

NIGHTMARE IN THE KINGDOM OF THIS WORLD

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RESUMEN

El presente artículo es un estudio profundo de las novelas *Tender Is the Night* de F. Scott Fitzgerald y *El reino de este mundo* de Alejo Carpentier. Se analiza la relación europeo americana, los personajes, las imágenes, los acontecimientos históricos y los puntos de vista filosóficos. Además se yuxtaponen los ambientes variados que se presentan en ambas novelas y con esto, las similitudes y diferencias discutidas convergen en una misma reversión mítica: el legado de posibilidades edénicas del continente americano.

ABSTRACT

The present article is a thorough study of the novels *Tender Is the Night* by F. Scott Fitzgerald and *El reino de este mundo* [The Kingdom of This World] by Alejo Carpentier. By analyzing the European-American relationship, characters, imagery patterns, historical events and philosophical views, and by juxtaposing the varied milieus depicted in both works, the similitudes and differences discussed converge into a similar mythical reversal: the demise of Edenic possibilities on the American continent.

During his or her artistic career, a writer usually feels the urge to be innovative, to produce something new. F. Scott Fitzgerald and Alejo Carpentier were not exceptions. After *The Great Gatsby* (1925), Fitzgerald started working on his most extensive and ambitious novel, *Tender Is the Night* (1934). He wanted this novel to be “the model for the age that Joyce and Stein [were] searching for, that Conrad didn’t find.”¹ Although it took him almost a decade to finish his work, and although Arthur Mizener considers *Tender Is the Night* “the most mature and moving book Fitzgerald ever wrote,” (1969: 104) the novel was severely criticized upon publication. The structure, the hero’s downfall, and the biographical elements present in Fitzgerald’s work provoked polemic within the literary field. Alejo Carpentier was also experimenting with new techniques when he wrote *El reino de este mundo* (1949), in which he uses his brand of what has come to be termed “magic realism” for the first time. As Alexis Márquez-Rodríguez affirms, *El reino de este mundo* is “una verdadera renovación de nuestra narrativa, tanto por lo singular de su temática como por las innovaciones técnicas que contiene” (1970: 43) (a real renovation of our narrative due to the singularity of its theme as well as the technical innovations that the work contains). Carpentier’s novel was considered a manifesto of a new turn in Spanish American narrative, since the author, playing with historical

facts and altering traditional structure, presents "a reality permeated by mythology and magic" (Schwartz 1986: 228).

In addition to the innovative element, both writers were deeply concerned about the societies they depicted. Although most scholars have studied the psychological elements of *Tender Is the Night* by analyzing the main characters, the social aspect of the work deserves further consideration, for, as Fitzgerald himself indicated, "I am interested in the individual only in his relation to society."² Sharing Fitzgerald's view, Alejo Carpentier states that the novelist's task is to depict his social milieu, "criticarlo, exaltarlo, pintarlo, . . . tratar de comprenderlo" (1967: 65, "to criticize it, to exalt it, to paint it, . . . to try to understand it"). The novelist's duty as Carpentier sees it, is to be a moralist in order "to help define these truths." (Harss and Dohmann 1967: 65) Fitzgerald also defines himself as a "a moralist at heart," since in his narrative, he wanted to "preach at people in some acceptable form rather than to entertain."³

Furthermore, Carpentier affirms that the epic novel is the form that the Spanish American writer should use as a means of revealing Spanish American reality. That is exactly what he does in *El reino de este mundo*, for the reader faces, as Norman Cortés Larriau states, "una afirmación de fe en el hombre, en su infinita capacidad de reacción frente a sus enemigos y opresores . . ." (1973: 124, emphasis mine; "an affirmation of faith in man, in his infinitive capacity of reaction against his enemies and oppressors"). Similarly, Fitzgerald considered *Tender Is the Night* as his "epic," and declared that while "Gatsby was a tour de force, . . . [*Tender Is the Night* was] a *confession of faith*"⁴ (emphasis mine). This affirmation or confession of faith is not only shared by both authors but presented by each in an epic form of narrative with mythical components that bind the two novels. While Carpentier's novel depicts "a brilliant, improbable world which has the stylized reality of the great myths," (Adams 1975: 215) *Tender Is the Night* "read [also] as myth . . . is a nightmare." (Light 1986: 136) Insanity, hypocrisy, and corruption can exist either in the peaceful French Riviera populated by Europeanized Americans or in the French colony of Haiti during the reign of Henri Christophe. Hence, *Tender Is the Night* and *El reino de este mundo* exhibit a similar mythical reversal of the American Dream: the demise of Edenic possibilities.

Tender Is the Night is the story of Dick and Nicole Diver—a problematic couple in a convulsive world. Within the frame of the post-World War I era, Dick Diver, with his undergraduate studies at Yale, his medical studies at John Hopkins, and his postgraduate work in Vienna, is a promising young psychiatrist who marries Nicole Warren, a rich mental patient, victim of incest. Dick plays a double role as husband and doctor since Nicole suffers from occasional regressions. Nicole cannot face the world without her husband. Her love is nourished by dependency and transference. In order to help his wife recuperate, Dick takes Nicole to the Riviera, where they buy a lovely place on the Cap d'Antibes, the "Villa Diana." In the summer of 1925, Rosemary Hoyt, a young American movie star, arrives at the Riviera and meets the Divers. Rosemary instantly falls in love with Dick and discovers Nicole's insanity. Although Dick and Rosemary's affair does not take place until some years later, Nicole's jealousy, as well as the violence of the milieu which is characterized by crimes, shootings, and fights, aggravates her mental condition. Later, still thinking of Nicole's health, Dick accepts Franz Gregorious's offer of buying a clinic in Switzerland (obviously with the Warrens' money), and the Divers move to peaceful Switzerland in order to look for a better environment. At this point, Nicole is still

totally dependent on her husband, but as the novel progresses and the condition of the psychiatrist deteriorates due to his alcoholism, his economic dependence on the Warrens, and his professional stagnation, Nicole too changes. She becomes strong, gains self-assurance, looks for a lover, and leaves her husband. At the end of *Tender Is the Night*, Dick returns to America, where he drifts from town to town in upstate New York: the former promising psychiatrist has turned into one of the living dead.

El reino de este mundo is a collage of historical texts which are transformed by Carpentier's imagination. The novel presents four main situations: two slave revolts, the decadence of French colonialism, and the reign of Henri Christophe. The first rebellion is headed by Mackandal, an African slave whose magic powers make his followers believe that he has been saved and transformed into an animal instead of accepting the fact that he has been killed. Mackandal starts poisoning the whites to liberate the blacks, but fails in his attempt at the end. The second revolt is headed by the Jamaican Bouckman, who wants to make valid the rights proclaimed by the French Revolution. But, symbolically, Bouckman is killed in the same place that Mackandal had been. The greedy violence of the French colonists is personified by Monsieur Lenormand de Mezy, while the conflict between Europe and America is incarnated in the European aristocrat Pauline Bonaparte, who unsuccessfully tries to use Voodoo to fulfill her desires, and in Henri Christophe, who tries to create a kingdom of blacks usurping the European models. Ti Noel, Lenormand de Mezy's slave, is the main figure of the novel, for he observes all these events. His exposure to mistreatment by the French and to the brutality of Christophe's regime make Ti Noel realize that salvation lies not in the kingdom of Heaven, but in constant struggle in the kingdom of this world.

