



新世纪外国语文论丛

何 宁◎著

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——菲茨杰拉德与1920年代

Anxiety of Modernism:
Fitzgerald in the 1920s

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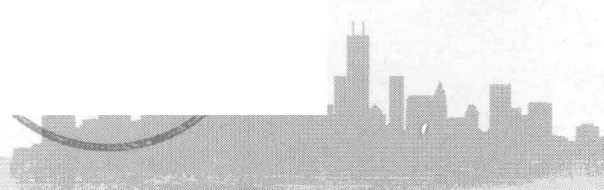
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Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in citation of Fitzgerald's works:

<i>AOAA</i>	<i>Afternoon of an Author</i>
<i>B&D</i>	<i>The Beautiful and Damned</i>
<i>CSS</i>	<i>Collected Short Stories</i>
<i>CU</i>	<i>The Crack-Up</i>
<i>F&P</i>	<i>Flappers and Philosophers</i>
<i>GG</i>	<i>The Great Gatsby</i>
<i>JAS</i>	<i>Jazz Age Stories</i>
<i>TSOP</i>	<i>This Side of Paradise</i>
<i>TITN</i>	<i>Tender Is the Night</i>

总 序

进入新世纪,南京大学外国语学院师资队伍结构不断优化,拥有博士学位者已超过全院教师队伍人数的一半。新一代青年教师受过严格的专业训练,外语基本功扎实,在各自的专业领域学有所成,成为人才培养和科学研究的骨干力量,是学科可持续发展的生力军。

为了展示南京大学外国语学院青年教师的学术风采,加强学科建设与学术队伍的建设,经过充分的酝酿和准备,我们决定编辑出版《新世纪外国语文论丛》。编进论丛中的论著,大多为获得博士学位并在南京大学外国语学院任教的青年教师的博士论文,在内容上涵盖外国语言、文学与文化的研究,基本上反映了青年学者丰富而活跃的学术思想,代表了南京大学外国语学院青年教师的学术水平。

南京大学作为一所研究型大学,注重学术研究,有悠久传统。早在20世纪30年代,南京大学外国语学院的前辈学者范存忠先生和陈嘉先生分别于1931年和1934年获美国哈佛大学和耶鲁大学博士学位,他们对南京大学外国语言文学研究特色的形成起到重要作用。百年南大培育了“严谨、求实、勤奋、创新”的学风和浓厚的学术氛围。无论是写博士论文,还是写一般的论文或专著,我们都追求学术的质量和水平,要求研究工作能经得起时间考验,真正能为现有知识体系做出新的贡献,真正能创造知识,真正能促进学术的发展。这三个“真正”也是对入选《新世纪外国语文论丛》论著的原则和标准。

2006年南京大学获得外国语言文学一级学科博士学位授

予权,这标志着南京大学外国语言文学的学科建设进入了一个新阶段,工作思路要向内涵发展转变。一流的学科要由一流学者来建设,要靠一流学术成果来支撑。编辑出版《新世纪外国语文论丛》,有助于促进新生学术力量的成长,培养青年学术骨干,推动学科建设,是内涵发展的一项重要举措。我衷心希望论丛越办越好,不断扩大其学术影响,努力提升我国的外国语言文学研究的学术水平。

王守仁

2009年5月28日

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He Ning

中文提要

弗朗西斯·斯科特·基·菲茨杰拉德(1896—1940)长期以来被视为美国 20 世纪 20 年代的代言人,也是美国文学文化的代表作家之一。本书以菲茨杰拉德 1920 年代结集出版的全部七部作品中隐含的焦虑为切入点,综合精神分析、社会文化批评的方法,探索菲茨杰拉德、美国现代文学的发展以及 1920 年代的社会状态之间的互动。通过对作品的解读,揭示出菲茨杰拉德作品中的焦虑不仅是其个人精神状态的表征,也是美国文学传统在现代主义风潮中转型的显示,更是表面繁荣的美国社会中深层焦虑的体现。理解菲茨杰拉德作品中的焦虑,不仅可以全面认识 1920 年代的美国文学和文化,更可以深入把握现代美国社会。

Abstract

Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald (1896 – 1940) has long been viewed as the spokesman of the seemingly prosperous 1920s, the so-called “Jazz Age.” Fitzgerald’s literary reputation is mainly associated with his status as the laureate of the “Roaring Twenties” and with his description of the wild young people in his works of the 1920s.

