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A Critical Study of the Loss and Gain of the Lost Generation

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Abstract

This study aims to the evaluation of the features of the group of writers who chose Paris as their new home to produce their works and the overall dominant atmosphere in that specific time in the generation that has already experienced war through comparative research methods. As a result, writers of this group tried to find new approaches to report different contexts of modern life. As a conclusion, regardless of every member of the lost generation bohemian and wild lifestyles, the range, creativity, and influence of works produced by this community of American expatriates in Paris are remarkable.

Key words: Lost Generation, World War, Disillusionment.

Un estudio crítico de la pérdida y ganancia de la generación perdida

Resumen

Este estudio tiene como objetivo la evaluación de las características del grupo de escritores que eligieron París como su nuevo hogar para producir sus obras y la atmósfera dominante en ese momento específico en la generación que ya ha experimentado la guerra a través de métodos de investigación comparativos. Como resultado, los escritores de este grupo trataron de encontrar nuevos enfoques para informar diferentes contextos de la vida moderna. Como conclusión, independientemente de cada miembro de la generación perdida de estilos de vida bohemios y salvajes, el rango, la creatividad y la influencia de las obras producidas por esta comunidad de expatriados estadounidenses en París son notables.

Palabras clave: generación perdida, guerra mundial, desilusión.

1. INTRODUCTION

Lost Generation is known as a term attributed to the group of writers who were born between 1883 and 1900 and experienced many striking events which happened in the first half of the twentieth century, especially the two World Wars and the different social and political changes afterward. The term is coined by Gertrude Stein and Hemingway (1964) made it popular by mentioning it in his *The Sun Also Rises* as an epigraph. Later on, Hemingway (1964) included this phrase in his *A Moveable Feast*, All of you young people who served

in the war. You are a lost generation, he claimed Stein happened to hear this term in a garage while having her car serviced. Most of the writers who are known to be under this title are exiled American writers that found Paris suitable for their Avant-guard activities. Puritan America was not a proper place for writers who wanted to find freedom of existence and freshness of thought in a way they could find anywhere else in the world. Paris got more freedom, it was cheaper and sprightlier city which was entitled city of lights (Chandler, 1981). In the last years of his life in his *A Moveable Feast* which was only published posthumously, the American author Chandler describes Paris in this way:

There is never any ending to Paris and the memory of each person who has lived in it differs from that of any other. We always returned to it no matter who we were, nor how it was changed, nor with what difficulties now what ease, it could be reached. It was always worth it and we received a return for whatever we brought to it (1981: 236).

These writers were disillusioned by World Wars and lost faith in any social, political and religious institutions. They believed a human being is no longer capable of finding prosperity in the aforementioned concepts. Lost Generation is not only a term which contains well-known writers but also a modernist movement that influenced so many authors who never met these writers, so it can be broadened to a term which can be defined as a movement with traceable elements in the majority of post-war writers and pioneers of modernism. This term includes existential and psychological leftovers of the Great War. Like other modernists, the writers of this movement

tried to seek sense in the world that lost its last traces of social, spiritual and religious entities in a war that brought about the viciousness and devastation. To find this meaning in the new era, they turned their trend from exterior elements to interior ones and from Victorian values, which were social and moral, to existential and mental qualities of life. The experience of the war and its brutality shattered their belief in the existence of a spiritual supremacy who governs the world and a single absolute pathway to reach prosperity if it exists at all.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF FIRST DECADES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Among many political movements, the twentieth century witnessed an entirely different method of governing of the states. By the commencement of the twentieth century, the monarchy was still the governing system of many countries in the world. Queen Victoria, who ruled the vastest empire on which the sun never sets died with the advent of the new millennium. Many believed her death would put an end to monarchy system which did not come true.

