

The unsteady progress on the new frontier of the 1920's
As reflected in
Francis scott key fitzgerald's *the great gatsby*



A Minor Thesis

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by

Anggoro Setyadi

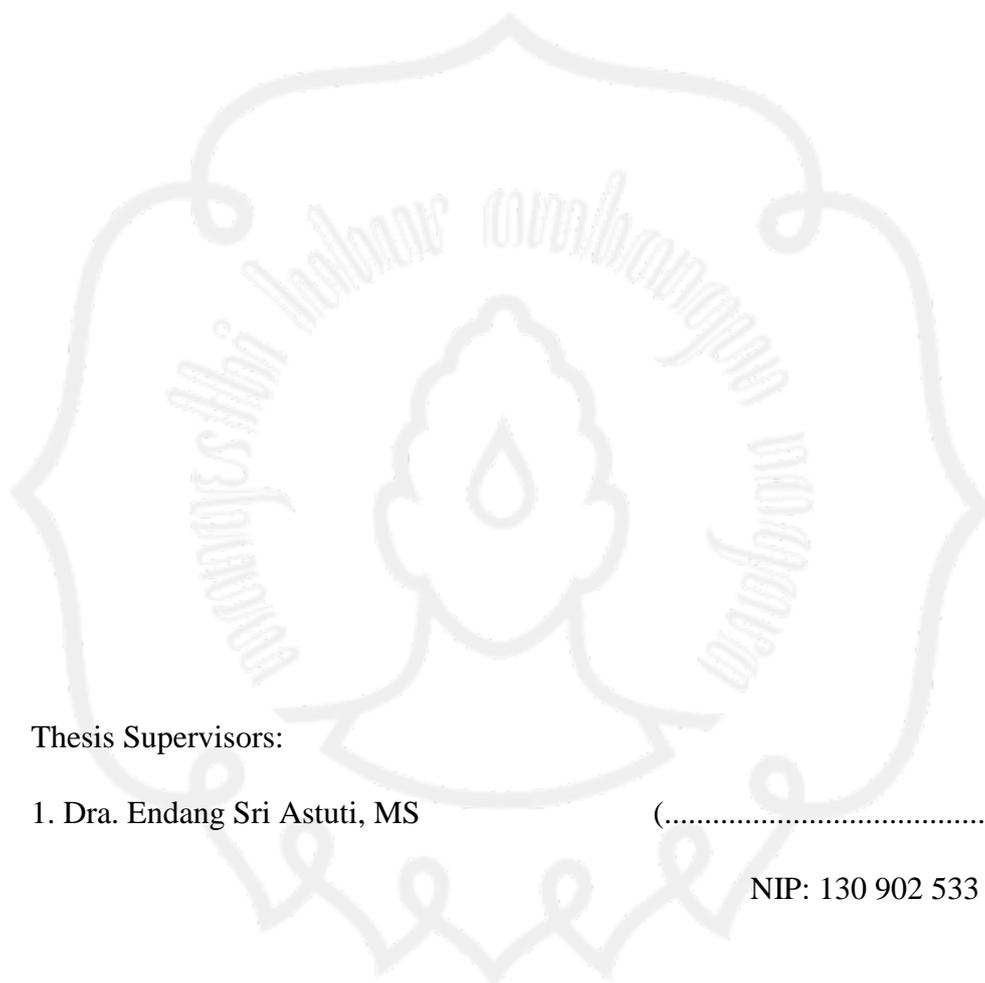
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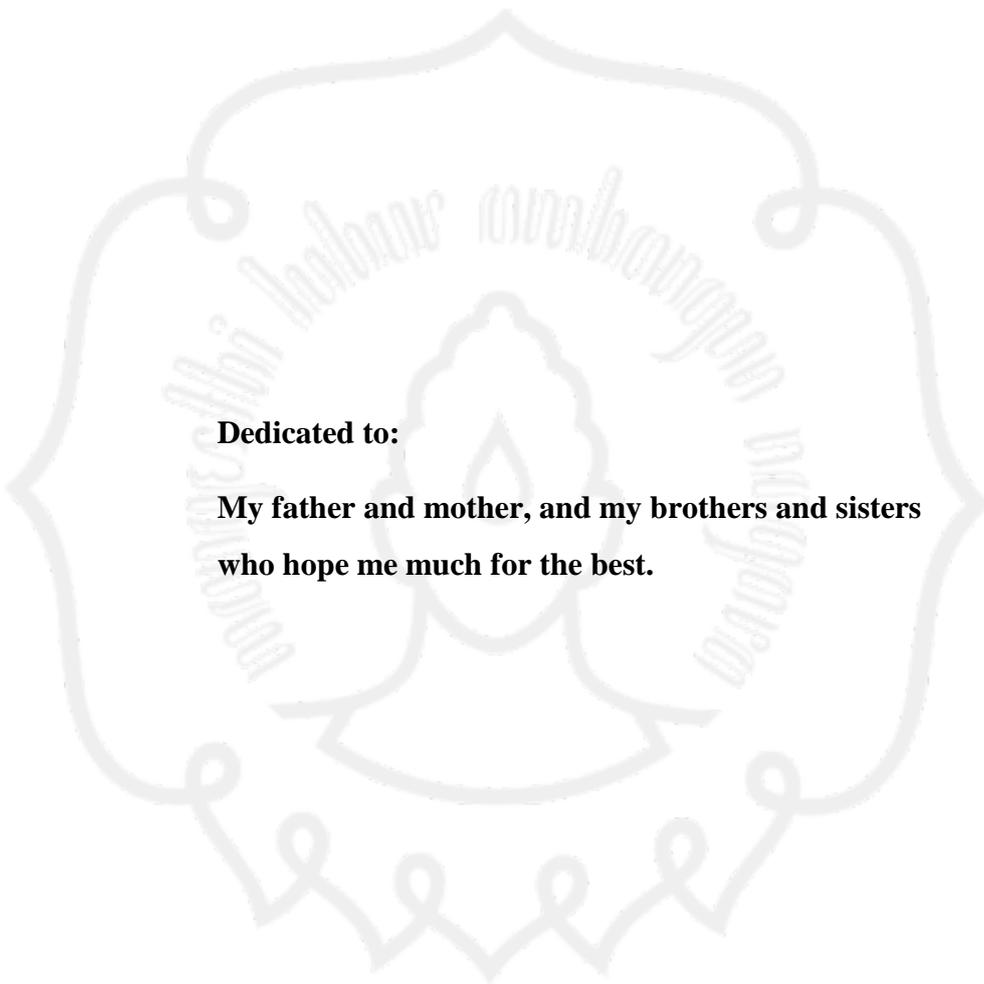
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*Keep looking forward,
conquering the unknown is a key to success*