In spite of their obvious differences in background, milieu, and conflicts, the two novels present remarkable similarities in the role society plays in each work, as well as in the traits, vices, desires, and behavior of some characters. The slave revolts and French colonialism in Haiti can be compared to the life of Post-war American expatriates in Europe: neither can America, the New World, be a paradise, nor can Americans recreate one.

As Richard Foster affirms, F. Scott Fitzgerald's *Tender Is the Night* depicts "a contemporary landscape of cultural breakup in the fevered colors of crime, madness, sexual deviance, and individual moral disintegrations." (1975: 90) A similar environment of social revolt is perceived in Carpentier's *El reino de este mundo*, which presents "an imaginative re-creation of Haiti's violent past and the troubled reign of Henri Christophe." (Müller-Bergh 1989: 1023) In addition, the two novels expose an Edenic façade as well as the rotten core of each environment. In Carpentier's description of racial conflicts, exploitation, and injustice, he "misses nothing of the blasting prosperity and social ostentation that made Saint Domingue a colorful paradise in the years 1766-1791." (Pontiero 1981: 529) And Fitzgerald's account of rich American expatriates in Europe shows that "behind this façade of glamor and power lies unnatural lust and perversion." (Fussell 1986: 112) In other words, Fitzgerald describes the vices of a bourgeois capitalistic civilization as characterized by "the inhumanity of rich people and the destructiveness of close contact with them" (Startrev 1972: 99).

Some of the vices of Fitzgerald's arrogant and wealthy characters are also seen in Carpentier's characters, among them Monsieur Lenormand, who exhibits a "bestialidad egoísta . . . [grandes] apetencias materiales . . . [y una] conciencia civilizada que ya inicia su carrera hacia

la decadencia" (Liscano 1953: 85, "selfish bestiality . . . [huge] material hunger . . . [and a] civilized consciousness that leads itself to decadence"). It seems that different epochs as well as different social systems generate similar deficiencies. Monarchy and capitalism can be equally detrimental since, as E. W. Pitcher affirms in regard to Fitzgerald's novel, "the conventions, rituals, and illusions supporting and making 'civilization' possible are an artificial construct, an expediently imposed order necessary to contain disorder (amorality, selfishness, egoism, barbarity)." (1981: 87) Pitcher's argument can be applied to Carpentier's work as well, though the social scope of Alejo Carpentier's novel is larger than Fitzgerald's. Carpentier's narrative embraces different social strata: the French colonists (the whites), the slaves (the blacks), and the mulattoes, who prove to be as tyrannical as the old masters. In Fitzgerald's work, the scope is mainly restricted to the wealthy class, for "the mores of the rich are depicted in an action that is narrowly limited by their cultural formula: money, leisure, sex." (Kallich 1949: 87)

One of the main recurrent traits of both novels is decadence. The selfish and ambitious Monsieur Lenormand, although married three times, never has offspring—a sign of the sterility of Lenormand's society. The promiscuous Pauline Bonaparte, married to General Leclerc, has multiple love affairs. Obviously the kingdom of Sans Souci—Christophe's realm—founded upon a decadent European social basis, is condemned to collapse. Similarly, in *Tender Is the Night*, one faces a world that matches the decadent theme of McKisco's novel, a world where Abe North has to be a "rotten musician," a world where Nicole and Dick must have extramarital love affairs, a world where the creative "Iron Maiden" has to die, for nothing artistic or productive can develop there. In a post-war world characterized by lifeless intellectuality, decay, moral breakdown, and mental disease, it is difficult to find "the seeds of potential cure and rebirth" (Foster 1975: 107) that are seen in Fitzgerald's novel, for the world displayed in *Tender Is the Night* is certainly neither an Edenic place, nor a land of rebirth.

Arthur Mizener clarifies that Fitzgerald's characters are not what they are "merely because they are rich; they are so because the world is." (1967: 115) Similarly, José Antonio Bravo affirms that in Carpentier's novel "es fácil deducir que ha habido un descenso en la escala de valores en el comportamiento de los protagonistas como producto de lo angustioso de los acontecimientos" (1978: 102, "it is easy to deduce that the descent in the moral scale of the protagonists' behavior is the result of the worrisome events"). But who provoked these "angustiosos acontecimientos"? How can Mizener and Bravo blame the world in order to justify people's acts? Human interaction is crucial to define any milieu.

While Carpentier's account exemplifies the social complexity of the colony "to draw a sharp contrast between the *grands blancs* who recreated the conditions in France to enjoy their fortunes and the *gens de couleur*, many of whom yearned to return to Africa," (Pontiero 1970: 217) Fitzgerald's *Tender Is the Night* shows an America embedded in Europe whose ideals "are becoming untenable, whose idealists . . . are being corrupted or crushed and cast out by a new culture progressively giving itself over to a material, amoral phase." (Grenberg 1986: 217) One thing is quite clear: America is not the Edenic place. In Carpentier's world, the colonists cannot recreate the conditions necessary to enjoy their fortunes in America, the slaves yearn to return to Africa, and the mulattoes cannot create the perfect world they dreamed of after the French Revolution. In Fitzgerald's novel, the Americans cannot maintain a durable Paradise like the "Villa Diana," for their ideals, if they have any, cannot co-exist with their selfish lives. Besides,

if they return to America, they are either killed in a degrading way, as is Abe North, who dies in a speakeasy or transformed into one of the living dead, as is Dick Diver. In both works, intrigue, resentment, and tension prevent the emergence of the Edenic world for which the characters yearn.

According to the circumstances of each novel, social tension and revolt generate changes in people. In Carpentier's narrative, because of his use of "magic realism," the changes are external, mythical, and magic, as can be seen in Ti Noel's metamorphoses. According to Richard Young, these metamorphoses suggest that "the existence of a constant state of tension in society is a natural phenomenon." (1983: 72) Natural or not, neither the human nor the animal world offers Carpentier's character acceptance and solidarity. The critic also affirms that these metamorphoses are "means not of evading responsibility but of continuing the struggle for liberation," since even in the natural kingdom there are "rigid hierarchies of which he [Ti Noel] is always a victim." (Young 1983: 61). But even if one considers these transformations as a way of evading society, Ti Noel's efforts are fruitless. When he transforms himself into a goose, for instance, he is rejected by the geese, for he "se presentaba, sin el menor expediente de limpieza de sangre, ante cuatro generaciones en palmas. En suma, era un meteco"⁵ ("presented himself, without proper family background, before geese who could trace their ancestry back four generations. In a word, he was an upstart, an intruder").⁶ The animal world also has its social rules.

In Fitzgerald's novel the personal changes are internal. As Dick Diver says, "The change came a long way back—but at first it didn't show. The manner remains intact for some time after the morale cracks."⁷ Furthermore, Bruce Grenberg points out "psychological metamorphoses" (1986: 208) in Fitzgerald's characters. Not only is Dick Diver, the promising and self-assured psychiatrist, transformed into an alcoholic wreck, but also Rosemary Hoyt, the innocent eighteen-year-old girl, turns into a *femme fatale*, and Nicole Warren, the mental patient, becomes a "sane crook" (*TIN*, 291) at the end. However, in contrast to Ti Noel, who lacks the proper "goose" background, Nicole's metamorphosis is successful since her "grandfather was a crook and [she is then] a crook by heritage" (*TIN*, 290), able to function in that amoral milieu. Each author uses the metamorphosis image differently. Fitzgerald provides his characters with these changes to make them part of their corrupt environment, exposing, at the same time, the vices of their world. Carpentier uses "the transformation as a metaphor for revolt," (de Armas 1981: 315) in order to ask for social change.

