaching California. Despite the obstacles they encounter, their ambitions keep them struggling and persisting.

Characters of both novels encounter hardships to achieve their goals but they stay well determined. Jay Gatsby as well as the Joads are in a constant perseverance to make their dreams happen. Jay Gatsby organizes parties to meet Daisy again, whereas the Joads keep moving around camps to find a job. Finally, characters' in both novels realize partly their dreams; Gatsby meets Daisy again and the Joads find a work and a house. As a result, their endless perseverance is the key to their success. However, their happiness after achieving their dreams did not last forever and their dreams collapse due to material and social reasons.

IV/ Chapter Three

The American Dream in Doubt

1/ Introduction:

For the light of what we have seen in the previous chapter, this section will investigate the failure of the American Dream. It tries to examine the reality behind this notion; if it really exists or further is only a myth. This chapter makes a better understanding about the rationales for the American Dream failure in both *The Great Gatsby* and *The Grapes of Wrath*. For Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, capitalism and materialism are the main reasons for the collapse of the dream. John Steinbeck, on the other hand, demonstrates this failure as a consequence of deception, capitalism and hostility.

Furthermore, this section will analyze the corruption of the American Dream through characters in both *The Great Gatsby* and *The Grapes of Wrath*. This section will focus on the upper class people's greed and selfishness that lead to the failure of the other's dreams. Thus, giving the story a new outlook as characters' fortune completely changed when they face reality of the failure of their dreams.

2/ The Failure of the American dream in *The Great Gatsby*:

2.1. Causes of the Failure of the American Dream:

Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* demonstrates the failure of the 1920's American Dream. In this novel, the main representative of the American Dream Gatsby and other characters do not achieve their dreams. Jay For example never attains his dream of marrying Daisy, while Myrtle lives and dies as a working class woman and not as an upper class lady. Also, George does not succeed to attain his dream. He cannot ensure the happiness and continuity of his marriage with Myrtle. Moreover, this man loses his wife for ever as she dies running away from him. As a modernistic novel, *The Great Gatsby* does not only criticize the Roaring Twenties American society, but also indicates the

growth of capitalism, materialism and immorality which leads to the failure of the American Dream.

2.1.1. Capitalism; Social distinction:

The German philosopher Karl Marx (1818-1883), divides society into two classes; Capitalist and proletarian class. In his *The Communist Manifesto*, he describes the capitalist or what is known as bourgeoisie as: “the owners of the means of social production and employers of wage labor.” On the other hand, the proletarian or the working class is defined as: “the class of modern wage-laborers who, having no means of production of their own, are reduced to selling their labor-power in order to live.”(Marx 79). Fitzgerald improves this theory by describing the capitalist American society of the twentieth century. He depicts an image about the social classes in the 1920’s through his novel.

Fitzgerald reflects the 1920’s as a capitalist one through the setting of the story. The narrator, Nick Carraway, describes the East Egg and West Egg as beautiful areas that are enjoyable for the millionaires. While the valley of ashes as a gloomy place where the working class people are struggling to survive. Fitzgerald uses the colors white and gray to make a distinction between the Aristocratic and the working-class places. The white palaces in East Egg symbolize beauty and wealth, while the gray color in the valley of ashes reflects poverty. However, the upper class prevents the lower class characters from achieving their dreams of being equal to the upper class. Thus, the social distinction is clear in *The Great Gatsby*.

Moreover, Fitzgerald shows the complex relationship between the different classes in the novel. First, the new rich people are derived from the working class and alienated by the old money class. Although they become wealthy, the new rich are still inferior comparing to those established rich people. For example, Gatsby as a poor man can not marry his upper class lover. Even when he establishes a good economic position, Gatsby is

still considered as a new rich person. However, in his society the established rich are more valuable rather than the new rich. As a result, Gatsby's dream to become socially equal to the Buchanan and gain his lover Daisy is failed.

In chapter seven Tom Buchanan says on Gatsby "*I suppose the latest thing is to sit back and let Mr. Nobody from Nowhere make love to your wife*" (136). This expression illustrates the relationship between the old and new rich classes. Tom doesn't alienate Gatsby only from his society, but he isolates him from the whole world by saying 'nowhere' and from humanity by using the word 'nobody'.

Furthermore, the working class characters are isolated in the valley of ashes. Those characters like George and Myrtle are even hurt by the rich. On the one hand, George fails to find happiness with a wife who prefers to be with an upper class man. On the other hand, Myrtle never attains her dream to be treated like the upper class woman Daisy. Although she becomes Tom's mistress, Myrtle is still belonging to the lower class. Nick reports: "*Tom Buchanan broke her nose with his open hand*". (43) This quote shows that Tom treats his mistress Myrtle as a slave. Tom never beats his wife because she shares him the same social status. Even when he discovers that Daisy is cheating on him, Tom promises her a better future instead of hurting or leaving her.

The novel ends with the death of Gatsby, Myrtle and her husband Wilson. All those characters are not from the elite class; they are, however, either from the new rich or working class. Daisy and Tom; the higher class people who affect other character's death and steal their dreams, are able to escape toward another place and carry on their life without being punish. Nick says about that:

They were careless people, Tom and Daisy—they smashed up things and creatures and then retreated back into their money or their vast carelessness or

whatever it was that kept them together, and let other people clean up the mess they had made.... (186).

Nick's description of the Buchanan reflects the American society of 1920's as a capitalist one. Also, edifies that the Aristocratic class have not only money, but they possess the power and authority. All these advantages motivate the working class to climb the social order through money. So, Capitalism in *The Great Gatsby* leads to materialism.

2.3.1. Materialism; Money and Pleasure:

Oxford English dictionary defines materialism as "*a propensity to consider material possessions and physical comfort as more important than spiritual values*". (Oxford English Dictionary). *The Great Gatsby* is a wonderful portrayal of the American Dream in the materialistic society of the Roaring Twenties. It provides a clear image about how are Americans throughout this period via its fictional characters and symbols. In F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel, the major characters are materialistic people who believe that wealth is the only source that brings happiness.

