

Francis Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby: Novel and Film

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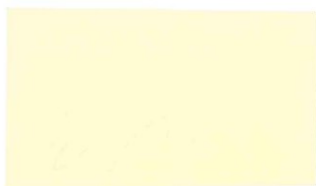
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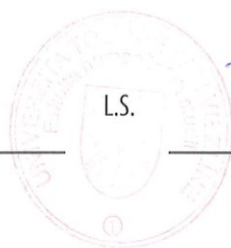
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ABSTRAKT

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá přepracováním románu Francise Scotta Fitzgeralda *Velký Gatsby* (1925) do jeho filmových adaptací z let 1974 a 2013 režisérů Jacka Claytona a Baze Luhrmanna s cílem srovnat jednotlivé aspekty románu a obou filmů a jejich natáčecí techniky. První kapitola se zaměřuje na představení obou režisérů a také to, co je vedlo ke zfilmování tak velkého díla. Druhá kapitola slouží jako náhled na oba filmy z hlediska obecných informací, děje, nebo uspořádání. Třetí kapitola představuje podrobnou analýzu vybraných filmů, a především kamerovou techniku režisérů. Čtvrtá kapitola poukazuje na znaky z dvacátých let, kterými se ve svém románu Fitzgerald zabýval, a které režiséři přenesli na filmová plátna. Na závěr kapitola pět porovnává již zjištěné informace. Práce vybírá stěžejní scény z filmů, které jsou ovlivněny románem.

Klíčová slova: *Velký Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Baz Luhrmann, Jack Clayton, film, kamera, adaptace, porovnání

ABSTRACT

This Bachelor's thesis deals with the reworking of Francis Scott Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby* (1925) into film adaptations from 1974 and 2013 by Jack Clayton and Baz Luhrmann. The aim is to compare the various aspects of the novel with both films and their shooting techniques. The first chapter focuses on the introduction of both directors and what led them to film such a masterpiece like *The Great Gatsby*. The second chapter serves as a preview of both films in terms of general information, plot or setting. The third chapter presents a detailed analysis of selected films and especially the camera techniques of the directors. The fourth chapter points to the signs of the 1920s that Fitzgerald dealt with in his novel and which the directors transferred to the film screens. Finally, chapter five compares the information already established. The work focuses on key scenes from films influenced by the novel.

Keywords: *The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Baz Luhrmann, Jack Clayton, film, camera, adaptation, a comparison

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I hereby declare that the print version of my Bachelor's thesis and the electronic version of my thesis deposited in the IS/STAG system are identical.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	8
1 DIRECTORS OF <i>THE GREAT GATSBY</i> FILMS	9
1.1 JACK CLAYTON.....	9
1.2 BAZ LUHRMANN.....	10
2 FILM ADAPTATIONS OF <i>THE GREAT GATSBY</i>	13
2.1 1974 ADAPTATION	13
2.1.1 Setting	14
2.1.2 Plot	14
2.1.3 Costumes	16
2.1.4 Parties.....	16
2.2 2013 ADAPTATION	16
2.2.1 Setting	18
2.2.2 Plot	18
2.2.3 Costumes.....	19
2.2.4 Parties.....	20
3 CINEMATIC EFFECTS OF BOTH VERSIONS	21
3.1 MUSIC AND SOUNDTRACK.....	21
3.1.1 1974 Adaptation.....	21
3.1.2 2013 Adaptation.....	22
3.2 USE OF CAMERA.....	22
3.2.1 1974 Adaptation.....	23
3.2.2 2013 Adaptation.....	24
3.3 LIGHTING AND COLORS	26
3.3.1 1974 Adaptation.....	26
3.3.2 2013 Adaptation.....	27
3.4 EDITING.....	28
3.4.1 1974 Adaptation.....	29
3.4.2 2013 Adaptation.....	30
4 SIGNS OF THE ROARING TWENTIES IN THE FILMS	32
4.1 SOCIETY AND CULTURE.....	32
4.1.1 1974 Adaptation.....	32
4.1.2 2013 Adaptation.....	33
4.2 PROHIBITION.....	33
4.2.1 1974 Adaptation.....	33
4.2.2 2013 Adaptation.....	34
4.3 WOMEN IN THE SOCIETY	34
4.3.1 1974 Adaptation.....	34
4.3.2 2013 Adaptation.....	35
5 COMPARISON.....	36
CONCLUSION	38
BIBLIOGRAPHY	40

INTRODUCTION

The Great Gatsby was not very popular in F. Scott Fitzgerald's life. At the time of the economic crisis and World War II, it was forgotten mainly because the novel was considered as a satire on the Roaring Twenties and reached its breakthrough in the 1950s when it was republished. This work quickly became compulsory reading for high schools around the world and was translated into many languages. It is often referred to as one of the greatest American novels of the twentieth century. No wonder that the novel was filmed so many times. However, each adaptation carries different scenes, shots, is treated differently, and has a completely different charm.

Since the novel was published in 1925, it has been nearly a hundred years from now and it was filmed four times. The first silent film was released a year after the novel, but it failed. The second film adaptation in 1949 was a black and white film by Elliott Nugent, however, the main, most important and large-scale adaptations are the 1947 and 2013 versions by Jack Clayton and Baz Luhrmann. It might seem that the film versions will be very similar as they are made from the same novel, but this is not the case. I decided to focus on these two latest films. The bachelor's thesis is divided into five chapters.

My goal was to introduce both directors to the reader and clarify what led them to rework the novel into a film, which is dealt with in the first chapter. Then I analyzed the films of both directors from different perspectives – plot, setting, costumes, parties. I tried to find similarities and differences in films and in the novel, respectively in Fitzgerald's understanding and presentation of that time. Essential for this work was the analysis of the film in terms of cinematic techniques. Both directors tried to bring the work closer to the time when the plot of the novel really takes place in, the 1920s – a time of prosperity when the world was recovering after the First World War. Each of them uses different camera techniques, editing, lighting, and music. In some scenes the two versions are identical, but in others, they are naturally different. The directors added some scenes, while others were removed. In the fourth chapter, I point to the current themes of the 1920s, which Fitzgerald criticizes in the novel and which Clayton and Luhrmann emphasize in both films.

The last chapter is devoted to a precise summary, respectively the final comparison. Given the time difference between Clayton's and Luhrmann's version, there are obvious differences.

1 DIRECTORS OF *THE GREAT GATSBY* FILMS

In my bachelor thesis, I decided to focus on two of the latest film adaptations the novel *The Great Gatsby* (1925) by Francis Scott Fitzgerald, who was an American writer and screenwriter. According to Bruccoli, Fitzgerald knew the importance of his own novel and his artistic achievements: “Gatsby was far from perfect in many ways but all in it contains such prose and has never been written in America before. The lyric quality of Gatsby, its esthetic soundness.”¹ The films achieved great success thanks to the quality of the novel. The films from 1974 and 2013 are directed by Jack Clayton and Baz Luhrmann.

1.1 Jack Clayton

Jack Clayton was a British film director and producer who specialized in screening literary works. He was born in 1921 in Brighton, England. He began appearing in the film industry at the age of fourteen, working as the third assistant director for Alexander Korda’s London Films at Denham Studios. His first experience with film leadership was a short documentary for the Royal Air Force Film Unit in 1944 and was called *Naples Is a Battlefield*. During the late 1940s and first half of the 1950s, he worked on a range of films as an assistant director, production manager, second unit director, associate producer and, from 1956 onwards, as a producer. In 1955 he received his first credit for a film adaptation of Nikolai Gogol’s work *The Bespoke Overcoat*. The film was a real success and won the Oscar and British Academy Award, but Clayton continued as a producer. John and James Woolf gave him the opportunity to re-direct John Braine’s novel *Room at the Top*.

His films have always been good adaptations of the books, but they also contained spontaneity and moments of surprise. Despite his hard work and the great acuity of events (except for *Room at the Top* in 1959, which was quite unusual for him), he did not always get commercial success. Throughout his career, Clayton has produced only 8 feature films that were not attractive to the market or critics at the time. Only two of Clayton’s films were shot in America. As I mentioned before, in 1974 it was the adaptation of Francis Scott Fitzgerald’s novel *The Great Gatsby*, which, however, did not reach great fame. Critics did not like it much. He released his second film in 1983, entitled *Something Wicked This Way Comes*. He produced it after he recovered from a stroke, that he suffered in the mid-1970s. Then he returned to Britain to make his last two films. It was *The Lonely Passion of Judith*

¹Joseph Matthew Bruccoli, *Some Sort of Epic Grandeur: The Life of F. Scott Fitzgerald* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2002), 221.

