



# A Marxist Critique of Power and Social Class in The Great Gatsby

Mauliana Tri Rusmawati<sup>1</sup>, Ruly Indra Darmawan<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> English Literature, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Jawa Tengah

Article Info	Abstract
<p>Received: 2026-04-18 Revised: 2026 04-25 Accepted: 2026 05-31</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Class Contrast; Capitalist Power; Social Class; Marxism</p> <p><b>DOI:</b> 10.24256/ideasv14i1.10201</p> <p><b>Corresponding Author:</b> Mauliana Tri Rusmawati maulianarusmawati@students.unnes.ac.id English Literature, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Jawa Tengah</p>	<p><i>This study analyzes how F. Scott Fitzgerald uses the class contrast between Jay Gatsby and Tom Buchanan in <i>The Great Gatsby</i> to critique capitalist power and social class structures. This study employs a descriptive qualitative method using text analysis techniques to examine words, phrases, sentences, and dialogues obtained through close reading. The analysis is grounded in Karl Marx's Marxist theory, particularly the concepts of class struggle, capital accumulation, and ideological domination. The results of the study indicate that Fitzgerald constructs a sharp contrast between old money and new money through spatial division (East Egg and West Egg), differences in the sources of wealth (inheritance and self-made wealth), ideological superiority, and unequal social consequences. Although Gatsby possesses significant economic capital, he lacks the social legitimacy and structural power of Tom Buchanan. These findings show that the dominant class maintains its position not only through wealth ownership but also through inherited privileges, social recognition, and control over ideological norms. In contrast, individuals from the emerging class remain vulnerable to exclusion. Furthermore, the contrasting fates of the two figures highlight the structural protection afforded to the elite class. This study also demonstrates that interpersonal conflict serves as a micro-level representation of capitalist power, thereby revealing the limitations of social mobility within the capitalist system.</i></p>

## 1. Introduction

In a capitalist society, social classes are shaped by economic ownership, inherited privilege, and access to power. Those who control wealth not only dominate economic production but also influence social and cultural institutions. As a result, inequality is evident not only in the distribution of wealth but also in access to education, employment, and social legitimacy. These conditions indicate

that the capitalist system tends to perpetuate inequality from one generation to the next, thereby reinforcing the hierarchical division between the upper, middle, and lower classes (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2018). Theoretically, this issue demonstrates that social class is determined not only by individual economic factors but also by broader structural factors. As Tan Ern Ser (2004) argues, social class is shaped not only by economic status but also by inherited advantages and cultural legacies passed down through generations. From a Marxist perspective, this demonstrates that social class functions as a mechanism of power that sustains domination and inequality within the capitalist system.

This phenomenon is reflected in literary works, including F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby* (1925). Set in 1920s America, the novel depicts a highly stratified society in which social status is determined not only by wealth but also by background and social legitimacy. Through the symbolic settings of East Egg and West Egg, Fitzgerald illustrates how the boundaries between social classes are maintained in subtle yet powerful ways, making it difficult for individuals outside the elite class to be truly accepted, even if they possess great wealth. The contrast between Jay Gatsby and Tom Buchanan serves as the primary representation of class conflict in the novel. Gatsby is portrayed as a *self-made man* who strives to climb the social ladder through wealth, yet remains viewed as an outsider. In contrast, Tom represents the traditional upper class that holds power through inheritance. Through this contrast, Fitzgerald exposes the rigidity of the class system while critiquing the illusion of social mobility in capitalist society, where social acceptance does not always accompany economic success.

Previous studies have examined F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby* (1925) from various perspectives, particularly through Marxist theory. Maleeha Akhtar Mulghani, Tanzeela Mushtaq, and Asra Fatima, in *Exploitation: A Marxist Analysis of The Great Gatsby*, highlight the exploitation of the lower classes by the upper classes, asserting that economic dominance allows the bourgeoisie to maintain power and social inequality. Meanwhile, Yue Wu and Jinsong Shen analyze the concept of social space, demonstrating that East Egg, West Egg, and the Valley of Ashes represent rigid class divisions in 1920s American society.

Furthermore, in *An Analysis of Gatsby's American Dream in The Great Gatsby from the Perspective of Lukács*, Yuan Jiajia examines the novel through a Marxist lens and Georg Lukács's thought, emphasizing that the structure of capitalism shapes identities, relationships, and the narrative's intrinsic elements. In line with this, Zhou (2023) in *Analysis of The Great Gatsby from the Perspective of Western Marxism* critiques the myth of the American Dream by demonstrating that an obsession with wealth leads to moral emptiness and disillusionment. However, these studies still focus on themes and symbolism, thereby failing to deeply explore how capitalist power directly shapes the complexity of characters' identities, relationships, and social dynamics.