The first example of materialism in *The Great Gatsby* is Daisy Buchanan. Though, she loves the poor Gatsby, however, she chooses to marry Tom simply because he is an established rich man. Gatsby says: "...*I was poor and she was tired of waiting for me.*" (137). Like any other American women during the 1920's, Daisy believes that poverty is an obstacle toward happiness and that love can't compensate the absence of money. In describing Daisy, Gatsby states: "*Her voice is full of money.*" (126). Money is considered as a source of beauty for this lost generation. This is why Jay doesn't say that Daisy's voice is full of love or beauty. One may ask the question, if Daisy is not a materialistic woman what would happen to Gatsby's dream? The answer is that Daisy would marry the poor Gatsby and his American Dream would be never failed.

Tom Buchanan is another model of materialism. He is a wealthy man who uses money for his pleasure, a man who thinks that he can buy happiness with his money. Before Tom and Daisy's wedding, Tom "gave her a string of pearls valued at three hundred and fifty thousand dollars." (82). Tom utilizes his wealth to impress Daisy and convince her to marry him in the absence of her lover. By doing so, the antagonist Tom prevents Gatsby from being happy and steals his dream of marrying her. Tom also destroys Mr. Wilson dream. Myrtle's husband wants nothing more than being happy with his wife. However, this woman cannot provide happiness to her husband since she has an affair with the millionaire Tom.

Like Daisy, Myrtle's relationship to Tom is also based on materialism. She is unsatisfied with her husband George, because he has not enough money to please her. "*The only crazy I was, was when I married him*", Myrtle says (41). Myrtle prefers Tom's money over George's love and respect. She thinks that money brings happiness while poverty causes sadness. As a materialistic woman Myrtle cannot live in peace and happiness with her honest and lovely husband. At the end, her death is very symbolic. Gatsby's car that symbolizes materialism strikes Myrtle causing her death as well as the failure of her American Dream.

3/ The Collapse of the American Dream in *The Grapes of Wrath*:

3.1. Causes of the Collapse of the American Dream:

After discussing the causes of the failure of the American Dream in *The Great Gatsby*, this part will discuss the collapse of the dream in Steinbeck's *The Grape of Wrath*. The representation of the American Dream in *The Grapes of Wrath* is seen through the eyes of the poor migrants who dream of better living conditions in California. Those migrants like the Joads, head out to the Promised Land of California which, in their minds, is a land of

opportunity and happiness. So, the image of California represents the greatest American Dream for many proletarians. However, this image becomes soured due to deception, hostility between people and the capitalist system, thus, the American Dreams remains unfulfilled.

3.1.1. Deception:

In *The Grapes of Wrath*, the Dust Bowl destroys all the crops making farmers unable to pay their loans and their lands, thus, are taken from them by force. Those farmers, then, left their lands because of the promises that California offers. One of the owners tells the farmers: *“Maybe you can go on relief. Why don't you go on west to California? There's work there, and it never gets cold. Why, you can reach out anywhere and pick an orange. Why, there's always some kind of crop to work in. Why don't you go there?”* (36). This quotation shows the farmers’ future destination which is shaped by the owners’ suggestions to the farmers to go west. Besides these verbal words, the written ones also encourage tenants to go on to California. The handbills which are distributed here and there in Oklahoma advertise fruit picking jobs in California. But, all these announcements and declarations are in fact deceptive and full of lies.

Banks and land owners use tricky handbills in order to drive out farmers from their lands. The handbills are deceitful in the sense that five thousand copies are made, while only eight-hundred workers are needed and twenty-thousands have heard about this advertisement. As a result, two-three thousands of people go to California which makes the chance of getting a job impossible (198). This *“makes no sense”*, because the number of the handbills in print exceed the amount of the work available. Deceived by the handbills, the Joads set out to California but they find ultimately the opposite of what the handbills have announced.

After reading the novel, it seems clear that the owners in Oklahoma and the owners in California have a profitable relationship since each one needs the other for his self interest. Just like the relation of George and Tom in *The Great Gatsby*; Tom meets George in order to see his mistress Myrtle and George in turn needs Tom to gain money. In *The Grapes of Wrath*, Oklahoma owners need deceptive promises in order to confiscate the lands rapidly and in turn California owners need Oklahoma farmers to work hardily and cheaply. Due to this mutual and beneficial relationship, the owners are the only winners while the migrants are the victims. Thus, the handbills are only an excuse to deceit people and gain money.

Actually, people do not realize this tricky game until they reach California where they discover that it is not a “*land of milk and honey*” (262) but only a “*murder country*” (213). The reality is that California is a fertile land with a nice weather but people who inhabit it are very greedy. Therefore, the Dust Bowl migrants cannot see the positives that California offers, but only the negatives. As the Joads and other migrants reach California, they are met with its unfriendly people who hate any extra group of migrants.

3.1.2. Hostility:

When the Joads reach California along with other Oklahoma migrants, they expect a Warming welcome by Californians; but in fact they are shocked by the cold treatments towards them. The Joads find nothing but harshness and cruelty from both people and owners. They find out that they hate them and treat them as outsider rather than friends. Unlike Fitzgerald who depicts hypocrisy as cause of the failure of the American Dream in *The Great Gatsby*, Steinbeck shows the failure of the dream by describing the negative side of human feelings in *The Grapes of Wrath*. Steinbeck depicts the hostility and the hatred that arose among Californians towards the new comers.

The first sign of hostility is that Oklahoma migrants are called “Okies” by the natives

which show discrimination between people. The Okies are hated by all as Steinbeck writes in his novel:

They had hoped to find a home, and they found only hatred... The owners hated them. And in the towns, the storekeepers hated them because they had no money to spend...The town men, little bankers, hated Okies because there was nothing to gain from them. They had nothing. And the laboring people hated Okies because a hungry man must work, and if he must work, if he has to work, the wage payer automatically gives him less for his work; and then no one can get more. (244).

The abovementioned quotation shows that the Okies are welcomed with much hatred. The reason behind that is that the Okies spend all what they have in their long trip and they have no money to pay for anything. If the migrants had money, they would be welcomed with much love. But since they are poor, Californians think that there is no profit behind accepting them. Rather, they think that the Okies will take their jobs from them. Thus, this hostility and hatred show the first disenchantment of the Joads as well as the other migrants' dreams.