Hearne, which was set in Dublin but was filmed primarily in Britain and 1992 the BBC film *Memento Mori*, both of which were quietly moving meditations on disappointment and aging. With this sad, but never depressing film, and with Clayton's eye for visual detail, he said good-bye to his career. He claimed that he could produce far more films than he actually did.²

When Clayton was supposed to make a film based on the work of Fitzgerald, he was not sure he could make an American classic movie like that. Due to earlier failed attempts to do film adaptations of the novel, he felt under pressure. Clayton had read the novel as a small child and immediately fell in love with it. He even worked with some of Fitzgerald's students on the film and consulted his work with Fitzgerald's daughter. He tried to capture the good and bad side of the novel, for example by portraying the love between Gatsby and Daisy, the marriage of Myrtle and Wilson. Clayton is considered to be a conservative director who likes to stick to the novel. In his opinion, the first two-thirds of the novel is boring and without any reversal. But this cannot be said of the last third. Clayton said he was trying to make the film more dynamic, but at the same time stick to the artwork. Throughout the film, he pointed out the relationship between Gatsby and Daisy and tried to portray their relationship very emotionally.³

1.2 Baz Luhrmann

Baz Luhrmann is an Australian director, screenwriter, actor, and producer. He was born in Sydney; Australia and he spent his childhood in a small town in New South Wales. Born in 1962 as Mark Anthony Luhrmann and like Gatsby, who was formerly James Gatz, he turned his back to the world and changed his name. In his rebirth, he took on the nickname given to him by his classmates according to the TV show and the character Basil Brush, who resembled Luhrmann's hairstyle. Since then he was no longer Mark but Baz Luhrmann. His mother, Barbara Carmel, was a dance lecturer and shop owner, and his father, Leonard Luhrmann, was a farmer. As a child, Luhrmann did not have it easy. Luhrmann and his brothers were raised by his father in a "military-style": his father had their hair cut very short and even put them in the car at night a couple of times, dropped them in the bush, and let them find their way home. He grew up in Herons Creek, a small rural settlement in New South Wales where his father ran a gas station and a cinema. Luhrmann personally claims

² Neil Sinyard, *Jack Clayton (British Film Makers)* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 21–9.

³ Sinyard, *Jack Clayton*, 144–8.

that the fact that his father had exposed him from theatre and film from an early age helped his film career. As a young child, he spent time watching movies in a small village cinema, and this is also reflected in the way he presents his films.

He tries to make the audience aware that they are in a cinematic or theater space. This characteristic has been noted in particular for the films that make up the Red Curtain Trilogy: *Strictly Ballroom* (1992), *Romeo + Juliet* (1996) and *Moulin Rouge!* (2001).⁴ He attended St Joseph's Hasting Regional School, Port Macquarie (1975-78), and St Paul's College. One interesting interconnection of biographies between the author of *The Great Gatsby* by Francis Scott Fitzgerald and the director of the eponymous film Baz Luhrmann is that they attended a school with the same name.⁵ Fitzgerald attended St. Paul's Academy in Minnesota, while Luhrmann, an Australian, was briefly a student of St. Paul's Catholic College in the suburbs of Sydney. In fact, the outer shots of Gatsby's mansion were filmed at the archbishop's residence, at the place of Luhrmann's old school.⁶

When it came to the filming of *The Great Gatsby*, Luhrmann risked a hundred million dollars, but he said: "I would do anything to make sure Gatsby stayed alive." The realization of the project came only seven years after Luhrmann decided to film this novel. He first agreed with Sony Pictures Entertainment in 2010, but it did not allow him to exceed the budget of over eighty million dollars. In 2011, he visited the Warner Bros conference room and spoke to the company's management (Jeff Robinov, Greg Silverman, Veronika Kwan Vandenberg, and Kevin Tsujihara) for two hours, trying to explain his idea of the film. He thought he could combine new and old, mix hip-hop with the classic twenties jazz music, and also use 3D to make the film modern. In the final, it turned out well and the film, in cooperation with Warner Bros, opened the Cannes Film Festival on May 15, 2013. After a long struggle for rights, the film took place, with a budget of fewer than 105 million dollars (it would have cost up to 190 million dollars without Australian location subsidies). Baz Luhrmann with Warner Bros. faced great pressure from both the public and the producer. The high-quality combination of the star cast, top-notch music, and also the period charm that prevails over the young audience was the main criterion for the cooperation.⁷ Although he sought to modernize the novel, he sought to preserve the mainline of the story. He did not

⁴ Maria Nugent, "Every Right to be There': Cinema Spaces and Racial Politics in Baz Luhrmann's Australia," *Australian Humanities Review*, no. 51 (2011): 5–6.

⁵ Andrew Turnbull, *Scott Fitzgerald* (New York: Vintage, 2004), 40–41.

⁶ Paul Giles, "A Good Gatsby: Baz Luhrmann Undomesticated Fitzgerald," *Commonweal; New York* 140, no. 12 (2013): 12.

⁷ Tom Ryan, ed., *Baz Luhrmann: Interviews* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2014), 131–38.

miss important scenes and implemented a lot of accurate quotes from the book. On the other hand, he moved away from the less important scenes, adding to the impressiveness of the story.⁸

⁸ Nancy von Rosk, *Looking Back at the Jazz Age: New Essays on the Literature and Legacy of an Iconic Decade* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016), 187.

2 FILM ADAPTATIONS OF *THE GREAT GATSBY*

There are many movie versions of *The Great Gatsby*. It already started in 1926 with an American silent drama film directed by Herbert Brenon, but it is now considered lost. The next adaptation of this American drama was released in 1949, directed by Elliott Nugent. Another version was released, but this time, it was a romantic drama directed by Jack Clayton. The fourth adaptation came out in 2000 and was directed by Robert Markowitz. The last and the newest adaptation was made by Baz Luhrmann in 2013.

2.1 1974 Adaptation

A 1974 version of *The Great Gatsby* is officially a third adaptation of the successful and eponymous novel written by Francis Scott Fitzgerald. Elliott Nugent himself stated that his 1949 adaptation did not meet his cinematic expectations, and this was one of the reasons why Paramount Pictures Corporation, a film studio that is a subsidiary of ViacomCBS, decided to produce another color version with a larger budget.⁹ The film earned twenty-six and a half million dollars, while the budget was only seven million dollars. The 1974 adaptation was a financial success.¹⁰ This adaptation was directed by Jack Clayton with a film script by Francis Ford Coppola. The original screenplay for the film was to be written by Truman Capote but he has never finished it. At that time, he had major problems with alcohol.¹¹ Coppola said he was asked to rewrite the script. He was finishing his film *The Godfather*. The deadline for rewriting the script was only three weeks, but he eventually agreed. He even had to invent some scenes to make the film easier. For example, a scene where Gatsby and Daisy are talking with each other all night: “I was shocked to find that there was almost no dialogue between Daisy and Gatsby in the book and was terrified that I’d have to make it all up.”¹²

The film stars Robert Redford in the title role of Jay Gatsby, along with Mia Farrow (Daisy Buchanan), Sam Waterston (Nick Carraway), Bruce Dern (Tom Buchanan), Karen Black (Myrtle Wilson), Scott Wilson (George Wilson), and Lois Chiles (Jordan Baker), with

⁹ Joy G. Boyum, *Double Exposure: Fiction into Film* (Minnesota: Olympic Marketing Corp, 1985), 117.

¹⁰ The Numbers, “The Great Gatsby (1974),” <https://www.the-numbers.com/movie/Great-Gatsby-The#tab=summary>, (accessed December 15, 2019).

¹¹ Peter Bart, “In Search of a Great ‘Gatsby’: Hollywood’s F. Scott Fitz and Starts,” *Variety*, Accessed February 19, 2020, <https://variety.com/2013/biz/features/in-search-of-a-great-gatsby-hollywoods-f-scott-fitz-and-starts-1200386084/>.

¹² Francis Ford Coppola, “Gatsby and Me,” *Town & Country*, Last modified April 16, 2013, <https://www.townandcountrymag.com/leisure/reviews/a1042/francis-ford-coppola-gatsby-and-me/>.

Howard Da Silva (Meyer Wolfsheim), who also previously appeared in the 1949 version, Roberts Blossom (Henry C. Gatz) and Edward Herrmann (Ewing Klipspringer).¹³

2.1.1 Setting

Clayton's and Coppola's adaptation of *The Great Gatsby* shows the mansions of Newport, Rhode Island, standing in for New York's Long Island. The novel is set on Long Island and is focused on separating the new and the old money by Long Island Sound. During the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century, Newport became the summer capital of the east of the USA and rich people started to build opulent houses along the entire coast. Built-in 1909, Jay Gatsby's magnificent mansion is located in the heart of Newport and imitates the Petit Trianon at Versailles. The difference between the Gatsby's mansion and the house of the Buchanan's is larger. The Victorian Buchanan House, which is in the novel on the other side of New York City, is located far away across the Atlantic Ocean, in England. The opening scene of the film is portrayed by Nick arriving in New York and visiting the Buchanans who live in old money East Egg, across the sound.