In spite of the sensation of a great change, nothing actually changed in 1901 which had any significant effect on the lives of those who had been her subjects. That the old queen was no longer on the throne did not alter the way they went about their work, thought about their families, worshiped and prayed,

sought pleasure and suffered, nor did it improve or worsen their real incomes and standards of living (Roberts, 1999: 9).

On the other side of the Atlantic, an assassination shook the political atmosphere of America. William McKinley, the president of the United States, was killed and his vice president, Theodore Roosevelt succeeded his office. All in all, these changes in great political roles did not change the political system in the states until other authoritative sources made their way for changing the long lasting structures of governing. Migrations of early twentieth century, technological and scientific advances and great wars could be seen as the main reasons for political changes in the world in the first half of the twentieth century. Immigrations from Europe to America dramatically increased by the last decades of the nineteenth century and first decades of the twentieth century. People tried their chances in finding new life and job opportunities in their new land. So many people left their homelands because of religious persecutions and war. A magnificent growth in manufacturing machinery altered the appearance of the cities and lifestyle of their citizens. Horses and carriages were replaced with automobiles and consequently, stables gave their place to gas stations. The traditional way of posting envelopes was substituted by using the telegram or the newly invented telephone. Scientific advances and theories engendered a sweeping view towards the old-fashioned accepted way of understanding science and the world. The classic physics, which was founded by Newton spread the belief that everything in the world is predictable by the means of physics and its laws. The new perspective which was

introduced by Einstein denounced conventional absolutism and broadened the relative perception of different physical entities. All these factors were the primary reasons for alteration of the positivist view towards scientific knowledge and traditional approaches in science and governing states. By such reconstructions and social changes New Enlightenment prepared the conditions for a gradual shift towards democracy and abolished the dynastic ruling of states.

3. THE ORIGIN OF THE LOST GENERATION

To refer to the Lost Generation's origin, one should first evaluate the Modernist movement. Although these movements were shaped outside the United States, it can be also defined in the American context. There are many suppositions about the starting date of the Lost Generation movement but as Bernard DeVoto, critic and historian, asserts nobody can decide just what a literary generation is because one cannot categorize each writer in a particular generation due to the continuous procedure of making up of such generations:

The time scale is ambiguous: the first novelist of the Younger Generation began publishing in 1900, its first poet died in 1886, and its twilight genius is only thirty-five. No date can be agreed on for its beginning: Mr. [Carl] Van Doren believes that it began with the Armistice, [...]. The

end is also undetermined. We are told that the period closed with 1929 and the Wall Street crash, [...]. But wherever you fix a date for the beginning of dotage, you find that nine-tenths of the reasonably good writing since that deadline has been done by men you have extinguished. (1936: 18)

This younger generation gets its meaning in its opposite older generation. If the younger generation of writers in the twentieth-century American literature is mentioned, this term distinguishes them from the Victorians. There are different explanations for the younger generation and it is similar to the term lost generation in this respect. This term was used by other authors in different articles like *A Generation Lost?* Written by Florence Valentine Keys but their implication did not contain any comprehensive mode of cultural and literary meaning and it only referred to a generation of soldiers who could not get back to their normal lives after the war. Lost generation as a movement includes an entire population and it first showed up as the term known today in Hemingway's (1964) *The Sun Also Rises* as an epigraph. Although Hemingway (1964) tried to explain this epigraph, not as a hollow and absurd concept in his novel, the same characteristics of this age's youth, which could be spotted in other works of contemporary writers, turned this term to an expression that described the post-war generation of people who had common features. Hemingway received a variety of feedbacks for using Stein's words as an epigraph and the mood of being lost in his novel, but after publishing this book it soon turned to be a great success and it was

widely accepted in the American context as a good representative of the lifestyles, relations and disillusionment of this generation.

Still, while the early critical fanfare for *The Sun Also Rises* was drowned out by raves for more established writers, the novel soon became a life handbook for young Americans at home and abroad. It was a good novel and became a craze, Cowley writes, young men tried to get as imperturbably drunk as the hero, young women of good families took a succession of lovers in the same heartbroken fashion as the heroine, they all talked like Hemingway heroes and the name was fixed (1964: 39).