Although previous studies have made significant contributions to our

understanding of class exploitation and social hierarchy in F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel (1925), they have generally focused on broad structural analyses, such as economic inequality, class symbolism, and critiques of the American Dream. Several studies also highlight the division of social space as a representation of class hierarchy, as well as the relationship between economic structure and the characters' identities. However, these studies tend to focus on general structural and symbolic aspects, and thus have not yet explored in depth the dynamics of interpersonal conflict in the struggle to maintain power and social legitimacy.

Furthermore, the opposition between inherited wealth and self-made wealth has not yet been analyzed in depth as a direct manifestation of capitalist power at the individual level. Most studies tend to view this contrast as a general social phenomenon, without highlighting the dynamics of personal conflict that reveal how class legitimacy is negotiated and maintained in interpersonal interactions. Therefore, a more focused analysis of the relationships between the characters, particularly between Gatsby and Tom, is needed to reveal how social dominance is maintained through personal interactions. This study specifically focuses on interpersonal conflict as a manifestation of capitalist power, which offers a more specific perspective than previous studies.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze how Fitzgerald constructs the class contrast between Jay Gatsby and Tom Buchanan as a critique of capitalist power and the persistence of social class hierarchy. This research seeks to answer the following question: How does Fitzgerald use the class contrast between Gatsby and Tom Buchanan to critique capitalist power and social class? By focusing on the ideological and interpersonal conflicts between inherited and earned wealth, this study is expected to expand Marxist research by foregrounding character and the dynamics of social relations.

## **2. Method**

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method to understand the meanings, representations, and social realities embedded in literary texts. This approach was chosen because it is well-suited to addressing the research focus, which emphasizes interpretive analysis of the phenomena of social class and power in literary works, rather than quantitative measurement. Qualitative research emphasizes the analysis of non-numerical data such as words, phrases, sentences, and discourse to uncover deeper meanings (Creswell, 2014). In line with this, Darmawan (2025) also uses a qualitative descriptive approach to examine literary texts through critical analysis of linguistic and social elements. Thus, this research design is considered relevant and adequate for revealing how interpersonal conflicts in novels represent power structures in capitalist society.

The object of this study is F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby* (1925), which serves as the primary data source. The study focuses on two main characters, Jay Gatsby and Tom Buchanan, as the contrast between them forms the center of

the analysis in uncovering social class dynamics and the legitimacy of power. The data in this study consist of words, phrases, sentences, and dialogues related to the themes of social class, power dominance, and capitalism. A purposive sampling technique was used, selecting text passages that directly represent class conflict, the distinction between inherited and earned wealth, and forms of domination in interactions among characters.

Data collection was conducted through close reading and systematic note-taking. To enhance the accuracy of the analysis, this study employed a coding scheme comprising several main categories, which are: (1) class contrast (differences between the old and new classes), (2) ideological domination (the dominance of values and norms by the upper class), (3) legitimacy (social recognition of status), and (4) social consequence (the social impact experienced by the character). All data were classified into these categories to facilitate the analysis. For example, dialogue showing other characters' rejection of Gatsby was coded as legitimacy, as it reflects a lack of social recognition of his status. The primary instrument in this study is the researcher (human instrument), who plays a role in determining the focus, interpreting the data, and connecting the findings to the theoretical framework. Therefore, the researcher's reflexivity is crucial, as they consciously consider their position and perspective during the interpretation process to remain critical and objective.

Data analysis was conducted using Karl Marx's Marxist theory, specifically the concepts of social class and power. The analysis process involved several stages: identifying relevant data, coding it according to predetermined categories, interpreting it in relation to class conflict and capitalist domination, and drawing conclusions. To enhance validity or trustworthiness, this study employs theoretical triangulation by comparing Marxist concepts with findings from previous studies and by compiling an audit trail through systematic documentation of the data collection and analysis process. For example, when the text indicates that Gatsby is not accepted into elite social circles despite his wealth, this data is analyzed as a form of failed legitimacy within the capitalist system, which is then interpreted as a critique of the illusion of social mobility. All data used is sourced from published literary texts and is properly cited to maintain academic integrity and research transparency.