2.1.2 Plot

The Great Gatsby is a film adaptation of the novel that gives the film respect and quality. Nick, the narrator, rather than Gatsby, becomes the main character here. As Fitzgerald's alter ego, Nick tells the story from the perspective of the author of the novel. The device of narration in the film allows us to hear a great deal of the novel's non-dialogue prose. It requires a certain amount of concentration and separation from current routines in order for the viewer – and the listener – to appreciate what was Clayton trying to do. Although America's fashion and decoration has changed, speech patterns, music, background noise have also changed. In his version of the novel, Clayton takes the audience into the Jazz Age environment. As the film begins, it is not necessary for Coppola or Clayton to indicate the exact date of their events. What is significant about this sequence is its foreshadowing nature. As Stoddart states in his essay, "Clayton obviously desires his audience to draw a connection with his romantic representation of the novel."¹⁴ Viewers may see the sequence of pictures of Jay Gatsby's property, his pompous house, the infamous yellow car, and at the end the

¹³ *The Great Gatsby*, Directed by Jack Clayton, USA: Paramount Pictures, 1974, Film.

¹⁴ Scott F. Stoddart, "Redirecting Fitzgerald's 'Gaze': Masculine Perception and Cinematic License in *The Great Gatsby*," in *F. Scott Fitzgerald: New Perspectives*, ed. by Jackson R. Bryer, Alan Margolies and Ruth Prigozy (Athens: UGP, 2011), 103.

detailed close-up of scrapbook with photos of Daisy Buchanan. And this is where the music begins to tune up and the camera approaches Daisy's eyes. Clayton's preference for dwelling on the story of the young pair of lovers is to be seen in the modification of the narrative technique.¹⁵ The beginning of the film features the world of Nick, Tom, and Daisy, in which Gatsby seems like an uninvited guest; Nick's journey through the Sound with gilded sailboats and nervous polo ponies on the coast; a noble dinner on the terrace; the dictated speech and materialism of Daisy and Jordan or Tom's secret phone calls. There is also a snippet from the ugly world that Nick is part of, for example, a party at Myrtle's sister's apartment in contrast to Daisy's refined dinner. This sequence tells a lot about how Tom chose Daisy as his wife and Myrtle as his mistress.

Then it is finally Gatsby's world we see - a scene from a spectacular jazz party. Some of these Clayton parties take too long - just like in the real world. Gatsby's parties are presented with authentic sound and shots of tinsel and flickering guests. Before Gatsby shows up on the scene, Coppola and Clayton continue to introduce the other characters of the story in conjunction with him, just like Fitzgerald. Then there is finally Gatsby's world we see - a scene from a spectacular jazz party. The shot of the gun bulging under the bodyguard's coat shows again that Gatsby is some kind of a gangster. Once Nick has met Gatsby and makes an appointment with Daisy, the film closely follows the development, climax, and denouement of the novel. We may notice in the tea party scene, where Robert Redford (Jay Gatsby) and Mia Farrow (Daisy Buchanan) meet for the first time, that their acting styles are different. Clayton tried to emphasize what is a pouting egocentric child in Daisy. When the five main characters come to the Plaza Hotel, there is a chance to watch the interplay between them. In Clayton's version, there are no flashbacks, "I don't like flashbacks. I think life is more interesting and people are more interesting because, for instance, you don't basically know anything about me, and I don't know anything about you. If you put characters onto the screen as long as you give a certain amount of information about them, they then, in fact, become life-like. It's far more fascinating than to have a diary of somebody's life. That's a bore. I think," said Clayton when asked. Clayton and Coppola decided to return to the version of the novel where Myrtle dies. But they did not show the accident, only its consequences. Nor did they quickly assure the audience that Gatsby is innocent and that he takes responsibility, as Maibaum, in his 1949 film, does for example. The movie could end in a graveyard or with a shot of Nick in Gatsby's empty house.

¹⁵ Stoddart, *Redirecting Fitzgerald's 'Gaze'*, 102–14.

This version contains an epilogue that was the idea of Jack Clayton. He imagined the end with happy flappers¹⁶ singing *Ain't We Got Fun*. This scene is not only a reference to the lusty people in the novel but also a reminder of the soundtrack's functionality, where old songs contributed to the film.¹⁷

2.1.3 Costumes

Clayton's version was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Costumes. In the end, it was just for the nomination and the Oscar was awarded to Theoni V. Aldredge. In addition to the Oscar, the film won the BAFTA award in 1975.¹⁸

Costumes, like music, are chosen according to the period in which the story takes place. Jazz years are very elegant and sophisticated in clothing. Ralph Lauren got a big breakthrough in 1974 when he was asked to design the costumes for Robert Redford's character in *The Great Gatsby*. The designers focus carefully on every detail, as we can see on Gatsby's clothing - handkerchiefs, stylish silk scarf or breast pockets.¹⁹ Women were shortening their hair, wearing short fancy dresses, men shaved their beards.

2.1.4 Parties

As the film is historically accurate, it also means that characters in Clayton's version have perfected the dances and popular culture of that period. The 1974 film is much quieter than other versions. People at Clayton's parties dance have fun and even jump into the pool, but no acrobats are flying around, no fire shows. For that time, it is a good party, but from the point of view of today, it is considered a sufficiently controversial one. At least compared to the 2013 version.

2.2 2013 Adaptation

The Great Gatsby, the film from 2013, is the newest adaptation of Francis Scott Fitzgerald's novel of the same name starring Leonardo DiCaprio (Jay Gatsby), Tobey Maguire (Nick Carraway), Carey Mulligan (Daisy Buchanan), Joel Edgerton (Tom Buchanan), Elizabeth Debicki (Jordan Baker), Isla Fisher (Myrtle Wilson), Jason Clarke (George Wilson), and

¹⁶ 1920s young women known for their energetic freedom, embracing a lifestyle viewed by many at the time as outrageous. Now considered the first generation of independent American women, flappers pushed barriers in economic, political and sexual freedom for women.

¹⁷ Irene Kahn Atkins, "In Search of the Greatest Gatsby," *Literature/Film Quarterly* 2, no. 3 (1974): 216–28.

¹⁸ IMDb, "The Great Gatsby," IMDb, Accessed February 19, 2020, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0071577/awards?ref_=tt_ql_op_1.

¹⁹ Alex Woodhall, "Celluloid Style: The Great Gatsby (1974)," FashionBeans, Last modified May 30, 2013, <https://www.fashionbeans.com/2013/celluloid-style-the-great-gatsby-1974/>.

Amitabh Bachchan (Meyer Wolfsheim).²⁰ The director of the film is Australian Baz Luhrmann, who decided to film the movie already in 2004 when traveling on a train.²¹ His wife, designer Catherine Martin, helped Luhrmann realize his vision of the film. She helped him with costumes in almost all his projects, including *The Great Gatsby*. She even won Oscars for her work on *Moulin Rouge*, another film by Baz Luhrmann in which she participated with him. She worked with her team for fourteen weeks to decorate, paint and build Gatsby's luxury mansion, which consisted of a library, a lounge, his bedroom, a lobby, and even a garden, "Looking at images of Beacon Towers, there's something that gives it the feel of the Disneyland castle, and Baz referenced that—the idea that Gatsby was building a fantasy," she says.²²

The film follows the lives of millionaire Jay Gatsby and his neighbor Nick, who met Gatsby during the Roaring twenties. The film premiered in the United States on May 10, 2013, was released in 3D format and obtained mixed reviews from film critics. The film adaptation of Baz Luhrmann and his longtime colleague Craig Pearce has received much praise and criticism for its performances, soundtrack, visual style and direction. The audience was more satisfied with the film than the critics themselves. Even Fitzgerald's granddaughter said her grandfather would be proud.²³

They earned three hundred and fifty-four million dollars worldwide, while the budget was only one hundred and five million dollars. It is Luhrmann's highest-grossing film.²⁴

In this theatrical world, exorbitance and exaggeration are cultivated at all levels. From almost surreal architectural scenery (Gatsby's palace and the whole New York as a city) to costumes, stage design, actors' makeup, and their masks, to graphic depictions of narrator described events, when the text turns into words and appears on the canvas.

²⁰ *The Great Gatsby*, Directed by Baz Luhrmann, Australia: WarnerBrothers, 2013, Film.

²¹ Scott Meslow, "The Great Gatsby: 6 Fascinating Facts," *The Week – All You Need to Know About Everything That Matters*, Last modified May 10, 2013, <https://theweek.com/articles/464479/great-gatsby-6-fascinating-facts>.