Because of this mass influence on public perception of life, the meaning of the Lost Generation transformed from youth culture regarded as the younger generation to refer to this movement's writers who had literary or aesthetic aspirations (Nicholls, 2004). By this shift, some scholars concluded that these writers tried to highlight their role in the history by framing their cultural manner, but it has not been investigated, proven and generally accepted. Obviously, what is agreeable is that self-conscious and innovative writing of Lost Generation writers set up modernism as the predominant social venture of the main portion of the first half of the twentieth century. Also, historians admit the significant role this movement played in the alterations happened after their arrival and activities: "The Twenties were really the formative years of modern American history" (Mowry, 1936: 19).

4. DURATION OF THE MOVEMENT

The historians and the authors of *Generations*, Howe (1992) and William Strauss in their book assert that members of the Lost Generation were born between 1883 and 1900. This movement started its activity with the emerging of roaring twenties, but the members came of age during World War I. Activities of this movement had been initiated by Gertrude Stein who was the first member of the group of American writers who immigrated to Paris. In Europe, this movement is also known as 'Generation of 1914' for the year World War I began. Writers of this movement were mostly prolific after the First World War and in the twenties, when the second wave of expatriate writers entered Paris. Authors like Hemingway (1964) and Fitzgerald along with other literary figures established a set of works which shared some elements resulted from The Great War. Stein's immigration to Paris in the first decade of the twentieth century was the starting point for the creation of this movement.

After the world war, America with its growing boundaries like the prohibition of the sale of alcohol was less appealing for the literary figures. In the early 1920s, more expatriate writers chose Paris as their new home and Stein's salon was appropriate to gather them in one place. This movement and its writers were prolific until the end of this decade. When in 1929 great depression marked the end of the roaring twenties, the extravagant life and extremist lifestyle ended along with the movement itself. This movement was gradually replaced by next generation which adapted itself with immigration and experienced

great depression in its formative years. But the effects of lost generation moved along with American society and literature during the rest of the century.

5. STEIN'S IMMIGRATION TO PARIS

Gertrude Stein, one of the self-expatriate writers, left America to seek her passion for art and literature in Paris in the early years of the twentieth century. In 1903, she moved to Paris with his brothers and with their help she established a salon which presented the works of her painter friends like Picasso, Matisse and Braque. This art collection soon became a gathering place for European and expatriate artists who were fond of modern art. Soon she was known as a mentor for young expatriate writers Monk who wanted to start their own literary style in Paris:

So while this was the period in which Stein completed and published her *Three Lives* (1909), now acknowledged as a landmark of American modernism, the regular Saturday night gatherings at the rue de Fleurus drew artists in Paris not because of her writings but because of this art collection—and Stein's willingness to discuss art. (2008:41).

By developing her art salon she witnessed the change in visitors, old crowd is substituted with a young generation of American expatriates. She describes When I first came to Paris there was a very small sprinkling of Americans Saturday evenings... this sprinkling grew gradually more abundant. By this time, she was the main figure

among younger and new expatriate writers and also a prominent literary and artistic character between French and other international artists. Among the group of artists she hosted, Stein mentions the names of Sherwood Anderson, T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound in the pages of the *Autobiography*; young Americans like John Dos Passos, E. E. Cummings and Ernest Hemingway (1964) who first came to Europe to volunteer for serving in the First World War are also mentioned. Stein entitles these gatherings a neo romantic circle which contains less than a dozen poets, painters and composers. These gatherings were an opportunity for the authors and other artists to brainstorm and impress each other's work. While they had different tastes in their style of being modern such meetings mixed different colors on a canvas of modernism and made every inch of it, intermingled and comprehensive. Reading and critiquing their works, Stein acted as a mentor for these writers and helped them to be more courageous in using modern techniques, the researcher believes that the first idea for emergence of the best works of these writers with the same themes but different personal tastes might be inspired in these gatherings and the discussions in Stein's place.

