



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Humanity, alongside its complex connection with cultural constructs, exhibits an unwavering determination to keep adapting, rebuilding, and forging a path forward. Steinberg (2013, p. 6) said that in order to show human's life and identity, humanity will utilize the human's ability to paint, to sculpt, to dance, to sing, and to use language. In other words, human will create an art with the aim to show their existence. In ethical view, humanity can be seen as universal morals engraved in society, a construct inseparable from human social nature (Nurcahyadi et al., 2025; Arafah et al., 2023). By combining both definitions, it is sufficed to say that human composed arts to show realities and morals within communities. Accordingly, arts (such as literature and music) record the attribute of society since they emerge from the artists' conceptual, ideological, and philosophical struggles (Nur and Arafah, 2020; Asri et al., 2022).

Language is a part of humanity that serves as a communication and social instrument (Arafah et al., 2024). The use of language has always been so unique for humanity that it has led human in producing massive amount of literary works. Literary work is a written piece that often portrayed the history, culture, and morals in certain society and time period (Suhadi et al., 2022; Marlina et al., 2018). Furthermore, Abrams and Harpham (2025, p.72) said literary work as "*imitation, reflection, or representation of the world and human life...*". In other words, literary work is a portrayal of a social community where the author lived and experienced. A quality piece of literary work should offer readers both meaning and valuable lesson, and that it usually comes with prominent use of figurative language aiming to achieve deeper meaning (Hasanah et al., 2021; Manugeran et al., 2023).

Generally, there are three big scopes that cover the literature's genre, namely poetry, drama, and prose (Tang et al., 2025; Magfirah et al., 2015). To put it in broad terms, poetry constitutes a verbal or written language distinguished by its rhythmic composition (Mutmainnah et al., 2022, p. 351), drama is any written work with dialogue meant to be acted out on a stage for audience (Fadillah et al., 2022, p. 66), and prose is any written work that is heavy with descriptive narrative fiction story.

One sub-genre of prose is novel. Novel is a literary work focused on describing a story by telling its characters experiences. Various novels had depicted real life phenomenon whether it is in allegory (i.e. Orwell's *Animal Farm*), in historical fiction (i.e. Tolstoy's *War and Peace*), or in realistic fiction (i.e.



ald's *The Great Gatsby* and McKay's *Banjo*). This is in line with Lestari et al. (2023) and Asri et al. (2023) who said that novel (as literary work) has strong relation to the nation's cultural records and the writer's response to an occurrence in

When talking about jazz, it could refer either to an age or a music genre. Schoenberg (2006) said that the word "jazz" is an African American idiom, which the roots of it (e.g. jism, jasm, gism) are considered to have a clear association with sexuality and brothels. Those root words are American slang commonly associated with male vigor or vitality in the early 20th century. However, Schoenberg (2006) also stated that recent historical studies have revealed most early jazz musicians in New Orleans did not perform in brothels, and that the genre has struggled to dissociate itself from its longstanding connection to the red-light district. Looking at today's dictionary, Merriam-Webster (2024) showed that the word jazz can be implied as either enliven or accelerate. When referring to Jazz Age, it is a time period that began from the 1920s until the Great Depression in 1929. Called as Jazz Age because it is the time where popularity of jazz music and dance are rising. Jazz can also be classified as musical genre, or centered around instruments (Schoenberg, 2006). The characteristics of jazz as musical genre can be seen from its rhythmic known as "swing", which was rooted in 19th century African American churches. Another important thing that made jazz music different with other musical genres is that jazz musicians tend to do a spontaneous variations and improvisations of the music, making it different from one performance with another.

Jazz as musical genre is still thriving in today's world. The genre itself has been flourished in almost every country. Attarian (2016) said that the development of jazz music outside of United States (such as Europe and Asia) is often associated with African American musicians who immigrate and brought or played their jazz music on the countries in which they wandered (notable musician such as: Teddy Weatherford who brought jazz music to India, and Josephine Baker, an African American jazz singer who was thrived in France). Thus, researching jazz music remains both engaging and socially relevant, given its widespread global recognition and the substantial number of its enthusiasts around the world.