### **3. Result**

The class contrast between Jay Gatsby and Tom Buchanan in *The Great Gatsby* (1925) can be traced through several key quotations that highlight the differences in their origins, social legitimacy, ideological authority, and positions within the capitalist structure. This study does not present all the data; rather, it selects the most representative textual evidence to demonstrate how the tension between old money and new money shapes social hierarchies and power relations. The findings indicate that Fitzgerald's critique of capitalism is constructed not only through

setting and symbolism, but also through interpersonal conflicts among the characters.

### ***Class Contrast Between Old Money and New Money***

Tom Buchanan represents inherited wealth and a stable, unquestioned social status, while Jay Gatsby embodies self-made wealth. Although Gatsby achieved prosperity and projected an upper-class lifestyle, he remains an outsider. In contrast, Tom is consistently accepted into elite circles without needing to prove his legitimacy. This demonstrates that social class is determined not only by the amount of wealth but also by one's origins and the social recognition that accompanies them. Therefore, wealth alone does not guarantee acceptance into a social class; inherited status carries greater legitimacy.

### ***Spatial Division as a Representation of Class Hierarchy***

The social structure in *The Great Gatsby* (1925) is also conveyed through the division of space between East Egg and West Egg. These two areas illustrate the social class differences within society. This is evident in the following excerpt:

I lived at West Egg, the—well, the less fashionable of the two, though this is a most superficial tag to express the bizarre and not a little sinister contrast between them. (p.7).

The term "*less fashionable*" suggests that *West Egg* is considered less prestigious than *East Egg*. The spatial division between *East Egg* and *West Egg* serves as a concrete representation of class stratification. *East Egg* is inhabited by the old money crowd, who enjoy high social status, while the new money crowd inhabits *West Egg*. Although both groups are equally wealthy, *East Egg* commands greater prestige. Thus, the novel's setting functions not only as a backdrop but also as a symbol that reinforces class boundaries within society. From these findings, it can be seen that space functions as a marker of class, reinforcing prestige inequalities even within the same economic class.

### ***Differences in the Sources of Wealth: Inheritance vs. Self-Made Wealth***

The difference between Tom Buchanan and Jay Gatsby in *The Great Gatsby* lies in the source of their wealth. Tom is introduced as a man from a wealthy family, as seen in the following excerpt:

His family was enormously wealthy—even in college, his freedom with money was a matter for reproach—but now he'd left Chicago and come east in a fashion that rather took your breath away: for instance, he'd brought down a string of polo ponies from Lake Forest. (p.8).

This quote shows that Tom has had access to wealth from the very beginning of his life. That wealth has become part of his social background.

On the contrary, Gatsby builds his identity through a process of self-transformation, as seen in the following quote:

James Gatz—that was really, or at least legally, his name. (p.104).

He even denied his family background:

His parents were shiftless and unsuccessful farmers—his imagination had never really accepted them as his parents. (p.105).

These findings suggest that Jay Gatsby sought to achieve social mobility by creating a new identity and accumulating capital, even though he came from a family that was economically poor and lacked inherited wealth; he earned it through his own efforts. However, these efforts did not fully succeed in granting him social recognition, as society continued to judge individuals based on their origins. This shows that in a capitalist system, social legitimacy is influenced more by the source of one's wealth than by economic success alone. This result shows that the source of wealth is a stronger determinant of legitimacy than the amount of wealth itself.

### ***Ideological Domination and Class Identity***

The difference between Tom and Gatsby is also evident in how they view their social standing. This can be seen in Tom's following statement:

It's up to us, who are the dominant race, to watch out, or these other races will have control of things.' (p.16).

This statement indicates that Tom views himself as part of a group with higher status. He expresses confidence in his group's superiority over others. Furthermore, Tom also displays an attitude that questions Gatsby's background, as seen in the following quote:

'I'd like to know who he is and what he does,' insisted Tom. 'And I think I'll make a point of finding out.'(p.116).

This question reveals a concern for a person's social identity. In this context, Tom expresses a belief in his class's superiority and actively questions Gatsby's identity. This attitude reflects ideological dominance, in which the upper class sets the standards of value and legitimacy in society. In contrast, Gatsby is in a position where he must constantly prove himself to be accepted. From these findings, it is clear that the ruling class maintains its power by controlling social values and determining legitimacy.