6. TEMPORAL AND SPATIAL MEETINGS OF THE GROUP

After leaving their place in 1903, Gertrude and her brother Leo, shared their new household, which was close to the Luxembourg Garden on the Left Bank of Paris. It was a two-floor apartment situated

in the interior courtyard at 27 rue de Fleurus. It would be the first genuine and permanent home for Stein since immigration from Oakland and one that she would stay in until 1938. Gertrude Stein's apartment was the place that hosted numbers of literary gatherings and meetings. Many writers, critics and artists became frequent guests for the Saturday night dinner parties. Soon this place got its popularity as a sanctuary for expatriate writers and artists. When Leo and Gertrude Stein moved to this place, Leo started to buy paintings from different modern painters. By hanging them on the wall of their house, he made a humble art gallery which was attractive for artists and it turned into a kind of competition for them. While critiquing and discussing avant-garde works of art, Gertrude continued her literary works and soon their home was a place to learn how to see and not simply look. Michael Stein and his wife Sarah were also collecting some artworks in their house: "They too opened their doors on Saturdays, apparently receiving at earlier hour, whereas the salon at rue de fleurus started at nine and went on well into the night, enabling visitors who so chose to attend both" (Braun, 2011: 50).

Our knowledge of Saturday evenings of Stein's salon includes records of her, modern paintings and styles. After the war and in 1920s, Goody supervised mostly literary gatherings on Saturday evenings.

The Autobiography of Alice B, Toklas presents a litany of the famous, infamous, unknown and upstart modernist figures who visited Gertrude and Alice at 27 rue de Fleurus from the 1910s to the 1930s. Attending one of Saturday evening parties at

Stein's salon served as an admission to the expatriate avant-garde of Paris, and figures as diverse as Ernest Hemingway, Edith Sitwell and Charles Demuth were invited to dine on Saturday evening which was the evening when everybody came, and indeed everybody did come. (2013: 148)

Of other places which is worthy of attention as a gathering place for writers and other prominent occasional visitors was Shakespeare and Company. Soon after the opening of this bookstore, many writers were absorbed in it to converse with each other, check the latest literary advances and borrow books from its owner, a member of American expatriates living in Paris (Beach, 1991). She also helped many of young lost writers to publish their books which soon became some of the most important works of the twentieth century literature. When no English speaking country showed any interest in publishing Joyce's *Ulysses* because of its graphic language and unconventional style which was a violation to literary standards of its time, Beach (1991) asked Joyce for the honor of publishing his work. Hemingway (1964) was a frequent visitor of this bookstore and explains this place in his *Moveable Feast* as: A warm, cheerful place with a big stove in winter, tables and shelves of books, new books in the window, and photographs on the wall of famous writers both dead and living. Fitzgerald was also a visitor of this bookstore and he met one of the greatest writers of the time, Joyce, through Beach's (1991) help and once again this bookstore.

7. FRANCIS SCOTT FITZGERALD AS A MEMBER OF LOST GENERATION:

Francis Scott Fitzgerald was a gifted novelist and short story writer who was regarded to be among the best American writers of the twentieth century. In 1924, just before the publication of *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald immigrated to Paris to join a growing community of expatriate American writers drawn to France for its inexpensive cost of living, freedom in sexual codes, sprightly bars and many presses and magazines ready to publish their works. Living cheaply in Paris helped writers create fine works and they could sell their written works to the magazines and publishers in the United States, which were looking for new tastes in artworks and ready to pay.

In 1924, they moved to France, where they could live more cheaply. Two years after their removal there, two more books were published: a third collection of stories, *All the Sad Young Men*, and Fitzgerald's third and probably finest novel, *The Great Gatsby* (Gray, 2004: 436).