Narration about jazz music often appear in a lot of literary works. Some examples are in: *The Great Gatsby* and *Tales of The Jazz Age* by Fitzgerald, *The Big Sea* by Hughes, and *Banjo* by McKay. Interestingly, when reading their narration about jazz music, a lot of narration about jazz music can be compared with each other. Some of them are resembling a similar narration such as jazz music often played with sudden improvisation and that jazz music often associated with African American culture (take example in *The Big Sea* and *Banjo*). In other side, some novels narrate jazz music as something that is enjoyed by the white people (take example in *The Great Gatsby*).



In studying literary works, a researcher should first understand the work int to study. This is in line with what Wellek and Warren (1949, p. 139) t doing the analysis of literary works first is the most natural and practical give the researcher interest in understanding the work of art itself. In today's age, a researcher has various selection of theories they can choose in studying a topic within literary works. This is because the theory of literature has been growing extensively from the twentieth century (Floriani et al., 2020, p. 1283). For example, the theory of dynamic structuralism that tries to focus both in intrinsic and extrinsic element of literary work (Irmawati et al., 2020), Goldmann's theory of genetic structuralism in the mid twentieth century that tries to analyzes the work of art, its extrinsic element, and its writer. (Yudith et al., 2023; Arifuddin et al., 2024), the sociology of literature theory that tries to study sociology and its reflection in literature (Sunyoto et al., 2022), and comparative literature that tries to compare two or more literary works in certain topic.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher is eager to juxtapose two literary works that narrated about jazz music by using the theory of comparative literature. The theory itself will be further explained in the theoretical background of this research. The researcher thought that researching jazz music from only one source is not enough to really comprehend the complexity of jazz music. It is interesting to compare the depiction of jazz music in two different literary works since it sometimes narrated different things that might be foreign in one another. Take example in Fitzgerald's novel entitled *The Great Gatsby*, it narrated jazz music as something attached with the middle- to high-class white people, while on the other side, McKay's novel entitled *Banjo* narrated jazz music as something attached with the lower-class black people. Therefore, the researcher will juxtapose both of the novels in regard to the depiction of jazz music inside of them.

The tittle of this research will be: "*Dancing around 1920s Jazz: Depiction of Jazz Music in Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby and McKay's Banjo*". The word "dancing" in this context means to move or to investigate around. Thus, the meaning of "Dancing around 1920s Jazz" is a process of moving or investigating around the 1920s jazz. The 1920s itself came from the time setting of the both novels, *The Great Gatsby's* time setting is 1922 while *Banjo's* time setting is around 1925s.

Music is a media that is innate for every social class as how the novels *Banjo* and *The Great Gatsby* (if combined) portrayed jazz as something inclusive and likable across all societal levels. Thus, studying music is important to understand social and cultural phenomenon happened in a social community. Take example on how the flourishing of jazz music in the early twentieth century encouraged the rise of new type of dances such as the Frisco and Black Bottom dances, and on how hip-hop music in America encouraged the rise of social and political movement called Black Lives Matter (BLM). There are still a lot of



es that can be taken out there, but the researcher just wanted to state that music is attached with social lives; accordingly, researching music is important for us to be aware with and appreciate our surroundings.

1.2 Identification of Problem

The writer identified some problems that can be analyzed when comparing Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and McKay's *Banjo*, they are:

1. Comparing the gender issues and stereotypes between men and women reflected in both novels.
2. Comparing the struggle of the main characters from both novels in achieving their ambition.
3. Comparing the differences of jazz music depiction between both novels.
4. Comparing the similarities of jazz music depiction between both novels.

