

Original Paper

Fitzgerald's Inheritance of Keats and His Writing on the Reality of America

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Abstract

*This paper probes into F. Scott Fitzgerald's inheritance and transcendence of the artistic heritage of 19th century British romantic poet John Keats in his literary creation, especially focusing on Fitzgerald's absorption and innovation of Keats's literary elements in *Tender is the Night* and *The Great Gatsby*. By comparing and analyzing the similarities and differences between the two literary giants in nature depiction, aesthetic pursuit, chivalry reproduction and social reality criticism, this paper reveals how Fitzgerald inherited Keats's romantic feelings and artistic expression techniques, combined with the unique social background of the "Jazz Age" in the United States in the 20th century to achieve a profound insight and unique expression of American reality writing. In nature depiction, Keats, with his delicate emotion and rich imagination, integrates natural elements into his poems to create a unique atmosphere. Fitzgerald also uses this technique, but his depiction of nature is more complex and multidimensional, which not only shows the beauty of nature, but also profoundly reflects the changes in the inner world of the characters and the hypocrisy of social reality. In aesthetic pursuit, Fitzgerald inherited Keats's persistent pursuit of beauty and transformed it into the emotion and behavioral motivation of the characters in the novel. On the reappearance of chivalry, Fitzgerald reconstructed and criticized the knight image in Keats's works. Finally, in the aspect of social reality criticism, Fitzgerald analyzed materialism and consumerism in capitalist society more directly and profoundly than Keats. Through *Tender Is the Night* and *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald exposed the social impetuosity and moral decay behind the economic prosperity of the "Jazz Age" in the United States in the 1920s, and criticized*

the social phenomenon of materialism and spiritual emptiness. This kind of profound realistic criticism not only surpasses Keats's obscure social satire, but also provides valuable ideological resources for later literature. To sum up, this paper holds that while inheriting the literary tradition of Keats, Fitzgerald, with his keen insight and unique artistic talent, successfully realized the innovation and transcendence of American reality writing, and contributed a series of landmark works to American literature and even world literature.

Keywords

Fitzgerald, John Keats, nature, beauty, chivalry, social reality

1. Introduction

The 19th century English Romantic poet John Keats, with his profound emotional charged portraying beauty, nature, love and the meaning of life, created a series of poetry full of philosophy, such as "Ode to a Nightingale" and "Ode on a Grecian Urn", which showed the poet's unique perception of nature, love and life. In his poetry, beauty and nature were endowed with a unique soul, and the chivalry became his praise for the noble qualities in human nature. In the 20th century, American writer Scott Fitzgerald described the prosperity of American society with his unique pattern, especially *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender Is the Night*, which deeply discussed the themes of money, love and dream. It showed the complexity and diversity of human nature.

In recent years, study on Fitzgerald and Keats has become a hot topic in literary research, but there has been little comparative study of the two writers (Cui, 2019; Wang, 2022). Although they lived in different times and places, their works show many similarities in depictions of nature, beauty, chivalry, and social reality. This paper will explore how Fitzgerald inherited Keats's literary legacy and went beyond it in these aspects. Through comparative study of the two writers, people can not only gain a deeper understanding of their literary ideas and creative concepts, but also see the connection and evolution of their literary creations more clearly.

2. Inheritance

The concept of inheritance is not merely into replicating the style or themes of a predecessor but also centering on absorbing and reinterpreting them in a way that reflects the writer's unique voice and the cultural context of their time. This section aims to explore how F. Scott Fitzgerald inherited the literary legacy from John Keats, particularly focusing on the aspects of nature depiction, beauty pursuit, chivalry, and social reality criticism.

2.1 Nature Depicts Inheritance

Nature has always been a popular element in literary creation, as it is an objective material world that not only exists but also serves as an important tool for writers to express emotions, showcase humanity, and create atmosphere. Keats, a prominent British Romantic poet in the late period, has a profound love

and pursuit of the beauty of nature in his poetry works; while Fitzgerald, an important representative of 20th century American literature, also delicately depicts the beauty of nature in his novel.

2.1.1 Nature as a Vehicle for Emotion

In Keats's poetry and *Tender Is the Night*, natural elements are often adopted as a vehicle for conveying characters' emotions, reflecting their inner emotions through describing the natural scenery. This writing style not only makes the work more vivid and concrete, but also allows readers to better understand the characters' emotional world. For example, in Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale", the poet expresses his longing for new life force through his description of the nightingale's song: "Tis not through envy of thy happy lot, But being too happy in thine happiness—That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees, In some melodious plot of beechen green, and shadows numberless, Singest of summer in full-throated ease" (Keats, 1819, p. 14). Similarly, Fitzgerald also uses descriptions of natural scenery to reflect characters' inner emotions in *Tender is the Night*. For example, "Already he felt her absence from these skies: on the beach he could only remember the sun-torn flesh of her shoulder; at Tarnes he crushed out her footprints as he crossed the garden" (Fitzgerald, 1934, p. 210). This description reflects the protagonist Dick's deep longing for lost love and his unresolved sense of loss. The feeling in the sky, the memories on the beach, and the footprints in the garden all evoke nostalgia for past happy times, but also hint at Dick's loneliness and resignation.