Scholars believe this group of American expatriates possibly brought about the greatest Renaissance in American literature. In addition to Fitzgerald, other members of the lost generation who published their works during the 1920s included Gertrude Stein, T.S. Eliot, Sherwood Anderson, Ezra Pound and young and talented Ernest Hemingway (1964). Fitzgerald and Hemingway's (1964) complicated relationship started with friendship, continued to rivalry and terminated in unpleasant dislike. Fitzgerald's *Great Gatsby* is known to be the best

work of the writer and the one which reflects post-war generation which confronted disillusionment. It was published by Scribner's on April 10th, 1925. The typical tale of the glory, lustrous lives, consumerism and tragedy of American aspiration won Fitzgerald great critical admiration. It also generated a caricature of the era which helps to the perception of the roaring twenties. In *The Crack-Up*, an essay by Fitzgerald, he explains how a shift changed euphoria of the early 1920s to the trauma at the end of this decade. It is also significant that Gray (2004) believes: Of all American writers concerned with the inventions of Modernism, Fitzgerald was the most autobiographical. When he got married to Zelda one week after the publication of *This Side of Paradise* he did not think that it will bring him great success and attention. After Fitzgerald's success, the couple started to live like the characters in his novels. Flamboyant lifestyle along with drinking caused some hardships in their relationship. After moving to Paris and joining American community of expatriate writers, Fitzgerald tried a new life and spark of talent for his career. Served as a link to connect great writers. In her memoir, Beach remembers Fitzgerald with respect: "One of our great pals was Scott Fitzgerald. We liked him very much, as who did not? With his blue eyes and good look, his concern for others, that wild recklessness of his, and his fallen-angel fascination". (Beach, 1991: 116).

Beach's (1991) bookstore was a shelter for young expatriate writers who sought freedom in Paris during post-war years. She attached great writers to each other and gave them the opportunity to know the latest literary styles and advances. It was because of her that

Hemingway (1964) met Pound or Fitzgerald met Joyce. As Stein's salon, Beach's (1991) bookstore hosted great writers along with their books and provided them a place to share ideas and borrow books. Fitzgerald was one of the callers in Stein's Salon which had a prolific friendship with her and always praised Stein as a great writer and his mentor. Toklas in her autobiography remembers Fitzgerald visiting Gertrude Stein in her famous salon on his thirtieth birthday:

One afternoon he said, you know I am thirty years old today and it is tragic. What is to become of me, what am I to do? And Gertrude told him that he should not worry, that he had been writing like a man of thirty for many years (1963: 117).

8. ERNEST HEMINGWAY AS A MEMBER OF LOST GENERATION

Ernest Hemingway (1964), the first writer who popularizes the term Lost Generation in his novel *The Sun Also Rises*, was one of the privileged authors of this group of expatriates who immigrated to Paris. The Hemingways arrived in Paris in December 1921. Their first apartment in Paris was not luxury at all But it was a start for bohemian sort of life for the couple. In Paris, by the introduction of Sherwood Anderson, Hemingway (1964) met prominent expatriate literary figures like Gertrude Stien, Ezra Pound, Beach (1991), James Joyce and started a friendship with them. He also met painters and artistic figures like Picasso and Miro. In Paris, he started to work in a

Transatlantic journal and it was there that he experimented his artistic theories and had them printed in a reputable magazine. In his short story collection *In Our Time* which contained *The Big Two-Hearted River*, Hemingway (1964) practiced his unique prose style which is mostly known for its iceberg technique. In 1926, he published his first novel, *The Sun Also Rises* in which also introduced lost generation as a term to signify him and his expatriate friends as the generation after the First World War. Published in 1929, *A Farewell to Arms* one of his best works which won him the reputation after the successes, Hemingway (1964) had experienced subsequently by the publication of *The Sun Also Rises*.

