

**Faculté de philosophie, arts et lettres**

**Echoes of War: Trauma and Ineffability  
in Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* (1925)  
and *Tender is the Night* (1934)**

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# 1. Introduction

As I am writing my master's dissertation in 2020-2021, it has been more than a hundred years since the First World War ended. Also called the Great War, it impacted the whole world due to, among others, the general trauma it created. A hundred years ago, people were trying to recover from the awful years they had been through. In addition to the numerous physical consequences and the many deaths war provoked which can be considered as immediate consequences of the war, people also had to deal with trauma and emotional disorders from which it took sometimes a whole life for people to recover. The concept of injury was thus not limited to physical wounds anymore but was also related to a more psychological dimension because people suffered from shell shock, the trauma caused by the war (Beidler, 2013). For more than a hundred years now, war is still present in the broader cultural memory thanks to diverse sites of memory and "a variety of media" (Erll & Rigney, 2006, p. 111). Stories accordingly serve as sites of memory to perpetuate the cultural memory related to the war and constitute today a global legacy of the war. Although the United States entered the war at the end of it, in 1917, American people have seen and experienced the atrocities of this event and are consequently also affected by the long-term influence of the war. After the war, the United States experienced the "Roaring Twenties", a decade of revival after dark times.

During this decade, literature flourished. Many famous modernist writers from the so-called "Lost Generation" such as Ernest Hemingway, Thomas Stearns Eliot and Francis Scott Fitzgerald were active during this period. In short, modernism can be seen "an attempt to restore a sense of order to human experience under the often chaotic conditions of twentieth-century existence" (Singal, 1987, p. 8). This literary movement is indeed closely linked to the peculiar after war period, which was disturbed by many changes, but also considerably affected by the war. Moreover, Bell (2001) writes that the modernist writers were affected by the changes that happened in their world, but they were also concerned about the historical understanding of these changes. Modernist prose is said to be used to represent human subjectivity thanks to the representation of emotions, perceptions and "the individual's relation to society" (Childs, 2000, p. 3). It seems indeed logical to represent this relation mentioned by Childs (2000) since the society was subject to many changes due to the war but also to many other changes such as the rise of feminism, and labour struggles (Bell, 2001). Modernism is often associated with, for example stream of consciousness, rhythm, fragmentation, insecurity, disintegration, and cultural revolution, in order to represent human subjectivity (Childs, 2000). The Lost Generation of which the above-mentioned modernist authors were part embodies these

characteristics and was defined as a generation “living in a world deprived of meaning or purpose” (Lundberg, 1984, p. 379). The term “Lost Generation” is said to refer to the American expatriates who lived and wrote in Europe, especially in Paris, during the interwar period (Green, 2009) and who wrote about a society transformed by the First World War. Some wrote about the war itself, but others, such as Fitzgerald, chose to move away from this topic. However, it seems that it was difficult to completely set aside this traumatic war in his narratives.

Trauma – that will be defined as well as other important concepts in the third section called “key concepts” – and war are indissociable although it took several years to officially recognise trauma and PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) as real disease. Symptoms of trauma are for example emotional detachment and a tendency to re-enact the past and to live in memory for example (Beidler, 2013). Injuries and diseases were rather limited to what was visible such as physical injuries, excluding all mental injuries, the First World War and the trauma called shell shock that the war caused enabled people to become more aware of the importance of mental health and its disorders. Balaev (2008) defines trauma as the emotional response of a person to an event that appears to be too overwhelming. Such an event distorts an individual’s conception of society and its standards but also one’s own sense of self. However, trauma can also appear as a consequence of physical injuries that were also common during the war. Trauma is therefore said to lie beyond our grasp as it “lies beyond the bounds of ‘normal’ conception” (Tal, 1996 as cited in Balaev, 2008, p. 150). Consequently, the causes of trauma might be numerous since any overwhelming or violent event can be a source of trauma. In any case, expressing trauma might appear so difficult that trauma and by extension the event to which it is related, can be ineffable. Given that war is an extremely violent event that provoked many physical and mental injuries, it is clearly a source of trauma. Characters from stories that take place in the 1920s, just after the Great War, have therefore been confronted with war and trauma in a way. It is indeed the case in Fitzgerald’s work in which we can read the following sentence.

So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past  
(Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 144).

This sentence is the last one in *The Great Gatsby*, certainly the most famous novel written by Francis Scott Fitzgerald. It was published in 1925, right after the First World War. The story in *The Great Gatsby*, but also in other Fitzgerald’s novels, takes place in the aftermath of World War I. For this reason, war occupies a unique place in some of these novels. Returning to the

above-mentioned sentence, it emphasises the difficulty for America to move beyond a difficult past, and for the characters in *The Great Gatsby*, to move on and to recover from the traumatic events of their past of which war is part. War might thus be implicitly mentioned in such a sentence which appears as extremely important since it is the last one in the novel. As many events might have shaped the characters' life, war does not receive special attention in *The Great Gatsby*, and in Fitzgerald's novels in general. But a sentence like the last one seems to echo a deeper dimension that might be related to the war.

Many studies have been carried out about Fitzgerald's work and especially about his four novels, namely *This Side of Paradise* (1920), *The Beautiful and Damned* (1922), *The Great Gatsby* (1925), *Tender is the Night* (1934) and *The Last Tycoon* (1941) which was published posthumously. Some scholars also conducted research on Fitzgerald's short stories. The studies about Fitzgerald's work are sometimes directly related to the war, while others just mention it because they rather focus on symbols (Hauhart, 2013), gender issues (Joseph, 2003), capitalism (Leiwakabessy, 2020) for example. As I will explain below, in the state of the art, recurring topics in the secondary literature about Fitzgerald's novels are for example psychiatry (West, 2011), war (Rennie, 2016), trauma and shell shock (James, 2013), and gender (Joseph, 2002). All these aspects at the centre of these studies, may be connected to war and may refer to it without merely recounting events from the war. The scholars that I mentioned indeed sometimes mention war in connection with the topic of their study.

Although war does not constitute the plots of Fitzgerald's novels, it is however present in Fitzgerald's work and this have been demonstrated by different studies. War is sometimes hinted at in the novels and the characters' behaviours sometimes show a failure, or strange reactions which might be the consequences of the hard times from which they emerge (Beidler, 2013). According to Rennie (2016, p. 181), references to the First World War are overt and subtle at the same time but also recurring in Fitzgerald's work. James (2013) argues that *The Great Gatsby* for example, must be read for what it omits rather than for what it says. Scholars such as Rennie, James and Beidler among others indeed seem to confirm what I am studying in this dissertation as they assert an implicit presence of war in Fitzgerald's texts. Some studies that are relevant to this dissertation are discussed further in the state of the art, but in short, Rennie (2016) compares the representation of World War I in *This Side of Paradise* and *Tender in the Night* especially through the characters' perceptions of war, Beidler (2013) compares *The Great Gatsby* with Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* and James (2013) analyses the narrator's position in *The Great Gatsby*.

For this reason, I would like to contribute to the debate by arguing that given that war is an extremely violent event, it appears as traumatising and ineffable. But the war is however crucial in the life and in the work of many writers from the post-World War I period. Zwicky (2012, p. 198) argues that a traumatic, ineffable experience consists of “a complex of perceptions, feelings, thoughts and memories, something we undergo”, it can therefore not be represented using only a mere depiction of facts although the experience of those facts is crucial. Thus, such representation thanks to perceptions etc. renders war and trauma worthy of our attention. As war is not always overtly represented in Fitzgerald’s work, it seems to respect Zwicky’s point of view about the ineffability of trauma. Therefore, we are here going to analyse explicit as well as implicit manifestations of the war in some of Fitzgerald’s novels by arguing that war and trauma may appear to be ineffable (or at least as it is extremely difficult to talk about in an appropriate way). They therefore deserve a specific representation, maybe through a subplot. This term, as well as trauma studies are therefore discussed later in this dissertation in order to analyse the representation of World War I in Fitzgerald’s novels.

Whereas the secondary literature about Fitzgerald’s work already covers many topics, I would like to focus on the representation of the First World War in two novels that have not been compared in this regard, namely *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night*. The analysis of these novels enables the comparison of the representation of war that, I argue, appears as traumatic and consequently ineffable. Although war in Fitzgerald’s novels has already been studied, it seems that the notion of ineffability (which is defined further in this dissertation) has not been connected to Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night* up to now. In these novels, we can observe two possibly different representations of the Great War. Moreover, *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night* seem worthy of attention as on the one hand, *The Great Gatsby* is probably Fitzgerald’s most famous novel in the view of the general public. On the other hand, *Tender is the Night*, has been considered by scholars as “Fitzgerald’s most ‘mature’ representation of World War I in his fiction” in Rennie’s comparison between *Tender is the Night* and *This Side of Paradise* (Rennie, 2016, p. 181). It therefore seems interesting to study this novel. In addition, seeing that these texts were published in 1925 and in 1934, the author’s vision of war might also have changed, and might have had an impact on his writing. *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night* are also chosen given that both stories take place in the Roaring Twenties; consequently, the characters are supposed to have experienced war in one way or another.

As a starting point for this dissertation, I will try to answer the following research questions. Firstly, how is World War I represented in Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night* to be at the same time central and peripheral? Secondly, I will also try to determine how war and trauma are conveyed with respect for their ineffability in *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night*. The last research question aims to find out how the representation of war evolved between *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night* in order to fill a gap in the existing literature that does not compare these two novels in this respect. To answer these questions, I would like to argue that although it does not constitute the main plot in Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night*, war appears on a more implicit level in the narratives. For this reason, we should consider the First World War as a subplot made of three different levels that I explain here. Firstly, one level that echoes the war in the novels is the narration and the narrative structure. Thanks to a disrupted chronology for example, a certain narrator, the focalisation or the structure of the narrative, we can perceive elements that refer to war and trauma, making them implicit although they are essential to the novels. Secondly, the representation of war can also be observed through the representation of the society in general. As the society considerably changed after the First World War, we can observe this broken society in the novels. Thus, this level of analysis includes the representation of the characters, their lifestyle, but also class and gender issues as well as the trauma of the post war society. Thirdly, the last level of analysis for the representation of war consists of some recurring motifs that are implicitly or explicitly connected to war such as violence, mental health, uniforms, etc. This level, in a way, might at first seem more explicit than the two others but it also includes motifs that are more implicitly related to the war.

These elements of narration, this representation of the society as well as, among others, the cited motifs appear as an attempt to represent the ineffable: war and the trauma it generated. The aim of this dissertation is therefore to focus on the representation of the First World War in Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night*, embedded in the subfield of trauma studies which is explained later. Regarding *The Great Gatsby*, it has been rewritten several times, for example as a graphic novel called *The Great Gatsby: the Graphic Novel*, illustrated by Aya Morton and with a text adapted by Fred Fordham (2020). There also exists a novel, called *Nick* (2021) written by Michael Farris Smith and which recounts the story of Nick, one character who is the narrator in *The Great Gatsby*. In *Nick* we can see Nick's experience of the war, his stay in Paris before returning to America as well as the period during which he would have lived in New Orleans before going to Long Island, where *The Great Gatsby* takes place.

These two adaptations, although not at the centre of this dissertation, are sometimes mentioned since these books might amplify the military dimension of the original narratives.

After this introduction, summaries of the two analysed novels are presented in the second section in order to make the plot of each novel as clear as possible and to facilitate the understanding of my dissertation. The third section will be devoted to the state of the art, and followed by an introduction to the main concepts approached in this study, namely trauma, the ineffable, the subplot and the “implicated subject”. The latter is a concept introduced by Rothberg (2019) that is explained later in this dissertation and which is useful for the understanding of the characters’ position toward the war. Afterwards, each novel is analysed separately in the fourth and fifth sections, according to the three levels that were mentioned earlier, namely the narration, the representation of society and the recurring motifs. These analyses of *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night* are discussed and more explicitly compared in the sixth section, which will help to answer the research questions about the evolution of the representation of war. The last section of my master dissertation finally outlines the conclusion in which the content of my study is summarised and ideas for further studies to counter the limitations of mine are provided.

## 2. Summaries of the novels

In the next sections, the two main novels on which this dissertation is based, namely *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night*, are summarised in order to make my argument as clear as possible. These summaries make clear that *The Great Gatsby*'s storyline is shorter, rather chronological and consequently less complex than *Tender is the Night*'s, which is a longer novel with more events, and which possesses a more specific narrative structure due to its non-chronology. One thing that is worth mentioning is that there exist two versions of *Tender is the Night*; the first one which is the original one, does not display the events in a chronological order. The second version, revised by Malcolm Cowley, was published in 1951 on the basis of a plan made by Fitzgerald at the end of his life because he was disappointed by the reception of the original novel. This version accordingly provides a straight chronology which is as interesting as the first one, but the original version of 1934 is today considered as the "definitive" one (Nowlin, 1998). Therefore, this summary presents the events as in the 1934 version, namely the non-chronological one. Regarding *The Great Gatsby*, there is less to say about its narrative structure, but this novel is much more famous than *Tender is the Night*. Consequently, many adaptations of *The Great Gatsby* exist contrary to *Tender is the Night*. Several films have been created and have known a considerable success. A graphic novel was also published in 2020 and the novel has been adapted for the stage too.

### 2.1. *The Great Gatsby*

In *The Great Gatsby*, secret love affairs and secrets between wealthy characters are depicted in a way that leads to a tragic end. The storyline involves Nick Carraway, the narrator, who is almost thirty in 1922 and moves to West Egg, in Long Island. He is the neighbour of a wealthy man named Jay Gatsby who lives in a large mansion in which he regularly throws impressive parties. Nick's cousin, Daisy, lives in East Egg with her husband, Tom Buchanan, who has an affair with a certain Myrtle Wilson. Tom and Daisy invite Nick to their luxurious mansion while one of the couple's friends, Jordan Baker, a famous golfer, is there. One day, during this summer, Nick receives an invitation to one of Gatsby's parties where he goes and meets "the great Gatsby". This nickname is due to his elegance, his attractiveness, his general appearance that make Nick admire Gatsby to such an extent that they rapidly become friends. During the war, in 1917, Gatsby and Daisy had an affair in Louisville where they deeply fell in love. Even after five years, Gatsby still loves her, and they meet again thanks to Nick, which marks the beginning of a secret love affair between Gatsby and Daisy. When Tom discovers

that there is something between his wife and Gatsby, he does not accept the fact that Gatsby still loves her, although Tom is not faithful to Daisy. In the afternoon, they all go to the Plaza Hotel in New York City, and as he gets angry, Tom confronts Gatsby and tells the truth about Gatsby's past: he earned his money thanks to illegal activities such as bootlegging alcohol. However, although he lied about how he earned his money, some elements of Gatsby's impressive past are true; he attended Oxford and he received a medal during the war for example. Tension rises and Daisy asserts that she loves Tom too but goes back to East Egg with Gatsby. She's driving Gatsby's car when she suddenly hits Myrtle, Tom's lover, who dies from this accident. Jay and Daisy do not stop but some people see Gatsby's car. Nick, Jordan and Tom arrive later at the scene of the accident and they hear that Myrtle has been killed by a car similar to Gatsby's. The next day Myrtle's husband comes to Gatsby's mansion and kills him just before committing suicide, believing that Gatsby was the driver who killed Myrtle because of Tom. The novel ends up with Gatsby's funeral where almost nobody comes except for Nick, who finally moves back to the Midwest in order to escape the wealthy society of the East Coast that only appears as façade that hides a society in turmoil and whose values appear as fake too.

In the storyline we can therefore see that the war happened a few years before the story and that Gatsby and Daisy's meeting took place during the war. Moreover, Gatsby and Nick were involved in it, which shows that the war is present in the background but does not explicitly appear in the main plot.

## 2.2. *Tender is the Night*

In this story about the French Riviera, Fitzgerald explores the topics of love affairs, mental health and the life of the upper-class expatriates in Europe via two storylines. The first one involves Rosemary, a young actress, while the other involves Nicole, a glamorous married woman. These two women are linked to each other by Dick Diver, Nicole's husband. At the beginning of the novel, in 1925, Rosemary Hoyt is almost eighteen and goes on holiday with her mother on the French Riviera. She is an internationally famous actress thanks to a film named *Daddy's Girl*. During her vacation, Rosemary meets Dick and Nicole Diver, a married and sophisticated expatriate couple who appears to be perfect at first sight; Nicole seems to be wise and is beautiful while Dick is an attractive American psychologist for whom Rosemary rapidly develops strong romantic feelings although he is married and older than her. Rosemary, Dick and Nicole spend time with other expatriates such as Abe and Mary North, Tommy Barban as well as Violet and Albert McKisco, who, like the Divers, all seem to represent a flawless, perfect class of the society, like in *The Great Gatsby*. But here, like in *The Great Gatsby*, this

flawless appearance of the characters later appears to be a façade that hides many issues. One day, during a party at the Diver's, Violet McKisco explains having discovered something about Nicole. However, this discovery remains a secret for a long time, which leads to an altercation between Albert McKisco and Tommy Barban who plan a duel in which one of the two men should die but neither of them gets shot. Rosemary later leaves the French Riviera to go to Paris with the Divers and the Norths, where she begins having an affair with Dick. In Paris, Rosemary surprises Nicole having a serious mental breakdown and understands that this aspect of Nicole's personality was Violet McKisco's secret discovery at the Diver's during the summer.

Afterwards, the story shifts to Dick and Nicole's meeting and their life when they were younger, setting aside Rosemary. Dick studies at Yale as a Rhodes scholar and later goes to Vienna to study psychiatry. In 1917, he leaves Vienna for Zurich to complete his degree before being sent to France when America enters the war. As a psychiatrist, he therefore joins a neurological unit in France. Just before leaving, he goes to say goodbye to one of his friends and colleagues from Zurich, Dr. Franz Gregorovius at his clinic. The latter, like Dick, is familiar with psychoanalysis and they use it as a treatment for trauma. At this moment, Dick wears his military uniform and meets the wealthy 16-year-old Nicole Warren, who is checking in at the clinic. She almost instantly falls in love with him and writes letters to him while he is in France. The reason for Nicole's admission to the clinic is her incestuous relationship with her father who sexually abused her, causing Nicole's fear of men as well as her mental disorders. Dick becomes her doctor, psychoanalyst, and lover at the same time. Freud and his theories about trauma, such as the repetition compulsion, are thus also present in the novel through the characters' relationships and Nicole's trauma due to her incestuous relationship with her father (Cokal, 2005). Later, despite the disapproval of her sister, Baby Warren, Nicole and Dick marry, travel and have two children together.

A flashforward brings us to 1925, in Paris, when Dick and Rosemary's affair ends after Nicole's mental breakdown. Gregorovius subsequently proposes that he and Dick buy a clinic together. Baby, being interested in the fact that her sister might live close to Dick's workplace, offers to financially support him in the purchase of the clinic, which he reluctantly accepts. At this point in the story, Nicole's psychological health becomes stable until she has doubts about Dick's faithfulness, and has a fit of madness, provoking a car accident, which echoes the one in *The Great Gatsby*. After this event, Dick distances himself from her as he has to go to America for his father's funeral. When he comes back, Dick realises that his whole world is collapsing and begins to drink. One day, being drunk, he gets beaten up and ends up in jail

where Baby comes to help him. After his stint in jail, Dick drinks more and more to such an extent that he is forced by Gregorovius to stop working at the clinic. The Divers therefore leave to go to the French Riviera where Dick's situation deteriorates just like his marriage; Nicole starts having an affair with Tommy Barban. At the end of the story, Nicole's mental health improves, she marries Tommy while Dick goes back to America where he tries to work in different places but never settles down. He ends up as a sort of Mister Nobody, disconnected from all his acquaintances and alone, like Nick Carraway who leaves an incredible society that is in fact a façade.

## 3. Theoretical background

### 3.1. State of the art

The period right after the First World War is called the Jazz Age and the 1920s, the Roaring Twenties. Fitzgerald's work has been discussed by many scholars throughout the years. Thanks to his fictions, he appears as the emblem of this Jazz Age (Keller, 2010, p. 131). He has been considered as a reinventor of decadence, just like other American writers in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century who used to emphasise the (cultural) decline of their time (Murray, 2016, p. 388). Often compared with some of his characters such as Jay Gatsby and Dick Diver, Fitzgerald is described by Giesbert (1991) as a Baudelairean character who often seems melancholic:

Il a beau descendre au Ritz, vivre à cent à l'heure, jeter son argent par les fenêtres, se consumer dans l'alcool et la sexualité, Fitzgerald ne guérit jamais. Il y a toujours quelque chose en lui qui saigne (Giesbert, 1991, p. VIII).

It is therefore clear that such a behaviour is echoed by some characters such as Gatsby, and especially Dick Diver from *Tender is the Night* who appears as more tortured than Gatsby. Forter (2003) states that, for this reason, the novel's detractors said that Fitzgerald was too present and mixed up with his characters. This comment has been made regarding *The Great Gatsby* but also other novels and short stories for which the two women of his life, Ginevra King and Zelda Sayre, have served as inspiration.