2.1.2 Nature as a Builder of Atmosphere

In Keats's poems and *Tender Is the Night*, natural elements are often adopted to create a specific atmosphere that serves the theme and plot development. The creation of this atmosphere not only makes the work more infectious, but also allows the reader to better immerse himself in the depicted world. In Keats's "To Autumn", the poet creates a peaceful and fruitful atmosphere by portraying the autumn mists, fruits, and vine vines: "season of mists and mellow fruitfulness, Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun; Conspiring with him how to load and bless with fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run" (Keats, 1819, p. 32). Similarly, in *Tender Is the Night*, Fitzgerald also creates the special atmosphere through nature description. For example, he writes "in the early morning the distant image of Cannes, the pink and cream of old fortifications, the purple Alp that bounded Italy, were cast across the water, and lay quavering ripples and rings sent up by sea-plants through the clear shallows" (Fitzgerald, 1934, p. 3). Natural elements such as remote mountains, shoals and the sea are used to create a beautiful and peaceful seaside atmosphere, which sets the tone for the whole story and hints at the state of life the protagonist is about to embark on.

2.1.3 Nature as a Driving Force for Plot Development

In Keats's poetry and *Tender Is the Night*, natural elements are often used to propel the plot forward, making the works more compact and engaging. This plot-driving method not only enhances the linguistic tension of works, but also allows readers to better understand the work's theme and connotation. For example, in Keats's "On the Grasshopper and Cricket", the poet writes "he has never

done with his delights, for when tired out with fun He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed” (Keats, 1816, p. 74). The cricket’s singing and resting drives the poem’s seasonal transition, also implying the poet’s reflection on the cycle of nature and the alternation of life. Similarly, Fitzgerald also uses descriptions of natural elements to drive the plot in *Tender is the Night*. For example, “Noon dominated sea and sky—even the white line of Cannes, five miles off, had faded to a mirage of what was fresh and cool” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p. 13). The hot air and blurred city scene symbolize Dick’s uncertainty about the future, hinting at his inner confusion and disorientation, laying the groundwork for the plot’s development.

In conclusion, Keats and Fitzgerald bear numerous similarities in depicting nature. Both authors are adept at employing natural elements to mirror characters’ emotions, establish an atmosphere, and advance the plot, rendering their works more vivid and emotionally captivating. This not only reveals the profound insight and delicate delineation of natural beauty shared by both writers but also showcases their distinctive charm and style in literary creation.

2.2 *Beauty Pursuit of Resonance*

When exploring the portrayal of beauty in the literary works of F. Scott Fitzgerald and John Keats, it is not hard to discover there exist profound inheritances and similarities between them. This resonance is not merely manifested in their shared pursuit of beauty but also in the way they materialized this pursuit through their respective art forms—poetry and fiction, endowing it with rich emotional hues and profound philosophical connotations.

2.2.1 *Eternal Pursuit of Beauty*

As the representative of English romantic poetry, Keats’s works are full of infinite yearning and pursuit of beauty. He built an ideal world full of love and beauty through the delicate characterization of natural scenes and the profound analysis of inner emotions. As Keats put it in “Ode to a Nightingale”: “My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk, Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk” (Keats, 1819, p. 14). This verse not only shows the poet’s ultimate feeling for the beauty of nature, but also reveals his sorrow and helplessness for the fleeting life. In Fitzgerald’s literary creation, he obviously inherited Keats’s persistent pursuit of beauty and transformed it into the emotional and behavioral motivation of the characters in the novel. In *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald shows a character with almost paranoid pursuit of beauty through the role of Gatsby. Gatsby’s deep feeling for Daisy is not only a personal attachment, but also a yearning for and pursuit of an idealized way of life. He tries to attract and retain Daisy’s heart by throwing lavish parties and creating a dreamlike world of money and material possessions. This pursuit of beauty is similar to the world of love and beauty constructed in Keats’s poetry, which reflects the artist’s infinite desire and unremitting pursuit of idealized beauty.

2.2.2 The Loss and Reflection of Beauty

The similarity between Fitzgerald and Keats in the depiction of beauty is also reflected in their profound insight into the loss and reflection of beauty. Keats's poems often reveal his sorrow for the short life and the fleeting beauty. He reveals the fragility and impermanence of beauty through the change and contrast of natural scenes. In *Tender Is the Night*, Fitzgerald pushed this theme to the level of social reality through Dick's story. Dick's pursuit finally came to nothing, and the beauty of the "American dream" he constructed was shattered under the impact of reality. Nicole's romantic involvement with someone else, the indifference of society, the corrosion of money... All of this makes Dick realize that the beauty he pursues is just a mere mirage and is out of reach. This loss of beauty is not only a personal tragedy, but also a profound reflection on the values of the whole society. Through Dick's story, Fitzgerald reveals the hypocrisy and emptiness of materialistic values in capitalist society, and the erosion and destruction of the truth, goodness and beauty of human nature.