Much like his contemporaries, Hemingway's (1964) longing for truth was significant; In his works, he tried to approach the truth about his identity. He believed that the writer's job is, to tell the truth and if he could see himself clearly, his vision might be interesting for others who experienced life in the same world. His personal life was challenging and attractive for the public which made him one of the most famous modern novelists. Hemingway's (1964) accuracy of description and search for truth can be traced in his concise, economical prose style, which is broadly conceded to be his greatest contribution to literature. Hemingway's first two major novels, *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms*, were chiefly descriptions of a group of people representing the society that had lost the values of love and belief. These two novels are filled with moods of infertility, boredom and decay. As a post-war writer of the lost generation,

Hemingway portrayed his generation realistically with his unique style of writing and techniques of report.

9. T.S ELIOT AS A MEMBER OF LOST GENERATION

T.S Eliot is one of the symbolist writers of the 1920s. He was born in St. Louis, Missouri in 1888. He sailed to Paris when he was 22 after finishing his education in Harvard school. There are different reasons for self-expatriate American authors' leaving of their continent but T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound, for example, were expatriates because they left forever an America they viewed as inhospitable to art. When Eliot Published the *Wasteland* in 1922, publicly, it was assumed to reflect the post-war Europe and disillusionment after The Great War. So many people were dead and a myriad number were wounded in the war. For these people who came of age during and after the war, life seemed to be severe and purposeless. However, Eliot was not a common visitor of Stein's place. Monk were pioneers of modernism and among prominent literary figures who visited Stein:

Caught up in this enthusiasm were ambitious young artists who had simply heard of 27 rue de Fleurus, and one measure of their initial success was whether or not they were admitted there. By the early 1930s, Gertrude Stein is able to say that geniuses, near geniuses and might be geniuses came to her salon. Older writers like Sherwood Anderson, T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, and Alfred Kreyborg are discussed in the pages of the *Autobiography* (2008: 57).

Eliot can be considered as one of the chief voices of post-war years and the leader of a generation who was assumed to give this generation's disillusionment a voice. Regardless of what his works represent, he did not believe himself to be a representative of a generation.

This notion Eliot simply calls nonsensical. What he objects to is the term generation. A poet expresses his own ideas and emotions, not those of a generation, if it may be said to have any. A great poet may be writing his time, but he does so in writing himself, and how the outlook of a time, or an age, is not identical with the outlook of a generation, which suggest a mere clique of self-conscious and self-important contemporaries (Smidt, 2015: 147).

His contribution to modernism was not similar to other expatriate writers of the time. He did not join his fellow writers after the war in Paris and he was a self-contained intellect. In spite of domination of post-Romantic tradition in Europe at the time of his arrival, he modernized himself by developing an individual concept of classicism. Eliot like Pound felt the need for change and cutting off himself from Romantic norms of writing and sentimental poetry. Using their American perspective they wanted to develop a realistic, urban, industrialized sort of poetry, using accurate, clear-cut and flexible diction as exists in prose. T.S. Eliot introduced himself to the world as a pure talent by the publishing of *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*, one of his famous poems. The poem randomly portrays chaotic remains of a city, along with the interior monologue of a middle-aged and shy fellow who is in a quandary about how to propose to a lady at

the party he is about to attend. By the juxtaposition of protagonist's conditions with the fates of mythical and literary heroes, Eliot enriches this poem with universal aspects. In this way Eliot presents a tragedy of the modern man who cannot succeed in his love and life because he is distraught by the hollowness of modern life.