For we are saved by hope:
but hope that is seen is not hope:
for what a man seeth, why doth
he yet hope for?

But if we hope for that we see not,
then do we with patience wait for it

Romans 8: 24-25



Dedicated to:

**My father and mother, and my brothers and sisters
who hope me much for the best.**

Acknowledgement

My greatest gratitude is praised to Jesus Christ, my light and my salvation, for His Blessing I can finally finish this work as one of the requirements for achieving The Graduate Degree of English Department of Faculty of Letters. He makes everything beautiful in time.

Writing this minor thesis has been a challenging but also exciting task. Here, I wish to express my gratitude to those who helped me complete this assignment. I wish to express my special gratitude to:

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Finally, I also deeply realize that this minor thesis is still far from being perfect and still requires much improvement. Therefore I willingly accept any advice. At last, I really hope that this minor thesis can be worthwhile for all, especially those who are interested in American Studies.

Surakarta, April 2003

The researcher



The Unsteady Progress on the New Frontier of the 1920's As Reflected in Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*

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Abstract

This thesis is an American Studies research that focuses on a discussion "The Unsteady Progress on the New Frontier of the 1920's as Reflected in Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby." Relating to the discussion, the researcher formulates a problem: "What factors that make the Americans on the New Frontier of the 1920's unsteady in progress."

Since this thesis is the American Studies research, therefore interdisciplinary approaches should be applied to achieve the aim of the research. It means that the researcher uses more than one approach to answer the issue about the unsteady progress in the American modern society of the 1920's. In this case, the approaches are based on the aspects of history and sociology. From the historical aspect, the analysis refers to the American frontier experience that is essential to understand the American modern society of the 1920's who are unsteady in expressing their idea of progress. From the sociological aspect, the analysis refers to the social phenomena in the American modern society of the 1920's including various fields of social study to find out what factors that make them unsteady in progress.

From the analysis, the researcher finds that the Americans on the New Frontier of the 1920's tend to be lawless in expressing their idea of progress. Besides, their struggle for success is determined more by capital than by effort. They represent selfish and monetary values that pursue pleasure only without a willingness to conquer the unknown or to make constant development and change the way the country needs to grow. Meanwhile, the frontier's idea of progress has taught a strong sense of self-reliance to build a new better world with all its opportunities and challenging future. To come into conclusion, thus, the researcher finds that the Americans on the New Frontier of the 1920's tend to be the users rather than the subduers. They live in a generation by stressing more on a result or instant success than on a gradual and increased process.

1. Introduction

I. Background of Choosing the Subject

This thesis is another side of the previous thesis by Dian Anggraini Sulistyowati, a graduate of English Department, Faculty of Letters, Sebelas Maret University of the 2002. She gives a title to her thesis 'American Hedonism of the 1920's as Reflected in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*.'