Social division is another similarity described by these two works. In Carpentier's novel, as Young states, "the social structure and its tensions are biologically determined. . . society is divided into impenetrable units that conflict with each other at the slightest provocation." (1983: 73) But these divisions are not only biological or racial but also social, economic, and religious. From the beginning, Carpentier's reader sees a divided world in the image of the wax heads displaying wigs at the barbershop and the calves' heads in the butchershop next door: "Sólo un tabique de madera separaba ambos mostradores, y Ti Noel se divertía pensando que, al lado de las cabezas descoloridas de los terneros, se servían cabezas de blancos señores en el mantel de la misma mesa" (*REM*, 20; "Only a wooden wall separated the two counters, and it amused Ti Noel to think that alongside the pale calves' heads, heads of white men were served on the same tablecloth," *TKW*, 4). The white and the black, the colonist and the slave, the oppressor and the oppressed, as well as the "civilized" and the native, form the milieu of counter-

point in Carpentier's work. That is why an event such as Mackandal's execution is interpreted in different ways by each group. That is why Pauline Bonaparte fails in using Voodoo in order to achieve her goals, betraying then her religion and culture. And that is why Henry Christophe fails when he ignores his cultural background.

The reader of *Tender Is the Night* also faces a social division from the beginning of Fitzgerald's novel. Of course the line is softer, but it exists. The characters are divided into the habitués and the outsiders, or "the dark people and the light" (*TIN*, 4), as Rosemary categorizes them. In other words, one sees two groups: the people who are tanned and comfortable, gossiping under large beach umbrellas, and the ones who are pale and located well back from the sea, where the sand is still filled with debris. Dick Diver, for instance, the attractive man in the "jockey cap," belongs to the first group, while the McKiscos are part of the second, the group of the boring auto-graph seekers from whom Rosemary wants to escape. Rosemary was accepted into Dick's group, "Only after she had gone through a sort of initiatory rite of acquiring a sunburn." (Dahlie 1971: 3)

Even for those who share similar social traits, it is not easy to cross the line. That is why Babe Warren never really accepts Dick Diver as the ideal husband for Nicole, even though both are Europeanized Americans. Nicole, from Chicago, is representative of the new wealthy America nourished by industrial power, while Dick stands for the older established families of Virginia, who, although usually not rich, ran long on tradition. That is also why Rosemary and Nicole are different. While Rosemary has made her own money, Nicole is "the product of much ingenuity and toil" by others (*TIN*, 54), not of her own work. Nicole's fortune was made out of the effort and time of many factory workers in industrial America.

The idea of violence, although developed in different ways, is a constant feature in both novels. In Fitzgerald's *Tender Is the Night*, violence, which erupts everywhere, can be classified into different categories. Nicole Diver, for instance, illustrates mental violence. During her childhood, Nicole is violated by her father, and this trauma causes her insanity. The incest motif used by Fitzgerald is, according to E. W. Pitcher, "a metaphor for the human condition—of an internal controlling consciousness seduced to disorder by a primitive natural appetite—and Fitzgerald intends that it be seen as a human condition set free in the twentieth century." (1981: 85) Because of the incest, Nicole suffers from regressions during her marital life, as can be seen in her behavior after her labors and in her hysterical attacks, as for example after she sees the bloody corpse of Jules Peterson. Fitzgerald closes the first part of his novel with the violent scene of Nicole kneeling "beside the tub swaying sidewise and sidewise" (*TIN*, 112), crying uncontrollably and provoking Rosemary's terror. The cyclical nature of violence is given a new twist, since now physical violence (a crime) leads to mental violence (Nicole's attack).

In addition to Peterson's murder, Fitzgerald's novel contains other examples of public violence: the shooting in the Gare Saint Lazare, the duel between Barban and McKisco (a case of farcical violence), Dick's fight with the taxi driver and his consequent imprisonment, Nicole's attempt at killing herself and her family in a car accident, and Abe North beaten to death in a speakeasy. Even Rosemary's birthday party portrays a world of tension: the image of a shaking chestnut tree, the alcohol, the disorder, the confusion, the hysterical laughter of Rosemary and her friends. Fitzgerald depicts a violent world where "all Americans . . . just shoot at each other . . ." (*TIN*, 111), a world where "Western man [has] made of himself a willing victim and perpetrator of violence." (Pitcher 1981: 83).

Victims and victimizers are also found in Carpentier's violent novel. In *El reino de este mundo*, violence is portrayed in different ways. Mackandal, for instance, personifies violence. As Ivan César Martínez affirms, Mackandal "es un hombre representativo de la realidad americana hecha de violencia, sangre, fuego, rebeldías y amor a la libertad." (1974: 48, "is a representative man of the American reality made of violence, blood, fire, rebelliousness, and love for freedom"). Mackandal's first manifestation of violence is perceived in his huge thirst for revenge. Being an exploited slave, he wants to exterminate the whites, the exploiters, by poisoning them. Then, violence generates more violence, for "Exasperados por el miedo, borrachos de vino por no atreverse ya a probar el agua de los pozos, los colonos azotaban y torturaban a sus esclavos, en busca de una explicación" (*REM*, 39; "Exasperated with fear, drunk with wine because they no longer dared taste the water of the wells, the colonists whipped and tortured their slaves, trying to find an explanation," *TKW*, 23). The "civilized" Europeans lose control and, in order to save themselves, resort to barbarism.

The Jamaican Bouckman, another violent figure in *El reino de este mundo*, seeks vengeance and wants to exterminate all the white men. He is the leader of the second slave revolt. This time one also sees sexual violence, since not only does Ti Noel rape Mademoiselle Floridor, Monsieur Lenormand's third wife, but also "Los negros habían violado a casi todas las señoritas distinguidas de la Llanura" (*REM*, 70; "The Negroes had violated nearly all the well-born girls of the Plaine", *TKW*, 57).

It is important to point out, however, that violence also emerges within a single racial group. "Ti Noel recibió un garrotazo en el cráneo" (*REM*, 102; "A cudgel cracked on Ti Noel's skull," *TKW*, 91) when he arrived at Sans Souci, Henri Christophe's kingdom, which is a world of blacks. There, Ti Noel has been beaten "por un negro tan negro como [él]" (*REM*, 107; "by a Negro as black as [himself]," *TKW*, 96). This time, there is no justification for the violence, such as the search for freedom. There is only the ambition for power and wealth that provokes suffering and pain. Henri Christophe, the black king, wants his castle to be built. Therefore, he mistreats and tortures his own subjects—even children, pregnant women, and old men—by forcing them to work without any consideration of their condition.