1.3 Scope of Problem

Based on the problems mentioned above, the writer only focused on certain problems since there is limited time and knowledge that the writer has. The topic of this undergraduate thesis focused on the 3rd and 4th problem. In other words, this research compared both the differences and similarities of jazz music depiction between Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and McKay's *Banjo*.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the scope of problem above, the writer formulates this research's questions as follows:

1. What are the differences of the jazz depiction between Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and McKay's *Banjo*?
2. What are the similarities of the jazz depiction between Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and McKay's *Banjo*?

1.5 Objective of the Study

Based on the scope of problems, the objective of this study are as follows:

1. To explore and elaborate the differences of the jazz depiction between Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and McKay's *Banjo*.
2. To explore and elaborate the similarities of the jazz depiction between Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and McKay's *Banjo*.

1.6 Benefit of the Study

This study has two functions, they are theoretical and practical. Theoretically, this research looks through few fields of studies, namely musicology (specifically the history of jazz music), cultural, and literature. This research can contribute for all of the mentioned fields since it focuses in discussing a topic about the



n of jazz music in literary works. Another thing experienced by the writer research is a phenomenon where there is somewhat a lack of interest donesian students in conducting research with the topic of music d in literary works. This can be seen by searching related topic (in this case music) on each Indonesian university's repository. Thereby, the researcher hopes that this study can encourage other researcher, specifically Indonesian students, in conducting study that can contribute both in musicology and literature.

Practically, this study tries to identify the depiction of jazz music in Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and McKay's *Banjo* and later compare it; thus, it will give us an understanding on how jazz music is depicted between two novels that have different country setting (*The Great Gatsby*'s setting is in America while *Banjo*'s setting is in France). Furthermore, both novels depicted jazz music in a different social class perspective; thus, it will give us an understanding on how jazz music is perceived from different social class. In addition, the result of this study is expected to be useful for other researchers and people in general, and also it is expected to be a reference and alternative information for further and similar research.



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Previous Related Studies

Regarding to this study, there are some previous studies that the writer wants to show and to explain about its correlation with the writer's title. The study might have the same topic but different object, or the opposite. Another case is the study have the same approach but different topic and/or object. As a whole, there are four researches that are explained on this part, they are (1) "*The Loud Music of Life*": *Representations of Jazz in the novels of Claude McKay* by Paul De Barros (1999), (2) *Literary Free Jazz? "Mumbo Jumbo" and "Paradise": Language and Meaning* by Keren Omry (2007), (3) *The Great Gatsby: Feminism in the Jazz Age* by Yu Yaoye (2021), and (4) *How differently can the same story be adapted? A Comparative Analysis of the Cinematic Adaptations of The Great Gatsby* by Julia Alejandro Cid (2023)

The first study is from Paul de Barros (1999) entitled "*The Loud Music of Life*": *Representations of Jazz in the novels of Claude McKay*. Despite the distant gap years between this research and Barros' research, the writer intends to include this study since it is closely related with the writer's title of research. The objective of Barros's study is to find the representation of jazz in three McKay's novel namely *Home to Harlem* (1928), *Banjo* (1929), and *Banana Bottom* (1933). Although the approach of this study is not mentioned, it can be said that this study uses the approach of genetic structuralism proven on how Barros researched the social context, the author's life, and the novels. The study found that McKay's goal as black artist is not that different with the current jazz musicians. Barros found that jazz musicians perceive jazz as an art that begin in the street merging with the lives of people (p. 317). Another found is that McKay uses jazz as "*symbol for the reclamation of self-determination and community by blacks-for blacks-...*" (p. 316).

The second study is from Keren Omry (2007) entitled *Literary Free Jazz? "Mumbo Jumbo" and "Paradise": Language and Meaning*. Again, there is some distant gap years, but it is still sufficient to be mentioned since there is interrelation between the researches in terms of jazz music history. The objective of Omry's research is to study two novels, namely *Mumbo Jumbo* (1972) by Ishmael Reed and *Paradise* (1998) by Toni Morrison, in terms on how both "*seek constructive ways to incorporate the history of African American experience into an aesthetic that moves beyond the traditional notion of an historical narrative*" (p. 127). Specifically, both novels' authors have creative efforts in identifying the 1960s development of jazz music by calling it as the "New Music" or "free jazz". The theory used in Omry's study is a theory constructed by Theodor W. Adorno



on his published collection of essays called *Vers une Musique Informelle*. ory itself tries to analyze the modern music's development by describing lding new kind of music as outcome of historical process. The outcome study found that both of the novels' author, Reed and Morrison, are transforming the narrative of history into a constructive force. By creating the terms "New Jazz" or free jazz, they create a fresh language fostering a dynamic sense of ethnic identity.