Further, the researcher is interested to study F. Scott Fitzgerald's work *The Great Gatsby* by involving the history of the American frontier experience. Martin Ridge and Ray Allen Billington (1980: p. 656b) assert that although the West of the

twentieth century—with its new and old problems and its challenging future—will produce new interpreters of its values and goals, the history of the American frontier experience cannot be erased without a loss of something more than even national identity. It means the frontier still has a mythical force in the American everyday lives in spite of as a historical fact it has disappeared.

Commonly frontier is indicated with a line separating two regions or countries. Yet, there is something unique of the frontier in the history of American West. In his thesis, Frederick Jackson Turner argued of it, as follows:

Now, the frontier is the line of most rapid and effective Americanization..... The fact is, that here is a new product that is American. At first, the frontier was the Atlantic coast. It was the frontier of Europe in a very real sense. Moving westward, the frontier became more and more American. *As successive terminal moraines result from successive glaciations, so each frontier leaves traces behind it, and when it becomes a settled area the regions still partakes of the frontier characteristics.* Thus the advance of the frontier has meant a steady movement away from the influence of Europe, a steady growth of independence on American lines (1984: p. 3).

Thus, the Frontier West not only rests on the concept of place or geography but it stresses more on the process of creating a new culture, that is American, through a pattern called **moving west**. By releasing their old world, the world of Europe, the early settlers gradually always kept moving westward from Atlantic to Pacific, to build a new better world and to be more and more Americanized.

It seems fair to say the frontier myth remains alive today because it has a great stimulus to express *the American Dream*. Pauline Maier (1986: p. 667) emphasizes that the American dream includes freedom, equality under the law, and the hope for a better life. In this case, the most obvious example is that in 1969 Neil Armstrong became the first human being landing on the moon. It was a space mission initiated

by the late president John F. Kennedy under his New Frontier program. This space mission intended to compete with the Soviet Union that previously Yuri Gagarin became the first human being entering the outer space. Thus, the success of Armstrong symbolized the American advancement in the space flight. In reality, however, this achievement also represented the American expression of freedom value by developing the pattern of moving west as the frontier of the moon. Mainly, it resulted in cooling down the democracy-versus-communism conflicts between the USA and USSR during the Cold War.

Now, what is the appealing thing of the frontier myth? In connection with this matter, Michael Eckel states:

There are some historical facts which were a good basis to build up myths. The most scary but also exciting thing during the settlement era was the uncertainty of what to expect beyond the Frontier, because the Frontier truly separated the known from the unknown. People entering the unknown land expected the fulfillment of their wishes, either only satisfaction for curiosity or the beginning of a new and better existence (<http://www.uni-ulm.de/~s-meckel/west.htm>, 2000: par. 7).

In other words, the frontier myth symbolized by the pattern of moving west is progressive by nature or expresses the idea of progress. Further, Eckel defines:

The belief in progress was a thing all Americans had in common. Optimism and the faith in a better future, the theory that everything was getting constantly better, the increase of the average way of life. This thought developed out of common happiness and individual success. Progress was not only an idea, but part of the everyday life (*ibid*, par. 37).

Pioneering spirit is the key word, where it stresses more on a gradual and increased process than merely on a result or instant success. Moreover, Harvey L. Carter (in Dictionary of American History, 1976: p. 126b) asserts: “The frontier period was marked by individual struggle, success in which was determined more by effort than by capital.”

Thus, the frontier myth reflecting the pioneering spirit has taught *a steadiness in progress*. As revealed previously by Turner, the advance of the frontier has meant a steady movement away from the influence of Europe, a steady growth of independence on American lines. Therefore, in his Presidential Nomination Acceptance Speech in 1960, JFK reminded to his fellow citizens: “We stand today on the edge of a New Frontier . . . a frontier of unknown opportunities and perils . . . I am asking each of you to be pioneers on that New Frontier” (<http://www.cs.umb.edu/jfklibrary/j071560.htm>, 2000: par. 31 & 34). That is what the frontier myth is for, conquering the unknown is a key to success.

Consciously or unconsciously, the frontier myth is also very influential in the American modern fictions. Arthur K. Moore (1963: p. 245) says, “A further statement, ‘The frontier has been a great stimulus to the imagination of American authors—even of those who never saw it,’ is as unlikely as it is unprovable.” In other words, all the American literary works virtually are the frontier literature including the novel *The Great Gatsby*.

Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald himself as the author is a frontier stock of Irish who was born in St. Paul, Minnesota on September 24, 1896 to a poor family. He was a student of St. Paul Academy and the Newman School, and had attended the Princeton University but without a degree. In 1917, he joined to the army in the World War I and was posited in Montgomery, Alabama, but later he was discharged. Then, he went to New York and worked at an advertising agency. Unfortunately, he was paid at low wages in which by the job he did expect to impress Zelda Sayre, a beautiful woman he met in Montgomery. Afterwards he returned to St. Paul and

started his new career as a writer. Amazingly, his first novel *This Side of Paradise* (1920) gave him much money and fame, even Zelda agreed to marry him at last. His fame increased with another works such as two short stories *Flappers and Philosophers* (1921) and *Tales from the Jazz Age* (1922), and his second novel *The Beautiful and Damned* (1922). However, though the Fitzgeralds had become a glamor couple of their generation they lived under heavy pressure. This condition encouraged them to move to Riviera, France in 1924 as a part of the American expatriates where Fitzgerald was inspired to write *The Great Gatsby* (1925). Notwithstanding, it was still not able to make their lives better that increasingly gave an impact on Fitzgerald's alcoholism and his wife's schizophrenia. Moreover, his later works began to have no place on his fans such as *Tender is the Night* (1934) and *The Last Tycoon* (1939). Finally, Fitzgerald died in Hollywood on December 21, 1940, because of a fatal heart attack.

Meanwhile, there are three types of the frontier literature as classified by RA Burchell and RJ Gray (in Bradbury and Temperley, 1984: p. 115), as follows:

We could, for instance, take frontier literature to mean anything that was actually written or devised by the settlers—that is to say, literature that comes *from* the frontier. Then again, we could take it to embrace books and poems from elsewhere, which use the life of the pioneer or the Indian as their subject and setting—in other words, literature *about* the frontier. Beyond this, we could expand the term even further, to include any writing that bears the imprint of the pioneering experience and the westward movement; it could, to put it another way, also mean literature that has somehow been *inspired* by the frontier. . . We identify the frontier period as being from 1607 to 1890, this might seem to mark the parameters of the frontier literature: frontier literature, we could say, was written over the 300 years the frontier was actually there.

From this it shows that F. Scott Fitzgerald's work *The Great Gatsby* belongs to the literature *inspired* by the frontier as it was written in 1925 or after the frontier period.

This novel has a background of America in the prosperity time of the 1920's known as **the Roaring Twenties**. Since the post-World War I the American economy and business were booming together with the impressive advance of the industrial and technological developments. Many Americans were making and buying more goods that previously unimagined such as radios, movies and automobile transforming their life-style into modernism. In short, they could enjoy a higher standard of living than any other people in the world.

In stark and touching flashback through the narrator Nick Carraway, *The Great Gatsby* depicts a rich man named Jay Gatsby that was very mysterious to the people around him. It soon reveals Gatsby is a Midwesterner who came East with a special mission. After his return from the war, he finds that his beloved Daisy Fay has married someone else Tom Buchanan because of a \$ 350,000 necklace. Therefore, in New York City he devotes his whole life to look for much money, even if it is illegal, to win Daisy back. Through bootlegging business, he buys a luxurious mansion and throws parties every week by hoping to get her sympathy. Unfortunately, his struggle must end with his tragic death that in truth was killed by his own dream.

The frontier myth reflecting the pioneering spirit has taught *a steadiness in progress* that conquering the unknown is a key to success. However, the story in *The Great Gatsby* seems to portray the Americans who were unsteady in progress on the New Frontier of the 1920's. The central character Jay Gatsby represents this condition. He moves east to the unknown city of New York to realize his dream. However, the dream seems too ideal to be realized as he tries to pull the past to the present, a very romantic nostalgia with Daisy. On the other hand, Daisy sees of love

only from how beneficial is the love to her rather than to develop it.

This means the Americans on the New Frontier of the 1920's just see of what they have known without a willingness to conquer the unknown. They tend to become **hedonists**, not heroes, that pursue pleasure only, by avoiding suffering and pain or without a willingness to work hard or to go through any odds and challenging future. This becomes an interesting phenomenon to be discussed thinking of the frontier myth assuredly remains alive in the American modern society. Moreover, in *The Great Gatsby* the last paragraph, "So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past" (TGG: p. 188), reinforces this theme.

1.2. Problem Statement

Considering the phenomenon above, the problem relevant to be discussed in this research is: What factors that make the Americans on the New Frontier of the 1920's unsteady in progress as reflected in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*?

1.3. Scope of the Study

As mentioned before, *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald belongs to the literature *inspired* by the frontier, a literary work written after the frontier period. Certainly this type has a wide dimension including the American literary works of this century. Hence, the scope of the study will focus on the American experience after the post-World War I: the prosperity time of the 1920's in which the novel took its setting.

1.4. Theory and Approach

This thesis is under American Studies program, an understanding of American culture by seeing aspects of interdisciplinary study in it. Certainly, it is difficult for a researcher majoring in the American Studies to work in a wide

spectrum. However, Robert E. Spiller (in Mickelson, 1969: p. 14) says:

He might also, by analogy, understand better man's experience in other times and places and, by generalizing, the nature of culture itself. The movement should not give in wholly to the historians and, through them, to the formalizing and limiting methods of the social sciences, nor should it renounce history and move into formal literary and art criticism.