²² Brad Goldfarb, "The Lavish Sets of Baz Luhrmann's *The Great Gatsby*," *Architectural Digest*, Last modified April 30, 2013, <https://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/great-gatsby-film-set-design-article>.

²³ Todd Cunningham, "CinemaScore Gets 'A' From Studios, Especially When It Counters Critics," *TheWrap*, Last modified July 24, 2014, <https://www.thewrap.com/cinemascore-gets-studios-especially-when-it-counters-critics-87701/>.

²⁴ *The Numbers*, "The Great Gatsby (2013)," *The Numbers*, Last modified May 10, 2013, [https://www.the-numbers.com/movie/Great-Gatsby-The-\(2011\)#tab=summary](https://www.the-numbers.com/movie/Great-Gatsby-The-(2011)#tab=summary).

2.2.1 Setting

The story of *The Great Gatsby*, as in the 1925 novel, takes place in the fictional towns of West Egg and East Egg on prosperous Long Island, New York. Characters live their lives in a decade of economic growth and widespread prosperity, driven by recovery from wartime devastation and deferred spending. Although the story of the novel takes place on the east coast of the United States, the director decided on a different filming location.

Baz Luhrmann did not use New York and Long Island, as they are described in most of F. S. Fitzgerald's novels for the scenes in the film. Instead, he made most of the film in his native Australia, more precisely in his native Sydney. The Valley of Ashes is not spread between New York and West Egg, but in Balmain, west of Sydney. Although it is a modern part of the city, it has a strong industrial past and Luhrmann believed, that it will be the right place to film the scenes from the novel. In fact, Gatsby's estate is represented by the Manly Business School in Manly on the north coast of Australia. The movie depicts the building as the exterior of Jay Gatsby's luxury home. Even palm trees around St. Patrick's Seminary had to be temporarily removed to make the look of a luxury mansion look like off the east coast of the United States. Cook Road in Centennial Park doubles as the entrance to Gatsby's mansion.²⁵

2.2.2 Plot

From the beginning, there is a difference from the adaptation from 1974, when Nick, who is currently watching events and is actually involved in them, is the key narrator. He tells the story retrospectively two years later, in 1924, by writing a book. We are able to perceive not only Nick's literary side and his money-making business bond side but also that the whole story is a process of remembering and retelling. For this reason, he constantly refers to the current present, permitting different time narration, and besides anticipates the negative ending of the book by pointing to Gatsby's failure, his own disappointment (as opposed to his illusion at the beginning) and moving back to the West to preserve its traditional values. Nick is the only one looking forward to building a relationship with Gatsby who, in the end, turns out fine compared to self-centered and laid-back East Eggers like Daisy, Tom or Jordan.

²⁵ Jolyon Attwooll, "The Real Great Gatsby Locations," The Telegraph, Accessed February 20, 2020, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/arts-and-culture/The-real-Great-Gatsby-locations/>.

The opening credits of the 2013 adaptation are not as crucial as the ones from 1974 adaptation. It focuses only on the frame of Gatsby's mansion with tragic music, and it turns to green light and Nick's narration. Therefore, the focus of Luhrmann's interpretation is only clear when we hear and see the true presence of the narrator. In the introduction, Nick remembers the story in the wintertime when he is a patient in a sanatorium because of his alcoholism, rage, insomnia, and anxiety. The film also uses voice-over, which shows irritability and exhaustion in his voice. Right from the start, we learn that this is happening to him because of past events, "When I came back from New York, I was disgusted. Disgusted with everyone and everything." [00:01:57] which, together with where the story is told, the season and his momentary thinking has a dramatic effect and contrasts with the whole story. The 2013 version depicts the past story of the hero by revealing the truth about him. In the flashbacks that Gatsby tells Nick, and therefore the second and third levels of the story, for example, the story itself and past events, blend together, we see a quick summary of his parents, a young Gatsby with a dream, from meeting Dan Cody over learning some important life lessons until he created a new personality. Together, on behalf of its gangster side, the film also contrasts and underlines the different shapes and meanings of money. Until the first party, we do not see his face, which keeps an even greater secret about him. This version also focuses on the relationship between Gatsby and Daisy, includes added scenes that show their affair (swimming, kissing, sunbathing) and also flashbacks. As in the book, it is Jordan who takes over the story and tells Nick how she met Gatsby [00:45:35].

2.2.3 Costumes

As I said before, Baz Luhrmann's wife Catherine Martin helped him much with the visual scenery of the film. The same was true of the costumes, which achieved their iconic appearance thanks to brands such as Prada or Miu Miu. Martin worked very closely with Miuccia Prada, chief executive officer of the fashion shop. She also worked with Brooks Brothers on men's costumes and Tiffany & Co provided expensive jewelry.

Although the action takes place in 1922, it shows fashion from a decade of the 1920s and even the 1930s. Many of the pieces of clothing that appeared in the film were clothes that were worn on catwalks, but women never wore them in real life. Martin said, that she took classic 1922 women's clothes and made them much bolder and more attractive. The men in the movie are dressing more authentically than women, except for tight pants. Alice Jurow from the Art Deco Society of California said that she really liked the film, but that other members prefer more historically accurate versions. In other words, Martin's film is

more about the fantasy world of the 1920s in the minds of progressive designers, but not how it looked in reality. And she believes the 20s ideas about sex appeal were much closer to 2013's.²⁶

2.2.4 Parties

In the 2013 film version, there are flying acrobats, swimming pools full of people and a house full of music through which people hardly hear each other, which makes Gatsby's parties a real spectacle. All the social strata of the society of that time gathered at Gatsby's party. Bankers, movie stars, alcohol smugglers, politicians, people without money, and beautiful girls who tried to catch their rich prince with an innocent expression. Gatsby's party attendants behaved as if the party they were taking was supposed to be their last. Luhrmann managed to capture the ecstatic, but also a fleeting character of these parties of modern high society, which had come to money quickly but could not yet responsibly handle it. The superficial world of weekly parties is just a metaphorical expression of the emptiness of people who cannot fill their lives in prosperity with anything but fun.²⁷

²⁶ Lisa Hix, "Did Hollywood Give the 1920s a Boob Job? 'Gatsby' Costume Designer Tells All," *Collectors Weekly*, Last modified September 18, 2013, <https://www.collectorsweekly.com/articles/did-hollywood-give-the-1920s-a-boob-job/>.

²⁷ Marek Čech, "Velký Gatsby: Recenze Filmu," *AVMania.zive.cz*, Last modified May 17, 2013, <https://avmania.zive.cz/velky-gatsby-recenze-filmu>.

3 CINEMATIC EFFECTS OF BOTH VERSIONS

The novel *The Great Gatsby* is popular in the film industry and it may seem to be exactly the same story in every adaptation, but it is not. Although the film versions are based on the same book, the similarities are only superficial. Each director conceived the novel differently, each focused on different aspects and emphasized something else.

3.1 Music and Soundtrack

Music is one of the greatest aspects of film diversity, it can evoke reactions in the audience. It usually evokes emotions, so the viewer feels like he or she is in a place with the actors. Filmmakers also use silence, which arranges that the viewer sharpens their attention, and the silence often dramatizes a particular scene. Not only the soundtrack but also the overall sound effects and dialogues are included. Soundtrack indicates what effects the selected music on the film has and whether it fits the film theme.²⁸

3.1.1 1974 Adaptation

The sound in 1974's *The Great Gatsby* version is poetic and evocative. Irving Berlin's ghostly sentimental soundtrack *What'll I Do* is enhanced by a melancholy echo that evokes a romantic past. This melody, which is not mentioned in the novel, is used several times in the film to recall the ancient love between Gatsby and Daisy. Even in Myrtle's apartment sequence, the poetic sound options are effectively used, for example, when she meets Tom. As she speaks, conversation, noise, and music slowly fade to an almost inaudible level. This has a moving dignity and noticeably overplays Myrtle's vulgarity.²⁹ The music in the 1974 film version is accurate to the novel's period. People at Gatsby's parties dance Charleston and tango. In the hall is a real jazz band with real instruments. The film seems to be silent because the parties are not that wild as it is, for example, in the adaptation from 2013. There are no crashes and no shouting. Even the party scenes are quiet: instead of jumping into the pool, people dance and talk with each other. Musicians at Gatsby's parties play jazz, which was a sign of the 1920s and people liked it. The songs remain true to its bluesy origins, the film uses period music.³⁰

²⁸ Michael Ryan, *An Introduction to Film Analysis: Technique and Meaning in Narrative Film* (London: Continuum, 2012), 111–15.

²⁹ Louis Giannetti, "The Gatsby Flap," *Literature/Film Quarterly* 3, no. 1 (1975): 18.