As Fitzgerald was a member of the so-called Lost Generation affected by the First World War, this traumatic event has often been discussed in secondary literature, mentioning "the traumatization of genders" as discussed by Joseph (2003, p.64) or war remembrance for example (Beidler, 2013). Forter (2003) also analysed mourning and melancholia in *The Great Gatsby*. Trauma has also been at the centre of different studies such as in James' article (2013) who states that the whole plot in *The Great Gatsby* appears as an analogy of war. I therefore agree with James' point, but this dissertation aims to compare this kind of representation of war with the one in *Tender is the Night*, in which the war might appear as a subplot, like in *The Great Gatsby*. Regarding *Tender is the Night*, scholars such as Stern (2002, as cited in Rennie, 2016, p. 182) claim that "a pervasive metaphor of war" is implicitly present in the novel, which gives to the novel a tone of melancholy, decay, and decline (Murray, 2016). Just like Joseph (2003), Rennie (2016) also analysed non-combatant's shell shock. The main topics in the existing literature about Fitzgerald's *Tender is the Night* and *The Great Gatsby* related to war and trauma are often connected to gender issues. War has therefore been central to different

studies even if it is not explicitly central to Fitzgerald's novels. Nevertheless, it seems that no comparison has been made between the representation of the war in *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night*. Moreover, the concepts of subplot and of ineffability have never been discussed regarding these novels.

In this section, I therefore attempt to present a non-exhaustive literature review of what has been written about *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night* and the impact of war on these novels, especially regarding the three levels of analysis that I use in this dissertation, i.e., narrative structure of the novels and their narration, the representation of the post war society – which has often been discussed in the secondary literature – and recurring motifs in the novels. Although these points have been discussed in the existing literature, I would like to go further in their analysis by trying to find other hints at war through these three levels and by connecting them to the war subplot that appears in the novel.

### 3.1.1. Narrative structure and Narration

Regarding the narration and the structure of the novels, it seems that more studies have been conducted about *The Great Gatsby* because Nick's position as a narrator is unique. James (2013) in her article "The Story Nick Can't Tell: Trauma in *The Great Gatsby*", analyses Nick's position in the story, as well as his relation to war. According to James, Nick does not act in the story, but he rather witnesses everything. He is a character who hears others' stories without living his own, as noted by Forter (2003). The latter draws a parallel between Nick and Fitzgerald, contrary to the more frequent association between the author and Gatsby. Forter also addresses the question of the narration and suggests that Nick introduces a distance between Fitzgerald and Gatsby, seeing that Nick is an independent character who witnesses the events instead of acting during the novel. In the past, Miller (1967, p. 111) already asserted that Nick "occupies an intermediary space between main character and author". Indeed, Miller (1967) writes that, in a way, Fitzgerald, eliminates himself by placing the reader in direct contact with the action and the characters through Nick. The latter therefore appears as a spectator through whom we can see the story, as said by Miller (1967). Consequently, Forter (2003) confirmed what Miller (1967) already claimed in the 1960s.

Regarding *Tender is the Night*, the narrator is not as complex as in *The Great Gatsby*, since the narrator is omnipresent in *Tender is the Night*. This is why it has been less studied than Nick's position as a narrator. However, *Tender is the Night*'s narrative structure appears as more complex due to its disrupted chronology that has been later revised by Cowley (1951)

who rearranged the storyline in order to respect the chronology of the events. This novel and its narration have yet been less discussed than *The Great Gatsby*. This difference might be explained by the success of Gatsby's story.

### 3.1.2. The impact of war on society

*The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night* both represent the society of the 1920s where emotions, the experience of time as well as the conventional view of class and gender were unsettled by the war. Therefore, I argue that the impact of war can be seen through this representation of the society that can be sum up using three different topics that has been discussed by scholars and that I also discuss later in this dissertation. The topics are namely war and trauma, social classes, and genders.

#### a. War and trauma

The major impact of war on society has been discussed by many scholars, especially in terms of trauma and gender. Murray (2008, p. 406) claims that the aim of Fitzgerald's novels is to make the reader "hear the past", which means that he tried to represent the society at one point in time in order for the reader to catch a glimpse in this period. *The Great Gatsby* is described as a novel that looks back at the war years (Beidler, 2013). In his article about World War I remembrance in Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, Beidler (2013) argues that the parties represented in these stories serve as a social gathering to help people forget World War I and both novels are said to be representative of the society of this period. But in my views, these parties that are present in *The Great Gatsby*, *Mrs Dalloway*, but also in *Tender is the Night* might be used to create a festive atmosphere that distracts the reader (and the characters) from perceiving a deeper, more serious dimension related to war in these stories. War is thus described by Beidler (2013) as the "Great Party Crasher" that is represented in two novels of manners that attempt to capture one precise moment in history. In Beidler's article, the effects of war on society are emphasised by the fact that some of them has been confronted with "the World War I spectacle of mass death" (Beidler, 2013, p. 6) and consequently, they constantly party in order to forget this awful violent event. Because of what they experienced during the war, the characters suffer from mental disorders due to war and to what they experienced. They consequently try to forget everything, or at least, they try not to think about it thanks to parties and the excess that parties cause.

Beidler (2013) considers that Jay Gatsby is the main victim of shell shock, although Nick Carraway, the narrator, also has similar symptoms such as emotional detachment, solitariness,

and tendency to live in memory. At one point, Nick says: “I enjoyed the counter-raid so thoroughly that I came back restless” (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 6). According to James (2013) such a sentence also shows the trauma from which Nick suffers. Nick and Gatsby are thus seen as war veterans who are visibly unwounded but at the same time prisoners of their memory. Nick and Jay carry their own version of shell shock as they are “memory culture’s walking wounded” (Beidler, 2013, p. 16). Joseph (2003) writes about trauma that “according to Joanna Bourke, a social historian, a sample of British soldiers suffering from combat trauma revealed that only twenty percent had actually been under fire” (1999, as cited in Joseph, 2003, p.70). We call “shell-shock” the trauma of the trenches, but as many men who suffered from trauma were not at the front, we can talk about a non-combatant shell shock, from which Dick, from *Tender is the Night*, suffers. Fitzgerald has often been compared with Dick Diver and here again, they share a common point as Fitzgerald did not fight during the war. In this respect, Gatsby achieves what Fitzgerald could not achieve (James, 2013) and Dick Diver appears as Fitzgerald’s representation of himself.

In *Tender is the Night*, psychiatry and mental health occupy an important place. Dick Diver, the protagonist, works as a psychiatrist, who, according to Rennie (2016, p. 188), suffers from “Non-Combatant’s shell-shock” given that Dick’s role in the army during the war was to work as a non-combatant in a neurological unit. Like Nick and Gatsby, Dick is part of the visibly unwounded people who still suffer from their past even though they did not have the same relationship to war. Nevertheless, it appears that the non-combatants that were in the military were subject to the highest level of psychological breakdown because they were not fully satisfied with their job which was more pacific in a violent war context (Joseph, 2003, p.70). Indeed, non-combatants like Dick did not fight and, consequently, had a job that seemed less masculine than being a soldier, and fitting in the violent context of the war. This issue is thus related to masculinity which is discussed further in this state of the art. Therefore, male combatants and non-combatants experienced the war very differently. And while the combatants were admired and validated by the army but also by the society, the non-combatants had less acknowledgement (Gandal, 2018, p. 48). Another element that contributed to the trauma of non-combatants was the survivor’s guilt that Joseph (2003) perceives in the character of Dick from *Tender is the Night* given that he survived a traumatic event in which thousands of people lost their lives.

## **b. Social classes**

Murray (2016) observes a significant shift in Fitzgerald's work. While his first novels, such as *The Great Gatsby* focus more on the individual psyche, *Tender is the Night* also depicts the effects of war on society in the United States as well as on the whole Western culture. The novel indeed tells the story of American expatriates in Europe, which gives a more global aspect to the novel. However, some scholars have demonstrated that the representation of the society as a whole was also present in *The Great Gatsby*, embodied by various social classes. Indeed, money and financial success are often mentioned in the novel. They are connected because of Nick for example, for his uncle and the rest of his family, war was associated with "the beginning of family financial success" (James, 2013, p. 68) since their business flourished during the Civil War. We can also perceive the difference between old and new money, mentioned by Forter (2003). He makes a distinction between Tom Buchanan, who is a "representative of *old money*" since he comes from a wealthy family while Gatsby embodies new money. Tom therefore exploits people from lower social classes such as George and Myrtle Wilson, on which he exercises a certain power.

## **c. Masculinity**

While women began to occupy a more important place in society, some men felt a need to reassert their place, and to restore the line between genders (Joseph, 2003). This is why a character like Tom tries to combat the supposed feminising influence of modernity by asserting his aggression (Forter, 2003). Tom and Gatsby are thus also in opposition regarding their masculinity. According to Forter (2003) Tom embodies a new style of masculinity by reasserting it in order to preserve his man's position in a society that gives more and more space to women. Gatsby has "the qualities of residual masculinity" (Forter, 2003, p. 146) which are due to a certain softness that remains instead of giving way to an extreme and brutal virility. Tom, as a man from higher class, aspires toward domination with the help of his superior class but also his gender. As Gatsby represents new wealth and is softer, he is considered by Forter (2003), as a more effeminate character since he does not strongly assert his masculinity contrary to Tom.

A certain hierarchy between genders is thus represented at some point in Fitzgerald's novels but this hierarchy is sometimes disturbed, which is representative of the gender anxiety produced by World War I. Fitzgerald, however, does not provide any answer or solution to this crisis. The only help he provides to address some potential issues regarding gender identity is perhaps "[calling] for more flexibility in understanding and characterizing gender" (Joseph,

2003, p. 79). Forter (2003) and Joseph (2013) are therefore not the only ones who discussed genders and especially masculinity, since war and consequently trauma had a huge impact on it. While Tom constantly reasserts his masculinity, we can observe another male character who asserts traditional masculinity in Fitzgerald's novels: Tommy Barban, Nicole's lover at the end of *Tender is the Night*. He is considered as "*Tender's* hypermasculine representative" (Joseph, 2003, p. 73) and consequently he is a sort of equivalent of Tom Buchanan in *Tender is the Night*. This impression mostly comes from his job as a career soldier which is considered as a virile job. However, his constant obsession to return to some war might appear as a re-enactment of a past trauma but also as a way to counter some form of feminization and to remain virile (Joseph, 2003). According to Meredith (2004), Fitzgerald regretted the fact that he never fought during the war, because like many young men at this time, he believed that war was crucial to assert his masculinity, just like Tommy Barban.

Contrary to Tommy, Dick seems to lose his masculinity in diverse ways. Firstly, given that shell shock was considered as a failure of masculinity (Beidler, 2013), Dick perceives himself as less masculine than Tommy for example. Dick also loses his dominance as a man since he becomes financially dependent on his sister-in-law, Baby Warren, who is described by Joseph (2003) as a sort of grandfather for Dick. This comparison with a grandfather is also made in the novel when Fitzgerald writes "Baby became suddenly her grandfather, cool and experimental" (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 162). This decline in power contributes to Dick's general decline which reflects a much broader phenomenon, namely the decline in traditional masculine power perceived by many men after the Great War (Joseph, 2003).

#### **d. Femininity**

Nonetheless, men were not the only ones impacted by war. Joseph (2003) points out the fact that due to the war, women assumed new roles that were reserved to men before. For this reason, the gender ideology changed during this period. Due to the war, women became more and more independent, and were not limited to housekeeping and looking after the children anymore (Samkanashvili, 2013). They also acquired the right to vote in 1920 and began drinking alcohol, smoking, etc. According to Samkanashvili (2013, p.47), Daisy embodies the "new woman" of the Roaring Twenties. However, she is not the only one and Daisy, as well as Jordan and Myrtle are all versions of new women. These three female characters are described by Samkanashvili (2013) as follows: Jordan is desirable and perfectly represents the Flapper since she is arrogant, does not show her emotions and appears to be irresponsible. Daisy embodies the transition between the traditional and new woman given that she has the role of

the “damsel in distress” who is the object of two men’s desire. But Daisy goes for the most traditional option that includes marriage and motherhood by having a child with Tom. But she also possesses some characteristics of the flapper by being unfaithful to her family for example, like Myrtle. While they are significantly different women and they belong to different social classes, they share the following characteristic: a certain carelessness toward their family life.

In *Tender is the Night*, Rosemary occupies a particular position as a woman in the society due to her status of actress (Joseph, 2003). On the one hand, she embodies a socially constructed ideal. Because of her job as an actress, her femininity is considered as performative, which means that she behaves as a rather stereotypical hyper-feminine woman in the society. But at the same time, her work gives Rosemary a masculine independence. Nevertheless, her role in the movie *Daddy’s Girl* displays a stereotypical femininity that shows that she is still affected by the fact that a woman’s career is only possible thanks to male agency (Joseph, 2003).

Nicole’s money dominates her couple in a way. However, by being her husband’s patient, Nicole is subject to the domination of Dick too who, in an almost paternal way, has to take care of her. According to Joseph (2003), such a relationship between Dick and Nicole might echo Nicole’s incestuous relationship with her father, although the relationships are fundamentally different. Due to Nicole’s relation with her father and with Dick, Nicole’s life can be considered as “under the direction of men” and in this way, Fitzgerald seems to criticize patriarchal power (Joseph, 2003, p. 67) even if Dick does not appear as a stereotype of male power. *Tender is the Night* is thus representative of the complexity of gender roles, especially when they are disturbed by traumatic experiences.

### 3.1.3. Motifs

Some motifs from *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night* that are recurring in the secondary literature are for example, the importance of machines, violence and of course shell shock. In my view, other motifs can be added to those already discussed by other scholars. For this reason, some motifs that have not been discussed by scholars and thus that are not present in this section, are explained later in this dissertation, in my own analyses of Fitzgerald’s novels.

According to James (2013), the importance of cars in *The Great Gatsby* would represent the mechanised warfare which was the First World War. The cars and the machines and new technology in general used during the war made it even more violent. However, this analogy made by James (2013) between cars and the mechanised warfare can be questioned as it is rather vague. Moreover, these aspects of the novel linked to modernity, etc. can be more

indicative of modern consumer culture and capitalism in addition to war and violence. Regarding capitalism, it has been discussed by De Bruyn (2015) who points out the importance of the representation of shops and objects which are representative of the diverse social classes in several novels including *Tender is the Night*.

According to James (2013), we can also perceive the violence of war in Fitzgerald's novels. The deaths of Myrtle, Gatsby and George remain traumatic events, just like war according to James (2013), although the characters deaths and the violence of war are very different forms of violence.

Lastly, psychiatry and psychotherapy – sometimes connected to the trauma of the war – are also important in Fitzgerald's novels. But while psychotherapy occupies an important place in some narratives, it also occupied a huge place in Fitzgerald's life given that his wife, Zelda needed psychological treatment. Obviously, we cannot help comparing this situation with Dick and Nicole's in *Tender is the Night*. Besides, Fitzgerald was addicted to alcohol which gives him another common point with Dick, in addition to the place of psychiatry in their life (West, 2011). In a letter to one of his readers, Fitzgerald said "I will go to a mechanic for a fault in a machine, to a surgeon for a fault in the body, but the mind—That's another story." (West, 2011, p. 62). Through this sentence, we can see the importance and the complexity of mental health in Fitzgerald's life and in *Tender is the Night* but also the disillusion of Fitzgerald that is incorporated in his novels.

### 3.2. Key concepts

Before the analysis of the two novels, the key terms of this study are defined and discussed in the following sections. These terms are "trauma", "ineffability", "subplot" and "implicated subject". To define these terms, I will use articles written by Balaev (2008), Viljoen (2019) and Zwicky (2012) for the concept of trauma and ineffability. Trauma is indeed extremely important in this dissertation as I argue that the trauma of war is omnipresent in Fitzgerald's novels, but in a rather implicit way due to its ineffable nature. Regarding the subplot, Shipley's (1955) and Cudden's (1977) definitions are explained, but Mentxaka's (2013) use of the concept of subplot is also demonstrated as I intend to adopt a similar approach to this concept. In other words, I consider here that Fitzgerald respects the ineffability of trauma by reflecting it thanks to a subplot. Lastly, the term "implicated subject" has been introduced by Rothberg (2019) and is used in this dissertation to analyse the position of some characters toward the war.

### 3.2.1. Trauma

Trauma studies is an important subfield in literature and has often been discussed in secondary literature, for example by Balaev (2008) and Caruth in her book “Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History” (2016) or even by Rothberg (2008) who also introduced the concept of the “implicated subject” that is mentioned later in this section. Rothberg (2008), among others, discussed trauma in connection with (de)colonisation. These three names are important ones in the subfield of trauma studies. This subfield can be linked to many different topics that are related to violent and terrible experiences. World War I, and even war in general play a central role in trauma studies; Lundberg argues that given that nobody was prepared for the slaughter that was World War I, the survivors claimed that it could not be explained in conventional terms which is the reason why “new forms of writing were needed” (Lundberg, 1984, p. 377).

In my dissertation I would like to use Balaev’s definition of trauma (2008, p. 150) which “refers to a person's emotional response to an overwhelming event that disrupts previous ideas of an individual's sense of self and the standards by which one evaluates society”. In other words, people are transformed by a violent experience that reshapes their self as well as their conception of the world (Balaev, 2008). According to Caruth (1996, as cited in Balaev p. 151), the traumatic experiences therefore haunt the survivors. Because trauma lies beyond our comprehension, according to Balaev (2008), it may be considered as unrepresentable because the human brain is not used to process such terrible experiences. But trauma can also exist through a broader culture form that affects a whole society, or a whole generation when violent events happen on a larger scale.

Trauma, being caused by an overwhelming event, therefore lies beyond our grasp and can be conveyed in “trauma novels”. Such novels depict a certain loss or fear that can be felt either on collective or on individual levels. Although traumatic experiences are difficult to process, they may be transferred to other individuals or groups which are originally not traumatised. This can be done through narration for example, or because of “a shared ancestry or ethnic origins” (Balaev, 2008, p. 151). It is a sort of contagion theory of trauma. For this reason, Caruth writes that trauma “is never simply one’s own [...] [but] precisely the way we are implicated in each other’s trauma” (Caruth, 1996, as cited in Balaev 1998, pp. 151-152). In this sense, the non-combatant’s shell shock that we saw earlier can perhaps be seen as the result of this contagion that spreads trauma. While the combatants suffer from the trauma of the trenches, the non-combatants might be contaminated by this trauma.

Regarding Fitzgerald's novels, protagonists such as Dick or Gatsby for example, can be representative of the trauma of a whole group, like an "everyperson' figure" (Balaev, 2008, p. 155) that contributes to or suffer from the trauma contagion that is initiated by the war. In novels, writers may therefore use various techniques to represent how trauma restructures one's perceptions of the world, for example by expressing strong emotions of pain that are sometimes incoherent (Balaev, 2008). Lastly, it is rare to see trauma represented thanks to an accurate recounting of events. By contrast, the telling might be set up through the perspectives of different characters, or through feelings and other more or less implicit elements in order to attempt to represent trauma in an appropriate way that respects its ineffability.

### 3.2.2. Ineffability

In Fitzgerald's novels, I argue that war and the trauma it produces might be considered as ineffable. The ineffability, in short, is the fact that some things cannot be said, sometimes because they are too abstract, or too difficult to say, like trauma that is overwhelming and therefore difficult to process (Balaev, 2008). In the framework of this dissertation, the ineffability is related to the difficulty to express traumatic experiences. This is indeed how Viljoen (2019) defines it. Some traumatising experiences provoke emotional reactions that might be too intense to be put into words (Zwicky, 2012). Some aspects of violent experiences are sometimes too difficult to convey, so that "describing what one knows about these experiences seems to be of limited value in enhancing one's understanding of them. Thus, merely representing what one already knows about violence and conflict seems inadequate" (Viljoen, 2019, p. 18). In short, the ineffability is "what we think we cannot talk about adequately" (Viljoen, 2019, p. 19). For this reason, talking about violent experiences can be done thanks to a complex of different elements such as feelings, memories and perceptions for example – as represented in fiction – but not by merely and accurately recounting the events (Viljoen, 2019). Therefore, one of the values of literature is certainly its ability to represent things that might be ineffable in life.

Some consider ineffability as uninteresting because it includes a certain paradox: since language is at the centre of every human cognition, some people maintain that nothing is genuinely ineffable. Everything can be present in our human consciousness and words can be put on anything. (Zwicky, 2012). Zwicky (2012) however considers the above-mentioned paradox as superficial because ineffability reflects the inadequacy of language to discuss some experiences or the fact that in some cases, no words seem right. It is obviously possible to talk about and express anything, but when it comes to traumatic experiences, it seems impossible to

talk about them adequately. However, we still have the desire and the need to communicate, and we accordingly try to do so, making an “ineffability claim” without being silent. (Zwicky, 2012, p. 198).