Similarly, the Department of American Studies at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch New Zealand, gives a suggestion: "Studying the past and present nature of American culture(s) will help you to recognize connections among complex materials and diverse phenomena in both an American and a cross-cultural context" (<http://www.amst.canterbury.ac.nz/pages/about.html>, 2002: par. 4).

This means the American Studies not merely to be seen holistically but comparatively in the context of the American historical and cultural development. Malcom Bradbury and Howard Temperley (op.cit., p. 17) explain of it, as follows:

For the fact is that the United States has, in many respects, always deeply in interaction with other societies. It has followed comparable patterns and processes of development; in some ways it typifies the rhythms of modern development and technological evolution, and its 'mythic' character is not solely a product of its internal progress but of those refractive and potent images that have kept it a central force in the world, especially the Western world. For these reasons it is often best seen not 'holistically' but comparatively, from outside as well as from inside, if its complex images and meanings are to be discerned, its historical significance pursued.

The implication in meaning is the understanding of America as an integrated culture. Because every culture is essentially dynamic that enables it to change over time. Thus, in the American Studies the understanding of cultural process is very essential by studying the patterns of behavior either in the past or present where Americans experience the world as the guide for the future. Richard E. Sykes says: "All cultures are characterized by certain patterns of behavior, learned and passed on from generation to generation. . . No one event is exactly the same as another, but we can

describe what most people do most of the time in most areas of life. From their behavior we infer meanings, values and ideas” (in Mickelson, op.cit., p. 30).

Concerning to the topic discussed, therefore, this research will analyze F. Scott Fitzgerald’s work *The Great Gatsby* comparatively by studying its literary and art expression in the context of the American historical and cultural development. The analysis will study *the imagery of pioneering* in the novel, as the literature inspired by the frontier, by considering the development of the frontier cultural pattern in the American modern society of the 1920’s. It is very significant to get the complex image and meaning about the frontier myth as a formative influence in the American life and culture with all its variation and color.

1.5. Method of Research

This American Studies research applies the library research method in which the object of study refers to documents or works of art to be learned as a cultural text. The primary data is collected from the main resource, *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, while the secondary data is collected from books, articles and other references. The secondary data is analyzed to support the primary data in relation to the study of the imagery of pioneering in the novel as the literature inspired by the frontier. It is essential to find out what factors that make the Americans on the New Frontier of the 1920’s unsteady in progress as reflected in the novel. Non-print material such as videocassette of *The Great Gatsby* film is also essential to support in understanding the topic discussed.

2. Analysis

Having as a source from Patrick A. Velardi’s paper ‘*Three Literary Views of*

the American Frontier, there are three basic aspects to study the imagery of pioneering in F. Scott Fitzgerald's work *The Great Gatsby* as the literature inspired by the frontier. They include the understanding of motivation for westward migration, pioneer spirit and the types of pioneers.

2.1. Motivation for Moving (Westward Migration)

To understand the motivation for westward migration, according to Velardi, is complex, and involves an understanding of two terms, deficiency motivation and abundance motivation:

Deficiency motivation is a response to man's basic urge for survival and security. Escape is the key word. Life in one's present location does not provide the comforts desired. On the other hand, abundance motivation implies a basic contentment with one's present lot, but the individual desires excitement, adventure or an even better life (<http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1978/4/87.04.06.x.html>, 2000: par. 6).

The understanding becomes complex because the people who left the early settlements and moved farther west to the unknown land not only those who were miserable but also who were comfortable in life. Again, Velardi adds:

Accepting that American pioneers had varying degrees of one or both of these motivations, the pioneers were markedly different from those people who chose to stay at home . . . These early pioneers were not content to accept life as it was, either good or poor, but were anxious to move to improve their lives, and moving harsher of conditions, unforeseen dangers and a complete uprooting of what they knew of as home (loc.cit).

Thus, it is more than just a desire to escape from all repressions in the past but to enter a new world and develop it in all its opportunities and challenging future. The gist is **a thirst for adventure** in which the early pioneers did expect something different, something more challenging and exciting for self-improvement. As the following Michael Eckel says: "The word Frontier includes 'to front' which means facing something different" (op.cit, par. 13).

Meanwhile, Richard Lingeman states that Americans kept moving until there was no frontier left, and then they made the city the frontier. The 1920 census was a watershed: it reported that more than half of the people lived in towns or cities. Thereafter the urban side of the scale grew heavier (in Luedtke, 1988: p. 102). In other words, the frontier myth still inspires the American everyday lives of the 1920's but it has experienced a transformation in which the rural agricultural situation was replaced by the urban industrial situation. As reflected in *The Great Gatsby*, the author depicts the pioneering experience of the Midwestern people in an urban industrial situation of the East by recurring the pattern of moving west as the frontier of New York.