³⁰ Devon Pack, "The Great Gatsby (1974): Movie Review," *Ruthless Reviews*, Last modified May 16, 2013, <https://www.ruthlessreviews.com/14787/the-great-gatsby-1974-movie-review/>.

3.1.2 2013 Adaptation

Sound is a symbolic aspect that is linked to the medium of the film. Hutcheon argues that in the way of screening, music, and sound can act as equivalent to describing a novel, which is reflected in the film adaptation.³¹ There is one repetitive image and sound motif that we can interpret to be related to Nick's feelings. This is an image of an African American man playing the trumpet outside Tom and Myrtle's apartment because Nick is drunk for the second time in his life. The music in the 2013 film version of *The Great Gatsby* is the opposite of the film from 1974. The director put contemporary music into the film. The music produced by a rapper Jay-Z has been processed for two years, as the artist sought to express the jazz age of Fitzgerald's novel to the musical equivalent of our time, through the blending of hip-hop, traditional jazz, and other contemporary musical textures. This works even though the music is modern, it tries to capture elements of the 1920s. In the beginning, people were skeptical and asked: how do artists like Beyoncé, Jack White, The xx, Kanye West, or Gotye get into a 1925 novel. The Roaring Twenties story should be based on classical jazz sound, but in Luhrmann's version, it mixes with contemporary techniques and electronic sound. This is most evident in Beyoncé's hit *Crazy in Love*, in which the swing singer Emeli Sandé was introduced in a new position. The plan was not to put the current conquerors of the charts into tuxedos, tails and bow ties, but to create new songs. The song *Young & Beautiful*, due to its opulence, is definitely one of the best pieces chosen by Jay-Z as the main producer for the musical accompaniment. However, it was not always possible to make a flaring mix of genres. The song *Bang Bang* by an American singer and rapper will.i.am is a continuation of music since the beginning of the last century but it is so different that it breaks the collage of the remaining songs.³² Director Baz Luhrmann decided to cooperate with Craig Armstrong, as well as to edit pop songs for a musical *Moulin Rouge!*, his other masterpiece from 2001. He combines his own orchestral music with remixes of contemporary hip hop songs and new versions of the 1920s hits.

3.2 Use of Camera

Camera shots are an important element for expressing stories and emotions throughout the scene. It is important how and where the camera is positioned, mainly because it is the only

³¹ Linda Hutcheon, and Siobhan O'Flynn, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2013), 23.

³² Lukáš Boček, "RECENZE: "Velký Gatsby" Se Za Soundtrack Stydět Nemusí. Alespoň Většinou," Musicserver.cz, Last modified May 13, 2013, <https://musicserver.cz/clanek/43002/ruzni-the-great-gatsbysoundtrack/>.

view that we are able to get as spectators – through the camera lens. Close-ups often mean intimacy, medium shots are shots that show the entire bodies of actors, usually used in the communication of two characters. Long shots are used in larger spectrums, for example in *The Great Gatsby* films they are used in the presentation of mansions of rich people.³³

The film adaptations of *The Great Gatsby* are well done, the shots, camera angles, and camera movements enhance the feeling and create real empathy with the Roaring Twenties. Although some elements of cinematography were not fully utilized in the 1974 adaptation, the 2013 film version over-utilized modern technology to create breathtaking scenes. Both versions are spectacular and translate the novel brilliantly, although each is different.

3.2.1 1974 Adaptation

Clayton and his colleagues always tried to get as close to the novel as possible. The camera seems to be moving gracefully along with the actors. He also uses many transparent and slightly blurry filters, especially in lovers' scenes, to emphasize the unreality of Gatsby's hopes. He uses sparkle filters to highlight objects and places, but also to highlight Daisy's eyes. This suggests that Daisy has some rarity too, at least as far as Gatsby is concerned. There are also many mirror shots and reflected images, especially those of lovers, which means they do not see each other as they really are, but as illusions.

Jack Clayton's opening scene takes place as a series of views of some of Jay Gatsby's intimate items, probably after his death. Without a word and with remote music, the camera moves over the subjects. The viewer is struck by the framing effect, now using photographs in frames or otherwise square and rectangular shapes. This is a sign of increased fascination with photography in the 1920s. Framed photographs probably reflect Fitzgerald's attempts to capture fleeting, irreversible elements. This interpretation process Clayton uses more often in the film, trying to rewrite other complex patterns of the novel on the screen. Apart from a few later scenes, there is an actual representation of the visual suggestiveness of the novel and the overall impression is a weak visual resonance. The next moment the visual intensifies is when we see Gatsby's back turned as he observes the flashing green light above the bay. All we can see is his back, his raised hand reaching over the bay toward the light and facing the waves that are slowly moving in another direction. It is not enough, but yet this scene explains everything just because of the visual.³⁴

³³ Ryan, *Introduction to Film Analysis*, 52–53.

³⁴ Taïna Tuhkunen, "The Great Gatsby: The Unadaptable American Hero?", *Cercles* 18, no. 1 (2008): 102–8.

The camera angles from Clayton's version are simplified and very straightforward. The unique angles are rarely used in the film, which makes the film slightly drab. In one of the first party scenes, two identical dancers walk through a crowd of people. A simple straight shot is used here, which changes in the 2013 version. Luhrmann uses two not exactly the same dancers and the camera angle is above the shot instead of the human eye. But what the films have very similar are the scenes between Daisy and Gatsby, for example, when they dance together in Gatsby's mansion. Throughout the 1974 film, there is a wide range of footage sizes, from close-ups to long and wide shots. Clayton uses long shots to project Gatsby's and Buchanan's mansions. *The Great Gatsby* from 1974 has ordinary still shots of Gatsby's house without any camera movement. In the 2013 version, the viewer is quickly brought into the action with the film's dynamic first scene but when it comes to showing George Wilson's petrol station, there are almost the same images. The rest of the shots match well in both adaptations.

The camera movement in Clayton's version is slow, very stable, and easy to watch, which helps viewers calmly enjoy the movie. If the camera is too passive, the scenes can be boring. Due to the static scenes, Clayton's adaptation of the film seems more realistic. Parties in the film from 1974 are very similar to those in the novel, full of people, music, and alcohol. People discuss Gatsby's origins and how he acquired such wealth. Some scenes are just dialogues of people with only jazz music in the background. The camera often occupies only the lower body parts of the party visitors (close-ups on the legs and feet) [00:28:02], Clayton points out the dance steps of that time, but also clothes. Viewers can see crowds of people attending parties and their ruthless behavior, which is also part of Fitzgerald's criticism. The main source of this criticism in the novel, however, is Nick's integrated thoughts that disappeared from the film because he is no longer present as a narrator. These snobbish visitors' scenes, however, replace all of Nick's thoughts, and it can be said that the depiction of criticism in the film is comparable to the novel.

3.2.2 2013 Adaptation

Baz Luhrmann, the director of the film, found fascinating how much the 3D effect could draw the viewer into the action. It surprised him that it is actually like a theater, that the actor moves towards the camera as opposed to moving the camera towards the actor. That is why

he decided that *The Great Gatsby* will be in 3D. This is also expressed in the *mise-en-scène*³⁵ at the beginning of the film using water and green light. The director of this version of the film also likes to use flashbacks, a scene in a film set in a time earlier than the main story. The film's first flashback, for example, is preceded by a close-up of hollow-eyed Nick. The picture is taken from the other side of the window of the sanitarium in the freezing cold as Nick faces the camera, looks toward the lake as the snow falls, and remembers his time spent with Gatsby. The camera starts on him and then quickly moves across the frozen lake until the picture melts into the New York of 1922. Nick, like Gatsby, is stuck in the past and the distance between them is the water surface of the lake.

There are several cases where we can see how Luhrmann was inspired by the sentences from *The Great Gatsby* and *Trimalchio*. He incorporated it into his work using techniques that can only be found in the film. One example is how the director plays with the connection between the window and the world. It is based on the following phrases from both novels (*The Great Gatsby* and *Trimalchio*): “This isn't just an epigram—*life is much better looked at from a single window, after all*” and “This isn't just an epigram—*life is much more successfully looked at from a single window, after all*”. In Luhrmann's *The Great Gatsby*, we can see how particular scenes play on this imagery of life being a window. In an apartment with Tom and Myrtle, Nick moves to the window and looks at the other apartments, where each window changes from a simple window to depict every person's life [00:21:36]. Later, in the same scene, we see Nick crawling out the window to escape the events that take place inside. As this happens, we see the camera move very quickly away from Nick and that every window in New York lights up, showing the city as the glittering bustle of life.