The second sign of hostility that Steinbeck describes is anger. The hostility of the natives toward the Okies leads them to be mad at those migrants. The natives say: "*These goddamned Okies are dirty and ignorant. They're degenerate, sexual maniacs. Those goddamned Okies are thieves. They'll steal anything. They've got no sense of property rights.*" (296). The migrants cannot understand the reason behind that anger and hostility and they do not know why those people hate them. However, this anger and these bullied words toward the Okies are only excuses that the natives use in order to show that they are good and that the Okies are bad. (295).

Moreover, Californians are in fear from those migrants. Tom Joad says: “*They's a mean thing here. The folks here is scared of us people comin' west; an' so they get cops out tryin' to scare us back.*” (262). Due to their selfishness, Californians use cops to prevent migrants from entering because they want to keep the jobs available for themselves only. The reason behind all these greedy attitudes that Steinbeck depicts in his novel is due to the capitalist system which is another reason behind the failure of the American Dream.

3.1.3. Capitalism:

Just like Fitzgerald who criticizes his capitalist society in *The Great Gatsby*, Steinbeck similarly does the same in his novel *The Grapes of Wrath*. Capitalism is “*an economic, political and social system based on private ownership of property, business and industry, and directed towards making the greatest possible profits for successful organizations and people*”. (Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary). In *The Grapes of Wrath*, this private ownership returns to the banks and the land owners who do not know how to use it. Rather, they harm people through their misconduct and greed under the title of capitalism.

Right in the beginning of the novel, Steinbeck shows his criticism of that negative economic system when he writes: “*The bank—the monster has to have profits all the time. It can't wait. It'll die.*” (34). Steinbeck refers to the banks as monsters that are responsible for the decisions of taking the lands away from the farmers. Since the owners represent the bank, the bank sends them to evict farmers from their lands. However, the farmers ask the owners to stop that decision of eviction but the owners reply: “*We're sorry. It's not us. It's the monster. The bank isn't like a man...The bank is something else than men ... It's the monster. Men made it, but can't control it*” (35- 36). Thus, this system is created by men but it is over their capacity to control it.

In *The Great Gatsby*, characters are corrupted because of materialism and the desire of being wealth no matter what the cost is. Similarly, in *The Grapes of Wrath*, the owners

cannot see anything but money and they even like to breathe money rather than oxygen. In describing the land owners' love of money, Steinbeck writes: "*Those creatures don't breathe air, don't eat side-meat. They breathe profits; they eat the interest on money. If they don't get it, they die the way you die without air, without side-meat. It is a sad thing, but it is so. It is just so*" (34). This shows that the owners adore money to the extent that they can do anything to accumulate more. Ordinary people die only if they do not eat enough, but those people that Steinbeck describes -the bankers and land owners- die only if they do not accumulate enough money. The reason behind the low wages given to the workers is that those land owners are money lovers and they do not want to lose more money.

Furthermore, capitalism resulted in the creation of division between classes; the upper class and the lower class. Steinbeck as Fitzgerald is very honest in presenting each class, but Steinbeck develop sympathy toward the lower class and criticize harshly the upper class or the capitalists. In order to understand capitalism in *The Grapes of Wrath*, it is necessary to study Marx's vision about it since Steinbeck have the same views as Marx's. In his *The Communist Manifesto*, Karl Marx's views is that: "*society as a whole is more and more splitting into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat*" (80). This split between classes is due to the capitalist system which gives priority only to the rich owners and marginalizes the others.

The Joads go to California with their dreams to find happiness and justice, but they are disappointed as they are faced with that capitalist system. Therefore, their dreams evaporate since that system creates injustice as it enriches the bourgeoisie and impoverishes the proletariat. As they reach California, they are treated as inferiors since the bank and the land owners are *the masters* and this shows the hollow between classes

that capitalism creates. Thus, John Steinbeck's representation of capitalism corresponds with Scott Fitzgerald's.

3.2. Problems in the Promised Land:

In Oklahoma, farmers suffer from the capitalist banks that take their lands away from them. But after they hear about the opportunities that California offers, they abandon their lands and set out west in order to escape that oppression of capitalists. The Joads, as well as other migrants, have a dream that all this domination and cruelty could not appear in the Promised Land. However, they find the same dominating system and the same cruel land owners. They are surprised when they discover that California is worse than Oklahoma. Thus, they realize the collapse of their dreams as they face many problems there.

The first problem that the migrants encounter is that they have to accept any job even for a low wage. Those migrants are starving and they have no choice but to accept that jobs. There are large numbers of migrants who need work and the land owners take that opportunity by bringing more workers and lower their wages. The owners do that because it is not expensive. If they bring more workers, the work would be done easily and rapidly. At the same time it does not cost the owners much money because they will pay low salaries.

The other problem that the Joads encounter is that they are treated as the "other" which makes them alienated and separated from the Californians. They are alienated because they are poor and there is "*nothing to gain from them*" (244). This is due to the capitalist system which creates division between classes according to their wealth. In *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald shows the people in the Valley of Ashes as alienated because they are poor. Similarly, Steinbeck in *The Grapes of Wrath* describes the migrants as the isolated other because they do not have money that the owners have.

In both novels, the upper class people are considered as economically powerful because they own, dominate and control all means of production. On the other hand, the lower class people are considered as economically weak because they are poor and have no domination or control over production. Thus, Steinbeck and Fitzgerald have the same visions in their description of the upper and the lower class.

Those migrants are seeking for equality in the Promised Land but since they are treated as the “other” or as “okies”, they are unequal to those Californians. As Jim Cullen states: “*the most noteworthy - and unsuccessful- of all American Dreams: the quest for equality.*” (8). The migrants in *The Grapes of Wrath* are not able to achieve equality in California just like people in the Valley of Ashes in *The Great Gatsby*. Rather those people are still inferiors who belong to the lower class. The first experience of that inferiority in *The Grapes of Wrath* is when a police man says to the Joads: “*Well, you ain't in your country now. You're in California, an' we don't want you goddamn Okies settlin' down.*”(223). This quotation shows that Oklahoma migrants will be not considered ever as Californians but as Okies, thus, their dreams of equality remain just a nightmare.