### ***The Delegitimization of New Wealth***

Gatsby's wealth in the novel is also depicted as eliciting a different response than Tom's wealth. This is evident in Tom's following statement:

'Who are you, anyhow?' broke out Tom.

'You're one of that bunch that hangs around with Meyer Wolfsheim—that much I happen to know.

I've made a little investigation into your affairs—and I'll carry it further tomorrow.'

'You can suit yourself about that, old sport,' said Gatsby steadily.

'I found out what your 'drug stores' were.' He turned to us and spoke rapidly. (p.143).

This statement suggests that Tom Buchanan questions the source of Jay Gatsby's wealth, associating it with activities he considers dubious, thereby undermining Gatsby's social standing. In contrast, Tom's inherited wealth is never subjected to the same scrutiny. This contrast highlights a double standard within the capitalist system, where newly acquired wealth must undergo stricter social validation than established wealth. Thus, the origin of capital becomes a key factor in shaping how individuals are perceived and functions as a tool for maintaining class dominance in the society depicted in the novel. As a result, new wealth is subject to stricter scrutiny, which reveals biases in the class system.

### ***Structural Resilience and Social Vulnerability***

The difference between Gatsby and Tom is also evident in the consequences they face at the end of the story. This is evident in the following quote:

A little before three, the Lutheran minister arrived from Flushing, and I began to look involuntarily out the windows for other cars. So did Gatsby's father. And as time passed, and the servants came in and stood waiting in the hall, his eyes began to blink anxiously, and he spoke of the rain in a worried, uncertain way. The minister glanced at his watch several times, so I took him aside and asked him to wait for half an hour. But it wasn't any use. Nobody came.(p.186).

This quote suggests that Gatsby was lonely toward the end of his life. Not many people attended his funeral.

In contrast, Tom and Daisy are depicted as continuing with their lives, as seen in the following excerpt:

They were careless people, Tom and Daisy—they smashed up things and creatures and then retreated into their money or their vast carelessness or whatever it was that kept them together, and let other people clean up the mess they had made.... (p.191).

This quote shows that Tom and Daisy can return to their normal lives after the events, highlighting a contrast in the experiences of characters shaped by their positions within the social structure. It further suggests that the elite class enjoys a form of structural immunity that shields them from both social and moral consequences, while individuals like Gatsby, who come from the new class, remain vulnerable to failure and exclusion despite achieving economic success. From these findings, it is clear that the upper class is structurally protected, while newcomers remain socially and morally vulnerable.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that Fitzgerald critiques the capitalist system by demonstrating that power is determined not only by economic ownership but also by social legitimacy that is inherited and ideologically maintained.

#### 4. Discussion

The results of this study indicate that Jay Gatsby and Tom Buchanan not only represent individual differences but also reflect class structures within the capitalist system, as Karl Marx explained in *The Communist Manifesto* (Marx & Engels, p. 14). The conflict between the two reflects the struggle between the dominant class and the class striving to rise, meaning that social relations in the novel are not neutral but are influenced by the distribution of power and capital ownership. In this regard, F. Scott Fitzgerald employs class contrast as a narrative strategy to critique social inequality. This study demonstrates that interpersonal conflict functions as a micro-level representation of capitalist power, in which inter-individual relationships serve as a medium for illustrating how class domination operates concretely within social life.

The spatial division between East Egg and West Egg reinforces the representation of class structure. These two spaces do not merely indicate geographical differences; they also serve as ideological markers that distinguish *old money* from *new money*. East Egg symbolizes the stability of inherited power, while West Egg reflects a new class that has not yet fully attained legitimacy. However, this finding can also be interpreted in another way: aside from being a symbol of class dominance, this spatial division can be understood as a cultural construction that reflects tastes, lifestyles, and habitus, as explained by Pierre Bourdieu. Thus, class differences are not only economic but also cultural, thereby reinforcing social exclusion against individuals like Gatsby.

Moreover, this spatial division also demonstrates that social mobility within the capitalist system is not entirely open-ended. Although Gatsby succeeded in accumulating great wealth, he remained unable to breach the social boundaries established by the dominant class. This underscores that capitalism operates not only through economic ownership but also through social legitimacy controlled by the upper class. Therefore, through the representation of space and class contrasts, Fitzgerald not only depicts social differences but also reveals the mechanisms by which such inequalities are maintained within the capitalist system.

