

**ANALYZING F. SCOTT FITZGERALD'S SHORT FICTIONS FROM THE
PERSPECTIVE OF NEW HISTORICISM: *FLAPPERS AND PHILOSOPHERS*
AND *TALES FROM THE JAZZ AGE***

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**F. SCOTT FITZGERALD'IN KISA KURMACALARININ YENİ TARİHÇİLİK
PERSPEKTİFİNDEN İNCELENMESİ: *FLAPPERS AND PHILOSOPHERS* VE
*TALES FROM THE JAZZ AGE***

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ABSTRACT

Francis Scott Fitzgerald, who had a profound effect on American Literature of the 1920s, wished for making his readers feel the time he lived in every aspect for better or for worse. Therefore, besides fiction, his works include the reflection of real events. New Historical approach, which overtly points to historical and cultural context on the texts differently from the conventional conception of history, helps to read Fitzgerald's works in the same manner. That movement, which was introduced by Stephen Greenblatt in the 1980s, pursues a goal of scrutinizing the text by looking at the culture of the era. In this article, in the light of New Historicism it is aimed to unveil how the hegemonic ideology and culture of Fitzgerald's time shape his and his characters' identities and dreams. Accordingly, in Fitzgerald's books *Flappers and Philosophers* and *Tales from the Jazz Age*, it will be scrutinized in terms of how the identities of the characters are on the way of shaping and eventually shaped without coercing in the direction of current hegemonic power.

Keywords: F. Scott Fitzgerald, Power, Ideology, North, South, Self-Identity, Dream

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This article was generated from MA Thesis titled "RE-READING HISTORY OF F. SCOTT FITZGERALD'S SHORT FICTIONS: *FLAPPERS AND PHILOSOPHERS* and *TALES FROM THE JAZZ AGE*" which was completed at Dokuz Eylül University, Graduate School of Social Sciences, Department of American Culture and Literature and supervised by Assistant Professor Hatice Nuray Önder.

ÖZ

1920'lerin Amerikan Edebiyatı'nı derinden etkileyen Francis Scott Fitzgerald, yaşadığı dönemi iyi ya da kötü her yönüyle okurlarına hissettirmek istemiştir. Bu sebeple eserlerinde kurgunun yanı sıra gerçek olayların yansımalarına da yer vermiştir. Geleneksel tarih anlayışından farklı olarak metinlerdeki tarihsel ve kültürel bağlamlara açıkça vurgu yapan Yeni Tarihsel yaklaşım, Fitzgerald'ın eserlerinin de aynı şekilde okunmasına olanak sağlar. Stephen Greenblatt tarafından 1980'lerde ortaya atılan bu akım, metni dönemin kültürüne bakarak irdelemeyi hedefler. Bu makalede, Yeni Tarihselcilik ışığında, Fitzgerald'ın yaşadığı dönemin hegemonik ideolojisi ve kültürünün kendisinin ve karakterlerinin kimliklerini ve hayallerini nasıl şekillendirdiğini ortaya çıkarmak amaçlanmaktadır. Bu doğrultuda Fitzgerald'ın *Flappers and Philosophers* ve *Tales from the Jazz Age* kitaplarında karakterlerin kimliklerinin nasıl şekillenme yolunda olduğu ve nihayetinde mevcut hegemonik güç doğrultusunda zorlama olmaksızın nasıl şekillendiği mercek altına alınacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: F. Scott Fitzgerald, İktidar, İdeoloji, Kuzey, Güney, Öz Kimlik, Rüya

Introduction

History and literature have made a great impact on each other throughout the years. Notwithstanding the different disciplines they belong to, literature has contained the overtones of history, and history has been discovered through literature, which became the main concern for the idea of New Historicism. This engagement is of great importance to understand the cultural context of the texts. American Literary historian Stephan Greenblatt, as one of the founders of New Historicism, described it as a tendency “to delve as deeply as possible into the creative matrices of particular historical cultures and at the same time to understand how certain products of culture could seem to possess a certain independence” (Greenblatt & Gallagher, 2000, 16). A text is seen as a component and epitome of culture. Culture, history, and text are in motion, and the creation of a text and social matters have interacted with each other, and thus any works of art could be historicized. The historical moment of literary works and turning them to “a historically informed base” has wide coverage in New Historicism (Hamilton, 2003, 151). Hereby, New Historicism for Louis A. Montrose has livened literary texts up “by the historicity a/texts, I mean to suggest the cultural specificity, the social embedment, of all modes of writing - not only the texts that critics study but also the texts in which we study them”².