Sweeney, another reputed poem of Eliot, is an animal-like creature with some resemblance to a human who is enthused by the urge to satisfy his blind instinctive desires. By introducing his themes of disillusionment, the emptiness of life and human's inability to love and act in the world, Eliot prepared the grounds for *The Waste Land*. *The Wasteland* could be considered as a poetic manifest for young modernist writers and one of the most influential modernist texts. It was published in *Criterion* in 1922. The poem is about a desolated fragment of a country which is capable of revival by a fertility ritual. There are different symbols and allusions in this poem juxtaposing this modern wasteland to mythic, religious works of preceding literature. Along the ruined cities of Europe after the First World War, and dead soldiers crossing the London Bridge, Eliot's *The Wasteland* evoked the emptiness of life felt by a generation who had experienced the war. This poem was illustrative of the Lost Generation of which he was a part, as the majority of his works. Being part of this post-war generation and suffering from the disillusionment from the aftermaths of the war; eventually, he sought meaning and peace in the church. Even after his conversion, despair and emptiness did not vanish completely from his works. Eliot continued his work as one of the most prominent figures of a generation in disillusionment, but his

isolation was also true about his relationships with other writers of the time, except Ezra Pound. His works proved him as a true modernist author whose works represented a different voice for a generation who lost all old values and experienced the helplessness and disillusionment of modern life. Had it not been for his acquaintance with Pound in the group of the Lost Generation in Paris, the ground-breaking masterpiece of *The Waste Land* could have been in a lower rank and a less important poem, rather than a modern epic as some critics called it.

10. YEARS OF WAR

In the history of America, Great wars can be counted as one of the main factors which constitutes the body of its literature and have provided a perfect theme for talented American writers to express their potentials. Just before the outburst of war in Europe in 1914, different armies were settled in the borders, ready to be part of a war that the world has never experienced before. Battles were no longer won by the number of soldiers, horses or acts of bravery, but by weapons and machine guns. Many of these writers served in ambulance units and experienced a close confrontation with death. The battles continued in trenches with using of machine guns and chemical bombs. There were millions of soldiers slaughtered and wounded by these attacks without any victories for any side of the war. Europe was experiencing a new phase during this massive war. France was under attack by allied forces and Britain announced war on Germany. Economic conditions

were affected by war and finding daily requirements to live became an ordeal. The works of the writers of the Lost Generation are abundant with the atrocities of the Great Wars. Disillusionment, bewilderment, mass immigration, religiosity, pending death, mechanically of life and so on, constitute the spirit and structure of the works of the authors whose works this research intends to investigate.

The First World War was like a catalyst which quickened the change of the attitude in the new century. During the war soldiers on different fronts killed one another under the influence of war propagandas in a century which man supposed to move in the direction of civilization. The act of killing and being killed gradually vanished the propagandas aimed at bringing them to the war under the effects of nationalist and religious slogans and soon they found themselves in a wasteland with no protection and no moral principles. The only way to escape this disillusionment caused by the war was the well-advertised consumerism and materialism.

11. COMMON FEATURES OF THE WORKS OF LOST GENERATION

As the Lost Generation went hand in hand with modernism and modernist artists share some major elements, there can be found some similarities and common features in the works which are written by writers of this group. There are also some other characteristics in their

works which ties them to the Lost Generation movement as well. In the novels of this era, there is an ethnic distinction between the characters. Low-born lovers are fooled by their beloved ones' sexual and shallow love for them. Gatsby was not a high-born man and like Cohn in *The Sun Also Rises* who was a Jew and Brett's lover, hated by other male characters who were involved with the love of the central female character. Excessive drinking and partying are other elements in the works of these writers used as a distraction to the disillusionment caused by war. War is the main reason which parts lovers in these novels. After Gatsby goes to the war and Daisy chooses to marry Tom, Jake is also sexually disabled because of the wound caused by the war and this is the main reason he cannot have Brett.