Finally, the violent image of war is part of the two novels. In Fitzgerald's *Tender Is the Night*, war is seen as a metaphor for the disintegration of the Western World. The reader faces a post-war society deprived of moral values. Even Dick Diver, who is a descendent of the revolutionary war hero Mad Anthony Wayne, and who is later compared with the Civil War hero Ulysses S. Grant, and who visits the World War I battlefields and describes them as the setting of a "love war," cannot cope with the convulsive milieu. Diver's values are obsolete, fruitless in an epoch where war is seen as a business, as the figure of Tommy Barban illustrates. On the other hand, in Carpentier's *El reino de este mundo*, war is not a metaphor but a reality; the revolts in Haiti and, indirectly, the French Revolution are important parts of the plot. It is a world at war, where massacres can be justified by the ideals of freedom and justice. However, as in Fitzgerald's case, once war is over, the ideals disintegrate. It is not necessary, then, to suffer from a "non-combatant's shell-shock," as Diver indicates, in order to become corrupt, for there are non-combatant victims and victimizers as well as combatant victims and victimizers in our world, as both Fitzgerald and Carpentier show.

An analysis of how the central figures of each novel interact within their respective worlds exposes even more similarities. Fitzgerald's Dick Diver has always been associated with the image of the decadent hero of the twentieth century. Even his last name, "Diver," has been interpreted as a symbol of his downfall. However, Margaret McBride affirms that "Diver" may also "stem from the Latin, 'divus' or 'god,' specially 'sky-god' . . . [and that] . . . Fitzgerald repeatedly depicts his protagonist as a Christ figure: Dick Diver literarily is divine."⁸ One sees that Dick, the psychiatrist, attempts to save people, as Christ did. At the beginning, Dick is the matrix of the group, a man of generous impulses who is admired by everybody. As Christ taught the Commandments, Dick teaches "the ABC's of human decency" (*TIN*, 201). Moreover, several of his patients implore Diver for miraculous cures. Fitzgerald's novel embodies more Biblical parallels, like the twelve guests at Dick's table in the "Villa Diana," reproducing the image of the Last Supper, and Dick's blessing of the beach at the end of the book. But unlike Christ, Dick Diver could not avoid temptation, since the psychiatrist marries his mental patient, the rich and beautiful Nicole Warren.

Curiously enough, part of the name of Carpentier's central figure, "Noel," which means Christmas in French, is also related to Christ, more specifically to the epoch of Christ's birth. Ti Noel, like Christ, wants to create a better world. Like Christ, he sacrifices himself for people since, as Richard Young affirms, "he [Ti Noel] becomes aware of the implications of his experiences, he feels as if he has carried the burden of all humanity." (1983: 62) But, unlike Christ, he resorts to barbarism and violence, for Ti Noel was never part of the Kingdom of Heaven, but a representative of the convulsive Kingdom of this World. Thus, the Christ motif or scapegoat archetype is demanded by the societies in *Tender Is the Night* and in *El reino de este mundo*, and both Fitzgerald and Carpentier include it in their narratives. However, neither of them is implying that the world will be redeemed with the respective sacrifices.

The return to roots is another feature shared by Fitzgerald's Dick Diver and Carpentier's Ti Noel. Diver returns to America to attend his father's funeral. In New York harbor, he sees his homeland as a magnificent "façade." Fitzgerald presents for the second time, then, the route of the Dutch sailors' voyage mentioned in *The Great Gatsby*, but the green land full of possibilities that the Dutch sailors had visualized in the past is seen now as an empty façade. It is not surprising, then, that Diver experiences only a sense of loss and isolation from that trip. His father, as the embodiment of Diver's traditional values, is dead. America is not the same. Dick Diver cannot recover his former self. On the other hand, Ti Noel's return to Haiti after a period of exile in Cuba is a figurative recovery of the past. Ti Noel believes that he has regained both "the mythic past of Africa and its historical continuation in the New World," (Young 1983: 85) but he realizes his mistake when he faces Christophe's regime. Then, in an apocalyptic ending, Ti Noel disappears in a storm; similarly, Dick Diver moves to America and his professional image fades in little towns in upstate New York.

Another trait seen in the central figures of these two novels is that of monarchical authority. At the beginning of Fitzgerald's work, Dick is described as a king. According to Brian Way, Dick is a kind of social ruler or emperor "through most of the novel—certainly throughout the period of Dick's social *reign* on the Riviera and in Paris" (1980: 135, emphasis mine). In Carpentier's novel, the king figure is Henri Christophe who, according to Emil Volek, represents not only a king of a determined country and epoch, but the king as universal symbol of

monarchy. (1969:107) However, Christophe's is not a typical royal story: he did not have a noble background, but was a cook. Besides, compared to the downfall of O'Neill's Emperor Jones, Christophe's is more pathetic. Although both black monarchs are deserted and destroyed by their respective black subjects, Jones was a "foreigner," a black from New York whose empire was on an island of the West Indies, while Christophe grew up in Haiti and shared his subjects' suffering and oppression for some time. He was one of them.

In addition, Carpentier gives us a variation of the king symbol in Ti Noel who, according to Daniel-Henri Pageux, "est une sorte de roi bouffon, habillé des oripeaux de Christophe et des meubles de Sans Souci, roi de Carnaval, regnant sur un territoire imaginaire" (1984: 63, "is a kind of clownish king, dressed with Christophe's tinsels and the trappings of Sans Souci, a king of Carnival, reigning in an imaginary territory". The figure of Ti Noel as a jester king in *El reino de este mundo* foreshadows, in a way, the end of Diver's and Henri Christophe's reigns. Both were governing imaginary kingdoms—kingdoms with no real basis to support themselves. Both were "kings of Carnaval" who lost control of their kingdoms as well as of their lives.

In short, the "powerful" kings are victims in their own domains. Fitzgerald's hero is a product of his civilization, and shares its deficiencies. As John Callahan states, Diver's morality "has consisted more of socially serving manners than of commitment to honesty [and] integrity." (1972: 163) While Callahan implies that Diver's moral values were not genuine, William Wasserstrom affirms that it is precisely Diver's values that made him a "displaced person" in his society. (1986: 145) And Brian Way declares that the abandonment of his inherited values is "a major element in his [Diver's] moral decline." (Way 1980: 129) Thus, pretended, misplaced or abandoned, moral values are what lead Dick Diver to his downfall. Moreover, Dick Diver is a man "*epuisé* . . . in a state of terrible spiritual ennui." (Mizener 1967: 113) Carpentier's Ti Noel, on the other hand, does not share Diver's spiritual exhaustion. Ti Noel is a man who "acts in accordance with the limits of his social status, education and experience." (Peavler 1982: 67) He is not a man of moral values, but a man of instincts. But, like Diver, Ti Noel represents his society. In fact, more than a man, Ti Noel is a symbol of rebellion and the fighting spirit. But even the most faithful representative of such a convulsive world feels trapped in his milieu. Ti Noel has to escape from the human world to the animal world, and even there, where no moral values are demanded, where instincts prevail, he is rejected.

Dick Diver's downfall, however, according to Brian Way, is caused by the abandonment of the moral values and the old virtues of his father. The image of the man of the twentieth century who favors materialism over spiritual qualities is seen clearly when Dick says, "Good-by my father—good-by, all my fathers" (*TIN*, 205). Here Dick realizes the betrayal of his moral heritage. One observes a kind of epiphany in this scene since the hero realizes his flaw, even though it is too late for him to change. Besides, if one considers Wasserstrom's explanation of Dick as a displaced man, at least he learns that a world of arrested time is not possible.