1. Power and New Historicism

Michel Foucault, who has a great impact on New Historicists, believed that power, which is led by hegemonies³ including the elite or ruling class, could easily change the people's perception without the need for any pressure. Therefore, hegemonic power does not need to shape people's behavior by force but by discourse and ideology. Discourse implicitly has an impact on human ideology who adopts its canon as a “natural thing to do and thus a free autonomous decision” and accordingly, “literature is accepted as actively involved in the making of history through its participation in discursive practices”

² (Montrose, 2013, 20)

³ The term hegemony is “the dominance of one group over another, often supported by legitimating norms and ideas” which is rooted in “a Greek term” translated as “dominance over”. (Rosamond, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/hegemony>).

(Bertens, 2001, 179). That hegemonic power is used “as an ideological weapon and army of metaphors” striving to convince and “manipulate rather than coerce” and thus, humans have no alternatives to shape their own subjectivity because they aren’t even aware of feeling the discrepancy (Brannigan, 1998, 5). Self-fashioning of the human subject interpellated by the ideological and discursive power has been a field of study to the core for Stephan Greenblatt and the other founders of New Historicism.

New Historicism and historical background of the 1920s has set light to analyze interpellated identities in the characters in F. Scott Fitzgerald’s short fictions –*Tales from the Jazz Age* and *Flappers and Philosophers*, and in what way they formulated their subjectivity according to the ideology of hegemonic power. For Fitzgerald, a writer could be wise enough insofar as he addressed the young generation contemporarily:

“The wise writer, I think, writes for the youth of his own generation, the critic of the next and the schoolmasters of ever afterward. Granted the ability to improve what he imitates in the way of style, to choose from his own interpretation of the experiences around him what constitutes material, and we get the first-water of genius” (Fitzgerald, 1996, 34).

He ornamented his work with eloquent details and nuances from his real life. Much of the significance of the fictions is rooted in its exploration of the American dream, which is the ideal by which equality of opportunity, is available to any American, allowing the highest aspirations and goals to be achieved. Therefore, American Dream had a big reputation in American society because of the 1920s flourishing economy. “The rejection of tradition and the celebration of the new” with the remark of Fitzgerald was that the 1920s refused to die “outmoded” and “old” (Currell, 2009, 1). For him, the 1920s or “*the Jazz Age* was an age of an art and excess” or “boom years filled with new pleasures” (Tate, 2007, 6). Although Fitzgerald was seen as against capitalism as a Bohemian writer, he and his characters, who were assimilated selves of the bourgeoisie culture, reflected well the age of glamor and exuberance. Therefore, his characters fashioned their self under the dominant ideology of capitalist hegemony. The hegemonic ideology was so deeply ingrained in the society that after a while people began to believe it to be the only truth they should adopt as if it were their own. As Stephan Greenblatt and Catherine Gallagher put forward that “for the critique of the subject! seemed a reduction of the complexity of human history: the subjects were mere epiphenomena of specific interpellations of dominant ideological structures” (Greenblatt & Gallagher, 2000, 66).

2. New Self and Dream

At the beginning of the 19th century, North Americans were so under the effect of Victorian thrift and productivity that they used money incorruptly and in a controlled way. Nevertheless, with the emergence of financial prosperity during the 1920s, secularized and thrifty bourgeoisie culture changed. When World War I ended, the bells of prosperity tolled heavily throughout America. As the war was turning Europe and the other countries into the ashes, America was moving on flaming. Having an active role in industrial development and towards the end of the war paved the way for America to living its most affluent and prosperous time. Providing satisfaction in leisure and consumption, industrial efficiency and the increase of consumer products gained prominence.