To sum up, Fitzgerald's inheritance and similarity to Keats in the description of beauty are reflected in many aspects. Their common pursuit of the idealized expression of beauty, through their own art forms to show the persistent pursuit of beauty and profound reflection. At the same time, they also touch on the theme of the loss of beauty, revealing the great gap between the ideal and the reality. This inheritance and similarity not only enrich the connotation and extension of literary creation, but also provide valuable reference for us to understand the aesthetic pursuit in different times and different cultural backgrounds.

2.3 The Inheritance of Chivalry

Chivalry, being an essential component of European medieval culture, has consistently captured the attention of artists and writers with its distinctive allure. When delving into the creative connection between two literary luminaries, F. Scott Fitzgerald and John Keats, a seldom-discussed yet profoundly implicit theme emerges—their portrayal of the "fall down" and "inactive fight" facets of chivalry. In his "La Belle Dame Sans Merci", Keats delineates the image of a knight who has succumbed to love, forsaking the battlefield and indulging in the lady's temptation. Moreover, Fitzgerald, in *Tender Is the Night*, via the protagonist Dick's experiences, presents another form of retreat and evasion. The two exhibit a startling resemblance and inheritance in the dissipation of chivalry. "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" by Keats is a narrative poem full of mystery and tragedy. It tells the story of a knight who encounters a beautiful lady in the forest and is deeply attracted by her beauty and charm, so that he forgets the duty and glory of a knight and chooses to indulge himself into the world created by her. However, when dawn comes, the lady disappears, and the knight finds himself in a desolate place, his courage and determination gone, leaving only endless regret and emptiness. The knight hereby symbolizes the blind pursuit of beautiful but illusory things, and the abandonment of true mission and responsibility in this process. His fall was not only a departure from battle and glory, but also a complete loss of self-worth and faith (Cui, 2019).

In *Tender Is the Night*, Dick Diver, portrayed by Fitzgerald, is a young talented man full of ideals and ambitions at the beginning, but as the story progresses, he gradually falls into the quagmire of overprotection for his wife Nicole, and eventually loses himself and his passion and pursuit of life. Dick's story can be seen as a distortion and variation of modern chivalry in a complex social environment. He should have been like a traditional knight, guarding marriage and family and defending justice, but the pressure of real life, the trouble of love and the loss of self-value made him choose to retreat and escape. He no longer bravely faced the challenge, but indulged in the care and control of Nicole, in order to escape the inner emptiness and insecurity. This withdrawal and escape not only made his career stall, but also made his marriage life full of contradictions and pain.

Fitzgerald's portrayal of the shrinking and inactive-fighting side of chivalry in *Tender is the Night* has profound inheritance and similarity with Keats's chivalry fall in "La Belle Dame Sans Merci". Both show how, in the face of temptation and dilemma, characters give up their original beliefs and responsibilities and choose a seemingly easy but dangerous path. Keats's knight fell with love, and Fitzgerald's Dick recoiled under the extravagant lifestyle and the weight of responsibility. Although the two situations are different, the core is the same, for both reveal the fragile and contradictory facets of human nature, and the irrational choices individuals can make in the face of complex emotions and social pressures. In addition, both writers use delicate psychological depiction and profound emotional depiction in depicting this theme, so that readers can deeply feel the inner struggle and pain of the characters. Keats creates a dreamy and strange atmosphere through the rhythm and image of his poetry. Fitzgerald, on the other hand, presents a complex and real picture of modern society through narrative techniques and characterization. The virtuosity of the two in literary expression also adds more luster to their joint exploration of the theme of lost chivalry.

In conclusion, both Fitzgerald and Keats, through their unique literary forms, explore the fragility and contradictions of human nature, as well as the choices they may make in the face of temptations and difficulties. This cross-era literary resonance not only enriches our understanding of the connotation of chivalry, but also provides us with valuable inspiration to reflect on the adherence of individual values and beliefs in modern society. In the future literature research and creation, further digging into this field will help us better understand the literary tradition and spiritual connotation under different cultural backgrounds.

2.4 The Initial Resonance of Social Reality Criticism

When discussing F. Scott Fitzgerald and John Keats, two literary giants are active in the 19th century British Romanticism and the early 20th century American "Jazz Age" with one of essential dimensions that cannot be ignored, that is, the critical comments over social reality. The keen insight and deep criticism of the social reality shown in their works show a kind of inheritance and similarity across time and space. This part aims to take Keats's poetry creation and Fitzgerald's *Tender Is the Night* as a typical case to analyze in detail the common characteristics of their social reality criticism.

