



POSUDEK OPONENTA BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

Studijní obor: **Anglický jazyk a literatura—Estetika**

Název práce: **The Portrayal of the Roaring Twenties in Francis Scott Fitzgerald's Novel
*The Great Gatsby***

Autorka práce: **Dariia Baula**

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Stručná charakteristika práce / Short characteristics of the thesis

The thesis examines the historical background to the novel *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald. It discusses the influence of the writer's life experience on the novel, before moving on to cover a range of topics, from politics to fashion and sports, showing how the realities of 1920s America are reflected in the novel. The thesis pays special attention to class differences, and how the details of the characters' circumstances, appearance, and behaviour, mark their social standing.

Celkové zhodnocení / Overall assessment

The thesis provides a wealth of historical information and manifests the writer's ability to research the background for the novel and connect it to specific passages in the text. Examining the material details of the various characters is helpful in marking class differences which would otherwise go unnoticed by readers today. Overall, it delivers a helpful account of the period that would enrich any reading of the text.

There are some serious issues, however, that make the work less than satisfactory. From the methodological point of view, the project is not well defined. The author does not explain key terms, such as the 'Jazz Age', and the chronological framework remains unclear. For example, the thesis highlights the importance of wealth and status in the Jazz Age (p. 3) but then goes on to discuss the author's childhood and early adulthood, which precede this period. Further on the same page the text states that James J. Hill 'represented the upper-class society of the Jazz Age', even though he died in 1916. While any strict periodisation is problematic and history is continuous rather than neatly categorised into 'ages', one would expect more attention to chronology in a work that focuses on historical realities.

Most importantly, the stated aim of the work is 'to analyse what features of the era had a significant impact on the author' (p.1), but the thesis does not show the impact of the era beyond simple identification of realistic contents. Fitzgerald is constantly praised for being able to represent the details of the 1920s reality, but it remains unclear why this would be an achievement, given that the novel is based on his own life experience as the first chapter rightly explains. When writing the novel, moreover, Fitzgerald did not copy his experience but rather shaped them artistically to create a work of fiction. For example, he conflated the characteristics of Ginevra King and his wife Zelda into a single woman in the novel – Daisy (pp. 4-7) or changes a skill in polo to football when portraying Tom Buchanan, who is based on the player Tommy Hitchcock (p.41). While the



author notes such artistic transformation of the historical materials, she offers no commentary on their meaning. In general, the thesis hardly considers the question of what the historical information it uncovers contributes to our understanding of the characters, their feelings and motivations, or the novel as a whole.

In terms of writing, the text suffers from an uneven level of English proficiency. The Introduction and Chapter 1 in particular suffer from numerous mistakes in grammar and vocabulary, as well as unidiomatic usage. The following chapters are better written and also proceed with better argumentation and overall organisation. The bibliographical citations in the text are mostly correct, but the bibliographical list at the end does not follow the MLA style, or any consistent system, and confuses print sources accessible through web services with electronic sources in the section titled 'Electronic Sources'.

In conclusion, this thesis has the potential to bring a meaningful insight into the novel with a better conceptualisation of the project, more critical analysis, and improved linguistic and academic writing.

Práci doporučuji k obhajobě.

Navrhovaná klasifikace: **velmi dobře**

23 August 2021

Datum

Podpis