The third study is a thesis by Yu Yaoye (2021) entitled *The Great Gatsby: Feminism in the Jazz Age*. The objective of the study is to seek and to analyze the depiction of female in the novel *The Great Gatsby*. Furthermore, it tries to understand the female tragedy in the Jazz Age from feminist viewpoint. The female characters analyzed on this thesis are restricted to only three characters, namely Daisy, Jordan, and Mrytle. This study used the approach of Feminist Literary Criticism, which tries to view literary works from a female point of view, to criticize the male-centric nature of Western culture and the misrepresentation of women in male-authored works, and to recover as well as establish a literary tradition that centers on women's voices and experiences. The outcome of this study stated that there is some observable female discriminations depicted in the novel *The Great Gatsby*, like how the men in this novel are always be the one who dominated family and social matter, making the women in this novel suppressed to follow the men's desire.

The fourth study is a dissertation by Julia Alejandro Cid (2023) entitled *How differently can the same story be adapted? A Comparative analysis of the Cinematic Adaptation of The Great Gatsby*. The objective of this study is to analyze the differences of the narrative elements between two movies that are based on the novel *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald. The chosen movies are Jack Clayton's *The Great Gatsby* (1974) and Baz Luhrmann's *The Great Gatsby* (2013). In conducting the study, Alejandro first read the novel and later use the comparative approach to compare how the novel was portrayed in both of the movies. The researcher is focused in studying both movies based on three main narratological aspects, they are the homodiegetic narrator, the focalization, and the role of the analepses. The result of this dissertation are: (1) the significance of Nick as the narrator of the story is rather opaque in Clayton's adaptation, while on the other side Luhrmann's adaptation kept Nick's emotion towards other characters visible; (2) there is a differentiation on how Gatsby is introduced in both movies; (3) Fitzgerald uses analepses on *The Great Gatsby* to give the reader more insight of the narrative and if compared to both movies, Clayton's adaptation is lack with analepses while Luhrmann's adaptation is the opposite. Cid (2023, p. 33) stated that the exclusion of key events in story can significantly influences how *The Great Gatsby* is adapted, in which the result are two distinctly different movie versions.



There are, of course, some intersections between those previous mentioned above and the writer's study. The first study takes the topic especially on its representation in McKay's novels (*Banjo* included). This, s the closest topic and object related to the writer's study. Though the topic is familiar, there are some more viewpoints about jazz music that can be found in McKay's *Banjo* especially when using different approach. The first study's discovery is mostly about how jazz musicians perceive and use jazz on their life, whereas this study is to find more outlooks about how jazz music is portrayed between two novels that have different place settings (one is in America and the other is in France). Moving to the second study, it examines the culture and development of jazz music 30 years after *Banjo* was published. It is rather interesting to compare how different or similar the representation of jazz between the 1920s and 1950s, but that should be another topic to talk about. The writer included the second study to show that jazz music has always been developing in humanity. The third study is studying Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, specifically about the topic of feminism on that particular time in the novel called as Jazz Age. This study is included to show that *The Great Gatsby* contained some depiction about Jazz Age and is interesting to be compared with McKay's *Banjo* that had a strong depiction about jazz music. The last study used the same approach, which is comparing, and also use *The Great Gatsby* (novel and two of its movie adaptation) as its primary data. This study is included in order to get a broader erudition about how comparative approach works.