2.4.1 Criticism of Social Reality in Keats's Poetry

Although most of John Keats's poems focus on nature, love, beauty and death, there are many subtle criticisms of social reality. Keats lived during Britain's Industrial Revolution in the 19th century, a time of dramatic changes in social structure and a widening gap between rich and poor. Although Keats's poems are beautiful in language and delicate in emotion, he does not shy away from paying attention to and reflecting on the social problems at that time. In "Ode to a Nightingale" and other works, Keats depicts the beauty of nature to the extreme, contrasting the noise and impetuosity of human society, suggesting the destruction of the natural environment by industrial civilization and the erosion of the human spiritual world. In addition, Keats's poems also contain a profound insight into the weakness of human nature, such as the criticism of human greed and desire in *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*, and the sympathy and pity for those who are driven by temptation and lose themselves. Although these elements are not direct social criticism, they reveal various ills and injustices in social reality through literary metaphors.

2.4.2 Fitzgerald's Critique of Social Reality

Tender Is the Night as an important work in Fitzgerald's writing career, is not only a novel of love and marriage, but also an in-depth reflection over the American social reality in the 1920s. During what became known as the Jazz Age, America prospered economically, but people became increasingly fickle and vain. Fitzgerald reveals the confusion, emptiness and depravity of people in this era through the perspective of the protagonist, Dick Diver. Dick was originally an ideal, ambitious young talent, but after marrying rich girl Nicole, he gradually surrounds by money, status and social activities, lost self, also lost the passion and pursuit of life. Other characters in the novel, such as Tom and Nicole's family, also show different levels of social reality, such as the value of money first, moral decay, spiritual emptiness, etc. Fitzgerald presents these social problems one by one before readers through delicate brushwork and profound psychological description, which triggers a profound reflection on the social reality at that time.

2.4.3 Inheritance Analysis

There are significant inheritances and similarities between Fitzgerald's criticism of social reality in *Tender Is the Night* and Keats's implied social criticism in his poems. Both keenly capture the social problems of their respective times, and deeply expose and reflect on them through literary works. Although Keats mainly focuses on nature and love, his poetry contains concern and criticism on the deep-seated problems such as human weakness and social injustice. And Fitzgerald directly uses the novel as a weapon to ruthlessly expose and ridicule the pomp and hypocrisy of the "Jazz Age". The two may differ in the breadth and depth of criticism, but they both contribute their strength to the improvement of social reality and the enhancement of humanity in the form of literature. In addition, they also show some similarities in their critical ways. Keats is good at using metaphor and symbolism to put social reality in the natural scene and the fate of characters. Fitzgerald, on the other hand,

concretized the social reality and made it into life through his delicate psychological description and vivid scene depiction. These different ways of criticism not only reflect the artistic characteristics of the two writers, but also show the diversity and richness of literature in reflecting social reality.

To sum up, both Fitzgerald and Keats used literature as the medium to deeply expose and reflect on the social problems of their respective times. This kind of literary resonance across time and space not only enriches our understanding of the connotation of the two writers' works, but also provides us with valuable inspiration to reflect on various problems in modern society. In the future literature research and creation, further digging into this field will help us better understand the literary traditions and spiritual connotations in different cultural backgrounds, as well as the important role of literature in promoting social progress and improving humanity.

3. Transcendence

F. Scott Fitzgerald's literary accomplishments extend beyond the rich inheritance of the Romantic era's artistic legacy, particularly that of John Keats. This section delves into how Fitzgerald not only continued the styles set by Keats but also transcended them, creating a unique voice that resonated with the cultural context of 20th century America.

3.1 Deepening of Natural Description

When delving into the surpassing of Keats by Fitzgerald in literary creations, particularly in the depiction of nature, which cannot help but dissect the unique expressions and artistic pursuits of these literary giants in their respective works. Keats, as a prominent representative of British Romantic poetry, is renowned for his delicate emotions, rich imagination, and profound insight into the beauty of nature. Meanwhile, Fitzgerald, a literary giant of the American "Jazz Age" in the 20th century, not only depicted the complex social landscape in his novel *Tender Is the Night*, but also presented a new dimension in nature depiction that surpasses Keats.

Keats's poems, such as "Bright Star" and "To Autumn", demonstrate his boundless love and profound understanding of the natural world. In *Bright Star*, Keats uses the metaphor of stars to express his longing for steadfastness and eternity, while not losing sight of his yearning for human warmth and love (Cui, 2023). The natural world in his works is not only depicted as an objective existence, but also a carrier of emotions and philosophy. Through the beauty of nature, he reflects the complex emotions and pursuits of the human heart. Keats's depiction of nature is full of romanticism, and he is skilled at capturing the fleeting beauty of nature and immortalizing it in poetic form (Cui, 2019). Keats's description of nature, like a carefully carved gem, shines with the luster of emotion, so that readers can appreciate the beauty of nature at the same time, but also feel the poet's deep emotional world. In contrast, Fitzgerald's depiction of nature shows a more complex and multi-dimensional artistic style. His novel is not only a grand picture of the community, but also a profound exploration of human nature, love and dreams. When describing nature, Fitzgerald not only stays on the beauty of the surface,

but also closely links nature with the emotion and fate of the characters, and maps the inner fluctuations and growth of the characters through the changes of the natural scene.