As argued by Zwicky (2012), Freud’s theories might sometimes be contested. However, she agrees with him on the fact that some mental activities cannot be captured by language. She therefore claims that in any utterance, the content and its meaning are the potential ineffable elements while language is “the means, the enabler of practical, thought” (Zwicky, 2012, p. 211). Language is therefore a mere means to convey some meaning which sometimes cannot be put into words, according to Freud. However, trauma can also be repeated and relived through a phenomenon that Freud calls the “repetition compulsion” which are unwanted and unintended repetitions of a traumatic event (Russel, 2006). Fitzgerald indeed seemed to be aware of Freud’s trauma theories since one of *Tender is the Night*’s central topics is psychiatry in connection with trauma that is cured by the protagonist, Dick Diver by means of psychoanalysis. Moreover, several elements in the novel seem to refer to Freud’s repetition compulsion.

As mentioned in the section about trauma, World War I created a need for new forms of writing to convey it. In Fitzgerald’s novels, I argue that Fitzgerald tries to find a solution to the above-mentioned issue of misrepresentation. Without recounting war events, Fitzgerald’s characters, and his novels in general hint at war in a way that sometimes echoes trauma as well as the war. Implicit references to war enable the presence of war in the reader’s mind while reading, without telling war episodes. The events themselves are not recounted, but the language used by Fitzgerald serves as a means to convey the characters’ war experience.

### 3.2.3. Subplot

As I said earlier, the ineffability of the trauma of war is respected in Fitzgerald’s novels as trauma and war are represented through a subplot. The subplot, in the context of this dissertation, appears as a way to represent trauma by respecting its ineffable nature in Fitzgerald’s novels *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night*. The concept of subplot is defined by different scholars in literary dictionaries as follows.

Firstly, Shipley (1955) provides the following definition:

A repetition on another plane of the main conflict, present occasionally in tragedy: Edgar and Edmund, brothers, repeating the opposition of the sisters, in *King Lear* ; more frequent in comedy. A Restoration version of *The Tempest* provides Miranda,

who had never seen a young man, with a sister loved of a youth that never before seen a maid. Such devices are mocked in Gilbert's *Pirates of Penzance*, wherein Frederic has seen no woman save his nurse (p. 401).

Secondly, in another dictionary of literary terms, Cudden (1977) defines the subplot in this way:

A subsidiary action in a play or story which coincides with the main action. Very common in Tudor and Jacobean drama, it is usually a variation of or counterpoint to the main plot. For example, the comic sub-plot involving Stefano and Trinculo in *The Tempest*; and the serious one involving Gloucester, Edmund and Edgar in *King Lear*. The sub-plot became increasingly rare after the 17<sup>th</sup> c (p. 930).

As can be seen in Cudden and Shipley's definitions, subplot is considered as a sort of repetition of the central plot, which is especially present in drama, tragedy. However, this concept of subplot is also a sort of minor story which might be present in novels too as explained in Mentxaka's article (2013). She argues that a lesbian subplot can be found in Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* (1814). According to her, in this novel, the subplot is "discreetly but firmly embedded onto the main narrative" (2013, p.1). The reason for this subplot is that lesbianism was unacceptable in a novel of 1814, that is why it had to be implicit, but it however has an "accumulative effect, forcing the reader to constantly reassess the story" (Mentxaka, 2013, p. 10).

In *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night*, war is not central as mentioned earlier but I argue that it is "discreet and firmly embedded in the main narrative" to use Mentxaka's words. This discreet representation of war as a subplot might thus be a way to represent the ineffability of war and trauma. War might also echo the main plot which includes violent events as well as the consequences of war that will be developed further in this dissertation. The impact of war, which is present and constantly recalled in Fitzgerald's novels through the three different levels analysed in this dissertation seem to have an "accumulative effect" that forces the reader to "reassess the story" (Mentxaka, 2013, p. 10).

#### 3.2.4. Implicated subject (Rothberg)

Rothberg, a specialist of memory and trauma studies introduced the concept of "implicated subject" (2019), another concept that needs to be defined in the context of this dissertation as it is useful to understand the positions of some of the characters in Fitzgerald's novels. Some characters in *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night* could therefore be considered as implicated subjects during the war which later leads for some of them to a non-combatant's shell shock, but this will be discussed later in my analyses of Fitzgerald's novels.

Rothberg argues that in some situations of conflict, violence, and inequality, the reader often tends to categorise the involved people into two different groups: the victims and the perpetrators. Sometimes a third category is added, namely the bystanders. However, Rothberg creates a new category that he calls the implicated subject. This new position represents neither criminals that are responsible agents, nor innocent bystanders. Consequently, the implicated subjects are not direct agents of violence, but they rather contribute to “inhabit, inherit or benefit” the conflict without originating or controlling it (Rothberg, 2019). The implicated subjects are not as involved as perpetrators, they are not active in the conflict though they are perhaps not passive either like victims would be. It is thus a particular position with a form of political responsibility as “their actions or inactions help produce and reproduce the positions of victims and perpetrators” (Rothberg, 2019, p. 1). Factors that provoke implication are for example ignorance and denial that make individual subjects involved in a group with whom they began to act, for better or for worse. The characters’ relation to war in Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night* will therefore be analysed later in this dissertation, thanks to this concept of implicated subject which might be applied to them. An implicated subject in a war, for example, does not appear as a leader in the war but he takes part in it in a more subtle way. Such people might therefore later feel guilty in a way, which would be part of a sort of non-combatant’s shell shock as can be seen in Fitzgerald’s novels.

In his theory of the implicated subject, Rothberg focuses on situations of violence and injustice such as cases of racial slavery, the legacies of the Holocaust, the South African apartheid and its aftermath, and the crisis of Israel/Palestine for example (Rothberg, 2019). Such situations, like every situation of conflict and violence, are more complex than a simple binary system that involves victims and perpetrators. That is a major reason why the category of the implicated subjects has been created although there are also clear victims and perpetrators. Moreover, the category of the implicated subject can be applied to other forms of violence, conflict or injustice such as wars. Obviously, categories “victims”, “perpetrators” and “implicated subjects”, in such situations, do not describe a human essence, but are rather abstractions that are useful when studying these situations with an analytical purpose (Rothberg, 2019, p. 8). The category of the implicated subject is therefore a way to help us understand and face the “legacies of violent histories and the sociopolitical dynamics that create suffering and inequality in the present” (Rothberg, 2019, p.11). The theory of implication is thus a way to conceptualise how contemporary but also historical forms of injustice and violence can be simultaneously omnipresent and barely distinguishable and, consequently, difficult to eradicate.

In other words, the implicated subjects include people who contribute to injustice but in a more or less indirect way; they are not guilty of the creation of the injustice, but they play a role in its development. In Rothberg's conclusion (2019), he considers the implicated subject as a solution to determine people's roles in situations of injustice, in order to move beyond the binary system of victims and perpetrators. But in real life, it is more a problem than a solution as the people from this category could be part of "the machinery of political violence, economic exploitation, and ecological devastation" (2019, p. 200).

In short, the concept of the implicated subject helps to analyse the positions of the characters in Fitzgerald's novels. This perception of the characters, through the prism of Rothberg's study is thus one element that implies the presence of war and trauma in the novels as part of a subplot. The war subplot that is not central to the stories is however omnipresent and forces the reader to bear in mind that war has some significance in the story. The subplot is thus used as a means to respect the ineffable nature of trauma in the novels.

## 4. War in *The Great Gatsby*

*The Great Gatsby* is Fitzgerald's most famous novels due to its brilliant writing, perfect reflection of a given time and period, and universal messages. At first reading, this novel can be perceived as a tragic and romantic love story, the story of an impossible love between Jay Gatsby who seems to live in luxury, and the beautiful Daisy Buchanan. Nevertheless, there is a deeper dimension related to the war in this novel. The story is set during the summer of 1922, a few years after the First World War. Therefore, I base my analysis of the novels on all the elements through which war and its impact can be perceived.

### 4.1. Narration and narrative structure

Firstly, Nick Carraway, the narrator of the novel, is an intradiegetic narrator as he is part of the narrative. Being involved in the plot as a character and giving his opinions and feelings, he is also a homodiegetic overt narrator. Nick's narration begins with the story of his grandfather's brother who is considered as "the actual founder of [his] line" (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 6). This man escaped the Civil War by sending a substitute when he came to New York to start a business. At this point, Nick already relates his own story to a war, but a few lines further, he briefly tells his own experience of the war, which is the First World War. Using irony, as argued by James (2013, p. 70), Nick adopts a positive vocabulary, saying "I enjoyed the counter-raid so thoroughly that I came back restless" (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 6). Here, Nick, as the narrator of the story, already sets the tone of the whole story, showing that war changed his life, in a way that does not show the gravity of what he experienced during these difficult years.

We could expect from an homodiegetic narrator, that he would take part in the events, but it is not the case of Nick who appears more as a witness although he is a character in the narrative. The novel revolves more around Jay Gatsby, the protagonist, than around Nick, given that the main plot involves Daisy and Jay and the love affair between them. Nick therefore appears as a discreet person, an I-witness narrator in the story of the other characters. Nick's position as a narrator, might thus be related to the positions of some people during the war, who were not on the battlefield but witnessed all the events and horrors of this period. Thus, Nick can be associated with the so-called "implicated subject" (Rothberg, 2019): he is always present, takes part in the events but due to his discretion, he does not hinder the love affair between Daisy and Jay that finally leads to the tragic death of the latter. Nick, in an indirect way, takes part in the injustice that finally kills Gatsby as he helps Gatsby to see Daisy. As Rothberg (2019) argues about the implicated subjects, Nick does not control or provoke the

situation, he is not a direct agent of harm, but his actions, and his inactions too, contribute to producing some positions of perpetrators and victims. As a witness and not an actual actor in the story, Nick's position can be compared to the one he has during the war in which he was forced to participate, like many men at this time. In the war too, like in his narration, his position is perhaps similar to the one of the implicated subjects. He indeed did not choose to fight during the war, he is not a soldier by profession but once again, he contributes to the violent situation that war is, without controlling it. That is how he presents himself. In Gatsby's story, he is not the one killing Gatsby at the end and he never directly creates conflicts. But in a way he also encourages Gatsby and Daisy's love affair that leads to dramatic consequences. Moreover, he seems to often follow the others who decide what they will all do, but Nick does not often make decisions. As the other characters – perhaps unconsciously – force Nick to do some things, Nick indirectly takes part in the events that lead to the triple death at the end of the story, which can perhaps be compared with his forced involvement in war.

Even if he is the narrator of this story, Nick is a passive character, which reinforces the disillusion that he seems to feel. He is constantly present, but most of the time, he is always watching the others and telling their stories to such an extent that he forgets his own thirtieth birthday. Regarding his birthday, Nick adopts a pessimistic, disenchanted attitude, saying “before me stretched the portentous, menacing road of a new decade” (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 108). This attitude toward his birthday might be representative of the difficulty to move forward in life as implied by the final sentence of the novel. Nick does not play a crucial role in the story, he rather shapes it thanks to his narration, contrary to Gatsby for example, who really takes action. Nick is “the one who hears others' stories, rather than living his own” (James, 2013, p. 68). He consequently shows a certain emotional detachment, which is a symptom of shell shock according to Beidler (2013). Perhaps this focus on the others instead of himself while narrating the story reveals his refusal to talk about himself in order to hide a certain trauma. He says that the war made him “restless” (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 6), therefore he might be unable to be fully invested in something. That is why he sometimes seems emotionally detached in his way of narrating the story, which is considered as a consequence of shell shock as argued by Beidler (2013). This emotional detachment and a certain disillusion also appear when Nick talks about his job by saying “so I decided to go East and learn the bond business. Everybody I knew was in the bond business, so I supposed it could support one more single man” (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 6). Through this sentence, Nick shows a certain carelessness toward his job. Once again, he

seems to try to fit in the society, imitates the others and follows them, which confirms what we saw earlier about his position as an implicated subject.

*The Great Gatsby* has a fragmented structure, which appears as a modernist feature. Despite a somewhat chronological order, some flashbacks or embedded narratives appear to disturb the linear development of the narrative. That can be seen when Jordan tells Daisy and Jay's story to Nick. This embedded story whose narrator is Jordan, is not really introduced by Nick; the latter explains the meeting between Gatsby and Tom Buchanan and says, "I turned toward Mr Gatsby, but he was no longer there" (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 59). After this last sentence uttered by Nick, Jordan's story appears almost out of the blue in the direct next paragraph:

One October day in nineteen seventeen —  
(said Jordan Baker that afternoon, sitting straight on a straight chair in the tea-garden at the Plaza Hotel)  
—I was walking along from one place to another, half on the sidewalks and half on the lawns (Fitzgerald, 2008, p.59).

Here, instead of introducing the fact that Jordan was about to tell something, Jordan begins her narration and is interrupted by Nick, explaining that this is Jordan who narrates this story. This interruption emphasises the fragmentation of the narration, typical of modernist writing. Another story recounted is Gatsby's. Here, we do not deal with an embedded story such as Jordan's, but Nick describing Gatsby's past, says:

It was this night that he told me the strange story of his youth with Dan Cody — told it to me because 'Jay Gatsby' had broken up like glass against Tom's hard malice, and the long secret extravaganza was played out. I think that he would have acknowledged anything now, without reserve, but he wanted to talk about Daisy (Fitzgerald, 2008, pp. 117-118).

Afterwards, once again, without transition, Gatsby takes the floor saying: "I can't describe to you how surprised I was to find out I loved her, old sport" (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 119). All of this story, that was before told by Jordan, is now recounted through Nick and Gatsby's voices which, once again, generates a certain fragmentation of the narration. The metaphor of the broken glass used by Nick might perhaps echo this fragmentation, but this metaphor is also an evidence of Gatsby's failure that is still present years later but is hidden by the greatness of the character.

Seeing that the narrator is intra- and homodiegetic, the reader gains access to Nick's thoughts, giving to the narration an impression of stream of consciousness. Despite his emotional detachment, Nick's opinions and his feelings are expressed sometimes with irony for example, but he does not merely recount events that happen in the story or in his past life. The

fragmentation as well as the stream of consciousness which are characteristics of modernist literature, serve to emphasise the fragmentation of the society in which they are living, and which is broken by the general trauma caused by the First World War. The novel, looking back at the war years, therefore echoes war and its consequences on the society but also the characters' failure thanks to the type of narration. Nick's stream of consciousness recalls his restlessness which is indeed one symptom of shell shock (James, 2013). Furthermore, the stream of consciousness enables us to see inside Nick's mind, and to observe this shell shock from which he seems to suffer. In addition, as ineffability may be conveyed thanks to a combination of memories, thoughts, perceptions, etc. (Zwicky, 2012), the stream of consciousness used by Fitzgerald to shape Nick's narration in *The Great Gatsby* seems appropriate for allusions to war. Nick's narration thus leads us to believe that war has some importance in *The Great Gatsby* and that Nick is affected by a common disease of the 1920s, namely shell shock, given that Nick was a soldier.

## 4.2. The representation of society

### 4.2.1. Relationships: distance and "mysterious fraternity"

In the post-World War I era, the society was broken, fractured to such an extent that it provoked serious psychic injuries, and social solidarity was difficult to reach (James, 2013). Modernism accordingly conveys this aspect of the society which is present in *The Great Gatsby* too. The novel displays characters whose personalities and relationships with each other have been altered. For example, Daisy says to Nick:

"We don't know each other very well, Nick," she said suddenly. "Even if we are cousins. You didn't come to my wedding"

"I wasn't back from the war" (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 17)

Through this excerpt, we can see that although they belong to the same family, war kept Daisy and Nick apart from knowing each other. War had created a physical and emotional distance between some people who were not able to see each other and hence to learn to know each other, like Nick and Daisy.

In contrast to this distance between Daisy and Nick, a special bond seems to emerge from the relation between men who experienced the same things during the war. As Jay Gatsby and Nick Carraway are war veterans and as they were both in the infantry during the Great War (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 38), there is a connection between them, a "shared historical past" (James,

2013, p. 72). Nick, although he appears as disillusioned with everything, seems to instantly trust Gatsby when he meets him. Gatsby appears as an exception to Nick's general disenchantment:

When I came back from the East last autumn I felt that I wanted the world to be in uniform and at a sort of moral attention forever; I wanted no more riotous excursions with privileged glimpses into the human heart. Only Gatsby, the man who gives his name to this book, was exempt from my reaction (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 5).

Here, we can see Nick's important disillusion after Gatsby's death. This disillusion therefore seems to be present at the beginning of the novel, when Nick arrives at West Egg. Gatsby, who is the one "exempt from [Nick's] reaction", thus appears as a sort of hope in the middle of a period of weariness. Because of Gatsby's death, it seems that Nick is even more disappointed by the world than before. His emotional detachment is stronger as he "wanted no more riotous excursions with privileged glimpses into the human heart". Gatsby is the only one with whom Nick would accept such "privileged glimpses", even if it is not possible anymore since Gatsby is dead. But the latter appears as unique to Nick.

At the beginning of the story, Nick mentions this special impression Gatsby made on him. The trust that Nick puts in Gatsby seems at some point, to be the result of their common past in the Great War. This trust of Nick in Gatsby can be seen in the following excerpt that takes place just after their meeting:

He smiled understandingly – much more than understandingly. It was one of those rare smiles with a quality of eternal reassurance in it, that you may come across four or five times in life. It faced – or seemed to face – the whole eternal world for an instant, and then concentrated on *you* with an irresistible prejudice in your favour. It understood you just so far as you wanted to be understood, believed in you as you would like to believe in yourself, and assured you that it had precisely the impression of you that, at your best, you hoped to convey (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 40).

In this excerpt, we can see the instantaneous connection, a "mysterious fraternity" (Beidler, 2013, p. 17) that Nick feels when he meets Gatsby. Although it later turns out that Gatsby was not totally honest about his past. The word *understandingly* uttered in the beginning of the sentence emphasises the fact that they seem to understand each other. Moreover, this word only refers to a smile, not to any utterance, which strengthens the impression that they understand each other without having to speak. In this excerpt, other words reinforce this idea, i.e. *reassurance*, *assured you*, *believed in you* and *hoped* convey a certain comfort for Nick and for the reader who, at this moment probably wants to trust Jay Gatsby too. But this positive impression that Gatsby conveys turns out to be deceptive as he lied about the origin of his

fortune. In any case, an emotional connection is rapidly created between Nick and Jay. Consequently, they share something that might be considered as ineffable. This idea of connection is not explicitly mentioned in the novel although it is conveyed thanks to sentences such as the following one: “We talked for a moment about some wet, gray little villages in France” (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 39). This sentence, referring to war, does not provide any details about it but implies the fact that both characters are familiar with the same places, the same experiences that are not recounted here. This sentence contributes to the transmission of ideas about war, in a way that respects its ineffable nature. Jay and Nick hence find common ground thanks to their experience of war that remains a sort of secret to the reader who is not allowed to know what they say about these villages. According to James, it is “the trauma of having killed, having witnessed death, and having survived the war” that connects them (2013, pp. 72-73) given that survivors of war often assert that they have the impression “of belonging to a secret order that is sworn to silence” (Felman & Laub, 1991, p. 82). Indeed, although Nick and Gatsby both came back visibly unwounded from the war, both are stuck in their memory, like prisoners of the past because of the atrocities they witnessed (Beidler, 2013). However, it is clear that Jay seems to be even more traumatised by his past affair with Daisy than by his experience in the war. We could argue that the novel also suggests a desire to forget this traumatic past through an endless stream of parties for example, that enables people to avoid remembering the past and consequently the trauma caused by the First World War. But this festive atmosphere might also be a way to distract the reader from perceiving a deeper, more serious dimension in the novel. The trauma appears thus as a taboo, something that people do not want to mention even if it sometimes connects them as it is the case for Nick and Jay for example. But trauma might also be something that was better not to explicitly mention in a book published in the 1920s and whose first readers had experienced war too.

#### 4.2.2. Shell shock: living in memory, retrieving an idealised past

War is at the same time a violent event that leads to trauma and shell shock, but war is also something that severed the ties between soldiers and people back home, like Jay and Daisy. These two aspects both imply a will to repeat certain episodes from the past and are therefore discussed in this section. The trauma experienced by Nick and Jay, called shell shock, thus shapes their whole life and contributes to the broken post war world. They are the two characters who appear as shell shocked in the novel given that they are the only ones who fought during the war and were thus confronted with the “disease of the trenches” (Joseph, 2003, p. 69). As I said earlier about Nick, Jay could also be considered as an implicated subject during the war as

he occupied a position similar to Nick's. Beidler (2013) argues that Gatsby is the main victim of shell shock although Nick seems to suffer from the same symptoms. Some of these symptoms are "emotional detachment" and "tendency to live in memory" (Beidler, 2013, p.6). Nevertheless, these traits, recognizable in the character of Nick, seem to be less present in Gatsby who is sometimes too emotionally attached and passionate, contrary to Nick who is more disillusioned and detached. Jay Gatsby is often alone, he quickly becomes excited and joyful, but he can also rapidly adopt an angry, violent and frightening behaviour. However, Gatsby's more extravagant behaviour might also be due to his fortune that contributes to make him "the Great Gatsby". His changing behaviour can be observed when he argues with Tom about Daisy's love for example, Gatsby suddenly looks angry:

Gatsby sprang to his feet, vivid with excitement.