The next problem is the lower wages that the migrants get from their works in the fields. The land owners have money but they want to keep it for themselves rather than distribute it on workers, wherefore workers get low salaries. Normally if a boss or an owner has a great profit from a business deal, he will give his workers their salaries corresponding to the profit he gets (André 27). On the contrary, in California land owners earn a lot of money but they are very stingy in distributing them on their workers. They do that in order to preserve their wealth and impoverish the working class. Besides the low salaries, the land owners call for more workers in order to do the work rapidly and at the same time keep their profit high. As a result, the desire of gaining a job with a good wage in California is diminished and thus calling for the collapse of the American Dream.

In addition to the owners' injustice and cruelty, the wrath of Mother Nature, again, is another problem that the migrants confront. In the final chapters, there is a heavy rainfall that leads to a flood in the camp, causing the Joad to look for another shelter. The boxcar is the only shelter the Joads had which they find it after such a long struggle, now, they are obliged to abandon it. Just like the beginning of the novel when they are obliged to abandon their lands because of the drought, now, they are forced to abandon their shelter because of the flood. Thus, their dreams of getting a stable and a nice house remain only an illusion.

Steinbeck criticizes the host country that supposes to be a paradise in the migrants' vision. He shows that all their dreams become meaningless and disappear although they struggle and persevere constantly to achieve them. However, California turns "*to be filled with hatred, violence, greed, and corruption*" and the American Dream is "*a heavily ironic promise into the Promised Land*" (Bloom 70). Just like characters in *The Great Gatsby*, the migrants in *The Grapes of Wrath* discover the corruption of their dreams as their dreams turn to be lies and illusions.

4/ Corruption of the American Dream:

4.1. Ethical Flaws in *The Great Gatsby*:

In his book *The Epic of America*, the historian James Truslow Adams defines the American Dream as the desire of finding happiness in a new world where all people are living freely and treated equally. In this world, each person is evaluated according to his or her capacity and success and not for their origins. Adams's definition provides an explanation of the pure American Dream. Adams says:

It is not a dream of motor cars and high wages merely, but a dream of social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the

fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position (404).

This passage distinguishes the original American dream from the corrupted one. While the first is about gaining an important social status and being happy through working hard, the second is about having a good amount of money and materials. This kind of materialistic dream has dominated the 1920's American society when many Americans start pursuing wealth and materials. During this period, working class people dream to have the upper class's money and power. As a result, the American Dream becomes corrupted in a capitalist and materialist society. Hence, *The Great Gatsby* is published; to show the social immorality as well as the corruption of the American Dream in a prosperous Age.

Fitzgerald's novel portrays how the character's dreams are corrupted. In Bloom's *Modern Critical Interpretations*, Alberto Lena says:

What the novel suggests is that in a world dominated by millionaires such as Buchanan, it becomes more and more difficult for men like Gatsby, whatever their mistakes and deficiencies, to climb the social ladder without partaking of the corruption that is associated with the leisure class (Bloom 53).

Lena's interpretation reveals the role of the corrupted upper class in corrupting other people's dreams. In *The Great Gatsby*, Jay's original dream is so pure and ideal. He wants to marry the woman he loves and enjoy a happy life. However, this dream is seen impossible in a materialist society where money and social status are more important than love or any other moral and ethical values. That is why Gatsby as a working class man struggles to get the acceptance of the high class including his lover Daisy. By doing so, he

starts accumulating wealth through illegal business. Therefore, his dream is transformed from pursuing love and happiness to accumulating money.

In the novel, the protagonist is involved in illegal activities to collect wealth which would buy him happiness. Gatsby becomes a corrupted person who smuggles alcohol in the period of prohibition. As a criminal, Jay succeeds to collect money he needs to gain Daisy. He knows that this woman is a materialistic woman who chooses Tom's money and social status over her love. In fact Daisy's greed motivates Jay to pursue more money and wealth. He wants to have the same economic and social status of Tom. As a new rich man, Gatsby throws lavish parties in which he offers bars of gins, liquor and cordials (46).

In fact, Jay's soirees are a way of gaining fame and popularity. However, Nick describes many characters like Gatsby's guests Myrtle sister Catherine as curious people who are trying to know Gatsby's origins. Nick says:

Well, they say he's a nephew or a cousin of Kaiser Wilhelm's. That's where all his money comes from... I'm scared of him. I'd hate to have him get anything on me... Somebody told me they thought he killed a man once... he was a German spy during the war (38-50).

The guests that come to Gatsby's home want to know Gatsby's background. They are wondering where Gatsby comes from; an upper class or a lower class. Those guests ask about Gatsby's origins in order to know where he gets his wealth from. Thus, if they know Gatsby's background, they would know the source of his wealth.

Gatsby's illegal work enables him to establish a high economic position. However, it does not allow him to enjoy the same social class of the East Eggers. To do so, he has to lie about his social and educational background. In chapter four, the narrator Nick reports Jay's lies about his origins and career when he says:

I was brought up in America but educated at Oxford because all my ancestors have been educated there for many years. It is a family tradition. He looked at me sideways – and I knew why Jordan Baker had believed he was lying. He hurried the phrase educated at Oxford” or swallowed it or choked on it as though it had bothered him before (71).

Gatsby pretends to be an Oxford man in order to get the acceptance of the elite class. Jay also claims that he is an old money by saying: “*I am the son of some wealthy people in the Middle West – all dead now*” (71). Gatsby’s lies are not only an attempt to increase his social status. Rather, it is a way of hiding the reality that he is a working class person who makes money through bootlegging and criminal activities.