Camera work is one aspect that reveals the most about Gatsby. For example, Gatsby shows his mansion to Nick and Daisy. The tour is only possible because Gatsby asked Nick to invite Daisy for tea so he could meet her. Instead of the entire tour of the house revolving around Daisy and Gatsby in love, the camera tends to focus on Gatsby's mansion. When everyone enters his property, Gatsby takes the time to explain to Nick why his mansion looks so great, and this is apparently the most important thing for him at that moment. A lot of attention is also given to the servants. The camera then moves to a distant location, filming it from the side, capturing the railing and some statues around Gatsby's mansion. When they enter the ballroom together, the camera first captures an impressive ceiling that looks like

³⁵ The arrangement of the scenery, props, etc. on the stage of a theatrical production or on the set of a film.

that of a cathedral with statues of angels and a huge chandelier decorated with pearls. Then it moves on to the characters and proceeds to the floor to capture the Gatsby's logo made up of his initials [01:01:29].

In party scenes, fast camera movement and a quick sequence of shots help to bring the story to life. In the second half of the film, the narration becomes more melancholic, sad, and thoughtful, the color darkens, and the camera and shots slow down as well.

Film adaptation uses a lot of camera techniques to create tension and uncertainty in the climax of the film. During Gatsby's death sequence, there are several crosscuts that indicate that Daisy is trying to call Gatsby, but either change her mind or be blocked by Nick, who also calls him. As Gatsby sinks into the pool, we see Daisy coming to the phone and panting loudly. At the moment when Gatsby gets shot and falls into the pool, Daisy hangs up the phone. Creating this additional scene is interesting because there is a possibility that Daisy might choose Gatsby instead of Tom. The same sequence can be interpreted as promoting Nick's relationship with Gatsby, where Nick proves to be Gatsby's only friend after his social collapse. Thanks to these cross-sections, we can say that Luhrmann departs from the source text because it creates an unclear scene.³⁶

3.3 Lighting and Colors

Lighting is used in the film to focus the audience's attention on the main character or object. It also indicates a mood or atmosphere. Directors often use filters to soften and reduce hard contrasts. They can also be used to remove haze, ultraviolet light, or glare, for example from water, when shooting outdoors. The use of red and orange colors promotes a pleasant feeling in the viewer. Some filmmakers use colors to create emotions and drama and to reinforce meanings.³⁷

3.3.1 1974 Adaptation

When creating the visual style of the film, the director was inspired by Fitzgerald's elegant prose. The camera lens tries to capture not only Nick's sensitivity but also – more eccentric – Gatsby's romance. During the making of the film, the emphasis was taken on highlighting this romance inspired by Fitzgerald's imagination, which includes many references to colors, especially white, yellow, and green. As for costumes and set, white dominates. It is Daisy's

³⁶ Alireza Anushirvani, and Ehsan Alinezhadi, "An Analytical Study of 2013 Cinematic Adaptation of The Great Gatsby," *International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences* 68 (2016): 73–85.

³⁷ Ryan, *Introduction to Film Analysis*, 104–7.

favorite color in the film. Usually, the white color indicates purity, but in the context of the film, it is more about the sterility and illusion of innocence. White clothing is a symbol of class inactivity, and its wearers say that they are not in contact with “dirt”. Wilson, one of the few characters in a movie who really works to survive, is always dressed in dark colors. Likewise, Nick dresses at work in dark tones and wears white in his spare time. Here we can also see the division of his two worlds. A set designer John Box, in his sets, tried to design a butterfly or bird, using as much white as possible to express the fragility and airiness of light and sparkle. Similarly, costumes chosen by Theoni V. Aldredge emphasize the subtlety and ethereal lightness. The scene when we first see Daisy and Jordan lying in a pure white, elegant room was much more effective for the film to induce a posh atmosphere than Fitzgerald’s gentle description in the novel.³⁸ Thanks to colors, Clayton develops the first-class obsession with wealth and power. The movie begins with a sequence of shots of gold objects in Gatsby’s bedroom. The golden color is a symbol of wealth, indicating Gatsby’s higher status and desire to show it. While gold objects appear later in the novel, we can see them as the first shot in the film. Besides, the low-key illumination in this shot masks the colors of other objects and reveals the gold associated with Jay Gatsby’s character. After Daisy and Gatsby meet, the gold color reappears as the camera watches Daisy’s hand touching a row of gold statues. The shot demonstrates her obsession with wealth and materialism.

3.3.2 2013 Adaptation

Luhrmann uses light in his films in a different way than other directors. He is able to enhance feelings with light; some scenes are more realistic and in others, the light becomes a symbol. In most of *The Great Gatsby* film, Luhrmann uses cool white lighting instead of warm yellow light. Thus, he is able to achieve a feeling of luxury and elegance of a higher class. White light is more flattering for both actors and props.

Luhrmann’s adaptation of *The Great Gatsby* at the beginning of Nick’s voiceover impresses with poor lighting, fast camera movement, and desaturated colors. The quick rotation of shots and flashes emphasizes the confusion and delirium of the 1920s: “Stocks reached record peaks and Wall Street boomed in a steady golden roar. The parties were bigger, the shows were broader, the buildings were higher, the morals were looser.”

³⁸ Giannetti, *Gatsby Flap*, 13–22.

[00:03:42 – 00:03:51] Most of the 2013 film adaptation is based on visual effects and the aesthetics of the film rather than characters.

When he then uses other color schemes, he can blend them well with white light and more easily attract the audience. An example is a scene at the beginning of the film when Nick goes to Buchanan's house for dinner. He walks into the living room, where Daisy and Jordan are lying on the couch, wrapped in a pure white curtain. The light adjustment, along with the women's white clothing and white curtains, makes the whole room glow. At Nick's first party at Gatsby's house, thanks to all the lights, it looks as if the party is held in daylight. Even outside the house, there is light that it is hard to believe it is night. Nick mentions later in the film and the novel: "Your place looks like the World's Fair" (Fitzgerald 81) and adds "or Coney Island." [00:48:57] In the same sequence of the film, the scene is also dominated by a large firework that makes Gatsby look dark and passionate. In the scene where Daisy comes to Nick for tea and stays alone with Gatsby, the lighting looks almost angelic, with soft background music and the brightness of the light. Even when it rains heavily outside, the light above them shines, trying to get the viewer to believe in love they have between each other. The way colored lights are used in some scenes can act like a cartoon. An example is a scene where Nick and Gatsby drive across the Queensboro Bridge, the camera zooms out to the bird's eye view, and New York's panorama looks animated. Luhrmann is able to use strong colors and link them to how Fitzgerald describes the events in the novel. This is what makes the film more realistic, while different color schemes, along with light settings, make luxury life unreachable for the viewer. The result is a film that remains true to the artwork and pleasing to the eye of the viewer.³⁹

3.4 Editing

Editing is the way in which an editor with the director of the film complete particular scenes together. It is an art of selection and combination. It is the way the scenes are connected and create the rhythm of the film. Scenes can be long and stretched, or short and choppy. The editors put the shots together to tell how the characters react, how they feel, and how they cope with the problems. They use cuts to communicate a meaning, idea.⁴⁰

³⁹ Ileana Jitaru, "Traumatic Film Adaptations: Baz Luhrmann's Cases of 'Cinematic Sublimes': Romeo + Juliet (1996) and The Great Gatsby (2013)," *Annals of Ovidius University Constanta*, no. 2 (2019): 198–207.

⁴⁰ Ryan, *Introduction to Film Analysis*, 75.

3.4.1 1974 Adaptation

Tom Priestley became the editor of the film, and thus the whole 1974 *The Great Gatsby* post-production. Jack Clayton's adaptation is edited faster in its first half, or shorter shots prevail. The shot is extended only when Daisy and Gatsby meet, which is a relatively long shot [00:49:15]. After that, the shots are shortened again for some time and more frequent cuts occur. Soon after Daisy and Gatsby meet again, the pace changes. Editing slows down in conversations about Daisy and Tom's wedding, even social gatherings at Gatsby's parties take place in long-lasting shots. The longest shot is when Tom Buchanan decides to avenge the murder of his mistress [02:03:56].