3.1.1 The Fusion of Time and Space

In *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald's description of nature is not limited to the beauty of a moment, but integrates nature into the vast background of time and space. He cleverly uses the change of seasons, the alternations of day and night, and the natural scenery of different regions to construct a multi-dimensional narrative space. This combination of time and space not only enhances the layered sense of the story, but also makes nature an important factor in promoting the development of the plot and the psychological changes of the characters (Yang, 2023). For example, the day described in the novel when Gatsby arrived at Buchanan Mansion happened to be the hottest day in summer, which was so hot that it made people hallucinatory. This scene not only created a tense and anxious atmosphere for readers, but also predicted that the emotions between Gatsby, Daisy and Tom, the protagonist, were detonated and their emotions were packed to the critical point. However, as the story progresses and the seasons shift from summer to autumn, the changes in nature reflect subtle changes in the relationships between the characters. The air began to have the taste of autumn, through the cold and loneliness of autumn, the protagonist's love failed, but also saw the desolation of the heart and the emptiness of dreams.

3.1.2 Nature and Society Critique

In *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald combines the depiction of nature with a profound critique of social reality. The luxurious villas on the west coast of Long Island, the bright lights at night and the dim green light on the opposite bank constitute the natural landscape of great symbolic significance in the novel. These scenes not only show the vanity and hypocrisy of the American society in the 1920s, but also symbolize Gatsby's blind pursuit and eventual collapse of the "American dream". As a natural image throughout the book, green light is not only Gatsby's desire for Daisy's love, but also his yearning for a higher social status, which eventually becomes a symbol of his tragic fate (Cai, 2019). The imagery of night in Fitzgerald's novels also has rich metaphorical meaning, which contains his thoughts on the people at the bottom and the fate of the United States (Zhong, 2022). Fitzgerald reveals the deep meaning of social phenomena through this clever use of natural scenes, making the depiction of nature a powerful tool for the novel to criticize reality.

To sum up, Fitzgerald's depiction of nature has indeed surpassed Keats's poetry in many aspects. He created a new way of depicting nature through the deep integration of nature and human emotion, the symbolic meaning of natural scenes, the interweaving of time and space, and the close combination of nature and social criticism. This approach not only enriches the artistic expression of the novel, but also deepens the ideological connotation of the work, making it a series of landmark literary works. With his unique artistic talent and profound insight, Fitzgerald opened up a new way in the field of natural depiction and provided valuable inspiration and reference for later writers.

3.2 The Complexity of Beauty Pursuit

In the vast starry sky of literature, although Francis Scott Fitzgerald and John Keats lived in different times and literary genres, their outstanding contributions to aesthetic pursuit became a dialogue across time and space. Keats laid the foundation of romantic aesthetics with his delicate emotion, exquisite language and praise of the beauty of nature in his poems. Fitzgerald, on the other hand, through more complex narrative structure, profound psychological analysis of characters and keen insight into modern society, realized the pursuit of Keats aesthetics beyond.

3.2.1 Beauty of Social Landscape

In Keats's poems, nature is an important medium for him to express emotion and explore the meaning of life. The flowers, stars, moonlight and other natural elements in his works all contain the poet's pursuit of beauty and deep understanding of the nature of life. However, Fitzgerald did not give up the depiction of natural beauty in his novels, but he further extended his aesthetic vision to the social landscape. In *The Great Gatsby*, the luxurious villas on the west coast of Long Island, the brightly lit parties, and the ever-untouchable green light combine to create a social picture that is both real and illusory. These social landscapes are not only the background of the characters' activities, but also the externalization of their inner world, reflecting the vanity and emptiness of American society in the 1920s. Through the delicate depiction of these social landscapes, Fitzgerald showed a new aesthetic pursuit, that is, personal emotions and social reality are closely combined to form a broader and deeper aesthetic experience.

3.2.2 Beauty of Emotion

Keats's poetry is famous for its deep feeling; he is good at integrating personal emotional experience into the natural scene, forming a unique emotional aesthetics. Fitzgerald, on the other hand, pays more attention to the depth and complexity of the character's psychology in his novels. In *Tender Is the Night*, the emotional entanglements, psychological struggles, and eventual mental breakdown between Dick and Nicole are vividly depicted by Fitzgerald. Through his delicate psychological description and profound emotional analysis, he reveals the contradictions and conflicts in the inner heart of the characters, so that readers can better understand the fate and choice of the characters. This deep excavation of the character's psychology not only enhances the appeal of the novel, but also enhances its aesthetic value, making Fitzgerald's works more delicate, profound and rich in emotional expression.

3.2.3 Beauty of Modern Critical Vision

Keats's poems are full of the pursuit of romantic ideals and longing for a better life. The natural scenes in his works are often endowed with sacred and lofty meanings and become the symbol of the poet's spiritual sustenance. In his novels, however, Fitzgerald examines modern society and human nature with a more sober and critical attitude. In *Tender Is the Night*, he exposes the illusion and collapse of the American dream and the spiritual emptiness behind people's pursuit of material things through his

portrayal of Dick's fallen fate. Fitzgerald made a profound criticism and reflection on the modern society through the medium of novels, and showed a more rational and mature aesthetic pursuit. He is no longer merely satisfied with the praise and praise of romantic ideals, but pays more attention to the complexity of human nature and the practical problems of society, trying to awaken people's thinking and awakening through the power of literature.