In the beginning of the story, Nick Carraway as the narrator of *The Great Gatsby* (TGG), has told of why he left the Middle Western area and moved to the East on the frontier of New York:

My family have been prominent, well-to-do people in this Middle Western city for three generations . . . I graduated from New Haven in 1915 . . . and a little later I participated in that delayed Teutonic migration known as the Great War. I enjoyed the counter-raid so thoroughly that I came back restless. Instead of being the warm centre 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 (TGG: p. 8-9).

Apparently life in the Middle West that in the post-World War I was like the ragged edge of the universe or out of date as contrasted with the warm centre of the world, New York City, has motivated Nick to move to the East. Further, Raymond D. Gastil (in Luedtke, op.cit., p.125-126) gives a general description about life in the skyscraper city of New York, as follows:

This is characteristically a society of recent immigrants, as generations of newcomers continue to use New York City as the gateway to America. . . New York City is in many ways “more European,” more varied, and for

many Americans more exciting than other regions of the country. It is the center of the communications industry, whether it be newspapers, radio, television, or book publishing, and to an increasing extent movies. It is America's business and financial capital, although not of course its political center.

Thus, the New York City is more fashionable providing any comforts and modern life-style, while the Middle West is **ragged** or in old-fashioned.

In such the matter, it seems there was still poverty in the nation behind the prosperity time of the 1920's. Pauline Maier (op.cit, p. 594a) says: "Some Americans had never shared in the good times of the 1920's. Farmers, for example, suffered from low prices for farm products through most of the decade. By 1929, they earned by less than one third of the wages earned by people in nonfarm occupations." Therefore, in 1920's many people from the rural areas moved to the urban cities to better their condition from the ragged to the rich or the more comfortable life, just as Nick did.

However, it does not mean Nick has no a comfortable life at all in his hometown as the background shows that he was an educated individual and came from a prominent family. In this case, why he moved east it is more than just a desire to escape from what deficient on the Midwest, but to explore further of what abundant on him by learning the bond business or as a stockbroker in New York. Thus, like the early pioneers, essentially Nick has a thirst for adventure. He was not content to accept life as it was or dependent upon his parents forever, but he was anxious for something different, something more challenging and exciting for self-improvement.

2.2. The Pioneer Spirit

What happens on Nick persisting in leaving home for something different on

the frontier of New York it requires a self-activity or pioneer spirit in his attitude. According to Michael Eckel, this pioneering spirit could be summarized as a bundle of ideals, including hard and constant work, modesty, self-discipline, spontaneity and initiative, all in all success-oriented attitudes as fundamental characteristics of a meaningful life (op.cit, par. 36).

In this case, Nick wants to place himself as the agent of progress stressing more on a gradual and increased process than merely on a result or instant success. As revealed in Chapter One, the frontier myth reflecting the pioneering spirit has taught a steadiness in progress that conquering the unknown is a key to success. Further, Velardi states: “The Americans were a competitive, ambitious, upwardly mobile people who had a strong sense of self-reliance. The conquering of an environment by an individual was a mark of success. Fear of unknown places was unacceptable and no hindrance to movement” (op.cit, par. 7).

Thus, as the agent of progress Nick has to focus more on what before him with all its opportunities and challenging future to make constant development and change. He is required to be able to adapt himself to his new environment because conquering the unknown is a key to success. Walter Prescott Webb, a researcher of the frontier, emphasizes: “In making this conquest, we rarely looked back but rather pressed forward eagerly to what was before us” (in Moore, op.cit, p. 241).

In reality, what happens on Nick in the East is not to make a conquest for a better future, except he just observes the people around him. Even he returns to the past eventually, as he says: “I decided to come back home” (TGG: p. 184). It shows that truly Nick is unsteady in progress since he is unadaptable to the urban industrial situation of the East symbolizing the American prosperity time of the 1920's.

However, he does not stand alone: “Tom and Gatsby, Daisy and Jordan and I, were all Westerners, and perhaps we possessed some deficiency in common which made us subtly unadaptable to Eastern life” (TGG: p. 183).

Further, Nick says: “When I came back from the East last autumn I felt that I wanted the world to be in uniform and at a sort of moral attention forever; I wanted no more riotous excursions with privileged glimpses into the human heart” (TGG: p. 8). Thus, it seems Nick is conscious of being trapped in such the game of those who came East only to pursue a privilege or elite class without considering moral and communal values. At least he sees of it by referring to the conflict between Tom and Gatsby.