"She never loved you, do you hear?" he cried. "She only married you because I was poor and she was tired of waiting for me. It was a terrible mistake, but in her heart she never loved any one except me" (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 104).

Gatsby's reaction at this moment seems to be the trigger for the tragic end of this novel. From this moment, the situation gets out of control. Gatsby also constantly refers to the past, which is a symptom of shell shock but also an evidence of the importance of war and its impact as well as his past love affair with Daisy. As said by Nick, Gatsby seems to suffer from an "unutterable depression" (Fitzgerald, 2008, p.87) which confirms the presence of a certain ineffability of trauma that would be conveyed in the novel. The secret trauma of the characters as well as all the secrets (such as love affairs, the mystery about Gatsby's past, etc.) that appear in the novel reflect the idea of the ineffable that can be seen in the novel. But Gatsby's shell shock perceived by Beidler (2013) seems not to consist in reliving awful events from the war. On the contrary, he desperately wants to relive a positive and idealistic version of the past and of his love affair with Daisy that has been broken by the war. This tendency to idealise the period before the war clearly differs from the brutal memories that shell shock victims keep reliving in their mind. Since Gatsby wants to have Daisy's love, like before the war, he strongly believes that he can repeat the past. He would like to relive his affair with Daisy, although he would probably not like to relive the war that followed, in order to stay with Daisy. He expresses his will to re-enact the past, for example when he talks with Nick:

"I wouldn't ask too much of [Daisy]," [Nick] ventured. "you can't repeat the past."

"Can't repeat the past? He cried incredulously. "Why of course you can!"

[...] "I'm going to fix everything just the way it was before," he said, nodding determinedly. (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 88)

His will to go back in time reflects a desire to get his pre-war life back in which the relationships between people and the social cohesion that prevailed had not been hindered. While his parties and the atmosphere of the Roaring Twenties are ways to forget the war years, Gatsby continues to live in the past. He acts as if nothing happened, thinking that Daisy still loves him although she now lives with Tom, apparently loves him, and has a daughter with him. This way to act as if nothing happened might also hint at the broader desire of people to return to the pre-war world, though it is impossible. Nick describes this idea of the past, mentioning Gatsby who “believed in the green light, the orgastic future that year by year recedes before us” (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 144). Through this sentence, it is possible to understand that Gatsby was unable to reach the future and to move forward. He was stuck in the past, constantly trying to reach the green light at the end of Daisy’s dock. Like a shell shock victim who cannot live normally because his memories keep returning to his mind, Gatsby cannot forget his past affair with Daisy. The green light consequently symbolises the unattainable, all the goals that Jay tries to reach throughout the novel but that he will not be able to attain. But it also symbolises a broader quest for ideals that shapes the whole society, not only Gatsby’s love affair. This unattainability reinforces Jay’s destiny to be stuck where he stands: that is to say in an unrequited love relationship, not being accepted by the higher classes embodied by Tom and Daisy. But Gatsby’s obstacle to reach his aims therefore seems to be the failed love affair between him and Daisy that took place before the war. War has therefore a considerable role in this affair, as it forced Gatsby and Daisy to be away from each other, but it seems that war memories are not directly those that make Jay live in the past.

#### 4.2.3. Class issues: old and new money

While Nick and Gatsby seem to be on the same wavelength and to share a certain connection, Tom is different from them. Tom and Jay are polar opposites in the novel. Initially, it seems that because of his money and the family business in which he and his family were, Tom did not go to the war. Nick describes Tom’s family as “enormously wealthy”. Nick and Gatsby, on the contrary went to fight during the war. While both seem to suffer from shell shock as argued previously, the special bond that appears between them is not shared with Tom. Class issues are therefore reinforced after the war given that classes had an impact on men’s participation in the war. This is emphasised by the characters of Tom and Jay who are originally not from the same class as the first one represents the “*old money*” and the other, the “*new money*” (Forster, 2003, p. 146).

Gatsby made his money after the war, in order to win Daisy's heart back as he heard that she married Tom, a man from a wealthy family, like Daisy's. During the war a myth of a classless America was promulgated, which means that classless romances would have been possible too (James, 2013). However, these types of romances "[came] to a brutal end" with the end of the war (James, 2013, p. 96). Although he came from a modest family, Gatsby's ambition to move to a higher social class was already present before the war as he decided to quit his modest family and took Dan Cody, a wealthy businessman, as a mentor. With Cody, James Gatz made the decision to change his name to become Jay Gatsby, a more Anglo-American name than its former one. Missing the opportunity to inherit from Cody's fortune because people made sure that he would not get the money, Jay's desire to make a fortune was reinforced. He succeeded in its goal but not in an honest way. Due to the prohibition that took place after World War I, and that forbid alcohol, bootlegging of alcohol was frequent, and that is the means used by Gatsby to make his fortune. In this regard, he has the following conversation with Nick who wonders about the origin of Gatsby's money:

"I thought you inherited your money."

"I did, old sport," he said automatically, "but I lost most of it in the big panic — the panic of the war."

I think he hardly knew what he was saying for when I asked him what business he was in he answered: "That's my affair," before he realized that it wasn't an appropriate reply.

"Oh, I've been in several things," he corrected himself. "I was in the drug business [...]" (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 72).

The drug business does not refer to any kind of drug dealing. On the contrary it refers to business related to drugstores, according to Prigozy (1998). However, those drugstores "could sell liquor legally [during Prohibition] by prescription and sometimes served as fronts for bootlegging operations" (Prigozy, 1998, p. 149). His answer "That's my affair", in combination with the fact that he was in the drug business – which is related to bootlegging – confirms the idea that he earned his money illegally. The war, as well as the prohibition, hence reshaped the whole society in the United States of the 1920s, it was thus an opportunity for people like Gatsby to make money. However, in spite of his fast rise that makes Gatsby the "embodiment of the American Dream" (Bewley, 1954, p.245), he is not accepted by people from the higher social class who own the old money, like Tom. In the view of the latter and the social class he embodies, Gatsby remains a sort of impostor who earned his money illegally. Jay Gatsby is thus forced to remain the former James Gatz, in a way, who will never be able to reach the green

light that symbolises Gatsby's objectives and the quest for ideals and for a better future that were mentioned earlier.

Myrtle, like Gatsby is hindered in her attempt to reach the American Dream and to move up to a higher social class. Myrtle, who is part of the working class with her husband, George, enjoys her relationship with Tom and the luxurious life she can experience thanks to him. He buys her everything she wants, like a dog for example, which appears as a luxury and a whim at this point in the novel. Moreover, Tom leads us to believe, that one day, they will leave together but this never happens as Tom stays with Daisy. Myrtle dies before reaching her goals too, like Gatsby. This once again shows that the classless romances (like the one between Tom and Myrtle for example) that people imagined during the war, as said by James (2013), were not possible.

#### 4.2.4. Masculinity: different styles of manhood

While war can be seen as a way to reassert one's masculinity, it also provoked shell shock that is considered as unmanly. Tom in a way, lacks masculinity because he did not go to the war, contrary to Nick and Gatsby. This is perhaps one major reason why he needs to demonstrate an exaggerated masculinity that is discussed in this section, in comparison with the other male characters' behaviours. The gap between Tom and Gatsby that we have seen before is therefore not only about money. Forter (2003) claims that Tom also represents "the *new style of manhood*" which seems to be a stereotypical virility, while Nick and Gatsby, having gone to the war, show a certain fragility. Tom keeps on reasserting his strength and masculinity thanks to sports for example. In the beginning he tells Nick "I'm stronger and more of a man than you are" (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 9) as if he needed to prove his masculinity. James (2013, p. 74) points out that Tom represents a sort of "chivalric nostalgia with callous and careless murder". Therefore, the "*new style of manhood*" claimed by Forter (2003) can be questioned as Tom represents a more traditional version of masculinity. He appears as a brute while Nick and Gatsby show more sensitivity, which might be considered as a new and less stereotypical style of manhood. Nick indeed never mentions positive aspects of Tom. He only appears as a strong man, who embodies masculinity, brutality, and holds the power but who is not particularly clever or sympathetic. Tom also dominates the others through his racist views that he expresses at the beginning of the novel. Tom is therefore a stereotype of brutality. By contrast, Nick appears as softer, for example when he goes to the Buchanan's for the first time, and admires the following scene:

The only completely stationary object in the room was an enormous couch on which two young women were buoyed up as though upon an anchored balloon. They were both in white, and their dresses were rippling and fluttering as if they had just been blown back in after a short flight around the house. I must have stood for a few moments listening to the whip and snap of the curtains and the groan of a picture on the wall. Then there was a boom as Tom Buchanan shut the rear windows and the caught wind died out about the room, and the curtains and the rugs and the two young women ballooned slowly to the floor (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 10)

This scene, full of movement, seems to be out of time, full of delicacy and lightness to which Nick seems to be sensitive, contrary to Tom. At this moment, Nick almost seems to be mesmerised by what he sees, he keeps watching the two women, Daisy and Jordan. However, the “whip and snap of the curtains” as well as “the groan” hint at the possibility that this perfect scene might easily be destroyed. Moreover, this scene is compared to a balloon which appears as something beautiful, the embodiment of lightness but it is also very fragile and may explode at any time. This is indeed what happens with the brutal arrival of Tom which puts an end at this delicate, aerial moment. The perfection of this fragile moment is interrupted by the brutality of Tom, who obviously lacks any sense of delicacy. The boom, and the fact that everything falls back on the ground, reinforces the brutality of the transition, and gives to Tom this stereotypically masculine aspect.

While we can argue that war reinforces masculinity (James, 2013), Tom did not go to war and consequently he cannot use it to assert his masculinity. In addition to the fact that women had more importance in the society as said in the state of the art, perhaps the fact that Tom did not go to the war is another reason for which he needs to say that he is “more of a man” than Nick and to constantly reassert his masculinity. But in reality, war does not serve to enhance one’s masculinity for every man. On the contrary, the Great War had another sort of impact. As war represents a men’s world, the consequences of it indeed had an impact on men’s masculinity. Those who went to war often came back traumatised; they suffered from shell shock. Because of this type of shock, “the concept of injury was quickly extended into the psychological and neuropsychiatric dimension” (Beidler, 2013, p. 3). However, shell shock was considered as “a somewhat embarrassing failure of masculinity” (Beidler, 2013, p. 9). This idea has also been discussed by Joseph (2003, p. 70) who writes that shell shock is a gendered trauma which is strongly linked to the idea of masculinity. For this reason, men who suffered from shell shock were usually judged as unmanly. Consequently, Tom, who did not go to war, is probably less affected by this “lack” of masculinity. But at the same time, we could also consider that he lacks masculinity because he did not go to the war, which would have been an

evidence of masculinity, in a way. Regarding his position in the war, he is less involved than Gatsby and Jay. We could therefore consider him as a simple bystander in the Great War. However, he later appears as closer to perpetrators due to his abusive masculinity, his racist views that he tries to convey to the others for example.

#### 4.2.5. Femininity: the emergence of the flapper

The representation of the war appears through the representation of masculinity reshaped by the social changes that followed the Great War. Nonetheless, war might also have had an impact on femininity which can be perceived in *The Great Gatsby*. Fitzgerald is considered as the first one who “introduced the American public to the flapper” (Ress 2010, p.118). Jordan Baker indeed appears as the typical flapper of the twenties. This type of woman is described by Ress (2010, p.118) as “precocious, beautiful, young, unconventional, and often times dangerous”. These American women had more authority to such an extent that they sometimes dominated men. The flappers are also depicted as the contrary of the following description: “long hair, high brow, thirty-six-inch bust, narrow anatomically precise waist, broad hips and well-concealed legs” (Ress, 2010, p.119). Jordan is described as slender and small-breasted, for example, with the attitude of a young cadet (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 12). In other words, she appears as a more masculine figure which fits the description of the flapper, with terms related to war. It therefore shows that war metaphors are present in the novel. Moreover, right from her meeting with Nick, Jordan naturally exercises a certain power over him by her indifference and her nonchalance; at different points in the story, he expresses the need to apologize to her for no good reason. “Jordan is a symbol for the principles of the flappers, as she is arrogant, unemotional, and often irresponsible” (Samkanashvili, 2013, p. 47). This attitude, typical of the flapper is also a consequence of the war. After World War I, American women’s role drastically changed; they initially were housewives who had to care for their children, but they changed, “they started drinking alcohol, smoking and dancing a new type of dance called “Swing”” (Samkanashvili, 2013, p. 47). Women became emancipated, like Jordan, and less prone to romantic fantasies like Daisy.

While Jordan Baker seems to embody this new type of women, Daisy Buchanan also shares some characteristics with the flappers. Firstly, she does not appear as a classical housewife. Even if she has a daughter, the latter is barely present in the novel although her role is crucial, and Daisy does not seem to look after her since there is a governess to do it. However, this behaviour was probably the appropriate one for an upper-class mother like Daisy. At the same time, she does not seem to represent a flapper regarding certain aspects. For example, she

“abandons love and Gatsby and settles down with Tom, a man who is wealthy and can provide for her financially” (Samkanashvili, 2013, p. 47). In other words, I would argue that rather than experiencing a passionate and romantic love with Jay Gatsby, she complies with what is expected from her: living with her husband and daughter. In a way, modern life might have destroyed the beautiful illusion of Gatsby.

Furthermore, as women too were affected by war, it shaped Daisy’s life. She first meets Gatsby in a military camp named Camp Taylor, before he went to war according to Jordan. Daisy did not see him anymore because of the war but she was willing to wait for him at first. However, Gatsby did not come back immediately, though he tried, because he had the opportunity to go to Oxford seeing that “It was an opportunity they gave to some of the officers after the armistice [...]. [He] could go to any of the universities in England or France” (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 103). Consequently, Daisy, had to make a decision; waiting for Jay or forgetting him to find someone else:

Daisy began to move again with the season, suddenly she was keeping half a dozen dates a day with half a dozen men, and drowsing asleep at dawn with the beads and chiffon of an evening dress [...] And all the time something within her was crying for a decision. She wanted her life shaped now, immediately – and the decision must be made by some force – of love, of money, of unquestionable practicality – that was close at hand (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 120).

In the novel, Nick describes this force as Tom’s arrival. This excerpt shows that Daisy experienced a period during which she enjoyed her numerous dates and parties. But the use of the word “crying” to refer to Daisy’s need to make a decision, shows her despair. That is this sadness that leads her to move forward in order to build her life with someone else than Gatsby. Daisy therefore chooses to marry Tom while Gatsby is in Europe. In other words, her love story with Gatsby began thanks to the war and was interrupted by the latter. This meeting and this separation are the basis of *The Great Gatsby* and the reason why the latter came to live in West Egg, in front of Daisy’s house. Thus, war shapes the whole story, although it is strangely displaced from the centre of the story.

The impact of war on Daisy can also be seen thanks to some of her reactions, for example, when she talks about her daughter. Most parents probably want their child to be clever, but Daisy seems to be tired of the world in which they live which might appear as a sort of disillusion due to the war. That is why she tells Nick about her daughter’s birth: “I’m glad it’s a girl. And I hope she’ll be a fool – that’s the best thing a girl can be in this world, a beautiful little fool” (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 17). In a way, Daisy seems to be against the modern evolution

of women's position in the society by considering that in the society, it is better for a girl to be a fool. Such a sentence could suggest that Daisy is disenchanted by the world because of the violence people had to face during the war. This sentence is however ambivalent as Daisy might also be suggesting that the position of women needs to change and become even more modern. In any case, Daisy appears as disillusioned toward the society, like Nick and probably like most people in this post war era. In spite of the parties, the new role of women as flappers who enjoy life, we can see that people's nonchalant surface, parties, etc. that appear in this post war context probably hide the trauma of a broken society in this world shocked by the war.

### 4.3. Motifs and metaphors

Some recurring motifs or metaphors are present in *The Great Gatsby* and might draw a parallel with the First World War. These elements contribute to the war subplot and therefore, they force the reader to keep in mind that there is a deeper dimension in the novel which is related to the First World War.

#### 4.3.1. Sport

A first motif has been introduced by James (2013) who argues that sport can be compared with war. I therefore develop this idea in more details in this section. There are indeed two characters who are closely related to sport, i.e., Jordan Baker and Tom Buchanan. The idea of confronting someone in sport might reflect the confrontation of war. For Tom, sport sometimes appears as a violent conflict and the metaphors of sport can in this context refer to "killing and death without naming them specifically" (James, 2013, p. 75). Such comparisons were common during the First World War; the terms used to refer to sport and war sometimes resemble each other. These two characters are however fairly disconnected from the war. The resemblance between sport and war might perhaps be a way to connect Tom and Jordan with the war from which they seem further than the other characters.

When Nick sees Tom, the latter wears his riding clothes, he describes him as muscled and strong. However, Nick associates Tom's appearance with cruelty by saying "It was a body capable of enormous leverage — a cruel body" (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 9). Tom's sportive body, mixed with his arrogant and aggressive appearance, gives an impression of violence that echoes the violence of war. And Tom, given that he did not go to the war, exposes his not war-damaged masculinity thanks to sports which contrasts with Nick and Jay. This vision of sport is thus applicable to Tom Buchanan.

Jordan, being a golfer, is related to sport too, and like Tom, and as mentioned above, sport is associated with masculinity, which reinforces her lack of stereotypical femininity. Moreover, being sometimes cold, tough, and compared to a “young cadet”, it is easy to associate her with the harshness of war, even though she is much less brutal than Tom.

#### 4.3.2. Violence

The recurring violence in *The Great Gatsby* can appear as a way to echo war’s violence and atrocity. It makes sense to return to this topic now seeing that a recent adaptation of the novel made by Farris Smith (2021) which recounts the story of Nick before his meeting with Gatsby was recently published. This story is full of violence, as the war years are depicted but also due to a story about a fire and death. Farris Smith therefore proves how World War I and its violence have affected Nick’s life. Regarding *The Great Gatsby*, James (2013, p. 86) argues that telling Gatsby’s story and especially his death, might be a way to evoke “his own traumatic past” indirectly. As war filled Nick’s past with violence, telling the violent plot of Gatsby’s story – including Myrtle and George’s death – can be a way to refer to his experience of violence that probably deeply shocked the characters.

The climax of violence that can be seen in *The Great Gatsby* is the fact that it ends with three brutal deaths: Myrtle Wilson’s, Jay Gatsby’s and George Wilson’s. In a novel in which the number of characters is relatively limited, the death of so many of them, including the main character, seems tragic. Furthermore, the three of them die violently in different scenes at the end of the novel: Myrtle is hit by a car, Gatsby get shot by George Wilson before the latter commits suicide. These tragic and violent deaths at the end of the story, although they are more “meaningful” in contrast to the mindless mass killing of World War I, seem to echo war trauma given that these deaths are very violent and traumatic just as some war events. Both are indeed events that “[disrupt] previous ideas of an individual's sense of self and the standards by which one evaluates society” (Balaev, 2008, p. 150). First of all, Myrtle’s death is caused by a car accident. Her injuries are described in crude terms:

[...] Myrtle Wilson, her life violently extinguished, knelt in the road and mingled her thick dark blood with dust.

[...] when they had torn open her shirtwaist, still damp with perspiration, they saw that her left breast was swinging loose like a flap, and there was no need to listen for the heart beneath. The mouth was wide open and ripped a little at the corners (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 109).

This horrible description of Myrtle's injuries after the accident reflects the violence of the impact. Perhaps this can be reminiscent of the atrocity of war. Moreover, as World War I was "the first fully mechanized war [...] [it] left an abundance of evidence of how machines intensified human destructive capability" (James, 2013, p. 91). This is illustrated by Myrtle's death due to the car accident; Daisy who drove the car did not intend to kill her, but thanks to the car, the machine, she had the ability to kill someone in a terribly violent way even if she did not want to. This intensification of the use of machines and its danger are also emphasised by the poor driving skills of some characters; here Daisy's, but also Jordan's who is considered as a "rotten driver", when Nick tells her "Either you ought to be more careful, or you oughtn't to drive at all" (Fitzgerald, 2008, p.48). Hence, the machines can be seen as a motif that conveys the importance of war and its impact in the novel as the cars are objects that are essential for the outcome of the story. It is however important to point out that the importance of cars in the novel might also reflect the prominence of consumerism in the upper classes of the 1920s. The cars, and especially driven by Daisy and Jordan, might also be used to emphasise the sexism that depicts women as inferior drivers.