2.2 Theoretical Background

In this sub-chapter, the theories used to analyze both novels (*The Great Gatsby* and *Banjo*) are further elaborated. The first one is theory about intrinsic elements, which the researcher used to understand both novels as a work of art. The second theory is comparative literature, which the researcher used to juxtapose both novels in terms of how both depict about jazz music.

2.2.1 Intrinsic Study of Literature

There are many theories about the intrinsic elements of literary work that had been elaborated by some experts. Take example of Meyer Howard Abrams who specifically called the study of the literary work itself as objective theories (Arafah et al., 2024; Falah et al., 2021). There is also Tzvetan Todorov's narrative theory that is focuses on the plot elements of literary work. The main theory that is used in this research (though other theories are still used to support each other) is René Wellek and Austin Warren's approach in studying the work of art itself, which they called as intrinsic elements.

In researching a literary work, Wellek tries to focus on what he called as "work of art". Later, he argued (2021, p. 170) that a literary work should be understood as an independent structure, a layered system of



ns and meanings that exist separately from author's thoughts, emotions, life experiences at the time it was written. In other words, a researcher could not reduce a literary work to the author's mind or life; the text is its own world, and we should analyze it on its own terms. However, unlike formalism approach, Wellek still acknowledge that it is still valuable to study where a work came from, like its historical, social, or biographical roots. He then distinctively divided, or named, the study of "work of art" as "intrinsic" while the study of its historical or contextual influences as "extrinsic"; thus, linking between two of them as "genetic relations".

Studying the intrinsic elements of a literary work is usually the common way in conducting literature research. Wellek and Warren (1949, p. 224) mentioned that the analysis of novel has usually been done by using four elements namely plot, characterization, setting, and atmosphere. Another intrinsic element that usually used in researching a literary work is theme.

First is the idea of plot. In Russian Formalist theory, plot is called as motive and motivation. Wellek and Warren (1949, p. 226) said that: "*in a work of literary art, the "motivation" must increase "the illusion of reality": that is, its aesthetic function... In art, seeming is even more important than being.*". In other words, plot is where "aesthetic function" resides, it is where author's imagination lies the most. One of the most common structures of plot used in researching a literary work is from Freytag's five-part plot model. Freytag divided the structures of narrative on his book *Die Technik des Dramas* (1872) into (1) exposition, (2) rising action, (3) climax, (4) falling action, and (5) resolution. Freytag (1900, p.120) said that exposition functioned as brief introductory to prepare for the action, and that exposition should remain untouched by distractions (conflicts). The rising action is where "*spirited motives*" are introduced (Freytag, 1900, p. 189); in other words, spirited motives can also be called as conflicts on a story. The climax is what Freytag called as the middle point. Climax is the peak of the conflict that had been introduced in rising action. Then, there is falling action that Freytag said as "*the first great result of a sublime struggle, or the beginning of a mortal inward conflict...*" (Freytag, 1900, p. 130). To put it simply, falling action is the post-effect of climax showing result for anyone or anything involved on the conflict, and it is also where new force or role is introduced. Lastly, the resolution or what Freytag also called as closing action. Freytag (1900, p. 137) claimed that resolution is where a substantial act was done by major characters in order to relief their embarrassment or inner conflict that appear from the falling action.

Second is the idea of characterization. In today's age, characterization often aligned with character. The center difference is that character is only limited to a person, figure, or being (such as their name,



kname, or alias); on the other side, characterization is focused on coloring the character's traits, personality, and motivations. Wellek and Warren (1949, p. 226) stated that naming is the most basic form of characterization. Later they mentioned different "repertory company", as what they wrote, in characterization such as major persons, the hero, the heroine, the villain, and the humor characters. Major persons, also known as major characters, are characters who constantly appeared in the story and who have significant contribution to the plot. The hero and heroine are what broadly known as main characters, while the villain is the one who will hinder the main characters' motives.

Third is the idea of setting. Setting is the environment depicted in a novel. It can be the spatial and temporal narration inside a novel. Wellek and Warren (1949, p. 228) said "*setting is environment; and environments, especially domestic interior, may be viewed as metonymic, or metaphoric, expressions of character. A man's house is an extension of himself.*". On that passage, Wellek and Warren tried to tell us that the environment where a character lives or exists (domestic interior) can give the reader insight into who they really are.