However, too often the mythic allure of the “Roaring Twenties” has deafened our ears to the real voices of Fitzgerald’s works. Focusing on the interactive relationship among the author, the development of modern American literature and the society of the 1920s, this study proposes a combination of psychoanalytic, Marxist and cultural approaches to explore the anxiety in Fitzgerald’s seven publications in the 1920s, namely *This Side of Paradise* (1920), *Flappers and Philosophers* (1920), *The Beautiful and Damned* (1922), *Tales of the Jazz Age* (1922), *The Vegetable* (1923), *The Great Gatsby* (1925), and *All the Sad Young Men* (1925). Positioned in the tightly interwoven complex of the author, the development of American literary tradition and the 1920s social milieu, anxiety in Fitzgerald’s works emerges as a symptom of his personal trauma, a signal of transformation in American literary tradition in the age of modernism and a representation of anxiety embedded in the American society.

The study first employs the Lacanian concepts of the Symbolic and the Imaginary to analyze Fitzgerald's sense of insecurity in the 1920s. The anxiety, which is most obviously seen through the failure pattern in Fitzgerald's works of the 1920s, originates from the dysfunction of the Name-of-the-Father in Fitzgerald's psychosis. For the Fitzgerald family, the Imaginary and the Symbolic have not been properly tied together. Writing combines the Imaginary, the Symbolic and the Real of the psychosis and leads the subject to the post-Oedipus stage. However, though writing functions as the Name-of-the-Father, there is still a lack of Name-of-the-Father in the Symbolic. This situation leaves the subject in anxiety of losing its place in the Symbolic, mixed with the original anxiety from the lack of Name-of-the-Father. In this way, anxiety in Fitzgerald's works of the 1920s with the failure pattern as its outward expression is a symptom of the subject.

Then the study locates the discussion of Fitzgerald's sense of insecurity in the literary canon. In using writing to function as the Name-of-the-Father, Fitzgerald was, consciously or unconsciously, under the influence of literary development in the decade. The anxiety in Fitzgerald's works also signals the inner anxiety of American literature under the hegemony of the European modernism. The negotiation between American literary tradition and European modernism resulted in the transmodernism of Fitzgerald's works in the 1920s. Employing the experimental innovations and retaining the verbal readability, Fitzgerald wrote exclusively transmodern works in the 1920s, among which *The Great Gatsby* is a perfect specimen. The complicated interplay between the dominant European modernism and the subordinate American literature made the 1920s American literature neither American literary tradition nor European modernism. This dilemma generated the anxiety of modern American literature, which was revealed in Fitzgerald's works of the 1920s.

Finally, the study examines the social elements in constructing the sense of insecurity in Fitzgerald's works. The anxiety in Fitzgerald's works of the 1920s is also the representation of the sense of insecurity that prevailed in the 1920s social milieu. Guided by Macherey's theory that what the text says is in fact what it does not say, a close reading of Fitzgerald's works in the 1920s discloses the numerous tensions underlying the superficially glamorous society. Focusing his writing on the upper class and the successful middle-class, Fitzgerald attempted to control the anxiety pervasive at the personal and literary register. In his works of the 1920s, Fitzgerald depicted the Jazz Age as an ideal American society for people at the moment instead of representing the society as it was. Yet the unspoken of Fitzgerald's texts demonstrates the tensions of society in a prosperous era of the United States. The failure pattern of his heroes and the few lower class characters undermine the Jazz Age legend in Fitzgerald's fiction. A society of anxiety is sketched through the sharp contrast between the comfortable life of the upper class and the miserable life of the lower class.