In *The Great Gatsby*, Myrtle is another example of the 1920’s corrupted American Dream. Fitzgerald introduces Myrtle as an American woman who cheats her poor husband by practicing adultery with other rich man; Tom Buchanan. In a period of consumerism, women like Myrtle prefer to marry or accompany rich men who are able to provide expensive presents for their lovers or wives. Mrs. Wilson’s materialistic dream involves her in illegitimate relationship with Tom. Just like Daisy, Myrtle thinks that money is more important than love or any other moral aspect. For them money can buy happiness.

The novel reflects George and Myrtle’s relationship as an ambiguous. Before their marriage, George hides the reality of his financial situation “*He borrowed somebody’s best suit to get married in and never told me about it*”, Myrtle says (41). George pretends to be a *gentleman* by wearing nice cloths. He does so in order to attract and marry the materialistic woman he loves. Myrtle as well lies on her husband to meet Tom “*He thinks she goes to see her sister in New York. He’s so dumb he doesn’t know he’s alive*”, Tom tells Nick (30). This quote reflects George as peaceful husband who trusts his wife. On the other hand, it shows Tom’s and Myrtle’s immorality.

Fitzgerald introduces the female characters; Daisy and Myrtle, as women who prefer to be with a same man; Tom. This later is the established rich person who has an important economic and social position. In the novel, Tom marries Daisy after giving her a luxurious present which is “*a string of pearls valued at three hundred and fifty thousand dollars.*” (82). Then, this man cheats his wife with another woman. He practices adultery with Myrtle for whom he buys a dog. For Tom each woman has its price. While Daisy deserves valuable and expensive things like pearls, Myrtle’s worth is only a dog with few dollars.

Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby* is a modern literary piece that portrays the corruption of the American Dream in a period of economic prosperity and social decay. The novel explains how materialism, capitalism and immorality change the principles of the American Dream from pausing happiness to chasing money and wealth. The author’s work shows that the character’s focus on materialism involves them in illegal and immoral activities. For example, Daisy’s greed and materialistic way of thinking transforms Gatsby from a romantic person with a romantic dream to a criminal who desire wealth.

In the capitalist American society of the 1920’s, people are not equal. As it is clear in *The Great Gatsby*, the upper class groups have a valuable position in society while the rest are ignored. In such society if any person inherits money from his known ancestors, he gains an important status even if he is a careless and selfish like Tom. However, the working class person is always considered as an inferior member even if he works hard. In fact, Gatsby’s capitalist society doesn’t appreciate people for their efforts and achievement but only for their origins.

To conclude, the American Dream in the novel is associated with illegal and immoral behaviors and activities that symbolize its corruption. Gatsby’s criminality, Myrtle’s adultery, Tom’s and Daisy’s involvement in the death of other working people class like Gatsby, George and Myrtle are all events that improve the corruption of American Dream.

Another writer that depicts the corruption of the American dream is John Steinbeck in his novel *The Grapes of Wrath* and this is what the next title will discuss.

4.2. Exploitation over Humanity in The Grapes of Wrath:

The capitalist system that spread in America, give priority to the upper class and neglect totally the lower class. Due to this, the upper class's people take this opportunity to impose their power over the lower class. This leads, to exploitation of man by man which is a sign of inhuman attitudes. However, this exploitation is not applied only in California but in Oklahoma as well. Thus, the migrants face this exploitation from the beginning of the novel till the end. Steinbeck gives a strong attack to the exploitative people who, by their attitudes, show no sign of humanity towards the tenants.

The first exploitation in the novel is the tenant's lands that are taken from them by the bank. But the bank does not take these lands in a peaceful way; rather they take it by force as the bring tractors to destroy their houses. After being evicted, the Joads and other tenants decide to go to California to escape that exploitation but, the trip there is long and it needs money. As a result, the Joads sell their extra possessions in order to buy a car and gain some money for the trip. However, the salesmen buy their possessions with low wages and others sell them broken cars. Those salesmen know that the farmers are in need of money and that they will sell their belongings even for lower prices. Thus, the salesmen take the opportunity to exploit the farmers.

Yet, those migrants find the same treatments in their journey to California. They meet with storekeepers or businessmen who sell goods for high prices knowing that the migrants are going to buy because they are in need. After the Joads' car breaks down, they stop to buy new tires for the broken ones, but the exploitative salesman sells them faulty tires for unfair prices. (www.LitChart.com). All the salesmen and businessmen use their tricks on

the migrants to sell their goods for their own profits. Then, the Joads carry on their way and stop at a gas station where they meet with its greedy owners. Those gas station attendants think that the Joads are robbers and that they have no money to pay for the gas (331). These bad ways of treatments show the cold exploitation of man by man.

Although the greed attitudes toward them, the Joads and the other migrants struggle to cross the borders thinking that this exploitation does not exist in the Promised Land of California. But their expectations are wrong; because they find more exploitative and greed people. Moreover, they discover that the land owners are collaborated with corrupted deputies and policemen. All together practice their exploitation over the poor migrants. In his *The Harvest Gypsies*, Steinbeck states: “*California’s importation and treatment of foreign labor is a disgraceful picture of greed and cruelty.*” (28). This quotation explains that Californians hate foreigners and they welcome them with hatred .i.e. they have xenophobia.

Another sign of exploitation is that the migrants live in dirty camps which show that they are alienated from society. Furthermore, they are called Okies or “reds” which illustrate that they are unequal to the native inhabitants of California. In addition, they do not have enough money to buy their needs because the cruel land owners pay low wages for long hours of work. The land owners are money lovers for that reason they are stingy in their distribution of money on their workers.

The Joads or rather all the migrants are forced to stay in the dirty camps that are ruled by corrupted deputies. Even the security cops, who suppose to protect and help establishing justice, are collaborated with those corrupted deputies and greedy land owners. The corrupted cops “*cause more trouble than they stop*” (401). In the camp they shoot on the Okies, wound a woman and take Jim Casy who takes the blame for Tom after he beats a deputy. After that incident, the policeman, instead of trying to know who is the

responsible of the fight, comes and burns the camp. Since the cops, deputies and the land owners are in league, no one asks who or why the camp is burnt. Thus, the migrants face another disillusionment of their dream which is corrupted because of exploitation.