During the twenties aka Roaring Twenties, merchants and advertisers transformed America into a nation of desire. Then, how did America have an appetite for material wealth, while once having “self-restraint and control over [such] appetites and emotions” as Susman stated. (Susman, 2003, 41)? Puritans having “self-restraining and self-corrective” traits were in a struggle for abstaining from worldly pleasures and had “the ideal of the God-centered life, the doctrine of calling or vocation, and the conviction that all of life is God’s” (Ellis, 1888, 254). Therefore, Puritans’ spiritual principles which emphasized forgoing worldly pleasures and leading a simple life aimed to get closer to God. “Puritanism has become identified with a particular set of attitudes toward success in a material sense,

a sign of salvation (the Protestant ethic) stressing industry, thrift, achievement of wealth” (Susman, 2003, 42). American economy and life turned into more capital centered and secular than unworldly taking on just “language of the Protestant ethic called the more modern economic terms ‘labor’ and ‘capital’ ‘hard work’ and ‘self-denial’ and praised the savings bank depositor as the hero of civilization” (43). In time, Puritanical values underwent a change and enabled some very critical perspectives to the new order e.g., frugality, material wealth, tenacity which were the motives to set up American character and ideology on the basis of a modern capitalist system and were the chief pillars of maintaining economic and social order. Thus, subversion of capitalism was contained, which “helped to consolidate the ruling of the nation and promoted the social development”⁴. With the industrial and technological development, consumer culture and an expansive middle class broke out, then purchasing power increased correspondingly.

Enlarging corporations, the stock market, industrial power, the growth of consumer products became more of an issue by enabling satisfaction in leisure and consumption. Changing the self to the machine of spending without hesitating, the power of crass consumerism had the power of spirituality over a barrel just as Greenblatt and Foucault pointed out that an episteme determines each epoch and its breaking point reveals another episteme, discourses, social practices, and power relations (Greenblatt, 1981, 57). During Victorian Era, consumer loans, the financial situation of the ordinary people with average income was managed on a “cash-and-carry basis” yet during the twenties new generation habitually got into the debt “for restaurant meals or new shoes” (Calder, 1999, 22). “The inconceivably large expansion of credit” was in the forefront to replace the “golden age of thrift” with the age of irrepressible greed (22). “By the 1920s, when the artfulness of merchants and advertisers had made America truly a land of desire, very few could practice the Victorian precepts of thrift” such as breaking the habit of saving money beforehand to buy something (207). Materialism and consumerism of American hegemony became the dominant ideological structures and were used as a trump card to interpellate the Victorian North and rustic South. Fitzgerald’s characters in his short fictions *Tales from the Jazz Age* and *Flappers and Philosophers* couldn’t help accommodating their identities to commodified selves unawaresly. Salvation didn’t stand upon the Puritan spiritual values or Victorian way of life by living thriftily or winning God’s favor anymore. Then, money was the only God to find happiness and release. Furthermore, God was the one who could be convinced with bribe as it was stated in the story “The Diamond as Big as The Ritz” in *Tales from The Jazz Age*. Fitzgerald’s characters fashioned their identity and led the people around them to formulate their selves under the effect of the dominant ideology. As Greenblatt and his inspirer, Foucault remarked the ideological structures of power were adopted everywhere and the human subject, who fancied to be independent, convinced to be so, became “the ideological product of the power relations in a particular society” (Greenblatt, 1980, 256). The process of transition of the self is on the horns of a dilemma. The South in Fitzgerald’s works is symbolized as a fallen civilization that remained between the past of Southern plantation aristocracy and the present of the Northern commodified civilization and there was an endless conflict between the old and young generation. Fitzgerald’s father character in the story “Mr. Icky” in *Flappers and Philosophers* complained that his sons Charles and his daughter became a part of such formulated selves by the power of materialism as Currell wrote about African Americans in Harlem Renaissance “based in the North and associated with the urban, the modern, and the future rather than the past” of the agrarian South, but the story clearly shows that the same situation also affects this society. (Currell, 2009, 61). Given this situation, Mr. Icky’s children wished to leave their father’s rural land which they find “plough and rot” and to move to the urbanized spaces e.g. the shopping square Piccadilly Circus and the land of “life” and “jazz” (Fitzgerald, 1920, 262). They prefer to consume enjoying the life in the concrete jungle rather than work in a farm and produce, so they ignored their father Mr. Icky’s efforts to engage them in the soil as it was understood through the lines;

⁴ (Jie-xiu, Yong-hui and Xiao-juan 618).