At the moment of Gatsby's death, he is waiting for Daisy's call, but she had planned to leave with Tom. For this reason, Gatsby's hope for a better future was annihilated although he did not know it, like Myrtle who still hoped that Tom would one day stay with her and leave Daisy. Gatsby's death might therefore be like a relief after having suffered due to the war that stopped his affair with Daisy. James (2013, p. 112) writes "death unfolds according to a beautiful order, free of fright and trauma". Thus, I argue that by dying, even if it is not his choice, Gatsby does not have to continue to live with the past that haunts him because of his idealized memories of Daisy as well as the disappointment that would have been caused by his separation with her. An excerpt from the novel that can corroborate this point is the following one: "There was a slow, pleasant movement in the air, scarcely a wind, promising a cool, lovely day" (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 120). After Gatsby's death, the tension that has built up can finally dissipate. Whereas the characters constantly complain about the oppressive heat during this summer, this moment is the one of the few during which the weather – and consequently the whole situation – seems to be bearable for the characters, especially after this afternoon at the Plaza Hotel, where everyone seems to suffer from the sweltering heat. This day, which is the day of Gatsby's death, appears as a day of relief regarding the weather which might be in harmony with Gatsby's end. While tension is present throughout the whole novel, an oppressive atmosphere emphasises these tensions, especially when Tom and Gatsby argue, the heat seems

to contribute to the irritation of these characters and to be unbearable. That can be seen thanks to sentences such as “It’s so hot” (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 100) but also thanks to this excerpt when the characters are in town and Jay and Tom are arguing:

“Open another window,” commanded Daisy, without turning around.

“There aren’t anymore.”

“Well, we’d better telephone for an axe-” (Fitzgerald, 2008, p.100).

The fact that there are no other windows to open reinforces the oppressive atmosphere of the moment. It gives the impression that they are trapped, stuck in this room where the tension builds up. Daisy, by saying that they should “telephone for an axe”, shows how unbearable the situation is.

By contrast with this oppressive heat that especially Daisy cannot bear, the next day, the day of Gatsby’s death is chiller and appears as a relief, which emphasises the relief of Gatsby’s “torture” of living in his idealized memories. There are no more quarrels and cries, only the violence of the two gunshots fired by George, who, having lost his wife and murdered Gatsby, seems not to be able to endure life anymore. For this reason, he therefore decides to commit suicide and thereby to relieve himself from the trauma of having seen and having caused people’s death. Even if we do not know anything about George’s past and if he went to war or not, he eventually feels something similar to shell shock and trauma in a way by being confronted with death both by killing and experiencing a relative’s death, but not in a war context of course. George’s behaviour when Myrtle dies is in fact close to the one of a shell shocked man, or at least of someone who suffers from trauma:

Then I saw Wilson standing on the raised threshold of his office, waying back and forth and holding to the doorposts with both hands. Some man was talking to him in a low voice and attempting, from time to time, to lay a hand on his shoulder, but Wilson neither heard nor saw. His eyes would drop slowly from the swinging light to the laden table by the wall, and then jerk back to the light again, and he gave out incessantly his high horrible call:

“Oh, my Ga-od! Oh, my Ga-od! Oh, my Ga-od! Oh, my Ga-od!” (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 110).

Such reaction, the repetition of “Oh, my Ga-od!” shows that the situation is too overwhelming for George, whose human brain is not able to process such an event. That is indeed what Balaev (2008) says about trauma. The situation and its atrocity are beyond George’s grasp. Consequently, his suffering is so intense that the only way to be relieved, according to him, is suicide, “and the holocaust was complete” (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 129).

### 4.3.3. Time

The war subplot also appears through the representation of time as time, and especially the past, is often referred to. The pre-war life of the characters is seen as an ideal that is however impossible to reach. According to Brucoli (1985), the novel is “time-haunted”, given that after all the character names, “time” is the second most frequent word in the novel (Brucoli, 1985, p.11, as cited in Vince, 2006, p. 97). In a way, it proves Fitzgerald’s tendency to represent the society of his time, as time and its irreversibility were at the centre of important discussions in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century due to Einstein’s work about time (Vince, 2006). It is perhaps Fitzgerald’s way to make the reader “hear the past”, as said by Murray (2008, p. 406). Present, past and futures are often mentioned, for example when Nick talks about his thirtieth birthday and “the portentous, menacing road of a new decade” that stretches before him (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 108). In addition to Gatsby’s will to repeat the past, the last sentences of the book also refer to time:

Gatsby believed in the green light, the orgastic future that year by year recedes before us. It eluded us then, but that’s no matter — to-morrow we will run faster, stretch out our arms farther.... And one fine morning —  
So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past  
(Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 144).

Gatsby therefore believes in a better future but struggles to attain it. Nevertheless, Gatsby does not seem to be the only one who struggles to live in the present and to move forward given that Nick uses “we” in his sentence about the boats. The metaphor of the boats which are drawn backwards by the current represents the characters whose past prevents them from reaching a glorious future, symbolised by the green light. With the “we”, this sentence seems to include everyone, but although they all seem to be haunted by the past and by the war, Gatsby is the only one who also wants to repeat the past, namely his love story with Daisy. The others appear to be aware that they have to try to detach from this past, or on the contrary they might also be too numb to entertain the illusion of an ideal past. Daisy, for example, knows that it cannot be repeated when she says to Gatsby “I can’t help what’s past” (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 105). Nick, even if he seems to suffer from shell shock, like Gatsby, and is thus haunted by the past, knows that they need to let the past behind in order to look to the future. The fact that the boats are against the current, as well as the word “ceaselessly” emphasise the restlessness due to the trauma of war mentioned by Nick in the beginning of the novel. The trauma haunts him, and he never stops fighting it, beating on even if he is “borne back ceaselessly into the past”.

#### 4.4. Conclusion

As a conclusion for this first part of my analysis, we can state that war and its impact are visible through the three levels analysed. These levels include elements that are more or less explicit. Some are the representations of the consequences of war which is rather explicit while others are simply elements that might echo war. They were therefore all mentioned but we must remain careful toward some of them.

War is firstly echoed through Nick's narration that reflects his trauma due to the fragmentation of the storyline and Nick's particular position in the story. Secondly, in *The Great Gatsby*, it is possible to analyse the changes that occurred in the society after the First World War. This reshaped world can be seen in the special connection between some characters such as Nick and Gatsby but also in the gap that strengthened between people and social classes after the war. We can therefore differentiate between the ones possessing the old or the new money such as Tom and Gatsby, and the working-class characters such as Myrtle and her husband, George. The gap between people is also reinforced by the changes regarding gender roles. On the one hand, some women are more independent than others and the flappers appeared. On the other hand, men's masculinity was altered by the shell shock from which many men suffered. We can see that the society, as represented by Fitzgerald is even more fractured than ever; there are different types of masculinity, of femininity, of classes, that create distance between people. Thirdly, three different aspects of the novels echo war: metaphors about sport that can be compared to war, violence that contributes to the climax of the plot, and lastly the references to time which might refer to the character's difficulty to reach a better future as they seem to be stuck into the past but also Fitzgerald's tendency to make the reader "hear the past" (Murray, 2008, p.406).

All these elements prove that war is still present in the novel and in the characters' minds. However, in *The Great Gatsby*, instead of admitting a certain trauma or a failure in the society or in the characters, the presence of war passes through many elements that make the war omnipresent but at the same time, totally absent from the plot. While the parties are used to hide people's failures and to make people forget or ignore their suffering, the presence of war is made discreet. It is for this reason, that we can consider war as a sort of subplot, comparable to Mentxaka's lesbian subplot in Austen's *Mansfield Park* (2013). Regarding Fitzgerald, we cannot be sure of the reasons why he made war essential to the story while placing it in the background. I would like to suggest that it was perhaps too difficult for people in the 1920s to write and to read about the traumatic event that war was, which is the essence of the ineffability of war and

trauma. Moreover, the recent novel *Nick*, written by Farris Smith, explicitly displays Nick's war years which might suggest that it is easier to talk about the war today than before, as people nowadays are no more witnesses of the Great War. *The Great Gatsby: the graphic novel*, by contrast eclipses the war from its pages. Except from the meeting between Daisy and Jay who is represented in his war uniform, war is barely present. We can therefore think that today war has lost its importance in a story in which war did not constitute the main plot. It is therefore difficult to determine what attitude is more appropriate to represent war nowadays, or even other traumatic events. Both adaptations, show that in any case, our relation to war has considerably changed over time as none of them has kept Fitzgerald's method to represent it. Such adaptations could thus be a starting point for further studies.

## 5. War in *Tender is the Night*

*Tender is the Night* exists in two versions. Fitzgerald's original version, published in 1934, outlines the events in a non-chronological order. The other one, revised by Malcolm Cowley in 1951, recounts the events chronologically. Since the 1934 version is considered canonical, I will base most of my analysis on this version, the fruit of Fitzgerald's own work. It also seems interesting to study the version written closer to the First World War. Furthermore, this non-chronological version of *Tender is the Night* is more representative of the fragmentation present in modernism that was a major literary movement in the 1920s. However, Cowley's chronological revision of the novel is sometimes used too to perceive how its interpretation might differ from the interpretation of the non-chronological version.

In *Tender is the Night* too, World War I may appear as ineffable, just like in *The Great Gatsby*. War can accordingly be seen as a subplot, something that happened in the past, which is sometimes mentioned without being explicitly central. Once again diverse elements of the novel echo warfare. In this way, we can observe these elements as components of the war subplot that can be seen in *Tender is the Night*, without the events or experiences of war being clearly recounted. Like for the analysis of *The Great Gatsby*, *Tender is the Night* is analysed according to the same three levels (i.e., narration, the representation of society and the diverse motifs and metaphors). These three levels are therefore used to represent the different aspects through which war can be seen and that contribute to the creation of the war subplot. These three levels are thus a way to refer to war in a more discreet way in order to respect the ineffability of the trauma caused by the war.

### 5.1. Narration and narrative structure

In *Tender is the Night*, the narrator is extradiegetic and omnipresent. Nevertheless, the focalisation sometimes changes; the reader gains access mostly to Dick, Nicole and Rosemary's point of view depending on the chapter. These three characters are thus three focalizers who appear in the novel. But the perspective also shifts to other minor characters from time to time. This change of perspective, offering different points of view, emphasises the contrast between some characters. For example, having Rosemary's point of view about the Divers shows the gap between them in terms of age but also in terms of social class and money. The focalisation therefore helps to represent the fracture between social classes that is mentioned in the further analysis of this novel.

Regarding the narrative structure, there is obviously more to discuss because of the two versions of the novel that exist. In the original version, the story is extremely fragmented and moreover, appears in a non-chronological order. *Tender is the Night* has been discussed as being Fitzgerald's most mature representation of World War I, according to Rennie (2016). One reason for that might be this "modernist fragmentation" (Beidler, 2013, p. 2). In my view, it is true that this fragmentation and reorganisation of the chronology in the original version of *Tender is the Night* appears as a modernist characteristic that serves to represent the society at a certain moment in time, namely the post-war society of the 1920s. This modernist feature makes Fitzgerald's novel join other modernist writings and produces a more complex storytelling that echoes the fragmentation of the whole society after World War I. The fragmentation is also emphasised by the fact that the story takes place on many different settings; there is no stability regarding the characters' living places. They constantly travel and are separated to later get together again. The novel is therefore disrupted in terms of time and place.

By fitting in the modernist tradition thanks to among other elements, the fragmentation in terms of narrative structure and place, the novel can be considered as rather complex regarding the narrative structure and therefore perhaps more mature than other Fitzgerald's fictions which might be less fragmented than *Tender is the Night*. Rennie (2016, p. 183-184) argues the war is the major event of Dick Diver's generation who must therefore live "in the broken universe of the war's ending". In this context, the social cohesion of the pre-war world does not exist anymore to the chagrin of characters such as Dick who sees himself as "an old romantic" (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 54). There is therefore a broader social trauma in addition to the individuals' personal trauma. This broken universe, but also the characters' psychological disorders are therefore represented thanks to the non-linearity of the storytelling. According to Balaev (2008), such nonlinearity in the plot can be produced to echo chaos or mental confusion for example.

The reader is forced to imagine more and to think about the characters' lives, and what happened to them in order to fill the gaps that a nonlinear plot might create. According to Dick in *Tender is the Night*: "nothing [is] more conducive to the development of thought than compulsory silence" (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 235). This thought reflects therefore the novel in which the reader, due to the unsaid link between the events that fragment the novel, has to think more about the plot and the story as a whole. This sentence might also refer to the ineffability of war about which people, including the reader, can more reflect given that few things are said.

As war is not often explicitly mentioned, but is rather implicitly omnipresent through a subplot, the reader constantly reassesses the story – even unconsciously – seeing that the ineffability of the trauma of war is echoed through the fragmentation and silence but also through several other elements explained in this section.

By contrast, Cowley's revised version of *Tender is the Night* provides a linear, non-disrupted plot. In this version, the story begins with what Miller (1967, p.134) calls the "case history", that is to say Dick and Nicole's presentation, their meeting, and their glorious years together etc. Afterwards, Rosemary appears in the novel, being on vacation on the French Riviera. Then come the part called the "casualties" (Miller, 1967, p. 134) which includes the duel between Albert McKisco and Tommy Barban, the purchase of the clinic, Nicole's relapse into mental disorders, Abe North's death and the death of Dick's father. From this moment, Cowley's version and the original one are the same; Dick goes to the United States for his father's funeral, then travels to Rome where he sees Rosemary and gets into a lot of troubles. Lastly comes Dick's decline, the deterioration of his relationship with Nicole, their separation and Dick's departure for the United States where he remains alone, far from all his acquaintances.

Thus, the revised version sets the tone right from the beginning, by explaining Dick and Nicole's past and Nicole's trauma. The reader directly knows that the foundations of the couple are maybe not as strong as we could think when reading the 1934 version. Indeed, in the original one, we access Rosemary's perspective who loves Dick and idealises Nicole as they appear as a glamorous successful couple. The role of the focalisation is therefore considerable. We later know that there is something wrong with Nicole as Violet says that she saw something, but a certain mystery remains, which is not the case in Cowley's 1951 version. This excerpt arrives early in the original version, when the reader does not know anything about Nicole's psychological troubles:

[...] Mrs McKisco came hurrying down from the house.

[...] "What's the matter, Vi?" came naturally, as all eyes turned towards her.

"My dear..." she said at large, and then addressed Rosemary, "my dear – it's nothing. I really can't say a word."

"You're among friends," said Abe.

"Well, upstairs I came upon a scene my dears..."

Shaking her head cryptically she broke off just in time, for Tommy arose and addresses her politely but sharply:

"It's inadvisable to comment on what goes on in this house" (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 34).

In the more recent version, the reader can already guess what Violet McKisco has seen, contrary to the original version in which we are not directly aware of Nicole's mental troubles. This mystery being maintained in the 1934 version can emphasise the mystery that revolves around the war background of the characters. What Violet saw appears here as ineffable, unspeakable, just like war and its trauma that are ineffable too. Although Nicole's trauma is not related to the war, trauma is in any case omnipresent in the novel. The ineffability of war and trauma thus seem to be translated into another type of trauma on which the narrative more explicitly focus, instead of focusing on Dick's trauma which is more related to the war. By hiding the truth about Nicole's mental health for a longer time in the original version, the ineffability is preserved. In this respect Cowley's version reflects less the war subplot that can be found in the novel given that there are fewer secrets for the reader. Furthermore, the chronological version obviously shows less fragmentation than the other one given that the time is not disrupted. Although the chapters are clearly distinct from each other and the story remains fragmented, there is more continuity due to the linear chronology. Cowley's version therefore contrasts with the original more fragmented version that represents the broken society that can be seen in *Tender is the Night*.

## 5.2. The representation of society

### 5.2.1. Relationships: the impact of war and Dick's compassion

War having significantly influenced the society and consequently the relationships between people and classes, it is reflected in *Tender is the Night*. If we focus on the main relationship of the novel which constitutes the precise plot, we can observe that Dick meets Nicole who is his patient before going to France to work in a neurological unit during the war. He indeed goes to the clinic where he works to say goodbye to Gregorovius before leaving, and this is the moment when Nicole and Dick meet. It is thus because of war that Dick and Nicole meet each other. Although Dick is not particularly attracted by Nicole at first seeing that she is his patient, Nicole sends him letters to maintain a sort of one-sided relationship with Dick who initially considers Nicole only as a patient. Although he is not a soldier and does not fight in the army, Dick is however sent to France during the war, to work in a neurological unit. Their relationship is hindered by the war and the fact that Dick must leave. In other words, they meet in a context which is not conducive to a sound and easy relationship, due to the fact that Nicole is Dick's patient, but also because of the war that separates them. It is however important to point out that war trauma is not the one at play in the plot of the novel, but it is rather Dick and

Nicole's relationships shaped by Nicole's trauma. But Nicole's trauma is related to incest and not to war. The war trauma is therefore part of the subplot and consequently appears in a more implicit way.

Furthermore, in a way war seems to be idealised from Nicole's perspective. She seems to experience an unrequited love with Dick but she perceives her letters as something very romantic: "He had received about fifty letters from her written over a period of eight months. The first one was apologetic, explaining that she had heard from America how girls wrote to soldiers whom they did not know" (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 110). This excerpt shows a certain idealisation of these peculiar relationships between men in war and women who admired them and sent them letters, which shows the complexity of relationships during the war. Although Nicole's feelings for Dick are certainly true, writing letters almost seems to be like a trend to follow, as if she wanted to imitate these American girls about whom Nicole talks. Such relationships, like those of these girls in America and like Nicole and Dick's consequently seem unnatural and maybe unbalanced as the soldiers and men in war in general, like Dick, seem to be almost worshipped by women finding these relationships romantic. Furthermore, as Dick and Nicole are American, even though they live in Europe, maybe Nicole identified with the American girls sending letters to their lovers in Europe.

The Great War also created a certain incomprehension from those who experienced it from afar, and on the contrary those who were closer to the front. We can see that in the following excerpt:

"Abe used to be so nice," Nicole told Rosemary. "So nice. Long ago – when Dick and I were first married. If you had known him then. [...]  
So much fun – so long ago. Rosemary envied them their fun, [...]  
"What did this to him?" she asked. "Why does he have to drink?"  
Nicole shook her head right and left, disclaiming responsibility for the matter: "So many smart men go to pieces nowadays."  
"And when haven't they?" Dick asked. "Smart men play close to the line because they have to – some of them can't stand it, so they quit."  
"It must lie deeper than that." [...] Why is it just Americans who dissipate?"  
There were so many answers to this question that Dick decided to leave it in the air, to buzz victoriously in Nicole's ears (Fitzgerald, 2018, pp. 92 – 93).

In this excerpt in which Dick, Nicole and Rosemary discuss Abe North's alcoholism, we can see that there is a gap between Dick and the two women. While Dick remains evasive about the matter, he seems to know more about Abe and men in general than what he says. First, we know that "Abe North had seen battle service" (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 53). Moreover, earlier in the novel

we can read McKisco saying “Don’t you know everybody was drunk all the time during the war?” (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 47). We can therefore relate Abe’s alcoholism with this sentence. The war, and the prohibition that followed, have probably influenced people’s alcohol consumption. Dick, by not answering Nicole’s question and leaving it in the air, avoids talking about that, especially since he too, appears to drink a lot later in the novel. Abe, like Dick and all the other American men who “go to pieces” are probably affected by many changes that happened in the 1920s. This period indeed includes the war, but also the generated trauma, the following prohibition as well as the Roaring Twenties that was synonym of entertainment, and of a Lost Generation for which the world was “deprived of meaning or purpose” (Lundberg, 1984, p. 379). All these events, in addition to the war, contribute to the lack of social cohesion in the society of the 1920s. The society was thus overwhelmed by many changes which were probably conducive to depression and consequently alcoholism too. According to Simmel (2017), an increase in psychological disorders and especially in addiction were noted during this period.

As explained before, Dick seems to understand Abe’s alcoholism. There is a certain understanding – or even a certain connection – between them that does not need to be uttered. Dick in a way shows some compassion for Abe, but Dick also seems affected by other people who experienced war in one way or another, although Abe fought during the war and Dick did not. When visiting Thiepval Memorial (a British war memorial in France), it seems important for Dick to explain to his friend what happened in this place. And while Abe makes cynical jokes about war, Dick answers “I couldn’t kid here” (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 54). Dick, particularly sensitive to war memory, also shows some compassion by helping an American girl who is looking for her brother’s grave to lay a wreath on it. Unfortunately, she does not find the right grave because they are too numerous. All these graves show that so many people have been killed during the war while the American girl might represent the fact that all these deaths are not the only ones who have been destroyed by the war. Indeed, war also affected the relatives of the deaths. The trauma and the experience of war are therefore deindividualized and appear as something that had an impact on the whole society. This is emphasised by the fact that “there’s so many graves”:

“I been lookin’ for it since two o’clock, and there’s so many graves

“Then if I were you I’d just lay it on any grave without looking at the name,” Dick advised her.