3.2.4 Beauty of Multiple Expressions

As a representative of the romantic poets, Keats's poetry is relatively simple in form, mainly through rhythm and image and other language means to convey feelings and ideas. Fitzgerald, on the other hand, used more abundant artistic expression techniques in his novels. He constructs a vivid and complex story world by means of multi-level narrative structure and delicate psychological description. At the same time, he also skillfully uses symbols, metaphors and other rhetorical devices to connect the natural scene, social landscape and the fate of the characters, forming a unique artistic style. This artistic innovation of multiple expressions not only enriches the expression form and connotation of the novel, but also enhances its aesthetic value, making Fitzgerald's works have an important position in the history of literature.

To sum up, Fitzgerald surpassed Keats in aesthetic pursuit in many ways. By expanding his aesthetic vision, digging deeply into the psychology of characters, changing his vision to modern criticism and innovating artistic expression techniques, he has achieved the transcendence of Keats's aesthetic pursuit. Fitzgerald's works not only have profound ideological connotation and rich emotional expression, but also show the author's deep insight and unique understanding of modern society and human nature. This transcendence not only enriches the means of expression and connotation of literature, but also provides us with valuable artistic enjoyment and thinking enlightenment.

3.3 Reconstruction of Modern Chivalry

In exploring how F. Scott Fitzgerald achieved a surpassing of John Keats in the theme of chivalry, we need to delve into the different dimensions of their artistic expression, particularly Keats's delicate portrayal of romantic chivalry in poetry, and Fitzgerald's complex reconstruction and critical reflection on the spirit in his novels *Tender Is the Night* and *The Great Gatsby*. This process not only transcends the boundaries of literary genres, but also showcases the profound transformation from romanticism to modernism in literary thought.

In contrast, Fitzgerald made a more complex and profound reconstruction of chivalry in his two masterpieces, *Tender Is the Night* and *The Great Gatsby*. As the spokesman of the "Jazz Age", Fitzgerald's works deeply reflect the materialism, moral decay and spiritual emptiness of the American society in the early 20th century. In this context, his discussion of chivalry is no longer limited to the praise of idealization, but puts it in the context of modern society, and carries on a profound critical reflection. In *The Great Gatsby*, the character of Gatsby is a modern interpretation of traditional chivalry. He amasses wealth through illegal means in order to win Daisy's love, displaying a romantic

pursuit that borders on paranoia. However, Gatsby's story is a tragedy, his "American dream" finally collapsed, revealing that in modern society, pure chivalry has been unable to resist the corrosion of money, power and desire. Through Gatsby's fate, Fitzgerald criticizes the injustice of society and the weakness of human nature, and also suggests the predicament and limitation of traditional chivalry in modern society. In *Tender Is the Night*, Fitzgerald further explores the influence of chivalry on the psychological level of individuals. The protagonist, Dick, is at first a doctor full of ideals and enthusiasm, trying to save Nicole who is in a spiritual crisis through love and marriage. However, as the story progresses, Dick himself suffers a spiritual crisis, and his chivalry gradually disintegrates under the onslaught of reality. This work not only reveals the conflict between individuals and society, but also more profoundly explores the psychological struggles of modern people in the pursuit of self-realization and the face of life difficulties, as well as the re-examination of traditional values.

Fitzgerald's surpassing of Keats in chivalry is also reflected in his application of realism. Keats's poems often construct an ideal world beyond reality through delicate images and strong emotional expression. Fitzgerald, on the other hand, brings readers into a more real, complex and contradictory society through the narrative techniques of the novel. In *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald describes the prosperity and corruption of American society in the 1920s with exquisite strokes. Through the character of Gatsby, he reveals how modern people gradually lose their moral bottom line and human brilliance in the process of pursuing material wealth and social status. Although Gatsby has endless wealth and prominent social status, his inner world is empty and lonely. His love for Daisy is more like a hopeless pursuit of chivalry, which can only lead to a tragic ending. This kind of profound analysis of the real society makes the chivalry in Fitzgerald's works no longer a simple idealized pursuit, but full of realistic helplessness and tragedy. Similarly, in *Tender Is the Night*, Fitzgerald also shows the weakness and struggle of modern people in the face of psychological difficulties through Dick's fate. Dick, originally an idealistic and passionate doctor, tries to save Nicole through love and marriage, only to find himself sucked into a nervous breakdown. This in-depth analysis of individual psychological state makes Fitzgerald's works have a richer sense of hierarchy and profound connotation. His chivalry is no longer simply heroic and sacrificial, but contains the fragility, contradiction and struggle of human nature.