“The farmers may be the backbone of the country, but who wants to be backbone?” (262). As a matter of fact, they chose to be a part of the materialist and consumer culture estranging themselves to their past just as New Historicist Stephen Greenblatt and Catherine Gallagher stated, “the subjects were merely epiphenomena of specific interpellations of dominant ideological structures” (Greenblatt & Gallagher, 2000, 66). Therefore, they become “a fugitive ‘true’ self a part of ‘ideological apparatus’ through which subjects are interpellated” (Greenblatt & Gallagher, 2000, 65). Northern capitalism projected the discourses to manipulate modern society. As Fitzgerald said: “in any case, the Jazz Age now raced along under its own power, served by great filling stations full of money” (Fitzgerald, 1996, 9).

The ideological apparatuses of capitalist and consumer-based power have penetrated every part of life. The human self wants to “be autonomous” in every decision and is “believed to be so” and they are deprived of freedom becoming an ideological product of the relations of power which stands for the materialist and consumer culture of Northern capitalism in American society (Greenblatt, 1980, 256). For instance, in *Flappers and Philosophers*, flapper girl Ardita’s beloved Curtis Carlyle’s obsession with being rich and materialism was reflected well in the story “The Offshore Pirate” as follows:

“He wanted to have a lot of money and time and opportunity to read and play, and the sort of men and women around him that he could never have—the kind who, if they thought of him at all, would have considered him rather contemptible; in short he wanted all those things which he was beginning to lump under the general head of aristocracy, an aristocracy which it seemed almost any money could buy except money made as he was making it” (Fitzgerald, 1920, p. 11).

Happiness therefore depended on transient and tangible things, in contrast to the rural Southern culture, a Victorian approach to money management, or Puritan spiritual beliefs focused on forgoing worldly pleasures and living modestly in order to reach God.

3. Commodified Dreams

All fugitive and transitory things lied at the heart of people’s happiness changing the rustic Southern culture and the North once having Victorian way of money management with simple life based upon Puritan values to attain to God. However, simplicity and frugality changed into the worldly pleasures and show off. God now in “Diamond as Big as the Ritz” of *Tales from the Jazz Age* could be convinced with “offering a bribe” and then “the simple piety prevalent in Hades [the hometown of John] has the earnest worship of and respect for riches” (Fitzgerald, 1922, 158). Accordingly, they shaped their own identity and were unknowingly molded by forces, they also led other selves to shape their identities according to the exuberant materialist, the consumerist ideology of the industrial North. In the “Offshore Pirate” in *Flappers and Philosophers*, Carlyle from Tennessee expressed this idea in such a way that: “courage to me meant ploughing through that dull gray mist that comes down on life –not only overriding people and circumstances but overriding the bleakness of living. A sort of insistence on the value of life and the worth of transient things” (Fitzgerald, 1920, 19). Furthermore, in the story, Mr. Icky of *Flappers and Philosophers*, the character Mr. Icky was ragging on the same concern since his sons Charles, Peter, and his daughter were insistent on abdicating the responsibility of farming which would be inherited from their father by becoming the formulated selves of capitalism “based in the North and associated with the urban, the modern and the future rather than the past” of the agrarian South (Currell, 2009, 61).

They seemingly did not want to follow in their father's footsteps and live a pastoral lifestyle rested on production. They preferred to be a member of the consumerist and materialist society, thereby differentiating themselves from their roots. Then, Southern people “migrated literally and metaphorically from the Old South to the Urban Meccas of the North” (Ogren, 1989, 139). By assuming “themselves much more as consumers” than producers and “not to save but to spend and spend” because they were “overwhelmed by the massive power of modern merchandising” (Calder, 1999, 25; Susman, 2003, 111).

4. Women’s Changing Priorities

During the First World War, men were enlisted in the army and women compensated the labor demand in the industry, which directly became grounds for gaining the right to vote in 1920. The definition of the "modern woman" unleashed plenty of new needs and "social norms." (Currell, 2009, 27). It is clear that women's contributions to the economy and society profoundly affected consumer culture. “Enjoying the freedom that came from having an independent source of income, many working-class women created a new culture for themselves which centered on consumption and mass entertainment” (27). The name “Flappers” refers to young women in their twenties. Flappers undermined the old roles of Victorian women with the modern way of life by embracing certain behaviors such as smoking, drinking, and dancing jazz “wearing their galoshes loose, enabling them to ‘flap’ around their ankles” (McNeese, 2010, 87). In terms of social life and consumption society, they felt freer as indicated by Currell:

“Flapper style entailed a minimum of undergarments, short skirts, filmy fabrics, and sheer hosiery as bobbed hair (a release from the weight of tradition) represented female daring and eroticism and... smoking, drinking and cosmetics” (Currell, 2009, 29).

