

**Morality and Corruption in Miller's Death of a Salesman and
Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby**

By

Fatima Khaled Mahmoud Hassan

Supervisor

Prof. Tawfiq Yousef

Abstract

This thesis explores the representation of morality and corruption in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* (1925) and Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* (1949). The study reveals how morality and corruption coexist in the two works as reflected in the two writers' portrayal of characters, events and setting. Set in the Jazz Age period, *The Great Gatsby* depicts the American society's move towards a freer lifestyle and a greater focus on material success and economic prosperity. The protagonist of the novel Jay Gatsby and several other characters including Tom Buchanan, Daisy, Jordan Baker and Myrtle, show great interest in material success at the expense of high moral values. Similarly, *Death of a Salesman* portrays Willy Loman as a lower middle class man aspiring to become rich while ignoring the importance of traditional moral values. In both works, the corrupt characters are misguided by a wrong perception of the American Dream which originally sought a combination of material and spiritual values as a way to success.

By contrast, both *The Great Gatsby* and *Death of a Salesman* contain some characters who care about morality in their life and acts. The novel's narrator Nick Carraway and some minor characters such as Gatsby's father and George Wilson are

portrayed as being deeply concerned about moral values and traditional ethical norms. A similar situation applies to the play's minor characters such as Willy's brother Ben and his neighbour Charley and Willy's wife Linda, all of whom show concern about traditional morality.