The reworking of the novel into the film presented inevitable difficulties for Clayton and Priestley with the *mise-en-scène*. In the novel, the author, in this case, Fitzgerald, can focus on details and ignore the larger context. Many scenes had to be deleted, reworked, or added because of the length of the movie. Some characters are also altered. In the novel, Jordan Baker's primary function is to provide Nick with the necessary information, especially about Daisy's relationship with Gatsby. Fitzgerald also uses her as a parallel to Daisy, who shares many of the same selfish and dishonest features. If it does not serve either, Fitzgerald usually ignores her or converts her to the background. In the film, however, Jordan seems to be hanging around without any purpose. Her presence (and this sometimes also applies to Nick) seems inappropriate, interfering with the privacy of others. Since the film cannot adapt exactly to the first-person narrative, the function of these two characters is limited. Clayton, in his attempts to be faithful to the novel, involved them in some scenes, although it is not so necessary. On the other hand, this parallelism can be an advantage. The richness of the *mise-en-scène* can offer more detailed saturation than the novel. For example, in the Plaza Hotel scene, we can see the reactions of all five characters when Gatsby and Tom argue about Daisy. In the novel, we can see only a few reactions that Nick finds interesting. Similarly, in the novel when Daisy learns about Gatsby, Fitzgerald offers only a hint of significance: "Gatsby?" demanded Daisy. "What Gatsby?" (Fitzgerald 13) And then he abandons things quickly. He approaches Daisy's distraught features, and although he no longer talks about the matter, one can see her nervousness, clearly indicating that she is in a state of emotional unrest.⁴¹

⁴¹ Giannetti, *Gatsby Flap*, 13–22.

3.4.2 2013 Adaptation

Editors, who worked alongside the director Baz Luhrmann with the raw footage, were selecting shots, combining them into sequences, and created a finished *The Great Gatsby* in 2013, are Jonathan Redmond, Matt Villa, and Jason Ballantine. Thanks to new technologies, Baz Luhrmann decided to open the door to the 3D world for his version of the film. Sophisticated crane shots, very fast cutting, several camera angles, hyperbolic sets, and a lot of special effects go beyond the expectations of a Hollywood film.

In a scene where Nick meets Gatsby at a party, the visibly drunk Nick walks through the house full of people, is offered a glass of champagne from a tray, and the hand carrying the tray has a large ring. At this point, the cutting is really fast. To illustrate the speed of the scene, it can be compared to the film adaptations of other directors. In Luhrmann's version, the first conversation between Nick and Gatsby takes just 1:48 minutes and is chopped into incredible thirty-six cuts, which is an average of about one cut in three seconds. In the 1974 film, the same conversation takes much calmer 2:25 minutes but uses only eight cuts, which means one cut every eighteen seconds. The effect of these technical details is that Clayton's film has a calm pace, almost reminiscent of a play, and Luhrmann's film attacks the senses with deep-rooted kinetics, reminiscent of a pop-music video. We can say that Luhrmann's version of the film is much faster in terms of editing. A quick cut is typical for Luhrmann, often showing Nick's confusion in his head at Jay Gatsby's parties. The characters of the party move around, but we do not know their faces. At this point, the camera shot changes to Nick's, and thanks to 3D technology, Gatsby's champagne glass approaches Nick, respectively the viewers, while fireworks explode.⁴²

The novel *The Great Gatsby* is an extensive work, so there are changes in the film adaptation that compress time. Jay Gatsby was introduced to film viewers less carefully than Gatsby from the novel. There are also scenes, such as an added scene from the hospital, to make the film run faster and less in detail. The same goes for Nick's character. Many details, such as his confirmation of his job, his neighbor, or the person he meets when he moves to West Egg, have been removed to add more important information to the film. The next deleted scene is after the Valley of Ashes scene where Tom, Nick, and Myrtle leave for the apartment, pause for a while, and play with the dog. In the novel Tom and Myrtle want Nick to join them in the apartment, while in the movie they ask him already in the apartment.

⁴² Jason M. Ward, "From Noir Hoodlum to Jay-G: Film Adaptations of Gatsby," *Journal of American Studies of Turkey* 45, no. 1 (2016): 128–9.

When they arrive at the apartment, Catherine expresses her opinion on the unsuitability of the couples: “Neither of them can stand the person they’re married to.” (Fitzgerald 34) This sentence was mentioned in the film, but its cause was not. Tom told Myrtle that Daisy was a Catholic and did not believe he would divorce. Nick wondered at this remark: “Daisy was not a Catholic, and I was a little shocked at the elaborateness of the lie.” (Fitzgerald 35) This lie is eliminated in the film and viewers will not learn who Tom really is. As for Gatsby’s film parties, some interviews have been removed in order to save time. These conversations are instructive and necessary to understand the characters. Such as the conversation between Jordan and the girl next to her: “Do you come to these parties often?” enquired Jordan of the girl beside her. “The last one was the one I met you at.” ... “I never care what I do, so I always have a good time.” (Fitzgerald 44) At the beginning of chapter four, Nick describes people who are invited to Gatsby’s parties. These people were left out of the film. When Daisy is invited to Nick’s house, Nick had to go to West Egg to buy teacups, flowers, and lemons. Even these events were omitted in the film to save time. In chapter six, Nick goes to Gatsby’s house and sees Tom with Mr. Sloane and his wife. This was the first time Tom had stepped into Gatsby’s house and he told him that he knew Tom’s wife (Daisy). Tom wonders where she found him. He tries to separate himself and Daisy from Gatsby’s class. Even these lines were compressed in the film.⁴³

⁴³ Anushirvani, and Alinezhadi, *Analytical Study of 2013 Cinematic Adaptation of The Great Gatsby*, 76–9.

4 SIGNS OF THE ROARING TWENTIES IN THE FILMS

The whole story of the novel takes place in the postwar period when Fitzgerald also lived. He blends intense symbolism and figurative language of modernism in his novel. It is always difficult to determine precisely what period the work falls exactly. It depends on time, content or theme, like the concept of other directions. The concept of modernity was yet born in the Christian Middle Ages.⁴⁴ As one of the representatives of the Lost Generation, after the First World War, Fitzgerald focuses on the change in the position of women in society, society as a whole, and overall the changed lifestyle in the postwar period. Modernism got quickly across Europe and the Atlantic. The main place of modernity was Paris, where Fitzgerald and other members of the Lost Generation arrived. Both films deal with these elements of the 1920s and thus the Roaring Twenties, although each of the directors thinks a little differently.⁴⁵

4.1 Society and Culture

The rapidly strengthening US economy creates a consumer society that is independent of state aid. The development of the individual is connected with economic success and consequently also with high earnings.⁴⁶ Money often forms society and is not an exception in Fitzgerald's work.

4.1.1 1974 Adaptation

Just as Nick's father told Nick to refrain from making any judgments: "Always try to see the best in people" [00:01:14], Clayton held on to it. When Nick visits the Buchanans for the first time, all the conversation revolves around their traveling and playing polo, a game for the upper class only. When Nick tells Tom that he lives in a small house in West Egg and pays eighty dollars a month for rent, Tom laughs because his spending on drinks at the party is much higher than Nick's monthly rent. Clayton, on the other hand, depicts the Valley of Ashes as an extreme opposite, where poor people live in large servant settlements. Every shot of the Valley of Ashes is one big picture of distress. Like Fitzgerald in his novel, Clayton managed to point out the great differences between the worlds. Throughout the story, we can notice what people Nick is surrounded by. The magnificent grounds of the Buchanans, dominated by a large house, a stable, cars, and even a harbor, or Gatsby's mansion, where

⁴⁴ Matei Călinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism, Avant-garde, Decadence, Kitsch, Postmodernism*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987), 13.

⁴⁵ Robin Walz, *Modernism*, (London: Pearson, 2008), 49.

⁴⁶ Jurgen Heideking, and Christof Mauch, *Dějiny USA* (Prague: Grada Publishing, a.s., 2012), 232.

all the rich get together for his unforgettable parties to enjoy his hospitality, luxury, free drinks, and also free food. Visitors come to the parties with cars that were owned by every affluent family at the time. People are differentiated by how much they own.

4.1.2 2013 Adaptation

In the 2013 adaptation, we can see how society uses prosperity and how exuberant it is. Nick talks about stocks at the beginning of the film and people seem to be very interested in bond trading: “Stocks reached record peaks, and Wall Street boomed a steady golden roar. The parties were bigger, the shows were broader, the buildings were higher, the morals were looser, and the ban on alcohol had backfired.” [00:03:34] Americans after the war earn more money and get rich. An example is Nick, who, although poor himself, moves in the society of the rich people. Thanks to the boom of the automotive industry, everyone in the film uses a car. People were driving everywhere. The words of Nick’s father to Nick about the restraint of judgments in this adaptation sound different and do not accurately describe what Fitzgerald wanted to convey to society. Like Clayton, Luhrmann reveals a strong contrast between East and West Egg and the Valley of Ashes. The technique the director uses makes the valley look awful. Nick describes it as a junkyard, a place full of ash and smoke. People work there with their own hands, and when Nick meets Wilson, whose clothes are dirty, he is sweaty because of repairing cars, he is shocked. His wife, however, does not like to accept it and tries to get into the life of the higher class.

4.2 Prohibition

In 1920, the new President of the United States of America, Warren Harding, was elected and said that this period was a period not of heroism but healing. In the same year, the 18th Amendment was published, prohibiting the sale and consumption of alcohol.⁴⁷ This important milestone in American history Fitzgerald could have not missed in his novel *The Great Gatsby*.