The analysis of social problems, oppressed communities, and structures that wielded power such as the school, the church in the time interval is the main concern to New Historicism. As Catherine Gallagher, one of the creators of New Historicism stated that:

“Power cannot be equated with economic or state power, that its sites of activity, and hence of resistance, are also in the micro-politics of daily life...people and phenomena that once seemed wholly insignificant, indeed outside of history: women, criminals, the insane, sexual practices and discourses, fairs, festivals, plays of all kinds.”⁵

With the aim of disseminating the capitalist culture, women were introduced as the means of advertisement and became a part of the micro-politics of life to interpellate people's identities by changing their looks and lifestyles. In the story “Bernice Bobs Her Hair” from *Flappers and Philosophers*, Marjorie was well-known for having "affairs with more than one boy” and despising the "dainty brains" of women that were characteristic of Victorian women. (Fitzgerald, 1920, 97-106). For Marjorie, Beatrice who is Marjorie's cousin, tending to carry out the conventional roles of Victorian women seen as a kind of "hopeless" in her look e.g., with her straggly eyebrows, dress, etc. (97-106). Although the story ends differently, since she was left behind by Marjorie and her friends because of her old style, she started to change her look and lifestyle as indicated in the following lines: “I've decided, began Bernice without preliminaries, ...if you'll tell me why your friends aren't—aren't interested in me I'll see if I can do what you want me to” (105). Furthermore, in “the Camel’s Back” of *Tales from the Jazz Age*, Betty Medill was “a typical flapper and [taking] well in the movies besides, her father gives her three hundred a month to dress on, and she has tawny eyes and hair and feather fans of five colors” (Fitzgerald, 1922, 26). Betty was always more interested in a material fad than

⁵ (Gallagher, 1989, 39).

marrying her ex-fiancé, Perry. As Hoxie Fairchild points out in *The Romantic Quest* “the dominance of man’s creative will over the material world” caused them to be the ones whose happiness depended on a piece of rags and luster (Fairchild, 1931, 200).

5. Inevitable Corruption

With the Wolfstead Act (the Prohibition Act of Alcohol production and consumption) in 1919, the American government aimed at mainly the working class of the society rather than the uppers since “impoverished workers, deprived of the supportive influences traditionally offered by religion and small-town life, were more likely to resort to criminal activities, alcohol-fueled violence or, worst of all, Marxist doctrines as outlets for their frustration” (Palmer, 2006, 8). Primarily, the government’s purpose was to force workers to work soberly, which was to the employers’ benefit by interfering in people’s private life. In addition, “in politics and business, in labor unions and employers’ associations, in public services and private industries, prohibition was the golden grease through which organized crime insinuated itself into a position of incredible power in the nation” (Currell, 2009, 178). The prohibition ignited the illegal actions among the society and officers and therefore, society was more prone to do illegal actions such as bootlegging, speakeasy, stealing, etc. Fitzgerald’s characters Key and his friend in the story “May Day” of *Tales from the Jazz Age* and Dalrymple in “Dalrymple Goes Wrong” of *Flappers and Philosophers* who were the veterans of World War I were destitute of the government’s help because the government vetoed the policy of Veteran Bonus⁶ under the guise of economic contraction by stating that “the nation could not afford the financial drain of long-term bonus payments” (Palmer, 2006, 48). However, President Warren G. Harding promised veterans with these statements: “a generous country will never forget the services you rendered” in his inaugural speech (48). In “Dalrymple Goes Wrong” when Dalrymple went back to his country at the end of the war his prize was a set of decoration of honor but, “when the shouting died he realized that for a month he had been the house guest of the mayor, that he had only fourteen dollars in the world and that the name that will live forever in the annals and legends of this state was already living there very quietly and obscurely” (Fitzgerald, 1920, 137). He understood that doing good for the country or society meant nothing but misery and oblivion. Then he was gradually haunted by irresistible ideas of transformation, and crushed by the juggernaut of money power:

“A great protest swelling into revolt surged up in him. Ideas half-forgotten, chaotically perceived and assimilated, filled his mind. Get on—that was the rule of life—and that was all. How he did it, didn't matter. You had to cut corners that was all. Pull—relationship—wealthy marriages—” (Fitzgerald, 1920, 142-143). *Happiness was what he wanted - a slowly rising scale of gratifications of the normal appetites - and he had a strong conviction that the materials, if not the inspiration of happiness, could be bought with money”* (145).