“You reckon that’s what I ought to do?”

“I think that’s what he’d have wanted you to do” (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 55).

This excerpt also reinforces the presence of the war in the novel. Here again, no one recounts events from the war or discusses atrocities that they have seen or experienced. Instead, we perceive the consequences of the war. Nobody expresses one's feelings, it is only through a mere conversation to find a grave, that we can understand the trauma of the whole society. This can be connected to my central argument seeing that the trauma of the war is not explicitly mentioned, it is a minor moment in the narrative that is used to convey the war dimension, consequently through a subplot. Because war events are not recounted, the stress is rather put on the trauma caused by the war. This trauma however appears as ineffable seeing that neither the American girl, nor Dick talks about it or about a non-combatant's shell shock.

Afterwards, the American girl goes to Amiens with Dick and his friends. In this excerpt, Dick, although he does not fight and does not know the girl's brother, acts as if he knew what this dead soldier would have wanted. He unhesitatingly helps the girl by finding a solution to her issue. Dick in a way, by having an intermediary position as he did not fight but was nevertheless confronted with war in the neurological unit, seems to be able to get closer to both side: the soldiers' relatives, like the girl but also the former soldiers, like Abe. This intermediary position can be compared with the one of the implicated subjects given that he was involved in the war but neither as a perpetrator, nor as a victim. This in between position as an implicated subject seems to have caused in Dick, his non-combatant's shell shock which perhaps enables him to understand other people, without having to explicitly talk about trauma which might be ineffable. However, this compassion that Dick shows at several points in the novel, might also be due to his mere personality and his job as a psychiatrist, in which he must probably show some compassion and be interested in the understanding of individuals.

This understanding is recurring and also appears when Dick talks with Baby Warren, Nicole's sister. She tells him that she is not married because she has been with two men: one of them died during the war, the other left her. At this moment, Dick asks her to talk about it, but Baby remains elusive. Beyond her appearance of independent, cold and wealthy woman, we can see that difficult events affected her life. Besides, her mother's death and the incestuous relationship between her sister and her father affected her life too. Therefore, her behaviour, as well as the fact that she remains alone, is not necessarily a choice but rather represents a life shaped by diverse types of trauma and, among others, by war who killed her lover. Baby's relationship with this man has accordingly been interrupted by war. In a way, she might be representative of the many women who lost their husband, or lover in the Great War. Baby also embodies a whole group of traumatised people who, although they are apparently uninjured,

suffer from the loss of a relative. Though war seems to be absent at first, we can see that war and trauma in fact emerge in many places if we start paying attention to this subplot that includes the past life of the characters and all the losses they underwent because of the war. Thus, war appears in the background, which respects the ineffability of the trauma caused by the First World War that shaped the relationships and the lives of all the characters.

### 5.2.2. Shell shock: the combatants and non-combatants' trauma

As seen in the previous section, Dick, Abe and Baby, but also other characters such as Nicole have seen their life shaped by trauma. As the protagonist of the story, Dick seems to be a character about whom there are many things to discuss regarding trauma. Contrary to Nicole whose story and diagnosis are clearly stated, Dick is only diagnosed by himself and more briefly than Nicole. But a first hint that shows that Dick might suffer is the title of the book that he wrote: *A Psychology for Psychiatrists*. Given that he is the one supposed to cure people, as he is a psychiatrist and particularly as he is Nicole's doctor, the reader does not assume in the beginning that Dick might be suffering too. However, the title of this book appears as a reminder that even a psychiatrist like him might sometimes need help. Moreover, we can perceive, at some points, hints that might suggest a possible mental failure in Dick, because of the war. That can be seen in a conversation between Franz Gregorovius and Dick:

On the way to the clinic [Franz] said: "Tell me of your experiences in the war. Are you changed like the rest? You have the same stupid and unageing American face, except I know you're not stupid, Dick."

"I didn't see any of the war – you must have gathered that from my letters, Franz."

"That doesn't matter – we have some shell shocks who merely heard an air raid from a distance. We have a few who merely read newspapers"

"It sounds like nonsense to me." (Fitzgerald, 2018, pp. 108-109)

In this excerpt, it can first be pointed out that Dick does not answer Gregorovius' first question about his experience in the war. Dick only says that he "didn't see any of the war" and refers to his previous letters as if there was nothing more to say about his experience in the war. Dick therefore gives the impression to the reader that he tries to cut short the discussion, which might appear as an evidence of the difficulty to talk about war. While Gregorovius seems to be waiting for some war stories, Dick does not recount any events. By answering that, Dick makes it sound like nonsense to suffer from shell shock without having fought, but once again by cutting short the discussion, he gives the impression that he is trying to hide his own trauma, or simply his own experience of war. Moreover, the fact that a possible non-combatant's shell shock "sounds like nonsense to [Dick]" is very strange seeing that he is a psychiatrist who

should understand such traumas. This answer might therefore also be a way to conceal his own trauma, his own non-combatant's shell shock that he later admits having given that trauma was sometimes seen as "an embarrassing failure of masculinity" (Beidler, 2013, p. 9).

His answers might also reflect a certain disappointment because he did not fight. Given that non-combatants more often survived contrary to soldiers, they sometimes undergo the so-called "survivor's guilt". This feeling of guilt might contribute to the ineffability of war. These survivors are lucky, in a way; they were less exposed to death and did not have to go to the front. Complaining about that might therefore seem inappropriate to the eyes of a society that lost so many people in the war. We can perceive that in Dick's speech, he does not complain or show any trauma or psychological failure that might appear as a lack of masculinity (Joseph, 2003) but also as a form of weakness. All these elements in addition to the survivor's guilt and the fact that sharing experience although he has "only" participated in the war "from afar" can be inappropriate, contribute to the ineffability of war experiences.

In other words, Dick's reaction in the above-mentioned discussion betrays his actual state of mind as said in the previous paragraph. This can also be confirmed by Dick's dream of war:

Dick awoke at five after a long dream of war, walked to the window and stared out it at the Zugersee. His dream had begun in sombre majesty; navy-blue uniforms crossed a dark plaza behind band playing the second movement of Prokofiev's *Love of Three Oranges*. Presently there were fire engines, symbols of disaster, and a ghastly uprising of the mutilated in a dressing station. He turned on his bed-lamp and made a thorough note of it ending with the half-ironic phrase: "Non-combatant's shell shock (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 165-166).

Such a dream confirms Dick's non-combatant's shell shock given that he admits it. He is the only one who puts words on what he feels and does not allow anyone to know by never telling anyone about this non-combatant's shell shock or any other kind of trauma. But his dream is also indicative of the trauma from which he seems to suffer. By admitting his shell shock at this moment but never in front of other people, he hides what he probably considers as a failure or a weakness. This comes back to the idea that he cuts short the discussion with Gregorovius because he does not want to show his shell shock that might be seen as a weakness.

Thanks to feelings, memories and perceptions – which are the elements used by Zwicky (2012) to refer to the representation of trauma – this dream enables us to perceive an image, a scene of war in our mind, without recounting any precise event of war. Prokofiev's music as well as the navy-blue uniforms, the band, the engines, etc. give a general tone to the dream which appears as something majestic and impressive. The uniforms, which will be mentioned

in a further section are also present to refer to the war. Regarding the music and the band, it seems that they add a theatrical, dramatic dimension to the dream, especially since Prokofiev's *Love for Three Oranges* is an opera with a considerable theatrical style because of its "adoptions of techniques from *commedia dell'arte*, a style that appears to have been enigmatic to most American opera audiences at its premiere" (Pisani, 1997, p. 489). However, the "uprising of the mutilated", and "the symbols of disaster" produce a sense of chaos in this majesty as well as a direct confrontation with the war. Without explaining any event, this dream appears as a description of one single scene in which the horror of war is depicted. But the greatness of the scene might in a way represent the idealisation of war perceived by non-combatants who felt a certain guilt for not having fought in the army with the soldiers who were validated by the society according to Gandal (2018, p. 48). In fact, thanks to this dream, Dick enables the reader to see his trauma, his non-combatant's shell shock, and the fact that he, too, validates and idealises these soldiers by dreaming of them in a sort of majestic but also ghastly and sombre context.

This dream about a war scene, emphasises the ineffability of war given that no war events are recounted, but instead feelings, memories and perceptions are used to represent the ineffable instead of precise events that happened. Zwicky (2012) indeed considers that as a way to represent the ineffable. We are here facing a dream, something that has been imagined, but not the true and accurate telling or recollection of real war events. However, this dream is an evidence of the importance of war in Dick's life and consequently in *Tender is the Night*. The dream also fits in with psychoanalysis and trauma, which are also present in the novel through Dick Diver's job. The dream emphasises the difficulty to process a trauma that repeats itself in Dick's dream.

Dick, as mentioned earlier, might have the position of the implicated subject in World War I by being involved in war without fighting as a soldier. However, this notion of implicated subject might be a reference point on a continuum from victim to perpetrator, as it seems that there is no clear-cut distinction between these two positions (Rothberg, 2019). Dick is affected by trauma and did not choose to go to France given that he first thought that he would not be concerned by the war: "in 1917 he laughed at the idea, saying apologetically that the war didn't touch him at all" (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 105). It is only later the same year that he was sent to France for his abilities as a psychiatrist. He is therefore far from the position of a soldier who must kill and who must directly face death. Nevertheless, due to his job, he is forced to deal with the others' trauma by constantly being confronted with people who suffer, which might

contribute to his non-combatant's shell shock seeing that trauma can be "contagious", as argued by Balaev (2008).

By contrast, a character like Tommy Barban, is not a perpetrator, but at the same time, given that he is a soldier in the army by profession, we could consider him as being closer to the perpetrators on the continuum that expands between victims, implicated subjects and perpetrators. He directly says: "My business is to kill people" (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 33). Contrary to Dick or Abe who are so traumatised that they drink, Tommy is fine with his position as a soldier given that it is his job. Dick and Abe indeed seem not to understand Tommy's job as Abe says: "what Tommy needs is a good war" (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 41) which appears to be true as Rosemary has the following conversation with him:

He was leaving in the morning.

"Going home?"

"Home? I have no home. I am going to war."

"What war?"

"What war? Any war. I haven't seen a paper lately but I suppose there's a war – there always is."

"Don't you care what you fight for?"

"Not at all – so long as I'm well treated" (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 28).

Through this excerpt, it is possible to see that Tommy is not to be worried about war. Through the sentence "I suppose there's a war – there always is", we can see that war will never be over in a way. As it is his job, it seems normal to Tommy to take part in a war to such an extent that the reason for which he fights does not have any importance to his eyes. Tommy is therefore extremely different from the other male characters who were involved in war in the novel, and especially from Dick, who, as written above shows compassion and sensitivity to the many people who died during the war. Through their behaviour, these male characters are more or less close to the status of victims or perpetrators. Though he also presents war and violence as its job, Tommy plays a role in the perpetration of violence while Dick or Abe, being shocked by their experience in war are more reluctant to contribute to this violence.

### 5.2.3. Class issues: expatriates' life and a remaining gap

Dick is not only different from Tommy Barban regarding their position toward the war. There is also a significant difference between him and the Warrens regarding their social class. Although the novel seems to focus on a group of rich American expatriates, we can perceive class issues. These American expatriates, especially at the beginning of the novel, when the perspective is Rosemary's, appear as a sort of elite, a group of entertaining, glamorous people.

Fitzgerald and his wife, like the Divers were indeed perceived as attractive and popular (Keller, 2010). They were a tanned couple who spent their holiday at the French Riviera too and lived in Paris as expatriates, just like other writers from the Lost Generation such as Hemingway for example (Keller, 2010). Fitzgerald was therefore considered as the “‘golden boy’ of literary circles” (Keller, 2010, p. 131). This aspect of the author’s life has therefore been reflected in *Tender is the Night* through the representation of all these expatriates who form a rather cosmopolitan group. However, the group cannot be considered as a classless one in which everyone is on an equal footing since differences regarding their classes, and especially their money can be highlighted. Therefore, even within the group, we can perceive the gap between classes that strengthened after the war.

Nicole comes from an extremely wealthy family from Chicago. In this regard, she contrasts with Dick since he is originally not part of an upper-class like her. Dick is therefore not the one earning money for his wife and children contrary to the traditions. It is Nicole’s family money, what Forter (2003) calls “the old money”, that enables the Divers to live in such a comfort. Nicole’s fortune can be observed when she goes shopping with Rosemary:

With Nicole’s help Rosemary bought two dresses and two hats and four pairs of shoes with her money. Nicole bought from a great list that ran two pages, and bought the things in the windows besides. Everything she liked that she couldn’t possibly use herself, she bought as a present for a friend. She bought coloured beads, folding beach cushions, artificial flowers, honey, a guest bed, bags, scarfs, lovebirds, miniatures for a doll’s house and three yards of some new cloth the colour of prawns. She bought a dozen bathing suits, a rubber alligator, a travelling chess set of gold and ivory, big linen handkerchiefs for Abe, two chamois leather jackets of kingfisher blue and burning bush from Hermès – bought all these things not a bit like a high-class courtesan buying underwear and jewels, which were after all professional equipment and insurance – but with an entirely different point of view (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 51).

In this excerpt, we can see the contrast between the two women. While Rosemary, bought a limited number of items, Nicole’s list of purchases seems interminable. Moreover, the brands and the materials cited are indicative of Nicole’s wealth as she buys items from Hermès, some cited materials are gold, ivory and leather for example. By buying a dozen bathing suits and many items that seem rather useless such as artificial flowers, Nicole shows us that her wealth has no limit, contrary to Rosemary’s. As argued by De Bruyn (2015, p. 95) who also highlights Nicole’s wealth that can be seen in this excerpt, Nicole “does not shop out of necessity, because she indulges in luxury for luxury’s sake”. Nicole indeed embodies the consumerism and the luxury in which upper social classes seem to live in *Tender is the Night*. These expenses might

also reflect a desire to enjoy life after the war, a post war consumerism, since she has the means to afford everything she wants.

Another contrast appears between the two women; regarding Rosemary, the excerpt points out that she used her own money to shop. On the contrary, nothing is mentioned about Nicole's money, except that she is "the product of much ingenuity and toil" (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 51), which shows that her wealth comes from her family, not from her own work. On the one hand, Rosemary, embodies a more recent American dream that she is fulfilling thanks to her job as an actress. On the other hand, Nicole seems to depend on her father and grandfather's achievement of the American dream as they represent the "ingenuity and toil" of which Nicole is the product. Besides, given that Nicole appears as the one helping Rosemary, the latter seems to take Nicole as a model because she has a lot of money and is married to a man that Rosemary loves. The couple being glamorous, rich and appreciated by all, appears like a goal for the young Rosemary Hoyt. Through these two women, we can observe the differences between diverse people from the American upper-class society after the First World War that reinforced the gap between people from different backgrounds. In spite of the war and the hard times that they had to face, the Warrens still have the possibility to afford anything. Rosemary's and especially Nicole's shopping represent the important rise of consumerism after the First World War during which the world and the economy were disrupted.

The Warrens' money therefore affects the relationships between people. While Rosemary seems to admire this wealth, Dick's relationship with Nicole is deeply influenced by the money of his wife's family. Baby who does not often appear in the novel yet has a major influence on Dick since Baby thanks to her money provides for Dick at different points in the story. This unusual relationship between the Warrens – especially Baby – and Dick is also expressed when they consider buying the clinic with Franz Gregorovius:

then it came to him under the form of what Baby had said: "We must think over it carefully..." and the unsaid lines back of that: "We own you, and you'll admit it sooner or later. It is absurd to keep up the pretence of independence (Fitzgerald, 2018, 163).

Dick loses his role of "breadwinner" or man of the house who is supposed to be financially independent, given that Baby buys Dick's part of the clinic, and that she also gets him out of jail in Rome. "Her interactions with Dick illustrate how gender roles and gender identities were contested during this period" (Joseph, 2003, p. 68). A sort of hierarchy between the Warrens and Dick therefore is established as Dick depends on his wife's wealth. Even if he is married

with Nicole, her money does not belong to him. The fracture, the gap that can be seen between people according to their social class also appears within the couple, and more precisely within their family as Dick and Nicole have two children, Lanier and Topsy. In a way, the Warrens' money is also used to buy Dick's services as a psychiatrist for Nicole. The foundation of their relationship is thus based on the Warrens' money too. Dick is bought by the Warren to be with Nicole, even though his feelings for her are later certainly true, he belongs to them through Nicole's psychiatric treatment and through the purchase of the clinic. Therefore, the hierarchy between the Warren and Dick are once again representative of the gap between classes that was reinforced after the First World War. Therefore, through this gap, we can perceive the impact of the war on the society. In addition, this hierarchy between classes also seems to alter the position of Dick as a man in the society. This point is discussed in the next section.

#### 5.2.4. Gender: the impact of money and war

Since he is not the "breadwinner" of the family, Dick does not achieve his goal as a stereotypical family man. Baby and Nicole, thanks to their money, offer to Dick an inferior position in the family given that he depends on the Warrens. The family keeps on buying him but at the same time, he can be stronger in a way thanks to Nicole's money.

Watching his father's struggles in poor parishes had wedded a desire for money to an essentially unacquisitive nature. It was not a healthy necessity for security – he had never felt more sure of himself, more thoroughly his own man, than at the time of his marriage to Nicole. Yet he had been swallowed up like a gigolo, and somehow permitted his arsenal to be locked up in the Warren safety-deposit vaults (Fitzgerald, 2018, pp. 185 - 186).

This excerpt shows the power that money may confer to someone like Dick who seems to be more self-confident thanks to her wife's money that brings a certain comfort to their family. But at the same, time he compares himself to a "gigolo", namely a man who have a relationship with women who pays for this relationship, which does not appear as a manly position since the women occupy a dominant position in the relationship thanks to their money. Through this sentence, Dick's lack of masculinity is emphasised by the narrator who adopts Dick's perspective at this moment. In addition, Dick's masculinity is also affected by the war, his non-combatant's shell shock and the fact that he could not demonstrate his masculinity by fighting during the war. All these elements reinforce Dick's decline throughout the whole story, which finally leads him into alcohol, like Abe. This shell shock shows to the reader that war is present through the characters' behaviour and masculinity, even if it is implicit.

However, the behaviour of one male character particularly differs from Dick's. Tommy Barban, thanks to his profession in the army, appears as, and considers himself as more manly than the others, like Dick or Abe for example, who show more weakness given that they appear as shell shocked. Tommy Barban keeps on reasserting his traditional masculinity for example by saying that he wants to go back to war as he said at different moments in the novel. At the end of the novel, he becomes Nicole's lover, and without letting her express her opinion, he speaks for her by telling Dick "Your wife does not love you [...] She loves me" (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 282). Later during the same conversation Tommy adds "It's very plain to me that your marriage to Nicole has run its course. She is through" (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 282). Thus, Tommy can be perceived as a man who exercises a certain power on Nicole who is not given a voice by her new lover. On the contrary, Dick gives her a voice by answering "What does Nicole say?" (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 282). However, it can be pointed out, that despite Dick's intention to let Nicole talk, he does not ask her directly what she thinks about the situation. He rather asks Tommy as if Nicole were not with them and that the question should be addressed between men. Nevertheless, Nicole admits that Tommy is right by saying that she is fond of him. In any case, Tommy seems to dominate the whole situation which might appear as a way to prove his masculinity in front of Dick and Nicole, by leading the conversation, although this conversation should have been between the former couple instead.

While men like Dick see their masculinity particularly affected by the war, on the contrary Tommy reinforces his masculinity thanks to his job. Regarding women, there seems to be less contrast. The three main female characters in *Tender is the Night* are Nicole and Baby Warren, and Rosemary Hoyt. Nicole and Baby, due to their wealth, lose their stereotypical women's inferiority. As we have seen, they provide for Dick, which gives them more independence and importance. We can therefore observe that genders and classes are two aspects that are closely linked to each other in *Tender is the Night*. But while the gap between social classes seems to have been strengthened by the Great War since the social cohesion of the pre-war world does not exist anymore (Rennie, 2016), the hierarchy between genders seems to be gradually blurred given that women have the opportunity to dominate men thanks to their money but also thanks to the independence they accessed during the war while men were gone. The consequences of this evolution on men accordingly seem to take two distinct directions. Firstly, some men like Dick seem to be disturbed by this growing independence of women in addition to their trauma of war and hence, they end up feeling "emasculated" (Berg, 1993, p. 442 as cited in Joseph, 2003, p. 71) although they do not go against the growing power of women. Secondly, some

men need to reassert their masculinity in front of women, like Tommy who embodies a stereotypical masculinity.