To sum up, Fitzgerald surpassed Keats in chivalry in many ways. He not only made a profound analysis and critical reflection on chivalry through realism, but also dug deeply into the complexity and multi-faceted nature of human nature. At the same time, his innovation in literary style also provides readers with a richer reading experience and aesthetic enjoyment. These surpasses not only reflect Fitzgerald's outstanding talent as a literary giant, but also show his deep insight and unique understanding of the spirit of The Times and human nature.

3.4 Deepening the Criticism of Social Reality

F. Scott Fitzgerald's writing is not only a continuation of the literary traditions of the past but also a profound critique of the social realities of his time. This section will discuss how Fitzgerald deepened the criticism of social reality, building upon the foundation laid by his predecessors such as John Keats.

3.4.1 Keats: A Critique of British Capitalism

Through *Isabel*, Keats showed the economic contradictions and class conflicts of the early 19th century British society, and deeply exposed and criticized the greed of capitalism and the alienation of human nature. First of all, the love tragedy between Isabel and her lover Lorenzo in the poem is the epitome of class differences and material interest conflicts in capitalist society. Lorenzo was murdered by Isabel's brothers because of poverty, which directly reveals the distortion of human nature and the contempt for life in the value of money supremacy in the capitalist society. Through this tragic love story, Keats criticizes the alienation of the relationship between people in capitalist society and the corrosive effect of wealth on human nature. Secondly, the description of Brothers Isabel in the poem also reflects Keats's criticism of the greedy nature of capitalism. They sacrificed their sister's happiness for wealth and status, and even murdered the innocent Lorenzo. This extreme pursuit of material benefits shows the loss of humanity and moral decay in capitalist society. Through this description, Keats exposed the class contradictions and the exploitation of the lower classes in capitalist society. In addition, Keats's depiction of the natural environment in *Isabel* is also a metaphor for the destruction of nature and society by capitalism. The natural scenes in the poem are closely connected with the emotions of the characters, reflecting the poet's concern about the destruction of the natural environment in the process of industrialization. This description of nature is not only an inheritance of the idyllic tradition, but also a criticism of the capitalist industrialization process ignoring environmental protection and pursuing short-term interests. Finally, Keats's discussion on art and beauty in *Isabel* also reflects his reflection on the values of capitalist society. In capitalist society, art and beauty are often commoditized and lose their due value and meaning. Keats criticized the commercialization of art and the vulgarization of aesthetics in capitalist society through his lofty pursuit of art and beauty.

To sum up, *Isabel* by Keats is not only a narrative poem full of romantic color, but also a profound criticism of the British capitalist society in the early 19th century. Through the depiction of the fate of the characters, the disclosure of social contradictions, the attention to the natural environment and the discussion of art and beauty, Keats showed his profound reflection and criticism on the alienation of human nature, class exploitation, environmental destruction and the commercialization of art in the capitalist society. With its unique artistic charm and profound social significance, this poem has become a classic work in the history of English literature.

3.4.2 Fitzgerald: A Profound Analysis of Materialism and Consumerism

Compared with Keats's implicit, Fitzgerald, with his keen insight and gorgeous writing, in *Tender Is the Night* and *The Great Gatsby*, made a more direct and profound analysis of the materialism and

consumerism of the Jazz Age in the United States in the 1920s. These two works are not only the reflection of Fitzgerald's personal experience, but also the accurate capture of the spirit of the whole era.

In *Tender Is the Night*, Fitzgerald shows the weakness and degradation of human nature under the temptation of money and fame through the protagonist Dick's experience. Dick is a talented psychiatrist, but because of love and money entanglements, gradually lost his self, and finally fell into the brink of mental breakdown. This work deeply reveals the corrosive effect of materialism on human nature, and in the process of pursuing material enjoyment, people often ignore or even sacrifice the more precious emotional and spiritual world. *The Great Gatsby* is the pinnacle of Fitzgerald's critical spirit. From Nick's point of view, the novel tells the story of how Gatsby accumulated huge wealth through illegal means and tried to win back the heart of his old love Daisy, but finally ended in tragedy. Gatsby's tragedy is not only his personal failure, but also the epitome of the materialism and spiritual emptiness of the whole era. Through the image of Gatsby, Fitzgerald criticizes people's endless pursuit of material under the consumerist culture, as well as the emptiness and loneliness hidden behind this pursuit. He reveals that behind this seemingly glamorous era, people's deep confusion and loss, as well as profound doubts about true happiness and value.

Fitzgerald's transcendence in the criticism of social reality is first reflected in the directness and sharpness of his criticism. Compared with Keats's implicit, Fitzgerald unflinchingly exposes the evils of capitalist society, especially the "Jazz Age", and directly touches the essence of materialism and consumerism. Secondly, Fitzgerald's works are more complex and three-dimensional in characterization. Through rich plots and delicate psychological descriptions, Fitzgerald shows the struggles and choices of characters in a specific social environment, which makes the criticism more convincing. Finally, while criticizing, Fitzgerald also expressed his desire for the return of humanity and spiritual redemption. This persistence and pursuit of idealism added a layer of humanistic care to his works besides criticism. To sum up, Fitzgerald's profound analysis of materialism and consumerism in *Tender Is the Night* and *The Great Gatsby* not only inherited Keats's critical spirit of social reality, but also surpassed Keats in the depth, breadth and artistic expression of criticism, providing valuable ideological resources and artistic reference for later literature.