Ti Noel also learns from his life experience. During his epiphany, as Volek affirms, Ti Noel loses his individual traits and becomes a symbolic outline of his race and of humanity as well. (1969: 110) Learning that "la grandeza del hombre está precisamente en querer mejorar lo que es" ("man's greatness consists in the very fact of wanting to be better than he is") and that "el hombre sólo puede hallar su grandeza, su medida máxima en el Reino de este Mundo"

(*REM*, 156; "man finds his greatness, his fullest measure, only in the Kingdom of This World," *TKW*, 149), Ti Noel depicts a world of struggle in constant movement, where no arrested time is possible, and where the desire for personal improvement is not only an individual moral value, but the matrix for a successful social system.

Within its respective social milieu, the female role exhibited in both novels is similar. One factor is the identification between the woman and the land, that is, the continent. Women in *Tender Is the Night* derive identity from their association with America. According to John Callahan, Nicole is "the essence of a continent . . . taken by Barban, by the Barbarian, by the plunderers." (1972: 176) For Bruce Grenberg, "the twentieth century is Nicole's Age," (1986: 213) since "Neither the war's end nor Nicole's recovery can be intended as a complete resolution of conflict . . . [since] neither Nicole nor America can ever be truly innocent again." (Grenberg 1986: 224) Both have been violated: the sixteen-year-old Nicole and the New World. Furthermore, in *Tender Is the Night*, Rosemary also stands for America, for she embodies "all the salient features of the post-war generation." (Grenberg 1986: 221) She epitomizes the American dream of youth and success as well as the immaturity and superficiality of her time.

In regard to Nicole, E. W. Pitcher adds that, "it is worth noting that her [Nicole's] mother was European, while her father . . . is American." (1981: 76) In this sense, Nicole embraces two continents, as does Pauline in *El reino de este mundo*. Alexis Márquez-Rodríguez affirms that Pauline has "ciertos nexos entre lo americano y lo europeo" (1970: 50) (certain bonds between the American and the European): Pauline is Europe (France) in America (Haiti), while Nicole is America (U.S.) in Europe. But Pauline returns to Europe because her expectations in the "Tropical Paradise" were not fulfilled. Nicole is totally well-installed in Europe; a return to her land is out of the question.

In addition to their symbolic roles as continents, the female characters in both novels help describe their respective societies: the shallowness of Rosemary's vanity, the selfishness of Nicole's lust for things, and the ambition of Babe Warren in *Tender Is the Night*, and the promiscuity of Pauline Bonaparte, and the professional failure, as an actress, of Mademoiselle Floridor in *El reino de este mundo*. But in Carpentier's novel, Mademoiselle Floridor is not the only one who acts. According to Richard Young, "the adoption of a series of roles is one of the principal characteristics of Pauline Bonaparte." (1983: 68) And "acting" is what Fitzgerald personifies in the successful movie star, Rosemary Hoyt, who is the product of Hollywood, factory of the "American Dream," and besides, who also embodies "all the immaturity of the race" (*TIN*, 68). As Edwin Fussell affirms, Rosemary "brings from Hollywood to Europe the latest American version of the dream of youthful innocence . . . [and] she provides one more symbol of the corruption of imagination in American civilization: both deluded and deluding." (1986: 115) Her acting embodies not only the illusions of a nation but also "the intrinsic insincerity of Hollywood." (Trachtenberg 1968: 156) In these two novels, women are like ambassadors who manifest the traits, aspirations, and vices of their cultures.

The human desire to forge a better world is found in both novels, but the ideas of how to achieve a paradise on earth, and what elements make the place an Eden, differ in each work. Fitzgerald recreates a paradise and places it "on the pleasant shore of the French Riviera" (*TIN*, 1), where the well-tanned rich Americans appear to live in an eternal holiday. As Thomas Stavola says, the place is the refuge of "a small group of *nice* Americans who make the paradisial-

cal Riviera beach the centre of their lives of leisure and idleness.” (1979: 122) But although in appearance the setting looks perfect, the retreat of “the tranquil Riviera summer life . . . is overwhelmed and lost in an invasion of the strident, the raffish and the vulgar.” (Way 1980: 140) The place is populated by a set of rich Americans for whom “there is nothing to do but make love in the corrosive sunlight or drink too much at night, or buy fine clothes or travel.” (Gregory 1986: 73) And within this blue paradise, the “Villa Diana”—the Divers’ house—is an outstanding element. According to Rosemary, who is described in an Edenic tone as a child who lives apart from the world, the “Villa Diana” is “the centre of the world” (*TIN*, 28). But the “Villa Diana” is, in fact, “a representative array of the frustrated, disappointed, neurotic, misled and deracinated of the Modern World.” (Foster 1975: 96) Dick Diver has created a beautiful, artificial half-imagined world, and his wife has transformed its garden into “the site of first magical enchantment” in the novel, but their paradise is not forever, the holiday is soon over, and the Edenic place turns into a nightmare. Crime, hypocrisy, and ambition pollute the atmosphere.

Another sort of paradise is found in *El reino de este mundo*. One sees the European idealization of colonial life in Pauline’s initial vision of Saint Domingue as a tropical paradise. Pauline had formed her preconceived ideas of America as an Edenic place after having read Bernardin de Saint-Pierre’s *Paul et Virginie*. Like Carpentier, Saint-Pierre sets his naturalistic novel on an island because such has been the usual setting for a utopian landscape—separated from the rest of the world as an oasis of bliss. However, despite the lush descriptions of tropical surroundings in *Paul et Virginie*, the author depicts a tragic love idyll. While Saint Pierre argues for man’s nobility in a natural environment, Carpentier searches for it in a convulsive world. Pauline, unlike Virginie, does not love anyone, except herself, but at least for a while her desire for an idyllic existence in Saint Domingue is fulfilled. She enjoys the gorgeous Nature “Sintiéndose algo ave del paraíso, . . . descubría la finura de los helechos nuevos, la parda jugosidad de los nísperos” (*REM*, 83; “Feeling herself part bird of paradise . . . she discovered the delicacy of tender ferns, the brown juiciness of the medlar . . .,” *TKW*, 71). Pauline is served by her slaves, bathed, massaged, and adored by her faithful Solimán, and gratifies her sexual impulses with the handsome officers of her husband’s unit.

Pauline’s image of Paradise is not the only one in Carpentier’s novel. According to Lorna Williams, “the most pronounced feature of Carpentier’s characters is their utopian mentality.” (1981: 130) That is why each of them has an individual Edenic concept in *El reino de este mundo*. For Mackandal and Solimán, their perfect world is Africa; Mackandal and Bouckman are the ones who attempt to exterminate the whites in order to recreate a similar perfect world in Saint Domingue. But “whereas Bouckman and Mackandal projected their utopia in time [into the future], in Ti Noel’s case, the vision of a better world is located within the self.” (Williams 1981: 133) When he returns to Haiti, Ti Noel thinks that he will find a land free of slavery, but the regime of Henri Christophe shows him his mistake. Then, Ti Noel realizes that the only hope for human beings is the desire for self-amelioration in order to achieve happiness in the kingdom of this world. Thus, Carpentier’s novel embodies the three kinds of utopias—spatial, temporal, and psychic—pointed out by Frank Manuel in his survey of the utopian tradition in Western literature. (Williams 1981: 130) Pauline looks for the spatial utopia, Mackandal and Bouckman for the temporal, and Ti Noel for the psychic.