Furthermore, F. Scott Fitzgerald uses the spatial division between East Egg and West Egg as a symbolic device to represent class hierarchy, which, from Karl Marx's perspective, reflects the material structure of society between the dominant and marginalized classes. The labels 'fashionable' and 'less fashionable' function as ideological markers that reinforce the dominance of the old class over the new. In this context, the difference in the sources of wealth between Tom Buchanan and Jay Gatsby further underscores Marx's analysis of capital accumulation (Marx, *Das Kapital*, p. 449).

Tom Buchanan's ideological dominance also illustrates how the upper class maintains its power. Tom's attitude of superiority and his tendency to question Gatsby's identity demonstrate that the dominant class controls social legitimacy. Therefore, Gatsby's wealth was not enough to grant him a status equal to Tom's,

because that wealth lacked structural legitimacy. This finding supports the concept of the ruling class's ideology in Marxist theory (Marx & Engels, *The German Ideology*, p. 35). Still, it also highlights the limitations of that approach, as it does not fully account for the psychological and cultural dimensions of character interactions. Therefore, other approaches, such as psychoanalysis or cultural studies, can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of these relationships.

Moreover, the difference in the sources of wealth between Tom and Gatsby underscores that capitalism does not fully open up opportunities for social mobility. Although Gatsby succeeded in accumulating wealth, he remained unable to breach the social boundaries set by the dominant class. This aligns with Marx's theory of class reproduction, but can also be enriched by Max Weber's perspective, which emphasizes that social status and prestige play a significant role alongside economic factors. Thus, Gatsby's failure stems not only from economic inequality but also from limitations in gaining status recognition within the broader social structure.

Furthermore, this study's findings indicate that power in a capitalist system is maintained not only through structure and legitimacy, but also through the performativity of social identity. In this regard, Jay Gatsby actively "plays" the role of a member of the upper class through a lavish lifestyle, grand parties, and other symbols of wealth. However, this performance is not entirely successful because it lacks authentic social recognition from the dominant class. This suggests that, in a capitalist society, class identity is not sufficiently constructed by external appearances alone but must be supported by recognized social history. Thus, capitalism demands not only the possession of capital but also the consistency of an identity recognized collectively.

On the other hand, the novel also reveals the fragility of the capitalist system itself. Although it appears stable and well-established, the social structure depicted actually depends on exclusion and inequality that are constantly reproduced. Gatsby's failure to maintain his position demonstrates that class positions lacking a strong foundation of legitimacy are prone to the collapse of social status. In contrast, characters like Tom Buchanan remain stable not because of individual merit, but because of a system that protects his position. This illustrates that stability within capitalism is unequal, where social security is enjoyed only by certain classes, while others face greater uncertainty.

The contrast between Gatsby's and Tom's fates at the end of the story further underscores the structural inequalities inherent in the capitalist system. Gatsby experiences alienation and death without social recognition, while Tom remains in a secure position without significant consequences. This observation can be further understood through a Marxist perspective, particularly as outlined in *The Communist Manifesto*, which asserts that capitalism transforms human relationships into ones based on material interests (Marx & Engels, *The Communist*

Manifesto, p. 38). This finding aligns with previous research highlighting class inequality in the novel, though it differs in its emphasis. While previous studies focused more on exploitation or the symbolism of space, this research demonstrates that interpersonal conflict serves as the primary arena for maintaining class legitimacy and power. Thus, this study not only reinforces previous findings but also expands upon them by introducing an analysis at the level of individual relationships.

Overall, the findings of this study reinforce the argument that *The Great Gatsby* (1925) represents a capitalist system that not only emphasizes the accumulation of wealth but also highlights the perpetuation of inequality through hereditary class structures and the social mechanisms that accompany them. Through the contrast between Jay Gatsby and Tom Buchanan, it is evident that power in the society depicted in the novel is not solely determined by capital ownership, but also by social background and pre-established positions. Tom, as a representation of old money, is portrayed as having a stable and recognized position, while Gatsby, despite possessing equivalent wealth, remains in a different position within that social structure. Furthermore, the way these two characters are treated reveals a pattern of unequal social acceptance. Gatsby is often portrayed as an outsider, while Tom remains firmly within an established social circle, experiencing no change in status. This suggests that, in the novel, social status is not only tied to economic factors but also to the legitimacy individuals derive from their origins and affiliations with particular classes.

Therefore, the findings of this study indicate that the social system depicted in the novel does not fully provide equal opportunities for every individual, despite the possibility of economic mobility. Gatsby's economic success does not automatically change his position within the social structure, which remains defined by existing class categories. Therefore, this novel demonstrates that in addition to creating disparities in wealth ownership, the system is also linked to differences in social status and patterns of acceptance within the depicted society.