Fourth is the idea of atmosphere. Atmosphere is often included in the element of setting alongside with time and place. Wellek and Warren classified atmosphere element as something symbolic or something that possess "metaphysical qualities". They further said that it is "*related to the "world", as equivalent to the "attitude towards life" or tone implicit in the world.*" (1949, p. 234). In other words, atmosphere is the emotional tone or mood that radiates in a literary work.

Fifth is the idea of theme. Theme is widely known as message or central idea that a literary work conveys. Abrams and Harpham (2015, p. 230) defined theme as general concept or principle functioned to engage the reader and present a compelling message. Theme is usually divided into major and minor theme, in which the major is idea that generally extends throughout the entire story while the minor is idea that specifically presents in certain part of story.

2.2.2 Comparative Literature

This study used the comparative literature approach, which is a form of literary theory aiming to understand literature and its content by juxtaposing two or more literary works. According to Dasgupta (1989, p. 3), comparative literature possesses a dynamic not static or fixed character, and adaptable on the constant evolving social. This theory can be used in order to understand the diversity within literary works, as well as the multiple external contexts inscribed inside some literary works. Two notable eminent pioneer that made a substantial development of comparative literature as a



Some of the pioneers of literary studies are Jean-Jacques Ampère (1800-1864) and Abel-André Villemain (1790-1890) (both are French). Other terms that may refer to this theory are “The Comparative History of Literature” or “History of Comparative Literature”. However, this theory is most famous by the name of comparative literature among French writers in nineteenth century. The early comparative literature, specifically the theory used for academic study, first appeared or at least recorded in France at nineteenth century. The two mentioned people above (Ampère and Villemain) often considered as the father of comparative literature, but some critics, like Brennan (2004, as cited in Manqoush, 2014), excluded Ampère, saying that the first person who used the term of “comparative literature” is Villemain in the name of “*littérature comparée*”.

Since the two eminent pioneers of comparative literature came and first flourished from France, the early development of this theory often recognized as French school of comparative literature. As what Dasgupta (1989, p. 3) mentioned, the word “French” signifies neither a specific nationality nor the language used, rather it denotes a general approach or orientation toward the subject. Generally, French school’s approach is intense in seeking how a thing influenced another thing (e.g., examining the influence of English gothic fiction on 19th century French literature). Not only that, French school is focused in presenting empirical evidence, constituting observable and verifiable facts rather than speculation. Manqoush (2014) claimed French school as “historical and positivist approach” since it is focused in searching influences or relations between different national literatures and how it is heavily attributed to fact, empirical evidence, and documentation (pp. 303-304). The reason of why this theory have significant development on French is because the presence of nationalist movement at the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries on Europe. In other words, the French school exists to support the nationalist movement, as what Shamsudin (2019, p. 89) mentioned, that this school enables a nation to reflect on its identity by viewing itself through the lens of other literatures. Another key aspect of this school is that the compared literatures must come from two different nations and must use two different languages. This aspect eventually got criticized causing other perspectives appeared in response to that.

In the middle of twentieth century, René Wellek frontally opposed the French school approach of comparative literature. Specifically, Warren and Wellek (1949, p. 44) issued about the “national literatures” stating that when it comes to distinguishing literatures written in the same language, like American English and Irish English, the question of “nationality” becomes especially complex. In other words, they discussed about the complication in defining “national literature” when multiple national



literatures can exist within the same language. Practically, in French school, conducting a comparative literature study between American English and British English literature can be an error since both use the same language even though they came from distinct nations and cultural identities. In other cases, Wellek (2021) felt a pity that comparative study in French school is too restricted to what he called as “foreign trade”. What he meant in “foreign trade” is the limitation of comparative literature in studying literatures only to direct, traceable influences across borders (pp. 162-163). Moreover, Wellek (2021, p. 168) argued that everyone has the right to explore any topic, even if it’s limited to a single work in a single language, and everyone is entitled to study subjects like history, philosophy, or anything else they choose. According to the explanation above, two literary works that came from the same nation can be juxtaposed using Wellek’s ideas of comparative literature.