He and the others like him had been encouraged and blessed with heroic deeds on the eve of the World War, which was now displaced by the criminal acts, the unification policy was taken over by the discrimination policy in line with the capitalist interests. Therefore, for Dalrymple “evil” used to mean a kind of “dirty hue”, yet now, he understood that “evil is only a manner of hard luck or heredity-and-environment or being found out” (145). Illegalization so bored through everyday life that the characters worked closely with the corrupt people. Then, because they viewed happiness as a type of item that could be purchased with money, they became closer to engaging in illicit activities in an effort to get wealthy in the quickest possible manner. Illegal activities “led to the proliferation of hotel and restaurant ballrooms” that were even infringed by the executors of the law itself. (Currell, 2009,

⁶ The World War Adjusted Compensation Act (43 Stat. 121), known as the Bonus Bill, created a benefit plan for World War I veterans as additional compensation for their military service. (Delaney <https://www.encyclopedia.com/history/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/bonus-bill-1924>).

77). A remarkable piece of evidence was “the gangsters bankrolled speakeasies as music and dance became a way of attracting customers as well as covering illegal activities” (77). In the story “Offshore Pirate” of *Flappers and Philosophers*, once “the ragtime⁷ craze hit the country” Curtis Carlyle believed that he was throwing away “the golden years of his life gibbering round a stage” since he was occupied with reaching the luxury of highlife as far in advance as possible (Fitzgerald, 1920, 11). Then, he and his friends discovered the quickest way to become wealthy, and they were “fugitives from justice” stealing a bag of mud –Florida Mud (another word for a drug usually referring to opium) rather than wasting their youth in “the Winter Garden and the Midnight Frolic” which were reputed clubs in the 1920s (8). According to Sinclair Lewis, “the commodity fetishism and materialism of the era turned culture into an adornment and advertisement for capitalist values” (Currell, 2009, 53). Therefore, they turned into “a fugitive ‘true’ self a part of ‘ideological apparatus’ through which subjects were interpellated” (Greenblatt & Gallagher, 2000, 65). With the help of capitalist progress, plutocratic and consumerist politics brought an unusual and obfuscated consumerist ideology that was inwardly unstable and disrupting.

6. Gender Perception

The 1920s is seen as a turning point in gender, color, and class inequality. During WWI, women took over manufacturing jobs previously held by men, paving the way for new opportunities and social norms. They earned their own money in addition to participating in the labor force. They gained the right to vote in 1878 as a part of their struggle for suffrage and had great roles in political power and job opportunities. The "new woman" was called a flapper and vilified by previous generations. Thus, according to Currell, they played a significant role in the modern culture of "consumption" and "mass entertainment." (Currell, 2009, 27). They explored their free will and personalities as a result of the postwar progress and wealth, and in order to embrace new ways of life, they rejected their Victorian mothers' traditional ideas of womanhood. Fitzgerald portrayed women in their twenties as follows: “This was the generation whose girls dramatized themselves as flappers, the generation that corrupted its elders and eventually overreached itself less through lack of morals than through lack of taste” (Fitzgerald 6).