Besides that, the land owners use a clever strategy to restore money back from the migrants even that low salaries. The land owners open stores in the camps and sell goods for high wages and the migrants are obliged to buy. This is very smart; the migrants take their wages from the land owners and then give them back to the storekeepers who are collaborated with the greedy owners. Those land owners do not want this money to go to another place that is why they open stores near the camps. Thus, the migrants' dreams to find peace and equality are destroyed as they meet with such greed people in California.

Although California is a rich land with plenty of opportunities, it cannot fulfill the migrants' dreams. This is because of the people that governed it who are money hungry corrupted by the capitalist system. In his essay "*John Steinbeck, Californian*", Freeman Champney writes:

more perhaps than any important contemporary American writer, [Steinbeck's] writing has grown out of a special region...[where] the operators of this paradise [California] have usually been able to use or usurp the sovereign powers of local or state government whenever necessary to wipe out a threat to their absolutism. Economically, socially, and culturally it has been an ugly state of affairs (137).

The above quotation explains that in paradise everything suppose to be nice and beautiful, but the devils turn it into hell. In *The Grapes of Wrath* those devils are the land owners, the deputies and the cops which turn California into a corrupted sate. Thus, the migrants find a hell instead of a heaven where all their dreams are burnt inside that hell.

The land owners use their position in society, as they belong to the upper class, to practice their cruelty on poor and weak people. In addition to their greed, their cruelty leads to many problems for the migrants. In *The Great Gatsby*, the characters' choice of money over ethics leads to the collapse of their dreams. Similarly, in *The Grapes of Wrath*, the land owners' choice of exploitation over humanity leads to the breakdown of the workers' dreams. These wrong choices cause the failure as well as the disappointment of many characters' American Dream, thus, leading characters to take different paths in their life. The following section will compare characters' destiny after they realize the failure of their dreams.

5/ Features of the Decline of the American Dream:

5.1. Characters' Death in The Great Gatsby:

The Great Gatsby is a wonderful American novel that portrays life of fictional characters living in New York. Also, it narrates their journey to achieve the American Dream and ensure a happy future. Throughout the story, Fitzgerald describes the dreamers as very optimistic i.e. they are hopeful people who believe that they can achieve their goals through hard work. However, reality is very different from their visions and dreams. So, after facing the real world and the failure of their dreams, *The Great Gatsby's* characters become very disappointed.

Myrtle's dream first fails when she discovers that her husband is not rich. She says: "*I married him because I thought he was a gentleman*" (41). This expression shows that Wilson is not that gentleman whom Myrtle prefers. After realizing the truth of her husband, Myrtle becomes very disappointed "*I lay down and cried to beat the band all afternoon.*" She says in describing her sadness (41). Later, she tries to change reality by reviving her hope and starting an affair with another rich man. But as soon as she feels that

this man prefers his wife over her she become disappointed. When Myrtle begins to taunt Tom about Daisy, he beats her and breaks her nose (43). However, Myrtle continues to dream about the luxurious life that Tom would provide for her. At the end, Myrtle's rejection of reality and pursuing of dreams leads to her death and the failure of her dream too. Now, she cannot be even disappointed since she is a dead woman.

George Wilson is another character who experts the feeling of disappointment in the novel. He is a man who dreams to be happy with his wife. However, he starts feeling that this woman is cheating on him with another man. In justifying why he wants to leave away with Myrtle, George says to Tom: *"I just got wised up to something funny the last two days... That's why I want to get away"* (130). Through these quotes, one may guess that Mr. Wilson starts realizing that there is another man in Myrtle's life. This reality makes him very upset *"Wilson was so sick that he looked guilty, unforgivably guilty"*, says Nick in describing him (130).

George wants to leave with his wife in order to start a new life away from her lover, he says: *"she's going whether she wants to or not. I'm going to get her away."*(129). But, Myrtle's husband dream of having a happy life with her fails tragically. The reality of Myrtle's Death makes George suffering and he even becomes *'morbid'* (165). His disappointment leads him to commit a crime. As he is informed that Gatsby is the one who killed Myrtle, Wilson finds Jay in the pool at his mansion and kills himself. Then, he shoots himself. (168-169).

Just like Myrtle and George, Gatsby also lives moments of dissatisfaction. After five years of separation, Jay dreams to recall his past with Daisy. But following their first meeting in the West Egg, he looks distressed *"He was silent and I guessed at his unutterable depression"*, Nick says (116). Gatsby's first disappointment in the novel appears when he realizes that Daisy has changed by time. He states: *"I feel far away from*

her” (116) then adds “*she doesn’t understand... She used to be able to understand.*” (117). Jay recognizes the gap between him and Daisy, but ignores reality that this woman is not that single girl who lives in Louisville. Daisy now is a married lady who has a child. Nick says that he thinks Gatsby has ever believed in the existence of Daisy’s daughter (123). However, the ignorance of reality and living in dreams causes pain to the novel’s protagonist. Plus to the feeling of disappointment that Gatsby lives each time he faces reality, he dies as a dreamer who never achieve his goal.

In *The Great Gatsby*, the narrator is also a character who becomes upset after recognizing the reality of his society. Nick Caraway moves to the East Coast searching for happiness and success. He says “*Instead of being the warm center of the world, the Middle West now seemed like the ragged edge of the universe—so I decided to go East and learn the bond business*”(09) this quotation shows that Nick is dissatisfied in the Middle West. So, he does not move only for the sake of learning. Moreover, he wants to enjoy his time in New York. But there, he discovers the corruption of this capitalist and materialist society.

After the death of Myrtle, Gatsby and George; Nick puts the blame on the upper class people who inhabit the East Egg when he says: “*They were careless people, Tom and Daisy – they smashed up things and creatures and then retreated back into their money or their vast carelessness or whatever it was that kept them together and let other people clean up their mess*” (186). In this passage, Nick seems disappointed in criticizing the immorality of his society and practically Tom and Daisy. The fact that the old rich control the world ails Nick. According to him all the upper class are carless even the beautiful Jordan. “*Suppose you met somebody just as careless as yourself*”, says Nick to Jordan (65). He sees that she is not a careful driver. Nick Caraway describes them as carless because he remarks that Tom, Daisy and Jordan show no intention to the other’s feelings and lives.