In *Tender Is the Night*, Dick Diver has failed with the first type of utopia since the Edenic look of the "Villa Diana" is fragile and artificial. He tries to achieve the psychic one by means of his profession. His clinic is located in peaceful "Switzerland [that] was an island, washed on one side by the waves of thunder around Gorizia and on another by the cataracts along the Somme and the Aisne" (*TIN*, 113; emphasis mine). In such a perfect place, the psychiatrist attempts "to regenerate the survivors of nightmare and recreate a world of purpose and order in which meaning, not mere existence is possible." (Grenberg 1986: 218) But all his attempts are fruitless, and even though Nicole is cured, her sanity consists of adapting herself to the amoral environment. Dick Diver cannot create psychic utopias, for he cannot find greatness in himself any more. His heroic age is over.

Any Edenic milieu demands an Adam. In Carpentier's novel, Ti Noel is seen as "un 'Nouvel Adam' chargé de décrire et de comprendre la création . . . de réconcilier la créature avec la Création" (Pageux 1984: 60) (a new Adam who is in charge of describing and understanding the world . . . in charge of reconciling the creature [man] and the Creation). Ti Noel himself is transformed into the myth of Edenic possibilities, representing this New Adam who can recreate in himself a better world. On the other hand, Fitzgerald depicts a weak Adam in Dick Diver who "dreamed his Eve and woke to find the form of his image embodied in the substance of his own flesh." (Callahan 1972: 179) At the beginning, Nicole existed because of Dick, "She (Nicole) was Dick" (*TIN*, 190). But the "missing rib" rejects her Creator and marries Tommy Barban, a twentieth-century barbarian of the old order. Thus, Fitzgerald closes his book with a parody of paradise where "Tommy and Nicole are *Adam and Eve*. Leisured, self-sufficient . . . they are sustained in their *garden* by the system which exploits and dehumanizes the world" (Callahan 1972: 195, emphasis mine). Nicole's previous garden, "her lovely grassless garden" (*TIN*, 23) of wriggling vines, lemon, and eucalyptus trees is, symbolically transformed into a Waste Land.

Since the Renaissance, America, the New World, has been contemplated as a land of opportunity and possibilities. According to Juan Liscano, *El reino de este mundo* illustrates the possibilities of a place, America, where the real is marvelous, where marvels belong exclusively to that place, and where the new son of this New World should be independent from his mother (Europe), and should discover new roots in order to live his own adventure as well as forge his own kingdom. (1953: 91) Sharing Liscano's view, Alexis Márquez-Rodríguez states that *El reino de este mundo* is America, a world full of wonder that challenges within its primitivism the ancestral essences of European traditional rationalism as well as twentieth century rationalism. (1970: 54) Both critics point out Europe as an obstacle for the New World, as a burden that the New Adam should get rid of in order to enjoy his marvelous kingdom. Is Europe, then, the reason why Fitzgerald's *Tender Is the Night* is a nightmare?

Even though the setting of Fitzgerald's *Tender Is the Night* is the Old World, even though the Americans portrayed there are called "Europeanized," what Fitzgerald depicts is mainly America; Europe is a sort of background in his narrative. The reader almost forgets that the action is taking place in France until near the end of first part of the novel, in which two porters, speaking in French, make a trivial comment about the violent milieu. With few exceptions, most of the characters are American. Although they live in Europe, their money makes them totally independent, absorbed by neither European norms nor European tradition. And if

they can, as Babe Warren does, they challenge European laws. However, all this challenge and this independence do not make them better. Fitzgerald does not present a Jamesian view of Europe as Evil and America as Innocence, but a corrupt America within a decadent Europe, both sharing the frame of a post-war era.

Similarly, in *El reino de este mundo*, Carpentier does not portray a perfect world, even though the setting is America. Within Ti Noel's epiphany, Carpentier gives hope since he shows a way of achieving a better world. However, most of the novel is the description of a nightmare caused not only by Europeans, but also by Africans and American mulattoes. Therefore, it is not only the land with majestic Nature or with material riches that can create a better world, but the people's behavior in it. In their narratives, the two authors are emphasizing the psychic utopia or eupsychia (as Frank Manuel defines it). In the twentieth century, a spatial utopia is out of the question and a temporal utopia too idealistic. The search for the perfect world should start within the self. But the two twentieth-century writers present this search in a different way. Fitzgerald delineates the downfall of a man of our century who wanted to be the greatest man in his field, and who had the proper background, education, and knowledge to achieve that goal. Carpentier, placing the reader two centuries earlier, narrates the story of an illiterate slave who is able to visualize what Fitzgerald's hero could not see: that in order to be great and to have a better world, a man has to become better himself.

Although the two novels exhibit a relationship between Europe and America, if one focuses on the nature of such a relationship, many differences emerge. According to James Miller, in Fitzgerald's *Tender Is the Night*, the Americans are the ones who suffer from "the brittle sterility of a life dedicated to the bitch goddess Money." (1969: 96) He adds that this illness takes "its most acute form in the American, and particularly the American abroad. But it infects society everywhere. Even the Swiss psychiatric clinics dedicated . . . to serious science . . . flourish on American fortunes." (1969: 96) Miller is severe in his criticism of Americans, but the Europeans portrayed in Fitzgerald's novel are not examples of honesty and integrity either. One sees the ambitious Franz Gregorious, his envious wife, Kaethe, and the decadent Lady Caroline Sibley-Biers, among others, as examples of corrupt Europeans. One could say that Fitzgerald is concerned, then, with that "society in Europe which is merely a heterogeneous prolongation of American society." (Way 1980: 139) Besides, as Brian Way declares, the image of a Swiss clinic for the wealthy is "the dramatic focus for examining the decay of Western civilization," (1980: 139) not only American civilization. Thomas Mann, for instance, uses a similar setting for *The Magic Mountain*.

Carpentier's *El reino de este mundo* presents a conflict that not only embodies Europe and America, but also Africa. As Richard Young states, the reader faces "the artificiality of European culture, the strength of African culture . . . [and] its authenticity and association with the natural world [America]." (1983: 78) In other words, the conflict is between a dynamic and a decadent culture fighting each other to impose their domain in the New World. The Europeans are depicted as the corruptors, and even the non-Europeans "who have adopted European ways are equally decadent" (Young 1983: 76) and unauthentic (The examples of Henri Christophe and Solimán illustrate this view.) In addition, European and Europeanized characters are the ones who cannot see reality, while Ti Noel can. One difference between the novels is clear. The kind of European influence in some of Carpentier's characters is not found in Fitzgerald's expan-

triates who, even though living in Europe, are "as effectively cut off from specifically European influence as if they had never left home." (Way 1980: 139)

It is important to clarify that when critics analyze the relationship between Europe and America in Fitzgerald's novel, they designate the United States as America, while critics of Carpentier's work see America as Spanish America. Both groups of critics have not realized that even in their differences the two Americas together are what constitute the whole continent, the New World. But the children of this New World are not innocent. The mulattoes are as tyrannical as the whites. Ti Noel has raped and killed. Henri Christophe, although he illustrates, in a way, the myth of the self-made man (from cook to king), turns out to be as ambitious and corrupt as Franz Gregorious.