2.3 Pertinent Ideas

This section discussed about all relevant concepts and views regarding to the research’s title. In total, there are two pertinent ideas that are discussed on this section, namely (1) General View of Jazz Music, and (2) The 1920s: Jazz Age, American Dream, and *Années Folles*.

2.3.1 General View of Jazz Music

In today’s occurrence when people mentioned about jazz, it will likely be associated with African American society. Other occasion, people know jazz as a music full of creativity and improvisation. The root cause of that can be seen by looking back at the history, Morgenstern (1973) explained that the root of jazz is from folk sources, specifically from African American slaves who developed their ancestral heritage into a new form of music and story (p. 5). It has been mentioned in the background of this research that jazz music has a distinctive rhythmic called as “swing”, which was rooted back in the 19th century African American churches. Such thing can also be seen from Farley’s doctoral thesis (2008) that mentioned two African American jazz musicians, namely Miles Davis and Duke Ellington, who were influenced a lot by the music from African American church (pp. 75-76).

Not only for the African American society, jazz music has always been popular among other societies. In the 1920s, there are many prominent white jazz musicians such as Bix Beiderbecke, Frankie Trumbauer, Paul Whiteman, Eddie Lang, and so on. Emerson (2024) said that Bix Beiderbecke was one of many leading jazz musicians in the 1920s who revolutionize the improvisational style of jazz.

The complexity of jazz music is also worth to be examined, particularly considering on why it has long been wholeheartedly associated



h creativity and improvisation. Morgenstern (1973, p. 5) said that its complexity came from African heritage, particularly on its “*distinctive rhythmic elements and also in its tradition of collective improvisation*”, which was assimilated on how jazz developed on the hand of African American musicians. Farley (2011) mentioned that a few significant collective European classical composers said that the value represented in jazz could influence the growth of classical music. Furthermore, jazz is regarded as musical sophistication by focusing on improvisational solos from the time it was growing (p. 123).

Eventually, jazz music is defined as a black American art form led by the Jazz Preservation Act (JPA). After that, jazz music became important and also a major theme of African American historical value. Former United States president, Bill Clinton, said on his scripted remarks in 13th June 1993, narrated that “*Jazz is really America’s classical music.*”; furthermore, he praised black musicians on how they influence and contribute to the American’s culture through jazz music.

A century after the 1920s, jazz music is still widely recognized around the globe and often fused with other genres. A lot of musical genres had tried to fuse jazz with them, take example of rhythm and blues (R&B) that fused the element of jazz and blues, jazz rap that fused the element of jazz and hip-hop, and neo soul that fused the element of jazz, funk, and hip-hop. Based on Nielsen (as cited in Duarte, 2025) R&B/hip-hop is the most popular music genre in 2021 United States, leading the chart by having a total of 29,9% proportion of streams. Another occasion is that in the 1920s until today’s age, Jazz Age often included in cocktail music, lounge music, or mood music alongside blues and ragtime. One of the reasons why it is included in that category is because jazz music often has soothing rhythm and melody aspect.

2.3.2 The 1920s: Jazz Age, American Dream, and *Années Folles*

The term Jazz Age refers back to the American 1920s, a time when jazz music is dramatically flourished and enjoyed by a lot of people. The massive popularity gain of jazz is also supported by the technological innovations on that time, enabling people to hear jazz music through radio and on their home through recordings. At this time, a lot of jazz bands performed at venues, mainly centered at New York and Chicago.