Fitzgerald introduces Nick as a person who witnesses the working class's dream failing due to the careless upper class people. After experiencing the different cruel events and observing the immoral activities such as cheating and lying, Nick ends his relationship with Jordan and moves back to the Midwest as a disillusioned person. Unlike characters in *The Great Gatsby* who die after facing reality, characters in *The Grapes of Wrath* change their vision about life after the failure of their dreams.

5.2. Characters' New Vision about Life in *The Grapes of Wrath*:

The aftermath of the American Dream's disillusionment in *The Grapes of Wrath* differs from that of *The Great Gatsby*. In *The Great Gatsby*, characters cannot hold the truth that their dreams failed and their role ends by death like Gatsby and Myrtle or by suicide like George. In *The Grapes of Wrath* things are different; characters' vision about life takes a new form even when their dreams are not fulfilled. In *The Great Gatsby*, the American Dream is ultimately dead, while in *The Grapes of Wrath* there is a little hope to fulfill it in the future even if it is not exactly sure. That little hope is assimilated in the change of characters' vision about life when they learn to collaborate with each other in order to survive.

After the exploitation and the cruelty of the landowners, the migrants seek for a way to react against the owners' abusive attitudes towards them. The migrants attempt to establish an organization in the government camp to react against this injustice. Since this camp is a governmental one, it is very organized and clean camp because its leaders and cops are not corrupted. However, some migrants have relation with corrupted deputies and they try to create a riot inside the camp in order to destroy it. Fortunately, due to the organization that is created, they are able to repeal the owners' plans and save the camp.

In the other camps, migrants also set up small groups and try to revolt or rebel against

the greedy owners. The aim of these organizations is to stop exploitation of the owners against their workers. In order to gain their rights, the migrants have to cooperate in order to achieve a result. This collaboration shows the migrants' one spirit and the new vision from "I" to "we" as Steinbeck states: "*This is the beginning—from "I" to "we."*" (158). This shows the tenants' solidarity to resolve their problems. The reason behind the failure of their dreams is the land owners' cruelty, so they have to unite against them and may be their dreams will rebirth again. Thus, their solution is in their collectivity and solidarity.

Due to this transformation from "I" to "we", Steinbeck wants to show us that the migrants became one soul to the extent that if one migrant is hurt the entire migrants feel the same. In describing this Steinbeck writes:

I'll tell ya. It's 'cause we're a-workin' together. Depity can't pick on one fella in this camp. He's pickin' on the whole darn camp. An' he don't dare. All we got to do is give a yell an' they's two hunderd men out... we could do that any place. Jus' stick together. (374).

This shows that the migrants' relation become stronger and as they are tied together nothing can hurt them. By showing this image of solidarity, Steinbeck wants to show that the migrants are totally the opposite of the selfish land owners who look only for themselves. Characters in *The Great Gatsby* are selfish and care only about themselves. By Contrast, characters in *The Grape of Wrath* collaborate with each other to solve their problems. Thus the notion of "we" exists only in *The Grapes of Wrath*, while in *The Great Gatsby* it does not.

Furthermore these organizations need a strong leader who can take responsibility for everything. Therefore, Jim Casy takes this responsibility by leading those migrants in a strike over low salaries. But, this strike is stopped by the officials and leads to Jim Casy's

tragic death as he is killed by an official. This is the most notable strike in the novel because Casy sacrifices himself for the others, thus, showing the spirit of the “we”. However, Casy’s sacrifice did not go for anything as Tom turns on the killer and kills him. Unlike Casy whose death bring some change in Tom Joad’s vision, Gatsby’s death in *The Great Gatsby* does not change anything and Daisy carry on her life with Tom as if nothing happens.

After that incident, Tom Joad decides to devote himself to help his people by continuing the work that Casy started in order to improve the workers’ conditions of life. Casy’s philosophy change Tom’s way of thinking and inspire him to carry on in the same path. Tom syas to Ma Joad: “*I’ll be all aroun’ in the dark. I’ll be ever’where—wherever you look. Wherever they’s a fight so hungry people can eat, I’ll be there. Wherever they’s a cop beatin’ up a guy, I’ll be there.*” (439). This shows that Tom is going to fight for social justice and continue Jim Casy’s calling. In the final chapters, Tom leaves with that philosophy of helping anyone who needs help. Thus, his philosophy gives a little hope that the workers’ dreams of getting better wages are going to be achieved.

Another character who changes her vision from “I” to “we”, is Rose of Sharon who breastfeeds a stranger starving old man. Her still born baby changes her vision from self interest to social interest. At the beginning of the novel she is presented as selfish woman, but after she gives birth to a sill born baby she is determined to help the other people. The novel ends with Rose of Sharon giving her milk to a dying man while she “*smiles mysteriously*” (476). Unlike *The Great Gatsby* which ends with the gloomy death of Gatsby, Myrtle and George, *The Grapes of Wrath* ends with Rose of Sharon’s smile which may be a sign of hope.

6/ Conclusion:

This chapter finished up with the conclusion that characters fail to achieve their dreams in both novels *The Great Gatsby* and *The Grapes of Wrath*. In Fitzgerald's novel the failure of this dream is associated with the characters' death; the novel ends with the death of Gatsby, Myrtle and George without achieving their dreams. On the other hand, *The Grapes of Wrath* ends with the characters' disillusionment to find a job. After its failure, people started doubting the existence of the American Dream and there is who claimed that it is only propaganda rather than a fact. As a result, this section aims at providing an answer to these doubts through comparing the reasons that lead to the failure of the American Dream. Finally, this chapter reflects the American Dream as a corrupted one in both novels *The Great Gatsby* and *The Grapes of Wrath*.

V/ General Conclusion

This dissertation leads to the conclusion that the American Dream is not a new concept but it is rooted in American society since the past. It started by the first settlers who escape persecution in Europe with their dreams to find freedom in the New World. They saw America as a land of hope, freedom and opportunity where they can fulfill their dreams through hard work. Furthermore, the real concept of the American Dream was derived from the Declaration of Independence which stated that the pursuit of happiness is everybody's right. But after the Industrial Revolution, the Dream took a new form and it lost its essence.