The implications of this research for literary studies, particularly Marxist studies, lie in its contribution to broadening the analytical focus from the macro to the micro level. This research enriches the Marxist approach by demonstrating that capitalist power operates not only through large-scale economic structures but also through interpersonal relationships that appear simple yet are laden with ideological significance. Furthermore, these findings are socially relevant because they demonstrate that limited mobility and legitimacy inequalities remain part of the societal reality. Thus, the novel *The Great Gatsby* functions not only as a literary work but also as a critical reflection on how power operates within the capitalist system.

Furthermore, this study's findings indicate that social legitimacy in capitalist societies is exclusive and cannot be easily attained through economic success alone. Gatsby, despite having amassed wealth on par with the elite, still failed to gain full

recognition because he lacked the social background that met the standards of the dominant class. This underscores that capitalism operates not only through material ownership but also through invisible mechanisms of social selection. Thus, the social mobility offered by the capitalist system tends to be limited and conditional, dependent on acceptance by groups that already possess prior legitimacy.

Moreover, this study also shows that social relationships in the novel are not only built on economic interests but also reflect inequalities in the distribution of responsibilities and consequences. Characters like Tom Buchanan remain in a safe position despite being involved in various conflicts, while Gatsby must bear greater consequences, ultimately leading to his downfall. The novel demonstrates that the social system operates in an unbalanced manner, in which the dominant class enjoys structural protections that shield them from the repercussions of their own actions. Thus, inequality exists not only in economic terms but also in the distribution of risk and social consequences.

Lastly, this study also confirms that literary works can serve as a critical medium for revealing complex social realities. Through its depiction of conflicts between characters, *The Great Gatsby* demonstrates that power structures in capitalist society are not always immediately apparent, but are instead hidden within everyday social relations. Therefore, the analysis of literary works not only provides an understanding of the text itself but also offers insights into how ideology and power operate in real life. Thus, this study contributes to strengthening the role of literary studies in understanding and critiquing social dynamics.

## **5. Conclusion**

Based on the analysis, this study concludes that F. Scott Fitzgerald deliberately employed the contrast between Jay Gatsby and Tom Buchanan as a narrative strategy to critique power structures and social class in *The Great Gatsby* (1925). The findings indicate that the difference in the origins of wealth between inherited wealth and self-made wealth not only reflects economic disparities but also reveals inequalities in social legitimacy. Furthermore, the division of social spaces such as East Egg and West Egg, the ideological dominance held by the upper class, and the unequal consequences of the characters' actions further underscore that capitalism operates through mechanisms more complex than mere capital accumulation. These findings align with Karl Marx's perspective, which holds that the dominant class not only controls material resources but also shapes values, norms, and standards of legitimacy within society. Thus, the claims in this study are supported by textual data showing that economic success achieved by individuals like Gatsby does not automatically confer social acceptance or structural power, thereby revealing the limitations of social mobility within the capitalist system.

Furthermore, these findings reinforce previous research on class inequality in

the novel, while broadening it by showing that interpersonal conflicts among characters can serve as concrete representations of ideological struggles within capitalist society. In other words, this study does not contradict existing theories or previous studies. Still, it offers a more specific analytical dimension at the individual level, particularly in examining how class legitimacy is negotiated through social relations. Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. First, the analysis focuses only on the two main characters, Gatsby and Tom Buchanan. It thus does not cover the roles of other characters, such as Daisy or George Wilson, who also contribute to the representation of class dynamics. Second, the use of a single Marxist approach limits the resulting interpretation to issues of class and power, without considering analysis from other perspectives, such as feminism or psychoanalysis. Therefore, the results of this study are not intended to be broadly generalized beyond the context of the analysis defined.

Given these limitations, future research is recommended to broaden the scope of analysis by including more characters to provide a more comprehensive picture of the novel's social structure. Additionally, integrating a Marxist approach with other theories could enrich the interpretation, for example, by examining gender relations, the psychological aspects of the characters, or cultural symbolism in *The Great Gatsby* (1925). Future research could also broaden the scope of the study by comparing this novel with other literary works that address similar themes, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of the critique of capitalism in literature. Thus, the findings of this study are not only relevant to literary analysis but also contribute to deepening our understanding of how literary works reflect and critique social realities in capitalist society.

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