Jay Gatsby is a very rich man who ever fought in World War I. He is Nick’s neighbor in West Egg outside New York. Initially, he is very mysterious to Nick since he lives alone and isolated in his mansion. He often throws his weekly parties and invites many people to come, but ironically he never assimilates with them. Later on it is revealed that before Gatsby went off to war, he had a very romantic relationship with Daisy Fay, Nick’s second cousin. Jordan Baker, a professional golfer who is a close friend of Daisy, explains of it to Nick. However, when he was off at war Daisy married a rich man from Chicago named Tom Buchanan. Jordan convinces Nick that Gatsby is still very much in love with Daisy and wishes to get her back, but he needs Nick’s help. Thus, it seems the reason of why Gatsby buys a large house and throws parties every week, and then makes a friend with Nick the way to meet Dasy again. In this case, Nick remains Gatsby (TGG: p. 117) that “you can’t repeat the past,” to which Gatsby replies: “Of course you can!” Moreover, it is also revealed that Gatsby becomes rich through illegal business. Tom makes an investigation and tells to Nick:

“Who is this Gatsby anyhow? . . . Some big bootlegger? . . . A lot of these newly rich people are just big bootleggers, you know” (TGG: p. 114-115).

In the meantime, Tom represents vulgar and arrogant in his attitude. While Gatsby is at war, he uses his money to win Daisy over and marry, knowing very well of her relationship with Gatsby. He also has an affair with Myrtle, George Wilson’s wife and makes no effort to hide it from Daisy. Therefore, it is true when Jordan says: “Tom’s got some woman in New York” (TGG: p. 21). He does not worry about anyone but himself. He cares only about getting what he wants, not caring who he takes down in the process. In addition, Nick tells about Tom:

His family were enormously wealthy – even in college his freedom with money was a matter for reproach – but now he’d left Chicago and come East in a fashion that rather took your breath away: for instance, he’d brought down a string of polo ponies from Lake Forest. It was hard to realize that a man in my own generation was wealthy enough to do that . . . Why they came East I don’t know. They had spent a year in France for no particular reason, and then drifted here and there unrestfully wherever people played polo and were rich together. This was a permanent move, said Daisy . . . but I didn’t believe it (TGG: p. 12).

Thus, it seems Tom is very fond to show off his power and money that in truth it only comes from his wealthy family, not from his efforts. He just moves from place to place without a certain purpose, not to make an improvement but only to find pleasure and self-satisfaction. On the other hand, Jordan tells to Nick about Daisy:

That was nineteen-seventeen. By the next year I had a few beaux myself, and I began to play in tournaments, so I didn’t see Daisy very often. . . Wild rumours were circulating about her - how her mother had found her packing her bag one winter night to go to New York and say good-bye to a soldier who was going overseas. . . In June she married Tom Buchanan of Chicago, with more pomp and circumstance than Louisville ever knew before. He came down with a hundred people in four private cars, and hired a whole floor of the Muhlbach Hotel, and the day before the wedding he gave her a string of pearls valued at three hundred and fifty thousand dollars (TGG: p. 82).

In other words, Daisy is a very material person. She married Tom because of money that Gatsby could not provide.

From this, it shows that what are the people looking for in the East everything is for getting privileged class merely. However, though their lives are filled by any comforts and material success, it seems there is something empty among them as if they have no a spiritual purpose. Daisy's fear about her future represents this condition (TGG: p. 124): "What'll we do with ourselves this afternoon . . . and the day after that, and the next thirty years?" Another example is what happening on Wilson where he killed Gatsby for the death of his wife Myrtle. In fact, it is a terror made by Tom because he wants to save Daisy who hit Myrtle by using Gatsby's car.

2.3. The Types of Pioneers

For a further understanding, the types of pioneers become essential to see whether an individual is steady in progress or not. During the frontier period, there are various types of the pioneers but they essentially can be classified into two groups, *users* and *subduer*, as defined by Patrick A. Velardi (op.cit, par. 8):

Generally the first newcomers on undeveloped frontier territory were *users* of the land. Examples of this group are fur-trappers, explorers, missionaries and herdsman. They all depended on the wilderness in its pristine state for the survival . . . When an area was trapped-out, they needed to move on to another, and in the process provided initial access into previously unexplored areas of America . . . On the heels of the users, came the subduers of the frontier whose existence depended on clearing the forests, fencing in the land and literally destroying the wilderness. This group can be subdivided into three smaller categories— backwoodsmen, small propertied farmers and the propertied farmers who completed the frontiering process.

Thus, it seems both the users and subduers of the frontier their existences were exactly the opposite each other and very potential for the emergence of conflict between them.

In this case, Velardi refers to the American frontier experience in the nineteenth century where it had happened a battle for *who have a right more to the land* between cattlemen and homesteaders. Here, behind the battle won by the homesteaders eventually, Velardi has observed some character traits in each group (ibid, par. 28):

Cattlemen	Homesteaders
Lawlessness	Lawful
Use the land to produce	Re-use the land to produce
Interested in money	Interested in making the country grow
Resistant to civilization	Wish to have civilization

Referring to **the first row**, it has been told that the cattlemen persisted to claim to the land because they set themselves up as the first newcomers in the territory. Yet, in reality the homesteaders had a right more to the land because they were lawful or have a legal document. According to The Merriam-Webster Dictionary (1974: p. 338b), a homesteader is “one who acquires a tract of land from U.S. public lands by filling a record and living on and cultivating the tract.” Thus, truly the cattlemen just showed their fear of losing the land because they were lawless or without the legalization.