Not just referring to the jazz music itself, Jazz Age also portrayed a time of wild lifestyle. History.com (2023) mentioned that some older people in the 1920s labeled Jazz Age as the inspire of moral disasters in American 1920s. The famous American writer on that age, Francis Scott Fitzgerald, even associated the age as follows:



The uncertainties of 1920 were drowned in a steady golden roar and many of our friends had grown wealthy. But the restlessness of New York in 1927 approached hysteria. The parties were bigger...the pace was faster...the shows were broader, the buildings were higher, the morals were looser, and the liquor was cheaper. (Fitzgerald, 2005, p. 112)

The moral disaster of Jazz Age was further soaring by the presence of flappers that reject the value of Victorian women. Just to clarify, the key point of the value is that women were heavily expected to only meddle with domestic affairs even though they were still able to work in limited professions such as teachers, factory workers, or domestic servants (Yudith et al., 2024, p. 826). Eventually, there were emerging movements and individual women who challenged the norms, and flapper is one of it. Same with the Jazz Age, flapper is a term that first appeared around the 1920s. According to Rosenberg (2025), it is after the World War I that the term flapper first appeared, specifically in Great Britain, with the meaning of a young girl who was still a bit clumsy and had not yet matured into adulthood. Rosenberg (2025) also said that it was John Held Jr. and F. Scott Fitzgerald who popularized the flapper term to United States.

Whipple (2025) said that the idea of the 1920s flapper was expressed through various mediums such as hairstyles, fashion, and makeup. In accordance to Coyle and DiEleuterio (2024), flapper was known for their bobbed hairstyle, prominent use of makeup, provocative fashion (such as short dresses and stockings), and unconventional behavior. Their behavior was called unconventional back then since they tend to do anything controversial on that age such as smoking and drinking on public, going and dancing at jazz club such as speakeasies, and having a freedom of their sexual life. Dancing was one of the highlighted lifestyles of flappers. Popular dances that are generally practiced by them are like the Black Bottom, the Shimmy, the Charleston dance, and also a popular jazz dance called as Frisco dance.

Though having a majestic party was a part of Jazz Age, the manufacturing and sale of alcoholic beverage was banned after the validation of Volstead Act in 1919. Interestingly, the consumption of alcoholic drink did not seem to be decreasing since people at that time chose to attend a secret bar called 'speakeasies' where they can enjoy illegal intoxication beverages. In this case, many place got their alcoholic beverages from 'bootleggers', which referred to people who illegally made, manufactured, or sold alcoholic beverages. The thing about speakeasies is that it was common to play jazz music in that kind of bar, and this could also be the reason of why jazz music became so popular in the 1920s.



Jazz Age is often aligned with the general concept of American Dream. Just to clarify, the concept of American Dream can be far traced back in the 1776's American Declaration of Independence, in which it declared that:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness... That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government... (Archives.gov, n.d.)

Based on the transcription above, it can be found that there are four main ideas in American Dream, those are (1) right to live, (2) right to be free, (3) right to pursuit happiness, and (4) right to alter or to abolish the government's law if it obstructs the first three rights. These four main ideas are clearly depicted on Jazz Age based on the prior explanation above; or, to summarize, the Jazz Age is a time where people are free to live with their freedom, with their right to pursue happiness whether it is in form of career, money, or lifestyle.

Aligned with Jazz Age, *Années Folles* (literally translated as The Crazy Years) is an age of the 1920s in France. Weeks (2021) said that this age was marked by the development of Surrealist movement and the arrival of "The Lost Generation" in France. The Lost Generation referred to American and British writers that moved in France after the Great War. In this age, the Surrealist movement tried to reject a social norm where arts were dominated by only the aristocrat, and it also tried to break free arts from the limitation of logic and reason.

Années Folles was also marked by the thriving of jazz music in many entertainment places. For Nevez (2019) he argued that jazz music in France was first brought by African American soldiers who were stationed in France during the Great War. In the 1920s, a famous African American jazz musician named Joséphine Baker arrived in France and made jazz music popular there. Fifer (2024) said that jazz in France is not completely influenced by American culture. He said that French musicians and local jazz ensembles developed distinctive styles by incorporating their own ideas and interpretations into their performances.