Carpentier once said that the entire history of America was "una crónica de lo real maravilloso" (1970: 12, "a chronicle of marvelous realism"). In his narrative *El reino de este mundo*, the marvelous is untamed nature, the mythical and magical elements included in the story, but the real is the ambition and selfishness seen in the Europeans, in the Europeanized, and in the anti-European characters of the novel. Moreover, Carpentier depicts the human vices of colonial times and makes them modern. Although he tries to transport his reader two centuries back through dates and historical facts, the reader does not feel submerged in a forgotten past but part of a convulsive present.

Many vices of Carpentier's eighteenth-century characters are also portrayed in Fitzgerald's. In *Tender Is the Night*, Fitzgerald is quite explicit in his criticism of his fellow citizens. He portrays them as selfish, ignorant, and immature. However, he never omits the fact that it is mainly the period in which these people had to live that affects their behavior. His novel covers a convulsive epoch in American history, from 1917 to 1930—that is, from America's entrance into World War I to the beginning of the Depression. As Brian Way affirms, "the hysteria and the anarchy of expatriate life are equally characteristic of the febrile rhythms of the post-war decade." (1980: 139) With such a background of revolt, American traits are easily observed, and not all of them are negative. For instance, a comparison of Dick Diver's with Ulysses S. Grant's idealism and commitment in the Civil War exposes "a traditional American ideal, [which is] a dedication to the healing of moral wounds." (Trachtenberg 1968: 154) Furthermore, there is a kind of naive American optimism in Diver's wish to become "a great psychiatrist or even a complete man simply by an act of will." (Way 1980: 127) Americans' self-conscious egoism is seen, as E. W. Pitcher declares, "in their naive but necessary participation in the optimistic myths which veil the waste land heterogeneity of the modern world." (1981: 72) In a way, Americans are naive in their feelings, not in their acts.

The role of the black is another variant between the works. Carpentier basically depicts a black America within the image of Haiti. He also presents the hatred between whites and blacks as well as the exploitation in the colonist-slave system. It is a conflict of race and power in which blacks have the qualities of leadership but not the ability or opportunity to use them. On the other hand, Fitzgerald presents a white America embedded in Europe in which the black characters are minor but symbolic. Mr. Freeman, for example, is a black restaurateur arrested mistakenly for having robbed Abe North. Fitzgerald remarkably portrays the conflict between the North and the South during the American Civil War by means of these characters. Abe North stands for Abraham Lincoln, but Lincoln seen as a drunken cynic who accuses a black

man unfairly, causing the black, ironically named "Freeman," to be imprisoned. The other black character is Jules Peterson, who had seen Abe North robbed and whom Freeman's friends kill for his complicity in confessing to the whites. In this case, all of white America is personified by Abe North. The black characters are not leaders but victims. Peterson's murder, which illustrates the exploitation of blacks by whites, is dismissed by Dick Diver, for whom the killing of a black man is just "some nigger scrap" (*TIN*, 110). There are no feelings of hatred in this white America, just a huge superiority complex and scorn toward the black. According to John Callahan, "the rape of America and the murder and enslavement of black people are linked;" (1972: 11) and the issue of blacks, being a minor part of Fitzgerald's novel and a main element of Carpentier's plot, exposes differences in degree between the two works as well as exhibits the injustice and cruelty of both milieux.

Freedom is a topic that, even though present in both novels, is developed in different ways. According to Márquez-Rodríguez, the yearning for freedom as well as the struggle to achieve it is a universal and eternal phenomenon which is always restricted since total freedom is unreachable. (1982: 97) In Carpentier's *El reino de este mundo*, freedom is a recurrent image which is found in the form of social desire and collective struggle, as well as in several characters such as Mackandal, who presents a struggle for freedom that embodies magic and esoteric elements. According to D. H. Lawrence, individuals are free "when they belong to a living organic believing community, active in fulfilling some unfulfilled, perhaps unrealized purpose." (1964: 6) Although Márquez-Rodríguez affirms that the yearning and struggle for freedom are universal, in *Tender Is the Night* freedom becomes "not a positive but a purely destructive condition." (Way 1980... 140) There is no living organic community as pointed out by D. H. Lawrence and seen in Carpentier's novel, but rather a collective group of lonely individuals whose freedom is measured in terms of money, ease of movement, and a lack of social friction that makes them unable to commit themselves to any purpose. There is no slavery in Fitzgerald's work. However, people are not free, for Fitzgerald's emphasis is on "the futility of all efforts to form absolute moral judgements in a world where free will is an unintelligible term." (Pitcher 1981: 73) Thus, although freedom can be unreachable, Carpentier's characters try to attain it, while Fitzgerald's, even though they would not have to struggle for it, never realize it.

One of the main themes perceived in both Fitzgerald's *Tender Is the Night* and in Carpentier's *El reino de este mundo* is failure. The reasons for failure expose dissimilarities in the two novels. First, it is significant that both authors were influenced, though in different ways, by Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West*. Spengler's book was one of Fitzgerald's favorites, and according to James F. Light the characters in *Tender Is the Night* "embody the decline of a culture, and in miniature they foreshadow Spengler's prophecy of the decline of the West ... [They are] selfish children who are what they are because civilization has taught them nothing better." (1986: 136) On the other hand, according to Roberto González-Echevarría, *The Decline of the West* was a source of hope for Latin America, since "Spengler provided the philosophical ground on which to stake the autonomy of Latin American culture and deny its filial relation to Europe." (1977: 56) This concept is clearly stated in Carpentier's narrative. If Fitzgerald foreshadows Spengler's prophecy in *Tender Is the Night*, then Dick Diver's tragic end as a living failure is understandable. And if Carpentier sees the hope Spengler offers for Latin America, then there is justification for Ti Noel's epiphany at the end. However, beyond taking an in-

fluent source of both works, such as *The Decline of the West*, as a basis to analyze the reasons for failure in the two novels, their downfall motif can be perceived within the frame of their social milieu.

In Fitzgerald's microcosm, money corrupts and destroys humanity. Material richness is the source of neurotic conflicts, for "not having it [money] means discouragement and maladjustment; but having it means heartlessness, selfishness, amorality." (Kallich 1949: 277) Fitzgerald presents a predatory society that erodes moral values, a society of alienated victims and of victimizers whose selfish nature denies any possibility of commitment to the human condition. In *El reino de este mundo*, there is collective as well as individual selfishness. Failure is due to cultural betrayal and anarchical individualism. Failure is also the consequence of greed, violence, and moral decadence. Thus, one witnesses the failure of the French to recapture Haiti, their colony, and the failure of Christophe to control his own kingdom. There is not a gradual erosion of values as Fitzgerald's narrative shows. And even though there is social and racial commitment, self-interest and desire for power prevent success.