From the words “fear of losing . . .” above; it seems not all the pioneers were steady in progress or had a strong sense of self-reliance in doing pioneering work. As reflected on **the second row**, the homesteaders re-use the land to produce. By conquering the wilderness with all its unforeseen hardships and dangers they cultivated and developed the Promised Land of the West, in which land was fertile

and abundant, for a new better world. On the contrary, the cattlemen just use the land to produce. They exploited the vast areas of land to graze their cattle, and then when the areas were not comfortable again for their cattle grazing they left and moved to the more comfortable areas for their survival.

This shows that the homesteaders were more steady in progress than the cattlemen in which the frontier movement was patterned on a gradual and increased process, not on a result or instant success only. Therefore, it is not surprising if the homesteaders won the battle over the cattlemen because their frontier movement not only rested on the deficiency motivation but stressed more on the abundancy motivation. In other words, the homesteaders were more optimistic than the cattlemen in doing pioneering work in which life on the frontier was always seen as an abundancy and full of expectancy. They always desired to become better, better and better again, no matter what they were in good or bad condition. By hard work and a strong sense of self-reliance they conquered the unknown West as the Promised Land with all its opportunities and challenges to make a new better world.

In such the matter, the homesteaders represent the subduers of the frontier or have an interest in making the country grow that used the land for self-betterment and the improvement of the young nation. In contrast, the cattlemen represent the users or just have an interest in money, as the following Velardi refers to the rancher:

Where farmers represent progress and communal values, the rancher represents selfish, monetary values. . . The battle between cattlemen and rancher/farmers was won by farmers because they were they way the country needed to progress. The open ranges could not be used merely as grazing land. The land had to produce if the country was to grow (op.cit, par. 11 & 13).

Moreover, as reflected on **the last row**, the cattlemen are resistant to civilization

where they were nativistic or anti-immigrants. Even, not rarely, they were vulgar and violent in manner as they lived under the rules made by themselves. Just the opposite, the homesteaders wish to have civilization where they were always open to the newcomers or to the fellow frontier settlers, and had a strong sense of belonging.

Dealing with this matter, what happens on Gatsby, Tom, Daisy, and the others including Nick it indicates that many Americans on the New Frontier of the 1920's were unsteady in progress. It is because of they just become the users, not the subduers. Whatever they dream is without a gradual and increased process, and even without moral and spiritual growth. In this case, they just want to see of they have known without a willingness to conquer the unknown. They just want to pursue pleasure, or to be the hedonists and the very material people without a willingness to go through any hardships and dangers.

In such the matter, F. Scott Fitzgerald in his work *Echoes of the Jazz Age* has made a statement, as follows:

This was the generation whose girls dramatized themselves as flappers, the generation that corrupted its elders and eventually overreached itself less through lack of morals than through lack of taste. May one offer in exhibit the year 1922! That was the peak of the younger generation, for though the Jazz Age continued, it became less and less as affair of youth (in Scheiber and Elliot, 1974: p. 310).

Thus, together with the birth of Jazz music in the 1920's, many young Americans just think about fun and all things immoral. Besides, Fitzgerald (loc.cit) said:

The word jazz in its progress toward respectability has meant first sex, then dancing, then music. It is associated with a state of nervous stimulation, not unlike that of big cities behind the lines of a war. To many English the War still goes on because all the forces that manace them are still active — Wherefore eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die.

In other words, they just think about life-style, not the maintenance of life. Again,

Fitzgerald (*ibid*, p. 314) stated: “Maybe there was a way out by flying, maybe our restless blood could find frontiers in the illimitable air.”

This means on the New Frontier of the 1920's, everything is devoted to pursue pleasure only, not to make constant development and change the way the country needs to grow. Many Americans have no a pioneering spirit or a strong sense of self-reliance to conquer the unknown anymore. They prefer to be the users than the subduers that made them unsteady in progress.

3. Conclusion

The frontier myth with its idea of progress is assuredly remains alive in the American modern society. Likewise as reflected in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, the Americans on the New Frontier of the 1920's kept moving by recurring the pattern of moving west as the frontier of New York. However, they move not to dream a free land to call their own anymore, but to dream a privileged class that in reality it cannot guarantee a special right or advantages to their behavior.

Comparing to the early pioneers, the American on the New Frontier of the 1920's prefer to be the users than the subduers. As the result, they become unsteady in progress where they live by stressing more on a result or instant success only than on a gradual and increased process. Some factors that make them unsteady in progress are:

- To be lawless in realizing a dream
- Unproductive or have no inisiative
- Materialistic or monetary values
- Represent selfish or have no sense of equality.

In other words, they have no a pioneering spirit or self-activity, success in which is determined more by capital than by effort. They struggle just to pursue pleasure only without moral and spiritual growth.

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