Rosemary Hoyt, being a young actress seems to occupy a specific place in the novel in terms of gender. While Joseph (2003, p. 77) argues that Rosemary “uses the performative feminine to enable a masculine independence”, I think her young age almost gives her the status of a child in the beginning of the novel. In the beginning of the story, she spends a lot of time with her mother from whom Rosemary slowly distances herself. The novel perhaps shows Rosemary’s growing independence since she gradually becomes an adult. Although she is young, she is propelled into the adult world due to her job as an actress. Moreover, as a woman, she is in a way further from war than men. But by being so young, she appears to be even further than the other women. For example, when she is at Thiepval with Dick, she cries when reading an inscription on a memorial. However, her preoccupation rapidly shifts to Dick:

Reading the inscription Rosemary burst into sudden tears. Like most women she like to be told how she should feel, and she liked Dick’s telling her which things were ludicrous and which things were sad. But most of all she wanted him to know she loved him, now that the fact was upsetting everything, now that she was walking over the battlefield in a thrilling dream (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 54).

Through this excerpt, we can once again see that war is present in the novel. In this excerpt, it seems that Rosemary’s tears, although they are probably sincere, seem to be a way to draw Dick’s attention. They are confronted with “a great sea of graves” (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 54) that shows that many people were involved in the war, probably as implicated subject who did not choose to fight but who ended as casualties of a war for which they did not want to fight. Though this situation appears as tragic, “most of all” emphasises the fact that even if they are confronted with the atrocity of war, the most important thing for Rosemary remains her relationship with Dick that she wants to grow into a love relationship. The word “thrilling” also reinforces this idea since being with Dick transforms the battlefield into a “thrilling dream”. Dick’s masculinity is therefore reinforced as he is the man who should comfort Rosemary, who appears as too young and too fragile to support the atrocity of the war. In this excerpt, the woman is seen as not strong enough to face the death caused by the war. War and genders are thus explicitly connected in a way that makes Rosemary appears as an innocent stereotypical young woman. She discovers life and love thanks to a man, Dick, with whom she instantly falls in love and who makes her discover several things. For example, when she arrives at the beach and observes Dick’s group, she examines their appurtenances, discovering “new things that Rosemary had never seen, from the first burst of luxury manufacturing after the War, and

probably in the hands of the first purchasers” (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 17). She discovers here the consequences of war as well as the luxury of the upper-class spending their holiday at the French Riviera like her.

Rosemary seems to have an in-between position at all levels. Firstly, she seems to come from the middle class but tries to reach the fame, the luxury and the glamour of the upper class. Secondly, she is only seventeen and in transition between childhood and adulthood. Thirdly, she occupies a contradictory place by being a stereotypical woman due to her performative femininity as an actress and as the protagonist of a film named *Daddy’s Girl*, and her position as an adult earning money and being independent in this regard. This in between position is also reinforced by the fact that she is Dick’s secret lover. She is neither totally with him, nor completely rejected by Dick. It seems here, that her femininity and her youth appear as attractive for Dick who is older than her and, in a way, perceives her as *Daddy’s Girl*. Rosemary is therefore a complex character that represent a certain ideal of youth, especially for Dick Diver. In the 1920s “age was the model” (Sullivan, 1935, as cited in Stanton, 1958, p. 140) because the war reversed the relationships between “the prewar and postwar generations” (Stanton, 1958, p. 140). Therefore, we can perhaps state that Dick’s relationship with Rosemary is a way to feel younger and to reach the youth that was idealised after the Great War. Consequently, even in the relationship between Dick and Rosemary, a consequence of war can be perceived, namely the reversed relationship between pre- and post-war generations that took youth as a model. War is thus present in this aspect in which the reader would initially not expect to perceive any link with the war.

### 5.3. Motifs and metaphors

The third level of analysis consists in highlighting the different recurring motifs present in *Tender is the Night*, I distinguish four different elements. The first one is the uniforms that regularly appear in the novel. The second is the violence caused by several events in the novel. The third motif is the travel. Last, psychiatry is discussed as it is of major importance in *Tender is the Night*.

#### 5.3.1. Uniforms

The first motif is the military uniforms that are often mentioned in a charming way that supports a certain idealisation of the war in *Tender is the Night*. For example, in Dick’s above-mentioned dream, the “navy-blue uniforms” are present, like in many excerpts of the novel. These war uniforms are idealised and charming. In *Tender is the Night*, Nicole writes to her

future husband, Dick: “*I thought when I saw you in your uniform you were handsome*” (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 111). In another letter, once again, she writes to Dick “*Dr Gregory gave me a snapshot of you, not as handsome as you are in your uniform, but younger-looking*” (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 113). This representation of the handsome soldier in his uniform therefore seems to be recurrent in *Tender is the Night*, especially from Nicole’s perspective. Military uniforms consequently constitute a sort of idealisation of the soldier, like in Dick’s dream. And a sort of romantic and also idealised perception of the love affairs that happened during and before the war, like the idea of writing letters to men who were gone. The uniforms, making people resemble each other, are therefore representative of the appearances as façades that occupy an important place in Fitzgerald’s novels. The uniforms, like many other elements of the novel, constitute a proud and neat appearance for the characters who, in fact are sometimes broken inside, like in *The Great Gatsby*.

### 5.3.2. Violence

Firstly, violence is part of many events in the novel, such as the duel between Albert McKisco and Tommy Barban who argue about Violet McKisco’s secret when she sees Nicole having a mental breakdown for example. Violence can also be seen through the death of the black man that Rosemary finds in her hotel room in Paris. *Tender is the Night* does not feature any African American character in the narrative, except from the one who dies in Paris. This absence of African Americans as well as the violent death of the only one present in the novel, emphasise the fragmentation of the post war society seeing that the characters, although they travel a lot, remain with people who resemble them. Black people, due to the death of the black man, appear as excluded from the society as the only one represented is killed. He might represent the violent racism that was present in the 1920s in the broken post war society.

Another important scene that stages violence is the one at the station where a woman shoots a man. It is indeed one excerpt during which it is clearly said that war is still anchored in people’s mind:

The shots had entered into all their lives: echoes of violence followed them out onto the pavement where two porters held a post-mortem beside them as they waited for a taxi.

“*Tu as vu le revolver ? Il était très petit, vraie perle – un jouet.*

“*Mais, assez puissant !*” said the other porter sagely. “*tu as vu sa chemise ? Assez de sang pour se croire à la guerre*” (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 80)

We can see here, thanks to non-significant characters, to what extent such violent episodes recall war, and especially “echoes of violence”. However, the violence is at the same time minimised with the comparison of the revolver with a toy. But the other comparison between the situation, the amount of blood and the war is indicative of the violence and the trauma of war that remains present into the characters’ mind.

All these scenes make the characters confront death in one way or another. As argued by James (2013), violent scenes might echo the violence of war. This is indeed confirmed by the excerpt discussed above, in which the violent situation is directly compared with the war. Another scene that displays a certain form of violence, is also when Nicole causes a car accident. Luckily, nobody dies or gets badly hurt during this event. The car accident scene is however representative of a moment of chaos:

The children were screaming, and Nicole was screaming and cursing and trying to tear at Dick’s face. [...] She was laughing hilariously, unashamed, unafraid, unconcerned. [...] She spoke with such force that in his shocked state Dick wondered if he had been frightened for himself – but the strained faces of the children, looking from parent to parents, made him want to grind her grinning mask into jelly (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 177).

The car as a machine echoing the mechanised warfare (James, 2013), in combination with Nicole’s fit of madness provoke a fearful scene that creates a shocked state for Dick, just like war. However, contrary to war which seems to “only” makes him depressed, this situation makes him angry, not only disillusioned. Indeed, this anger probably comes from the fact that he is here directly confronted with danger, contrary to the First World War during which, he was confronted with war, violence and danger in an indirect way by having to cure the shell-shocked soldiers. “Doctor Diver’s profession of sorting the broken shells of another sort of egg had given him a dread of breakage” (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 163). Due to his profession, the violence felt by the others seems to be transferred to him, as if he was absorbing the others’ pain to finally completely feel it. This quotation moreover shows that war becomes common, it seeps into ordinary life as if it would never disappear.

Regarding Dick and Nicole’s relationship, Miller (1967, p. 140) considers it as “a kind of spiritual cannibalism”. While on the one hand Nicole seems to absorb Dick’s vitality and to consequently recover from her soul-sickness, Dick on the other hand, undergoes a certain decline, feeling gradually empty, to such an extent that he ends up being desperate. “It is as though for Dick and Nicole there is only one soul, first in Dick’s possession, finally in Nicole’s” (Miller, 1967, p. 140). The term “cannibalism” shows the violence of their relationship. This

violence is not physical but rather psychological and emphasises the fact that psychological violence, like trauma might be as destructive as physical violence.

### 5.3.3. Travel

*Tender is the Night* is full of travel which is the third motif. Some scenes happen in France, in Italy, in the United States, etc. The characters are always leaving some places to go somewhere else; they travel and consequently the story takes place in Europe and America. We can perhaps compare that to the war, during which things happened everywhere in the world and people sometimes had to leave their country, to be separated from their family in order to fight abroad. This link might however seem tenuous, but all these travels also seem to contrast with the atrocity of war. While traveling around the world was synonym of violence and despair during the war, it becomes, at first sight, a synonym of discovery, holiday and love affair in the beginning of the non-chronological version of *Tender is the Night*. Therefore, the 1951 version displaying Dick going to France for the war right from the beginning, gives to the motif of the travel a harsh tone which only appears later in the non-chronological version as the first place in which we see the characters is the French Riviera. Depending on the version, the travel might get different connotations. At the end of the novel, Dick travels a lot in order to find a place where he could settle, which turns out to be impossible. We can connect that with writers from the Lost Generation, such as Fitzgerald, who went to Europe as expatriates. These travels might perhaps reflect a difficulty for people after the First World War, to find a place where they feel good.

Finally, travel sometimes appears as an escape. For example, Dick's departure to America for his father's funeral happens just after one of the fits of madness into which Nicole gets. In other words, when the state of their relationship begins to decay, Dick has the opportunity to leave even if it is for a good reason, which probably creates a certain distance between him and his wife. This separation is apparently one of the trigger elements that provoke their later separation and Nicole's affair with Tommy Barban in addition to Dick's "physical deterioration", "his moralities" and "the accumulated resentment of years" (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 276). The travel, although it appears as a synonym of holiday and entertainment in the beginning of the novel is also related to death and to separation, which might echo the travels caused by the war that I mentioned earlier in this section.

#### 5.3.4. Psychiatry

Given that psychiatry is an important topic in the novel, it seems important to discuss it, especially since it constitutes a crucial difference with *The Great Gatsby* in which psychiatry is absent. Dick and Nicole's relationship emphasises the importance of psychiatry and mental health in the novel, which can be seen as a second motif used to implicitly refer to the ineffable trauma of war. Moreover, the psychiatric dimension is omnipresent in the novel, for example through Dick's job and the purchase of the clinic with Dr. Gergorovius, through Nicole's disease, through Abe's alcoholism, through Dick's later decline and through the fact that "So many smart men go to pieces nowadays" (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 92). But a dimension related to mental health in a story which takes place in the 1920s, appears as related to the war of the previous decade. Indeed, Dick mentions his non-combatant's shell shock, war is mentioned at different points in the novel and is echoed through different aspects throughout the whole novel.

In *Tender is the Night*, we can observe the complexity of mental health and its impact on the characters' relationships given that even if Nicole's sickness improves at the end of the novel, Dick's state deteriorates at all levels. It is thus possible to see that although he had everything to succeed in his life, such problems can happen to anyone, regardless of people's social class given that Nicole and Dick, who both initially come from different classes, undergo psychological disorders. Fitzgerald himself has been affected by the complexity of mental illnesses because of his wife but also because of his own depression. In a letter in which he points out the complexity of mental health, Francis Scott Fitzgerald shows how important this aspect of health was for him (West, 2011). He indeed shows the significance of mental health and psychiatry in his novel *Tender is the Night* in which Dick and Nicole suffer from different forms of trauma or others psychological disorders. But in spite of Nicole's recovery, the novel gets a tone of disillusion given that Dick does not really heal. Through this idea, we can probably perceive Fitzgerald's own disillusion, thinking that mental disorders are much more difficult to cure than any other issues, when as mentioned in the state of the art, the author writes in his letter: "I will go to a mechanic for a fault in a machine, to a surgeon for a fault in the body, but the mind—That's another story." (West, 2011, p. 62). Through this sentence it seems that according to Fitzgerald, even a psychiatric treatment is not always a solution.

Trauma also often appears in the novel through explicit references to war such as Dick and Abe's non-combatant's shell shock. But trauma is also present through Nicole who suffers from her incestuous relationship with her father. Trauma also appears in a more implicit dimension. Balaev (2008) argues that it is rare that traumatic memory be represented thanks to

an exact recalling of events. Rather, the traumatic event is often re-enacted “through repetitive flashbacks” by the person who undergoes trauma (Balaev, 2008, p. 151). Such a repetition is emphasised by the sentences: “—Do you mind if I pull down the curtain? —Please do. It’s too light in here” (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 82). This sentence is uttered when Dick is told about Rosemary and a man named Bill Hillis who were in a train together. Apparently, something happened between Rosemary and Bill as Collis, the person who tells Dick about this affair says, “Seems they locked the door and pulled down the blinds and I guess there was some heavy stuff going on when the conductor came for the tickets and knocked on the door” (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 82). When he hears this, Dick grows jealous and begins to be obsessed with the fact that the curtain was pulled down. Like a traumatic event, the sentence is repeated several times in the novel, which echoes Freud’s phenomenon of repetition compulsion which means that a traumatised person keeps on repeating the trauma in his mind. Dick, being shocked by hearing that, appears as traumatised and obsessed by this sentence that he constantly repeats in his mind. The repetition of trauma therefore echoes the shell-shocked victims who constantly relive the past.

#### 5.4. Conclusion

The purpose of the previous sections was to demonstrate the different aspects that reflect war in a way that respects the trauma it caused and especially its ineffability. This was demonstrated through, among others, the narration. The most important aspect of narration that might represent war and trauma is its fragmentation. Given that the chronology is disrupted, at least in the original version, the fragmented aspect of the novel is reinforced and emphasises the modernist nature of the book. This modernist approach is therefore used to convey the fragmentation of the characters’ mind who all seem to suffer from mental disorders in a way (depression, trauma, alcoholism, etc.) as well as the fractured society caused by the First World War. Indeed, the second level analysed here was the representation of this broken society. In *Tender is the Night*, we can observe the expatriate life, which was frequent for some of the writers from the Lost Generation, such as Francis Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway. This expatriate life brings a certain instability to the novel seeing that it is also fragmented in terms of setting due to the many travels of the characters who are regularly separated from each other.

The fragmentation, typical of modernist writing, appears regarding the setting and can be seen as a consequence of war that also fragmented the characters’ lives by separating them. These expatriates are also representative of an upper social class. However, even within this higher class, we can notice differences. Nicole and Rosemary for example, embody different

types of wealth. On the one hand, Nicole gets her money from her extremely wealthy family while Rosemary, being a young actress earns money thanks to her work but remains limited in terms of expenses contrary to Nicole. Even within Dick and Nicole's couple, money issues seem to divide them given that Nicole and her sister, Baby, always provide for Dick who feels bought by the Warrens. Regarding the society, discrepancies between genders can also be pointed out, as a gap is created in terms of masculinity, especially between Tommy Barban and Dick Diver. Regarding the women in *Tender is the Night*, they also occupy different positions in the society according to their job, their social classes and their relationships with men. Lastly, the third level of analysis being the recurring motifs in *Tender is the Night*, I distinguished four different motifs. Firstly, we can note the recurrence of uniforms and their attractiveness in the novel which confer a certain charm to the men who had to go to war, and even to war itself. Secondly, travels constitute another motif that emphasises the fragmented life experienced by the characters as well as the war that happened in several countries, just like the novel. Thirdly, the omnipresence of violence in the novel can be highlighted thanks to different scenes which are sometimes explicitly compared to the violence of war. Lastly, psychiatry occupies a huge place in the novel too and is representative of the importance of mental health after the Great War.

Consequently, the war subplot that, I argue, is present in Fitzgerald novels seems to be confirmed thanks to all these elements that have been uncovered. The First World War is indeed part of the characters' past and creates a broken world in which people try to recover from the atrocities of this period. But although war is implicitly omnipresent throughout the whole novel, no memories or events from the war are recounted neither by Dick and Abe, nor by Tommy who seems rather used to war to such an extent that he seems to enjoy it. In this novel, we do not encounter any scenes in the trenches or on the battlefield and neither do we come across many characters who talk about the war openly or in detail. Yet, all of these characters and society as a whole show different, often implicit traces of the war such as Abe's alcoholism, Dick's non-combatant's shell shock and depression, Rosemary's idealised youth, but also traces of violence and a considerable importance of the characters' mental health, as we have seen before. As the meaning of war and its concrete events are difficult to put into words due to their traumatic nature, their ineffability is countered and at the same time respected thanks to the different means to convey it, namely the narration and narrative structure, the representation of the society and different motifs echoing war that have been discussed in this analysis of *Tender is the Night*. The war subplot is present and adds a deeper dimension to the novel. It shows that

although some people suffered from personal trauma, such as Nicole, the whole society was affected by a broader trauma related to the war.

## 6. Discussion: comparison

This section aims to compare the representation of war in *The Great Gatsby* and in *Tender is the Night*. It is first important to mention that although both stories take place in the 1920s, almost ten years separate the publication of the two novels, which might influence the representation of war and trauma given that more time has passed between World War I and the publication of *Tender is the Night*.

### 6.1. Narration and narrative structure

Regarding the narration and the narrative structure of both novels, we can state that both are very different but, in a way, they emphasise the same things. The narrator being Nick, an intra-homodiegetic narrator in *The Great Gatsby* and an extradiegetic omnipresent one in *Tender is the Night*, the two novels already differ. But Nick, as a character of the story, allows the reader to access his thoughts and therefore to perceive the story from the perspective of a man traumatised by the war. In *Tender is the Night*, we can also see such a perspective thanks to Dick. Yet he is not the narrator, and the focalisation sometimes shifts to other characters such as Nicole and Rosemary who are less affected by the war than Dick and Nick for example. Moreover, Fitzgerald gives a voice to his character to tell the story of the others. Nick is given a peculiar place between the author and the characters, as argued by Miller (1967), which connects Nick with reality. However, the narrative structure, although already fragmented in *The Great Gatsby*, is even more fragmented in *Tender is the Night* in which, the disrupted chronology in addition to the many travels create fragmentation in space and in time. As said before, this fragmentation echoes the broken post war society. As *Tender is the Night* seems to be even more fragmented than *The Great Gatsby* regarding space and time, it can contribute to make of *Tender is the Night* the most mature representation of war made by Fitzgerald. The chronology is indeed more respected in *The Great Gatsby*, in spite of a few flashbacks. However, these flashbacks as well as the disrupted chronology in *Tender is the Night*, result in the fact that the reader is not aware of everything right from the beginning. In any case, we do not have access to the whole background of the characters as there remain many gaps in their story. Thus, a novel such as *Nick* constitutes an attempt to fill the gaps thanks to another fragmented story that displays three important periods from Nick Carraway's life before his meeting with Gatsby.

## 6.2. Representation of society

The fragmentation being also present within the stories, thanks to the representation of the society, we can point out that in *The Great Gatsby*, the social cohesion that disappeared after World War I is less clearly represented than in *Tender is the Night*. Although the society in *The Great Gatsby* appears as broken too, the narrative takes place only in New York and Long Island and all the characters remain more or less together from the beginning to the end of the story. The number of characters is rather limited which creates a sort of bubble in which these characters are living. It therefore seems that a certain social cohesion remains. By contrast, in *Tender is the Night*, people are often separated due to many travels. Though the expatriate community seems to form a bubble too, they keep on being separated from each other, the story takes place in many different countries such as France, Switzerland and United States which brings a certain instability to the characters' lives. The characters are dispersed, appear and disappear and are more numerous. All these elements reinforce the broken social cohesion of the post war world.

Regarding the representation of social classes, both novels focus on upper social classes in general and show the gap between the different types of wealthy people who are present in the novel. Some are representatives of the old money such as Tom Buchanan in *The Great Gatsby*, and the Warrens in *Tender is the Night*, while others represent the new money such as Gatsby and Rosemary who seem to be fulfilling the American dream by earning money thanks to their – legal or not – work. Nevertheless, one difference between both novels is that *The Great Gatsby* also depicts people from working classes such as George and Myrtle Wilson. Such characters are not present in *Tender is the Night* which only depicts the expatriate aristocrats living in Europe. However, as Dick is not an aristocrat, he can perhaps be compared with James Gatz, which later becomes Jay Gatsby when he becomes wealthy. Dick also enjoys the aristocrat life thanks to his wife's money. However, Dick and Jay are never fully accepted by the upper social class of which Daisy, Tom, and Nicole are part. Many gaps in the society are therefore represented in both novels and these gaps are the results of the First World War that created more distance between people than ever, although class tensions were already present before the war.