The anxiety in Fitzgerald's works of the 1920s reveals the psyche of the author, the development of modern American literature and the tensions embedded in ostensibly prosperous society. In the time of profound transformation, anxiety in Fitzgerald's works is a mixture of personal, literary and social insecurity. Fitzgerald's works of the 1920s register the conflicts and paradoxes of American society, between center and periphery, middlebrow and highbrow, past and present in a dialectic tension, and reveals the decade as a time of confronting long-lasting social problems, fears, and anxieties that nagged the national consciousness. It is in this sense that Fitzgerald is the laureate of the 1920s and the spokesman of his generation.

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Introduction

Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald (1896 – 1940) became the spokesman and chronicler of the 1920s, known as “the Jazz Age,”¹ with the publication of his first novel, *This Side of Paradise* in 1920. In all, Fitzgerald produced six novels, one play and nearly 180 short stories about the “greatest, gaudiest spree in history” (*CU* 87), describing “a new generation grown up to find all Gods dead, all wars fought, all faiths in man shaken” (*TSOP* 260). Though none of Fitzgerald’s works ever won any prizes during his lifetime, they were welcomed by various readers and critics. *The Great Gatsby*, his sixth published book, is one of the most popular novels in the world² and certainly among the most important in 20th century American literature. In the late 1950s, the proliferation of articles on Fitzgerald in both popular and academic journals led to the initiation of the quarterly *Fitzgerald Newsletter*³. By the 1960s, Fitzgerald was elevated to a permanent position as one of the greatest writers who ever lived (Baughman and Bruccoli 34). While it is not unusual for an author like Fitzgerald to garner a range of different responses, what is remarkable is the unanimous view that Fitzgerald is one who portrays the Jazz Age with combined accuracy and lyricism.

Like most of his contemporaries, such as Ernest Hemingway and John Dos Passos, Fitzgerald has undergone a rise and fall of his reputation in the critical arena over the last eighty years. Generally, excluding the short period following the publication

of *This Side of Paradise* (1920), critics have hardly agreed on Fitzgerald's literary creation. The year 1920 witnessed all kinds of favorable review toward this young and promising writer. Among them, H. L. Mencken's review is clearly the most influential estimate of Fitzgerald's literary accomplishment. Mencken described *This Side of Paradise* as "the best American novel that I have seen of late, ... original in structure, extremely sophisticated in manner, and adorned with a brilliancy that is as rare in American writing as honesty is in American statecraft" (48).⁴ Similar views were held anonymously. *New York Evening Post* noted that Fitzgerald "manifests striking talent" (Claridge 2:41) while Margaret Emerson Bailey considered the book as "a convincing chronicle of youth by youth" (Claridge 2:47). In short, Fitzgerald has received enthusiastic praise from most American reviewers. When his second book *Flappers and Philosophers* (1920), a collection of short stories, was published six months after the success of *This Side of Paradise*, it met with mixed and polarized reviews by the leading critics. Mencken found the collection "to be a great deal less promising" (*Life* 259).⁵ The *Chicago Evening Post* reviewer was surely disappointed that Fitzgerald's talent "is expended, for the most part, on themes of such slight importance" (O'Donnell XV). Yet other critics greeted Fitzgerald's stories with careful praise. Heywood Broun, another prominent critical voice of the time, cautiously admitted that some of the stories convinced him that "after all, F. Scott Fitzgerald did have something to say and knew how to say it" (Claridge 3:372). The critic for *The New York Times Book Review and Magazine* claimed "[even] the most superficial reader can fail to recognize Mr. Fitzgerald's talent and genius. ... Mr. Fitzgerald is working out an idiom, and it is an idiom at once universal, American and individual" (O'Donnell XVI).

The diverse and sometimes opposing critical views generated