According to Bruce Grenberg, *Tender Is the Night* tells us that "man's nobility lies in his unyielding efforts to be his best self . . . [and] . . . that man's tragedy . . . lies in his failure to recognize his own limitations and live with them." (1986: 235) *El reino de este mundo* embodies a similar message. Carpentier also points human limitations when he comments that "el hombre siempre ansía una felicidad más allá de la porción que le es otorgada" (*REM*, 156; "man always seeks a happiness far beyond that which is meted out to him," *TKW*, 149). Thus, the concept of Carpentier's human greatness is parallel to that of human nobility which Grenberg sees as one of Fitzgerald's messages embedded in *Tender Is the Night*.

Taking into account the first definitions of the "American Dream," that present the idea of a dream of a land in which life should be better, one sees that the emphasis is on the myth of Edenic possibilities not only as a geographical entity, but also as a place where human behavior can make life better. Freedom, justice, and fraternity were considered the main elements of such an Edenic place. The utopian mentality, then, looked for a land that could offer rebirth. With the discovery of the New World, the Europeans thought they had found their New Eden, a new start, a second opportunity to make life better. Europeans during this time described America as a dreamlike milieu, as "a land of wonders." In some of their historical chronicles, the Europeans' idealism and imagination made them omit the violence, hardship, and exploitation that characterized the discovery and settlement of the New Continent. That was the first delusion of the myth of Edenic possibilities.

Because the myth demanded a place to become concrete, the young American continent was chosen and invented, as Norman Cortés Larriau states so well: "América inventada, América mágica, sueño americano" (1973: 97) (emphasis mine; invented America, magic America, American dream). However, the settlers of the New World betrayed the myth itself, for massacre, exploitation, and slavery continued to characterize the new Promised Land, contradicting the ideals of freedom, justice, and fraternity that the fulfillment of the dream implied. The second delusion of the Edenic myth took shape when many Europeans arrived in the new continent looking not for freedom, but for a way of escape from Europe's privations. Moreover, the children subsequently born of this New World committed the same mistakes, for once the Americans achieved their independence from Europe, they made war and fought among them-

selves. Even though the human longing for a better world was always there, exuberant Nature and virgin lands were not enough to recreate the Garden of Eden, despite the persistence of the concept: what had begun as a European invention was taken as a fact in the New Continent. And while American and Spanish American writers were exposing this demise of Edenic possibilities, Americans in each respective part of the continent kept changing the seat of this mythical place, but always within the New World.

In the twentieth century, with the experience of two World Wars, with the impact of technology, with the haste for living, and with the lack of faith, the transition from Eden to Wasteland, that is, from dream to nightmare, is easily perceived. American writers left the New World. Some, like Fitzgerald, went to Europe because, disillusioned with their homeland, they thought they could escape or start again (reversing the concept of the "American Dream"—from the New to the Old World, this time). Others, like Carpentier, went to Europe and there, far away from the New World, achieved a better perspective on the place they had left behind. However, both Fitzgerald and Carpentier had the same concern: to describe what they had left, to judge their pasts, to go back and see how and why the Edenic dream had turned into a nightmare.

Although coming from different backgrounds and portraying different societies at different times, Fitzgerald and Carpentier share a similar philosophy of life, one which is enhanced by the role of history in *Tender Is the Night* and *El reino de este mundo*. Once Fitzgerald defined history as "a figured curtain hiding that terrible door into the past through which we all must go." (1945: 173) In *Tender Is the Night*, history is seen as something frightening but inevitable: "history, if not humanized, will brutalize humanity." (Callahan 1972: 139). In short, Fitzgerald points out the importance of the past "through which we all must go," and the necessity to "humanize" it. In other words, by realizing past mistakes, we can avoid them and forge a better future. On the other hand, Carpentier's characters are considered "the pawn[s] of history . . . [since] things evolve, they happen and man gets caught up in the course of events" (Irish 1972: 65, emphasis mine). Carpentier, then, evokes the strength of history as well as the importance of going back.

The difference does not lie in how these two authors see the past, but in how they see the future. In Fitzgerald's novel, the reader feels regret for the "future unfulfilled because it was irresponsibly wasted;" (Lehan 1969: 69) in Carpentier's, the reader grasps a hope involved in the struggle for a better future.

While Fitzgerald is preaching morality to the whole American continent, Carpentier makes his regional values universal by offering a serious world view in order to interpret human nature. That is why the themes are interchangeable in *Tender Is the Night* and *El reino de este mundo*. Images of exploitation and class struggle, present in Fitzgerald's work, are developed in Carpentier's novel. Patterns that run from "madness to barbarism, barbarism to tyranny, tyranny to exile and exile to grief and ruin" (Wasserstrom 1986: 142) describe Fitzgerald's narrative, while Carpentier's novel moves from "fanaticism and insurrection to corruption, to some new phase of tyranny and violence to end on a note of disillusionment." (Pontiero 1970: 537) Different societies and different times exhibit the same problems—humanity has not yet learned from its past. The night will never be tender in the kingdom of this world if we do not move aside the curtain and face the past. And if, for the present, "all people want is to have a

good time and if you make them unhappy you cut yourself off from nourishment" (*TIN*, 311), human beings will be surrounded by darkness in spite of their potential and endeavors.

The America of the twentieth century is far from being an Earthly Paradise, but the America of the fifteenth century was not such an Edenic place either. The myth was invented, the dream was conceived, and the nightmare was lived. However, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Alejo Carpentier not only present the nightmare, but also offer the reader solutions to achieve realistically the previous dream. In a duet, both writers state that the children of this "Brave New World" should know their limitations and should learn from the past in order to mature and hence to be able to scale down, to modest proportions, their dream of forging a better world, that is, reinventing and remaking the Americas. Otherwise, the children of the New World will be always "pathetic creatures lost in a world they never made."¹⁰

Notes

1. Scott Fitzgerald, "Introduction," in *Tender Is the Night*, ed. Charles Scribner III (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1982) viii.
2. F. Scott Fitzgerald, quoted by Henry Dan Piper in his "The Great Gatsby: Finding a Form," *F. Scott Fitzgerald: A Critical Portrait* (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1986) 133.
3. F. Scott Fitzgerald, quoted by James F. Light in "Political Conscience in the Novels of F. Scott Fitzgerald," in *Critical Essays on Tender Is the Night*, ed. Milton R. Stern (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1986) 133.
4. F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Introduction," in *Tender Is the Night*, ed. Charles Scribner III (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1982) xiii.
5. Alejo Carpentier, *El reino de este mundo* (Santiago de Chile: Editorial Universitaria, S.A., 1967) 155. Citations from this source will be indicated as *REM*.
6. Harriet de Onís, trans., *The Kingdom of This World*, by Alejo Carpentier (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1957) 147-148. Citations from this source will be indicated as *TKW*.
7. F. Scott Fitzgerald, *Tender Is the Night*, ed. Charles Scribner III (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1982) 283. Citations from this source will be indicated as *TIN*.
8. Margaret McBride, "The Divine Dick Diver," *Notes on Modern American Literature* 1 (Fall 1977): Item 28.
9. James W. Tuttleton, "Vitality and Vampirism in *Tender Is the Night*," in *Critical Essays on Tender Is the Night*, ed. Milton R. Stern (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1986) 242.
10. Kent and Gretchen Kreuter, "F. Scott Fitzgerald," in *A Library of Literary Criticism*, ed. Dorothy Nyren Curley, 1 (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1969) 400.

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