4. Conclusion

This paper conducts a comparative study of the literary creations of F. Scott Fitzgerald and John Keats to delve deeply into how Fitzgerald achieved a new breakthrough in the writing of American reality by inheriting the artistic legacy of Keats. By analyzing the similarities and differences in their depictions of nature, aesthetic pursuits, portrayals of chivalry, and social realist critique, we can easily find that Fitzgerald not only effectively inherited the literary essence of Keats, but also developed a unique literary perspective and profound critical spirit in the drive of time changes and personal experiences.

This paper aims to reveal the profound connotation of this inter-generational literary dialogue and its inspiration and influence on later literary creations.

4.1 Inheritance

Firstly, Fitzgerald demonstrated a profound inheritance of Keats's style in natural depiction. Keats was skilled at depicting natural scenery with delicate strokes, endowing nature with profound symbolic meaning. Similarly, Fitzgerald showcased his mastery of natural depiction in works such as *The Great Gatsby*. He vividly depicted natural scenes such as the luxurious villas on Long Island's west coast, the dazzling lights at night, and the indistinct green light across the water, not only portraying the prosperity of American society in the 1920s, but also endowing these natural elements with rich symbolic connotations. For instance, the green light symbolizes Gatsby's yearning for love and aspiration for a higher social status, ultimately becoming a symbol of his tragic fate. This profound exploration and symbolic use of natural scenery is undoubtedly an inheritance and development of Keats's style of natural description.

Secondly, in aesthetic pursuit, Fitzgerald also inherited Keats's insight into the weakness of human nature and aesthetic pursuit. Keats's poems are full of longing for the beauty of nature, love and life, and also reveal the fragility and contradiction of human nature. In his novels, Fitzgerald also pays attention to the complex aspects of human nature, especially through the role of Dick in *Tender Is the Night*, he deeply reveals the struggle and fall of modern people in the material temptation and spiritual predicament. This profound analysis of the weakness of human nature and the description of the conflict between ideal and reality are undoubtedly the inheritance and continuation of Keats's aesthetic pursuit.

Moreover, Fitzgerald's description of chivalry also reflects the inheritance of Keats. In poems such as *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*, Keats depicts the image of knights who give up fighting and indulge in fantasy because of love, while Fitzgerald shows the distortion and variation of modern chivalry through the role of Dick in *Tender Is the Night*. Dick should be the knight who guards marriage and justice, but under the pressure of reality, he gradually loses himself and chooses to escape and withdraw. This reinterpretation of chivalry in modern society is not only a continuation of the theme of Keats's creation, but also a profound revelation of the complexity of human nature in modern society.

4.2 Transcendence

Fitzgerald's criticism of social reality is more direct and profound than Keats's. Although Keats's poems implicitly criticize the social reality, they focus more on nature, love and human nature. Fitzgerald, on the other hand, directly used the novel as a weapon to expose the pomp and hypocrisy of the "Jazz Age" in the 1920s, and ruthlessly criticized materialism and consumer culture. His criticism not only touches on the surface of social phenomena, but also explores the deep-rooted reasons behind them, such as the greed of human nature and the emptiness of spirit.

Fitzgerald constantly innovated artistic expression techniques in literary creation, so that his works have stronger expression and appeal. Through rich and varied plot Settings, delicate psychological description, symbolism, metaphor and other rhetorical devices, he makes his works present more complex and multi-dimensional artistic effects. This artistic innovation not only enriches the expression techniques of literature, but also enhances the literary value of the works.

While criticizing the social reality, Fitzgerald also expressed his deep concern for human nature and his desire for spiritual redemption. By creating a series of complex and multi-dimensional characters, he shows their struggle and pursuit in material temptation and spiritual dilemma, thus provoking readers to think deeply about the nature of human nature and social value. This sublimation of humanistic care makes Fitzgerald's works have more far-reaching ideological connotation and more extensive social significance.

4.3 Reasons

There are subjective and objective reasons why Fitzgerald can inherit and surpass Keats. Subjectively, Fitzgerald has keen insight, profound thinking power and excellent literary talent. He can accurately grasp the pulse of The Times, deeply understand the complexity of human nature, and present it with unique artistic techniques. At the same time, he also has a strong sense of social responsibility and humanistic care, which makes his works not only have literary value, but also have important social significance. Objectively, the background of Fitzgerald's time also provides rich materials and broad stages for his literary creation. In the 1920s, the United States was in the "Jazz Age" of economic prosperity but spiritual emptiness. This special social environment provided Fitzgerald with rich creative inspiration and profound criticism. Through this literary form, he not only recorded the features and changes of that era, but also revealed the deep problems behind it, leaving precious cultural heritage for the later generations.

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