In most of the Lost Generation novels like *The Sun Also Rises* or *The Great Gatsby*, there is a male character who pursues a central female character whose first love was a soldier and her relationship with the protagonist is the main conflict in the novel. Such female characters are modern women of post-war society who also act as charity girls during the war years, but their image was softened by a romantic connection to the protagonist. Most female characters in modern poems and novels are sexually disorganized and try to escape the patriarchy and get control over men through the act of involving several men with carnal affections. As modernist writers found it necessary to write about new subject matters for making a new literature, it was clear that their new way of seeing life required a new form, a different way of writing. So many experimental and individual

forms of writings were practiced by the writers of the Lost Generation. But some elements were obvious in the works of all these writers:

Modernist works of these writers were mostly affected by the emergence of psychology and Freud's theories about the human psyche. In modernist literary works, especially works written by the lost generation of writers, consciousness and evaluation of the interior world of characters were some of the key elements of their new form of writing. In this manner, the reader would be more entangled with inner world of the characters. Since dreams and thoughts are indiscriminate and chronologically disorganized in their fictions, time loses its sense of being linear and to be perceived as moment time. New theories of quantum physics and relativity --Einstein's first book on relativity 1905-- were attractive for writers like Hemingway (1964) or Stein to highlight the impossibility of being a single way for the salvation of humankind or solving a problem. The substitution of the belief in absolute, comprehensible truth with a sort of relative, conditional truths gradually found its way into a modernist novel and poetry of the writers of this movement. Cities and their changing roles in the constitution of new societies became more prominent in the constitution of their works. Cities were now centers of this radical change, as movie theaters, skyscrapers, electric lights, telephones, automobiles and advertisements were spreading more and more during this era. Even new technologies had some effects on the physical procedure of writing in that era.

With the widespread use of the typewriter, even the mechanical act of writing changed. As media theorist Marshall McLuhan would later explain, the legibility of typewriting and its visual similarity to published literature gave writers the feeling of being able to simultaneously compose and publish their work: Seated at the typewriter, the poet, much in the manner of the jazz musician, has the experience of performance as composition (Seed, 2010: 14).

Characters in modernist works like *The Great Gatsby* were more ambiguous, contradictory and strange in comparison with discrete well-delineated characters in works of Victorian writers like Dickens. The characters became more complicated and simple adjectives were not sufficient for their portrayal. So common features of this group of writers are linked with the shared experience of them of a changing world and post-war years which brought about the emergence of modernism in literature. Being affected by looseness and disillusionment of post-war years Lost Generation members were trying to console themselves with searching for new values and distractions like gaining more power in the new system of social class, excessive drinking, enjoying the technology and the flicker of the modern bright cities, but on the other hand, they were lost in the abundance of theories in the new century, skyscrapers and vastness of megacities and lost themselves in order to find new identities.

12. CONCLUSION

Lost Generation as a movement started by expatriate artists and writers accomplished its prime in reflecting their individual experience of life which was influenced by remarkable events like war and technological advances. This movement was also very important in the emergence of modernism and its branches and as American modernists, writers of this group tried to find new approaches to report different contexts of modern life. Gertrude Stein and her salon was the first modern gallery which hosted other talented writers on Saturday nights to talk about the change they were about to make. World War I is probably the most important occurrence in those years, which engendered a new perspective on life and accelerated the process of changing.

With significant consequences for our subsequent understanding of modernist literature, it was in this postwar period that the canon of modernist literature was also established, as part of the drive to assert a U.S. cultural presence on the international stage commensurate with its geopolitical might (Hemingway, 1964: 22).

The phrase as mentioned in Hemingway's (1964) book depicted this generation as a doomed youth, entangled with hedonism, unbending creativity, and wounded by the experience of war. These virtues and vices are recognizable in the life story of every member of the lost generation to varying degrees, regardless of their bohemian and wild lifestyles, the range, creativity, and influence of works produced by this community of American expatriates in Paris is

remarkable. The themes are mostly life and death, wounds of war, dissatisfaction, and tragic love affair and the novels and the poems written by Lost Generation authors benefited from modern techniques of writing like dialog in Hemingway's (1964) works or Fitzgerald's special diction to describe scenes and Eliot's fragmentation technique. In the following chapters the lives, works, writing styles and contributions of the selected writers will be discussed and the elements of looseness and the mentioned themes will be evaluated in selected works of them.

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