After the Industrial Revolution, the decade known as the Roaring Twenties witnessed several social and economic changes. These changes in turn led to the change of the notion of the American Dream. The dream shifted from being virtue to the dream of accumulating money as much as possible. This materialistic attitude was because of the economic boom that everyone wanted to benefit from. People of that decade did not care about the means but about the results i.e. they wanted to gain money no matter what the cost is even if that cost means breaking laws and traditions. All these attitudes are portrayed in Scott Fitzgerald's masterpiece *The Great Gatsby* which tends to describe the American Dream of the 1920's.

In *The Great Gatsby*, characters want to establish happiness through gaining money without knowing that they are looking for their own destruction. Jay Gatsby wants to gain money to get his past lover Daisy. Daisy in turn does not love him but loves the money that he has and Myrtle as well want to be with Tom for the same reason. Fitzgerald uses these images of materialism to show the decay of American society and the illusive nature of the American Dream that symbolizes the Roaring Twenties. Nevertheless, that decade ended with the Great Depression which led to the change of the American Dream.

The 1920's that witnessed a great economic prosperity ended in 1930's with the Great

Depression. That depression caused an economic crisis and many people lost their jobs because the factories that they worked for have no money to pay their wages. In addition, other people lost their lands in favor of the banks because they could not pay their debts. This economic downturn led to a change in the notion of the American Dream as people's dreams change to be the search for a good job and a nice house. All these feverish tensions are portrayed in John Steinbeck's famous novel *The Grapes of Wrath* which he used it as a sample of the American Dream during the 1930's.

In *The Grapes of Wrath*, characters leave their home land in search of a job and a home. The Joad family and other migrants leave Oklahoma to California with their dreams to find good jobs with stable wages. They believe that California is the Promised Land where they can fulfill all their dreams, but they are welcomed with hatred and hostility by the natives. Furthermore, they find that the land owners are very cruel and greedy and they treat them as non humans. Steinbeck uses his intercalary chapters to reshape American society during the Great Depression and the downfall of the American Dream during that period.

Although characters struggle and persist constantly to make their dreams true, the external forces that face them lead to the corruption of the American Dream. In *The Great Gatsby*, characters rebel against morals and manners and try to accumulate money as much as they can. This lust for money and wealth negatively contributed in the corruption of the American Dream. Similarly, in *The Grapes of Wrath* characters witness the disillusionment of their dreams due to the capitalist system and the selfishness of the land owners. Thus, the desire for wealth in *The Great Gatsby* and the owners' greedy attitudes in *The Grapes of Wrath* contribute in the damage of the first puritans' American Dream.

One who takes a look on the previous two novels would claim that the American Dream does not exist and it is only a myth. But, the fact is that "the big heads" who rule

the government are corrupted ones and they destroy other's dreams. Through careful reading and analysis of the two novels, we come to the conclusion that the American Dream exists but it is corrupted. But may be in the future this corruption will be vanished and the American Dream will restore its spirit. Perhaps people still believe that the American Dream will be better in the future despite challenges. Thus, what are the challenges that will face the American Dream in the future?

VI/ Glossary

Allies: were the nations allied against the Central Powers of Europe during WWI. These Allies were Russia, France, Britain and the United States. It refers also to the nations, primarily Britain, France, Soviet Union and the United States, that allied against the Axis Powers during WWII.

Bootlegger: is someone who makes or sells illegal liquor. Or he is a person who engages in smuggling.

Bushel: is a unit of volume, capacity or weight used in dry measures and it contains 4 pecks.

City Upon a Hill: was written by the puritan leader John Winthrop in 1630 while the first group of the Puritan immigrants was still aboard their ship, waiting to come ashore and create their first settlement in what would become the Newfoundland. Winthrop referred to this place as a City Upon a Hill because he believed that it is a world of truly godly society. **Declaration of Independence:** was a proclamation made by the second American Continental Congress and written by Thomas Jefferson in July 4th 1776. It asserted that the thirteen colonies are independent from Great Britain. It focuses on the rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Eldorado: an imaginary place of great wealth and opportunity, sought in South America by the 16th century explorers.

Flapper: was a name applied in the 1920's to young women who behave in public in somewhat reckless manner. Or she is a young woman, especially one who, during the 1920's, behaved and dressed in boldly unconventional manner.

Fundamentalism: is a conservative movement in 20th century of American Protestantism in reaction to modernism which is characterized by a return to fundamental principles and morals.

Great Depression: was the economic crisis in America that began with stock

market crash in 1929 and ended in 1930's. This period marked a mass unemployment in addition to a severe drought.

Industrialization: is a large scale introduction of manufacturing, advanced technical enterprise, and other productive economic activity into an area, society, country, etc. **Jazz Age:** was a term first coined by Scott Fitzgerald in his novels and it was popularized when he called a collection of his short stories *Tales of the Jazz Age*. It was also called the Roaring Twenties. This decade was a period of wealth that began with the end of WWI and ended with the stock market crash of 1929.

Speakeasy: a place for the illegal sale and consumption of alcoholic drinks, as during the prohibition in the United States.

Stamina: is a physical or moral strength to resist illness, fatigue or hardship endurance.

Standardization: is the imposition of standards and regulations. Or it is the condition in which a standard has been successfully established.

The New Deal: was a program set by the president of the United States Franklin Delano Roosevelt in order to help America to get out from the depression. There were two New Deals; the first was set on (1933-1934), while the second was set on (1935-1938). The main aim of this program was to reform and to establish economic recovery in America.

Urbanization: is the process of changing a rural area into an urban one.

Utopia: was a word first coined by Thomas More in his 1516 book titled *Utopia*, which describes a fictional island in the Atlantic Ocean. Utopia comes from a Greek word which means no place. After that book was published people used this word to describe anything bad, evil or imaginary.

Note: the previous definitions are taken from electronic dictionaries:

www.thefreedictionary.com and from www.dictionary.com

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