4.2.1 1974 Adaptation

Clayton and Coppola process the film much more subtly and mildly, so alcohol consumption is lower throughout the film. Occasionally, a glass of alcohol – champagne – appears in the camera shot, but the guests drink it shyly. Gatsby’s parties in the 1974 version are similar to these from the 1920s.

⁴⁷ Richard Gray, *A History of American Literature*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2012), 315.

4.2.2 2013 Adaptation

In the Luhrmann version of the film, we encounter alcohol more often than in the book or the previous version. The beginning of the film is accompanied by Nick's voice-over, which describes what it really looked like in the Roaring Twenties. Evidence of excessive alcohol consumption is also Nick's condition when he sits behind a window in the mental hospital and is treated himself, being an alcoholic.

4.3 Women in the Society

A new woman (a woman from the 1920s) wanted to be as free as men, she wanted the same political and economic rights. Before the war the woman could not enter the salon, after the war, she could go there as she wanted. Women did not have the same rights as men, for example, they were not allowed to vote, drink alcohol or had jobs with lower salaries. The 1920s in America are attributed to the emancipation of women. Women were becoming free and slowly gaining rights. In addition to fighting for their rights, women also changed fashion. Long hair was cut to short mikados, and they began to wear short clothes. It was not just a change of outer looks but above all a change of reasoning. Women began to rebel against the classic female role of wife and mother. Modern women have shown that they do not need men by their side to survive, they were enjoying life, smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol and driving cars.⁴⁸

4.3.1 1974 Adaptation

Clayton's version of the film focuses more on the difference between women of all classes in society. He portrays three major women: Daisy Buchanan, who represents traditional values and naivety. She has no morality, is careless, her daughter is cared for by a maid, and she plans to leave her husband for Jay Gatsby. Although she is in love with her old love, she ultimately prefers the money and security her husband can provide. The other woman is Jordan Baker, whom Clayton captured as an emancipated, independent, and almost feminist woman. Jordan is very careless, but she can still take care of herself. And the third woman is Myrtle Wilson, who tries to be independent too, but her husband cannot allow her and keeps watch over her. When Myrtle's husband discovers that she has a lover, he still hopes that everything will be settled. Each plays a different role, but it is possible to find a modern pattern of women's behavior in society.

⁴⁸ Gray, *History of American Literature*, 316.

4.3.2 2013 Adaptation

Like Clayton, Luhrmann tried to preserve the image of women's independence but took it a little more modern. However, he focused more on the fashion of women who wore many pieces of jewelry, beads, hats, hair beads and also glitters. Women present themselves more freely, and no one finds strange that they drink alcohol, smoke cigarettes or even drive a car. The main female characters Luhrmann identified as Daisy and Jordan, who have short hair which was the first sign of liberation of women from the stereotype. The character traits of both characters in the 2013 version are very similar to those of Jordan and Daisy in the 1974 version.

5 COMPARISON

The two films I have chosen both describe the same story, based on the novel *The Great Gatsby* by the American writer Francis Scott Fitzgerald. While it may seem that there are no differences, the opposite is true. Since the films are processed at a significantly different time (approximately forty years apart), most of the differences are in the technique of both directors and film effects such as sound, editing, lighting and camera use.

Before the introduction of the films to the readers, I decided to provide information about both directors. The first startling fact is that, unlike Baz Luhrmann, the director of the 2013 film adaptation, Jack Clayton, the director of the 1974 film, did not succeed in his lifetime. He is considered primarily to be a person who liked to transform book stories into films. Luhrmann, on the other hand, is known and admired in the world, especially for his passion for innovation and special effects. Therefore, many people and film critics have been skeptical about how these film elements he likes to use will fit the novel.

Clayton built on the classic layout and the filming of the film takes place in American New York, as well as the storyline of the novel. Luhrmann, as a native Australian, decided to move the bar higher and moved the entire shooting to Australia, which in the final moving picture cannot be identified. In terms of costumes, Luhrmann's film version is much more extravagant than Clayton's adaptation. Women dress in shimmering robes, revealing their bodies, not just at Gatsby's parties. Both directors prefer a white color that indicates purity and innocence. Clayton keeps the model and adapts the costumes in the film to the twenties and Fitzgerald's overall image, while Luhrmann is experimenting and is not afraid to bring modernity into the film.

As far as music is concerned, it is a very dominant element in both films. The adaptation of 1974 again used classical jazz music, which corresponds to the music that was really played from 1920 to 1930 at the parties. Luhrmann wanted to make the film special with varied music that will not be drab and can lift the viewer off the chair. However, he did not want to reshape the jazz songs that already existed, so he created new songs that are modern and contain both electronic and jazz music elements that are typical for the 1920s. The use of the camera and editing is more vivid and brisk in Luhrmann's version. Clayton clings to longer shots that blend in with jazz music and the actors' overall performance. He also uses many transparent and slightly blurry filters, while Luhrmann uses color contrasts.

Since money shapes society, it is no wonder that Fitzgerald is extensively involved in this subject. In both adaptations of the film, the directors emphasize this difference as well as the

author of the novel. Both Clayton and Luhrmann take advantage of the contrast that exists between the rich world of West and East Egg and the Valley of Ashes, and the contrast between the unscrupulous society and poor Nick in the middle of this all. The only difference is that Luhrmann's version describes it more drastically. The prohibition that prevailed in the United States at the time of the novel also affected the novel and its film versions. As is clear from the first scenes of Luhrmann's film: Nick, who is treated for alcohol addiction in a hospital diagnosed as an alcoholic and a nervous person, alcohol plays a much more prominent role here than in Clayton's 1974 version where people sipped champagne from small glasses. There was still a huge amount of alcohol in the shots as it was banned in the US. In both adaptations, three main female characters are retained: Daisy, Jordan, and Myrtle. The difference in film processing is that Clayton describes and focuses more on their intrinsic characteristics, while Luhrmann focuses more on their appearance. Women's independence is expressed by extravagant clothes and hairstyles unusual for that era. Clayton tries to capture the inner struggle of female characters: to be independent or to stay with their secured men. In both versions, some of them are released (Myrtle, Jordan) and some choose the side of security and money (Daisy).

Taking a closer look at both films, we can find that Clayton's version is true to its artwork, whether it is the storyline, the character characteristics, the music or the camera. Luhrmann's adaptation is one big show where the world of the 1920s and today's modern age is mixed. In my opinion, Luhrmann's version looks more dramatic and extravagant, but Clayton's version leaves vibes from the post-World War I period.

CONCLUSION

The aim of my Bachelor's thesis was to compare the various aspects of Francis Scott Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby* and its eponymous film adaptations from 1974 and 2013 by Jack Clayton and Baz Luhrmann and their shooting techniques.

For the purpose of the thesis, it was essential to introduce directors of both films in the first chapter and both their films from 1974 and 2013, including a short plot description, handling of the party scenes, character costumes and setting of the whole film, in chapter two. These details were chosen for a better insight into the 1920s and Fitzgerald's overall view of that time. Both films must be viewed not only in the historical context of the jazz era but also through the lens of adaptation theory.

The film analysis from the view of cinematic effects is described in the third chapter. Each director chooses different shots, camera angles, and camera movements to enhance the feeling and create real empathy with the Roaring Twenties. Music is one of the most important factors in film diversity, so it is often used in movies and plays a great role. Clayton adhered to the familiar tones of jazz music, while Luhrmann used a mixture of jazz and popular music of the twenty-first century. Although some elements of cinematography were not fully utilized in the 1974 adaptation, the 2013 film version over-utilized modern technology to create breathtaking scenes. Both versions are spectacular and translate the novel brilliantly, although each is different.

The twenties became an important period in women's lives. They started to establish various organizations and associations to claim their rights. At that time, the sale and consumption of alcohol were banned, and Fitzgerald in his novel quite faithfully portrayed the 1920s. For example, he did not hide the illegal production of alcohol and its increased consumption or intense pace of life, which turned into a never-ending carousel of parties. *The Great Gatsby* portrays society during the 1920s and captures people's behavior as well as social, economic and political changes. These signs of the Roaring Twenties, which Fitzgerald described in the novel and which the directors depicted in their films, are discussed in chapter four.

The last chapter is devoted to a short but precise comparison of all the above-mentioned aspects. After an overall analysis, it can be said that Clayton's version is much more conservative, cuts between shots are slower, there are fewer and the lighting is dimmer. According to critics, Luhrmann's version is considered more a radical, sometimes even independent work of art. This loose adaptation nevertheless stems from Fitzgerald's work

and is enriched with a distinctive modernizing visual and sound aspects. Both film adaptations, however, confirm the attractiveness of the novel, which was written in 1925.

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