However, regardless of the classes, distance has been created between the characters, directly because of war. But it is not the only effect of war on the relationships between the characters. While war breaks the love affair between Jay and Daisy in *The Great Gatsby*, which creates Jay's trauma, it seems to almost provoke the one between Dick and Nicole in *Tender is*

*the Night*. But the latter's relationship, seeing they meet just before the war and create their relationship thanks to letters, is representative of the fragile foundation of their love. The beginning of their relationship is unrequited as Nicole seems to be the only one involved in the relationship. Afterwards, their relationship is almost forced by Nicole's family, it thus seems that their marriage was right from the beginning, not as solid as we could think when reading the beginning of the original novel. The founding of the glamorous couple that we discover through the admirer look of Rosemary, is more complicated than expected given that their relationship was first based on a doctor-patient relationship. By contrast, Jay and Daisy's meeting seems to be simpler as they both rapidly fall in love.

Finally, both Jay and Daisy's and Dick and Nicole's relationships collapse. But one difference between those characters is that while Dick falls into despair and alcohol – which is one reason for which he has often been compared with Fitzgerald – Gatsby tragically dies but until the end, he is hoping for Daisy to call him. Gatsby seems to be optimistic and to turn a blind eye, thinking that Daisy is going to quit everything for him. By contrast, *Tender is the Night* shows a certain disillusion given that Dick, who had everything to succeed, neglects himself and loses everything due to his non-combatant's shell shock and his increasingly complex relationship with Nicole. These attitudes can also be observed in their behaviours toward their love relationship. Since war affected the whole society including the love relationships, we can observe two different attitudes toward these changes. While Gatsby embodies a certain naivety toward love and Daisy's behaviour after World War I, Dick who must face non-combatant's shell shock seems disillusioned toward the whole world and toward love too, but also toward his job and his life in general. Therefore, Gatsby is, in a way, more carefree than Dick and therefore less mature, just like the whole representation of war and of its impact. Gatsby remains an eternal optimist, even after the war, while Dick, due to his non-combatant's shell shock and his relationship with Nicole, appears as a disillusioned man. This disillusionment, although less explicitly present in the character of Gatsby, is on the contrary typical of Nick, who in this respect, resembles Dick more.

Nick and Dick indeed sometimes resemble each other. They are the two only characters who admit their trauma to the reader in a more or less explicit way. While Nick uses irony by saying that he “enjoyed the counter-raid so thoroughly that [he] came back restless” (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 6), Dick after having a dream about war, wakes up and says “Non-combatant's shell shock” (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 166) *Tender is the Night* therefore clearly emphasises psychology and the psychological effects of the war on the characters which is not the case in *The Great*

*Gatsby*. But neither Dick, nor Nick mention their trauma or any psychological effect of the war in front of other characters; Nick as the narrator of *The Great Gatsby* includes the above-mentioned sentence in his narration, not in a dialogue and Dick, utters this sentence aloud but at this moment, he is alone which only enables the reader to know it. The two characters therefore have more common features than the resemblance between their names.

The fact that they do not avow their trauma in front of other characters might be due to the fact that shell shock was seen “as a somewhat embarrassing failure of masculinity” (Beidler, 2013, p. 9). The impact of war on masculinity can hence be perceived in both novels. Here again, we can find some similarities between characters from both novels. Tom Buchanan and Tommy Barban being both stereotypical representations of masculinity are described in similar terms in their respective novels. While Tom embodies an older form of masculinity that resists the growing power of women after the war, Tommy is described in the novel as “the end product of an archaic world” (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 33). Thus, both characters seem to represent men who need to reassert their masculinity without accepting the post war society in which women were given more importance. The resemblance between these two characters is also reinforced by their name which are very similar to each other.

Comparing the different men from both novels in connection with Rothberg’s implicated subject (2019), we can notice that Tom embodies more some sort of implicated subject in *The Great Gatsby* as he is a sportsman, not a veteran. Like Dick in *Tender is the Night*, Tom did not fight. However, because Dick had to work in a neurological unit, they had totally different positions toward the war given that Dick, in a way, helped people by trying to cure their trauma. Tommy, on the contrary, by being a soldier, occupies a position more similar to Jay and Nick in *The Great Gatsby*. Therefore, while Tom and Tommy are similar in many aspects and are in a way the antagonists in each novel, they differ in their position related to war. Jay, Nick and Dick, who are all protagonists or at least major characters in the novels, are also similar in certain aspects. But just like Tom and Tommy, Jay, Dick and Nick also differ in their position during the war given that Dick did not fight contrary to Jay and Nick. As argued previously the implicated subject is perhaps more a continuum than a distinct category between the victims and the perpetrators. And although all the characters seem to be some kinds of implicated subjects given that none of them is part of those who are at the origin of the war, Tommy Barban, as I said before, seems to be closer to the perpetrators, given that “[His] business is to kill people” (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 33). Jay and Nick being rather forced to go to war and to fight, are closer to the status of the implicated subject as it is not their job and given that they seem

shell shocked contrary to Tommy. Jay and Nick are, like Tommy, involved in the action of the war as they had to fight but the difference between them is that Tommy sees the killing of people as his business while Jay and Nick are forced to fight and do not seem to enjoy that contrary to Tommy who “needs a good war” (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 41). Dick, for his part, is even less implicated than Jay and Nick as he did not fight but was only involved in war due to his competences as a psychiatrist. He was therefore probably less confronted with death as he certainly does not undergo the trauma of having caused people’s death. However, Dick saw the devastating impact of war on people’s mental health. Surprisingly, Tom is the man who is the farthest from the perpetrators since he did not take part in the war. However, due to his behaviour, he seems to be a perpetrator of an extreme masculinity that was shattered by the war for some men such as Nick and Gatsby. Moreover, Tom is also a perpetrator of injustice due to the racist theories in which he strongly believes, and a perpetrator of violence as he is certainly the person who tells George where to find Gatsby. It is also thanks to Tom that at the end “the holocaust [is] complete” (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 129).

Regarding femininity, *The Great Gatsby* seems to rather highlight the evolution of the position of women in the post war society by representing Jordan, the stereotypical flapper of the 1920s, and Daisy, who appears to represent the evolution between more traditional women and the new flappers. Her in between position might be caused by the fact that she remains with Tom. The latter represents a more traditional man who perhaps does not let Daisy being more independent like Jordan. However, it is also Daisy’s choice to stay with Tom and to comply with a more traditional life. In *Tender is the Night*, although the two main women, Rosemary and Nicole, are very different, we do not perceive any stereotypical representation of the flapper, like in *The Great Gatsby*, which is not surprising since the story takes place in Europe and not in the American Roaring Twenties. Instead, *Tender is the Night* provides an overview of the differences in power that money confers to women. In other words, the novel contrasts Rosemary, the young rising star, and Nicole and her sister Baby, who, thanks to their money, can afford anything and exercise a certain power and influence on anybody, including men such as Dick.

### 6.3. Motifs and metaphors

The most important motif, which is recurring in the two novels, is violence. *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night* are two novels in which violent events take place in a way that might recall war to the reader. *The Great Gatsby* evolves toward a sort of violent climax that includes the triple death, that is to say Myrtle’s, Gatsby’s and George’s. According to James

(2013), Myrtle's death echoes the mechanised warfare that caused a large number of casualties. However, in my view, the two other deaths in *The Great Gatsby* might also implicitly refer to war or at least echo the war in the reader's mind. Gatsby might represent the people killed during the war while George might refer to the trauma of having seen and caused some people's death which is unbearable and leads him to committing suicide. All these deaths appear at the end of the novel although the reader, at the beginning of the novel, does probably not expect such a tragic and violent end. In *Tender is the Night* however, the story is punctuated by violence. There is not one terrible outcome at the end but rather different moments that remind the reader of the violence of this period traumatised by World War I. *Tender is the Night* displays the death of Abe North, which is the only recurring character who dies in the story contrary to *The Great Gatsby* in which the three deaths are those of recurring characters, and especially of the protagonist, Jay Gatsby. In *Tender is the Night*, there is also the death of the black man, the shooting at the station, the duel, etc. All these events echo war in a more subtle way that shows to what extent the post war society and its social cohesion are broken, partly due to the war and the general trauma it caused. In terms of violence, we can therefore state that both novels seem to reflect war but in different ways. On the one hand, *The Great Gatsby* represents the direct violence of war and on the other hand, *Tender is the Night* emphasises the impact of war on a society made of traumatised people.

As argued by James (2013), sport appears as a metaphor of war in *The Great Gatsby*. Thanks to sport, Tom appears as more masculine and is associated with war in an indirect way. In comparison with *The Great Gatsby*, *Tender is the Night* does not show any characters related to sport. However, Tommy Barban who seems to be Tom Buchanan's equivalent in *Tender is the Night*, is directly related to the war and violence. Another motif discussed in one of the novels, but not in both, is psychiatry. Contrary to sport, which is present in *The Great Gatsby* and not in *Tender is the Night*, psychiatry is omnipresent in *Tender is the Night* and not in *The Great Gatsby*. Although trauma seems to occupy an important place in both novels, its presence is more explicit in *Tender is the Night* in which Nicole's trauma is explicitly uttered as well as Dick's when he appears to diagnose his own non-combatant's shell shock. A shift toward psychiatry can therefore be seen in *Tender is the Night* while it is absent from *The Great Gatsby*. This representation of psychiatry and the explicit consideration of mental health probably plays a crucial role in the fact that *Tender is the Night* is considered as a more mature representation of the Great War. Just after the war, mental disorders were not directly considered as real

diseases and it took time for people to take such diseases seriously. The two novels therefore echo this evolution of the consideration of mental diseases, such as trauma.

The uniforms are often mentioned in *Tender is the Night* but are also present in *The Great Gatsby*, but less than in *Tender is the Night*. They contribute to the importance of the appearances in the novels. In *The Great Gatsby*, the latter's uniform is mentioned for example when Meyer Wolfsheim, one of Gatsby's friends says that when he met Gatsby "he had to keep on wearing his uniform because he couldn't buy some regular clothes" (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 136). The uniforms are thus part of the appearances and the idealisation of certain aspects of war that seem quite superficial. The medals on the uniforms are also worn to be shown. In *Tender is the Night* and in *The Great Gatsby*, the appearances are important, but they are always hiding the problems with which the characters must struggle. Regarding the idealisation of love affairs that happened before the war for example, they appear as wonderful while it was probably not as easy as it seems. The money, the parties and the incredible life that the characters are experiencing in both novels, contribute to the importance of the appearances, like the uniforms. But all these elements are not evidences of the characters' happiness. This opulence rather appears as a façade that hides the inner failure of the characters that have been discussed throughout this dissertation. The parties and the luxury in which the characters live are rather a way to hide a deep failure, a trauma, or in the case of Gatsby's parties it is a way to find Daisy too. In *Tender is the Night*, the fact that the amusement of the characters hides a deeper meaning is clearly uttered at the Divers' party:

They had been at table half an hour and a perceptible change had set in – person by person had given up something, a preoccupation, an anxiety, a suspicion, and now they were only their best selves and the Divers' guests (Fitzgerald, 2018, p. 30).

At this moment, we can see that the party helps people thinking about something else than their preoccupation which was typical of the post war period during which people needed amusement to hide their trauma and failure. Moreover, the use of "they" describes the individuals as one unique group, which makes the failure common to the whole group. The parties thus represent the ineffability of war. Instead of sharing their failure, the characters seem to prefer hiding them, as if they were not there. The entertainment, hiding the characters' trauma, like at the Divers' party, therefore helps to constitute the war subplot that seems to be present in both novels but more explicitly in *The Great Gatsby* than in *Tender is the Night*.

In the analysis of *The Great Gatsby*, the motif of time was also mentioned as the question of going back in time or the possibility of repeating the past is regularly addressed. However,

such ideas do not seem to appear in *Tender is the Night*. While Jay Gatsby wants to re-enact some kind of idealised past, the characters from *Tender is the Night* are never willing to go back in time because of the traumatic events they experienced and the mental disorders they consequently sometimes undergo. However, each character suffers from very different forms of trauma. Some are related to war but others, such as Nicole's, are not, which is important to take into consideration. In *Tender is the Night*, however, references to time are rarely explicitly mentioned. But time remains extremely important thanks to the disrupted chronology of the novel. Therefore, while references to time emphasise its irreversibility in *The Great Gatsby* and the characters' tendency to live in the past due to their trauma, the representation of time in *Tender is the Night* thanks to its non-linearity rather reinforces the representation of the fractured post war society and the characters' failures due to their trauma. In short, we can state that in both novels time is used to place emphasis on trauma but in two different ways, namely explicit references to time in *The Great Gatsby* and a fragmented chronology in *Tender is the Night*. This is obviously valid especially for the 1934 version of *Tender is the Night* and less for the 1951 version in which the chronology of the events is respected.

## 7. Conclusion

In this master dissertation, I demonstrated how war, although barely present in the plots of Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night*, is central in both novels as part of a subplot that respects the ineffability of the trauma caused by the First World War. In order to carry out this demonstration, I first introduced the topic and the main research questions: How is World War I represented in Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night* seeing that it seems to be at the same time central and peripheral? How is the ineffability of war and trauma conveyed in *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night*? How does the representation of war evolve between *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night*? After this introduction, the two novels that constitute the corpus of this dissertation were summarised, namely *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night*. The next sections were dedicated to the theoretical background that included the state of the art. The state of the art served to render an overview of Fitzgerald's studies, especially about the two studied novels regarding the three levels of analysis that I used throughout all this dissertation, that is to say, the narration and narrative structure of the novels, the representation of the society which in a way is also the representation of the characters, and lastly, the motifs and metaphors that are recurring in *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night*. These three levels of analysis were therefore used in order to prove that war was represented thanks to other elements that the mere recounting of war events, such as perceptions, feelings and memory or other implicit elements that might echo World War I too. The theoretical background provided an overview of the different themes and concepts discussed in this dissertation, such as trauma and trauma studies, ineffability, subplot and implicated subject. These terms were thus defined and discussed in order to understand my argument which is that trauma, and by extension trauma related to the war, appear as ineffable, as argued by Zwicky (2012). Alternative methods are thus used in Fitzgerald's novels to discuss war and trauma in a rather implicit way that does not include them in the plots of the novel, but war and trauma rather constitute a subplot in order to respect their ineffable nature. War in Fitzgerald's novels has been studied by diverse scholars in the secondary literature, for example by Beidler (2013), James (2013) and Joseph (2003), that is why I decided to use, among others, their research as a starting point for this dissertation. While Beidler discusses the post war society in *The Great Gatsby* and *Mrs. Dalloway*, James discussed Nick's position in *The Great Gatsby*, and Joseph, the impact of war on gender in *Tender is the Night*. I therefore tried to go further in the study of these aspects that help to constitute the war subplot in Fitzgerald's novels, but also to add other levels of analysis that appeared as worthy of attention. The notion of the ineffability of

trauma, moreover, had not been discussed in previous study. *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night* were therefore first studied separately according to the three levels of analysis above-mentioned. Then came the comparison between *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night* and the three aspects that are used to echo war.

Thanks to this analysis of Fitzgerald's novels, we can see that it seemed unavoidable to refer to war in stories that take place in the 1920s given that the society was still shocked by the past war years. *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night* therefore seem to be representative of the post war atmosphere and the general trauma that people underwent. This can be observed through the narration, the structure and different recurring topics, as said before, but also thanks to different characters who in a way, seem to be broken, such as Nick or Dick for example. The representation of the characters, their relationship with each other and the society in general are probably the most relevant elements that suggest the war subplot in the novel. However, it is important to note that three different types of trauma related to war appear in the novels. Firstly, trauma can be the result of direct exposure to war, as in the case of Nick or Abe North for example. Secondly, we can observe trauma as a result of social and cultural upheaval directly or indirectly caused by the war. This type of trauma seems to affect all the characters seeing that it is a more general one. Thirdly, trauma can also be personal and be (relatively) unconnected to the war, such as Nicole's trauma which is related to her relationship with her father. The more or less implicit representations of these traumas help to display the consequences of war without having to explicitly recount war events for example. Thus, as argued by Zwicky (2012), the ineffability of war is represented but also respected thanks to a combination of perceptions, or memories for example such as "some wet, gray little villages in France" (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 39) or violence that echoes the violence of the past war years.

In spite of the nine years between the publication of each novel, it seems that the ineffability of war remains and indeed constitutes a subplot in both novels. The reason for representing war through a subplot and not as an explicitly central element in the novel, as mentioned earlier, might be due to the traumatic nature of war that makes it ineffable. It is difficult to quantify the ineffability of war in the novels, however, it seems that war sometimes appears more explicitly in *Tender is the Night* in which the psychology of the characters seems to be more developed. The mental health of the characters, especially Dick and Nicole, which seems to be a central topic in the novel, perhaps constitutes one reason for which *Tender is the Night* is considered as Fitzgerald's most mature representation of the war in his novels, according to Rennie (2016). In my view, we can perceive that as a shift towards psychology,

but also towards the broader cultural impact of the war that is more visible in *Tender is the Night*. Moreover, trauma related to war is, I argue, represented in a more discreet way in both novels but it turns out that it seems to be even more discreet in *The Great Gatsby* while in *Tender is the Night* the general concept of trauma appears as a central component of the novel because of Nicole's trauma (even if her trauma is more related to her relationship with her father than to the war). Trauma is also more explicitly mentioned thanks to Dick's self-diagnosis of his non-combatant's shell shock which is also a form of trauma. As mentioned earlier, the representation of war in *Tender is the Night* is rather made thanks to an emphasis of the impact of war on the individuals' mental health, but also on the whole society. On the one hand, *The Great Gatsby* demonstrates violence that might echo war through a dramatic climax constituted by the three extremely violent deaths, including the protagonist's. On the other hand, the violence in *Tender is the Night* seems to be less direct as the violent events punctuate the whole novels and almost go unnoticed. This representation of war is rather typical of the disillusion present in *Tender is the Night*, especially thanks to Dick. The weary tone of *Tender is the Night* produced by the representation of war is probably also a reason for considering it as more mature and more "calm" than in *The Great Gatsby* in which there is a shocking climax.

James (2013, p. 71) claims that "we read *Gatsby*, like the writings of other modernists, not only for what it says but for what it omits". This statement appears to be confirmed by this dissertation since the war subplot seems to be even more implicit in *The Great Gatsby* as there are less explicit references to war and trauma than in *Tender is the Night*. Nick being the narrator, seems to hide some aspects related to war to the reader. Instead, *Tender is the Night* and its extra-heterodiegetic omniscient narrator give access to more of the characters' thoughts. However, although these thoughts are communicated to the reader, like Dick's non-combatant's shell shock for example, they are rarely communicated between the characters. *Tender is the Night* shows to the reader, in a still discreet way, the inner reflections of the characters but also displays the difficulty for individuals to talk about trauma in front of the others. In contrast, *The Great Gatsby*, hides more the war dimension from the reader thanks to its narrator, Nick, and uses fewer clear statements about trauma and war for example.

To conclude, it can be said that although similar techniques seemed to be used by Fitzgerald to represent the war, the representation of the latter is different in *The Great Gatsby* and in *Tender is the Night*. As *Tender is the Night* was published in 1934, the representation of war was perhaps more conscious, which makes it more explicit, though it still appears as ineffable. But the years that passed between the writings of the two novels, have probably

helped the author to shape stories in which the representation of the First World War is more mature, like in *Tender is the Night*.

Lastly, this dissertation has its limitations given that the corpus only consists of two novels. It would therefore be interesting to include for example the five novels written by Fitzgerald, or maybe the short stories that he wrote. Another option would be to compare Fitzgerald's novels with those written at the same time by other writers from the Lost Generation such as Hemingway for example. Analysing in more depth several adaptations of the novels might be a good topic to investigate too, especially regarding *The Great Gatsby* that has been adapted to cinema, opera, theatre, etc. A more quantitative approach counting and analysing all the words referring to war in the novels might also be a worthy study.

This dissertation might therefore be a starting point for such further studies as I tried to use a comprehensive approach to the representation of war in *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night*. I also demonstrated how the ineffability of trauma and war was respected by Fitzgerald in these novels, which might be useful for trauma studies or research related to trauma in novels that depict the 1920s. Upcoming adaptations of Fitzgerald's novels may approach the representation of war differently as they will be further from the war. These adaptations will therefore provide material to determine how the future generations are going to perceive the war dimension in Fitzgerald's masterpieces.

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