They took to the stage with "showy costumes, diamonds, and gold teeth" after achieving economic independence (Currell, 2009, 79). They were enthralled by the music, which inspired them to write songs and dance invigoratingly, symbolizing their "independence unheard outside the ghetto, brothel, or vaudeville show." (79). Their performances of blues and jazz were so directly linked to the emergence of more liberated sexual identity and the declaration of an unorthodox rebelliousness. Flappers could be identified with “pretty, bob cut haired, impudent, superbly assured, as worldly-wise, briefly clad, sexually assertive”; dancing, drinking, smoking were among their favorite activities (113). Marcia was a cabaret girl in the story “Head and Shoulders,” for example, “on the stage she thought she would feel better”. “This was her dance—and she always felt that the way she did it wasn't suggestive any more than to some men every pretty girl is suggestive” and such dance was “a kind of acrobatic stunt” for her rather than showcasing her body (Fitzgerald, 65-62). On the other hand, Sally Carrol in the story “Ice Palace”, as a Southern flapper girl, believed that Victorian women were constrained in their domestic positions, referring to them as “glorified domestics” and "men [were] the center of every mixed group" (Fitzgerald, 1920, 44). Then, as she expressed “when you look at them, they all fade out they were nothing” from their status as "glorified domestics" who "seemed the essence of spiritless conversationality” (44).

The twenties' young men and women, the majority of whom were Flappers, embodied a more individualistic side of society. They had freedom of expression, consumerism, and moral corruption.

⁷ Ragtime is a type of popular music, developed by African American musicians in the early 1900s, with tunes that are not on regular beats. (Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/ragtime>).

Women refused to live in the "Victorian ideologies of separate spheres and the passive or virginal female" who preferred to be confined with male dominance, as Currell renders those women in Georgia O'Keeffe's *Skyscraper Aesthetic* (Currell, 2009, 156). On the other hand, some young men were reluctant to marry and start a family. In *Flappers and Philosophers*, when one of the flapper characters Ardita in the "Offshore Pirate" talked about her family, she regarded them as "wild" because they were trying to enforce the conventional women roles. The particular reason for this circumstance was that "they tried to marry [her] off", but she found "courage" and when one of the flapper characters Ardita in the "Offshore Pirate" spoke about her family in *Flappers and Philosophers*, she described them as "crazy" because they were attempting to impose traditional women's roles on her, e.g. "they tried to marry [her] off," but she found "courage" and that was enough for her to gain self-reliance "as a rule of life, and something to cling to always, [she] began to build up this enormous faith in [her]self" (Fitzgerald, 1920, 19).

7. Conclusion

The study aimed to examine Fitzgerald's short stories *Tales from the Jazz Age* and *Flappers and Philosophers* in light of New Historicist theories. New Historicism has been a phenomenon since the 1980s, shaking the stereotypical sense of history at its heart. This study enables the readers and researchers who will study in this field to see that a text can be a reflection of culture. Culture, tradition, and text are all in motion, and the creation of a text and social issues overlap, therefore any piece of art can be historicized. According to Stephen Greenblatt, the self is portrayed as a sense of personal order, a distinctive mode of address to the world, a structure of bounded desires, and elements of deliberate shaping of identity by culture. (Greenblatt, 1980, 1). Fitzgerald's characters ideally represented the impulsive identity of American society in the 1920s and during the Roaring Twenties, the power and glamour of wealth and appearance had a profound impact on Fitzgerald's characters. The corruption of the 1920s was conceived as dim, bourgeoisie, and mechanic. Capitalism drew the characters' attention to the American Dream, which seemed to promise independence, self-fulfillment, and happier life but instead resulted in dissatisfaction. Following the World War I, Victorian money management was replaced by a flow of mass-produced commodities and hedonistic spending appetite, resulting in the dispersion of family ties. For twenties' men and women, therefore, commodity fetishism and hedonistic lifestyle take precedence over family relations. As Greenblatt points out, the prevalent philosophy and theory of the time fashioned the subjectivity of the human self without being noticed, resulting in a new perspective and identity of the individual in the world of capitalistic order. Characters were oblivious of their changed behavior and conditions because the world in which they lived embraced the capitalistic hegemony's realities, philosophy, and moral principles as if their own. Adoption of crass consumerist and materialist ideology, as well as certain criminal acts, is aided by ideological state apparatuses through their surroundings, radio, education, television, and works of art, among other things. As a result, they lost their subjectivity due to identity assimilation based on wealth and material objects, which were replaced by intellectual and spiritual inheritance then the characters were unable to find contentment as they were captives of their formulated selves' insatiable desires. In this way, this thesis allows the spirit of the time to be read not only in history books but also in texts written under the hegemonic influence of the time.

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Yazar tarafından potansiyel bir çıkar çatışması bildirilmemiştir.

