Journal of American Studies of Turkey
45 (2016): 179-195

Tarleton Revisited: Representation of the South in Fitzgerald's Tarleton Stories

Gül Varlı Karaarslan

Abstract

Known as one of the major pens of the Jazz Age, F. Scott Fitzgerald narrates the cultural and historical panorama of the South at the beginning of the twentieth century in his early writings as well. Categorized under his early works, Fitzgerald's Tarleton trilogy includes his stories "The Ice Palace" (1920), "The Jelly Bean" (1920), and "The Last of the Belles" (1929). The stories take place in the fictional city of Tarleton that brings the Old South into existence through vivid city descriptions and characters. The author sketches the dramatic shift in the cultural, social, and economic spheres in the South. In addition, the stories provide a historical insight as the time moves towards the end of World War I. The economic impacts of World War I, the social mobility, the conflicts between the South and the North, and the reformation of gender roles are interconnected with the journeys of the characters who desire to accomplish their dreams. By reiterating the connections among the mentioned stories, this paper focuses on the use of physical space that closely interacts with the changing Southern culture represented by Southern tradition and women characters.

Keywords

F. Scott Fitzgerald, "The Ice Palace," "The Jelly Bean," "The Last of the Belles," the Culture of the South

Özet

Jazz Dönemi'nin önde gelen kalemlerinden bir olarak bilinen F. Scott Fitzgerald, erken dönem eserlerinde de güneyin yirminci yüzyılın

başlarındaki tarihi ve kültürel görünümünü hikayeleştirir. Erken dönem eserleri arasında kabul edilen öyküleri, "The Ice Palace (Buz Sarayı) (1920), "The Jelly Bean" (Jöleli Şeker) (1920), ve "The Last of the Belles" (Güzellerin Sonuncusu) (1929), Fitzgerald'ın Tarleton Üçlemesi'ni oluşturur. Canlı şehir tasvirleri ve karakterleriyle öyküler kurmaca bir şehir olan Tarleton'da geçer ve Eski Güney'e hayat verir. Yazar, öykülerde Güney'deki güçlü kültürel, sosyal ve ekonomik değişimi resmeder. Buna ek olarak, öykülerde zaman Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nın sonuna doğru ilerlerken tarihe ışık tutar. Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nın ekonomik etkileri, toplumsal hareketlilik, Güney ve Kuzey arasındaki çatışmalar, toplumsal cinsiyetin yeniden yapılanması, rüyalarına ulaşmayı arzulayan karakterlerin çıktıkları yolculuklarla iç içe geçer. Bu çalışma, adı geçen eserlerdeki bağlantıları inceleyerek, öncelikle gelenek ve kadın karakterlerle temsil edilen Güney kültüründeki değişimin fiziksel mekanla ilişkisine odaklanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler

F. Scott Fitzgerald, "The Ice Palace," "The Jelly Bean," "The Last of the Belles," Güney Kültürü

1920s America is often mentioned with coined phrases including "The Roaring 20s," "The Gilged Age," or "The Jazz Age." In the "Echoes of the Jazz Age" (1931), Fitzgerald, himself, defines the Jazz Age as "the ten year period" (14) that started in 1919 and continued until 1929. 1920s America was radically marked by economic, industrial, cultural change and progress. On the other hand, the period continued to carry the marks of the disillusionment of World War I and the Lost Cause in the South. The South possessed a nostalgia fading away with its "nobler, more gracious and more cultured life" against the expanding modernized materialistic world (Makowsky 190). In the course of time, the American South with its inherited values and traditions was standing against the erosive power of Northern culture identified by dynamism and progress. Susan Currell, in *American Culture in the 1920s*, interprets this paradoxical opposition between progress and tradition as the major cultural tension molding American culture and history (2). As such, on the eve of the decade, it was necessary for many

writers to remap the social and cultural landscape of America (Currell 38). As a praised writer of the Jazz Age, F. Scott Fitzgerald remaps the cultural and social landscape of the South through his works.

Though mostly credited for his signature works *The Great Gatsby* (1925) and *Tender Is the Night* (1934), Fitzgerald primarily sketches his romantic relationship with the South in his short stories published mainly in magazines and newspapers, and collected in both *Flappers and Philosophers* (1920) and *Tales of the Jazz Age* (1922) (Nagel 120). For him, the South meant "a land of beauty, romance, lost order, of tradition and dignity" (Holman 25). Primarily, his relation with the South depends upon his familial roots. In contrast to his distant relationship with his Minnesotan mother, he felt impressed by the well-established origins of his father, Edward Fitzgerald's Maryland family (Hook 3). Fitzgerald strengthened the romantic image of the Old South inherited from his father (Donaldson 3) by meeting his wife Zelda, a typical Alabama belle, who inspired him in many of his works. The writer's personal relationship to the South gave him a deeper understanding of the Southern characteristics to portray the fully developed Southern cities and characters with autobiographical touches (Donaldson 4). His deep connection to the South can be traced in his Tarleton stories as well.

Fitzgerald's short stories "The Ice Palace" (1920), "The Jelly Bean" (1920) and "The Last of the Belles" (1929) are the three stories that comprise the Tarleton Trilogy. The stories give an insight into Fitzgerald's understanding of the South in his early career as a writer. Tarleton is the fictional city that represents the culture of the American South in the early twentieth century as "a genuine microcosm" (Sklar 170). "The Ice Palace," published in *Weekend Post* in 1920, narrates the circular journey of Sally Carol Harper from Tarleton who desires to establish a new life in the North by marriage. Fitzgerald in this story portrays the lamenting of the Southern belle for the discoloring of established values and traditions of the Old South. Published in the same year, as a sequel to "The Ice Palace," "The Jelly Bean" is the story of the disillusionment of an old soldier, Jim, known as Jelly Bean, who returns to his home town Tarleton. Jim's dream of leaving Tarleton to become a gentleman is dissolved when he realizes it is impossible for him to reach Nancy Lamar, a young modern Southern belle. Jelly Bean appears for the second time as the Southern male protagonist of another story, "Dice, Brassknuckles and Guitar" (1923), in which the character's dreams are

dispersed once more in a journey up to the North upon meeting another flapper figure who reminds him he cannot be part of the high society in the North even if he is economically powerful. As the last story of the Tarleton trilogy, "The Last of the Belles," written between *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night*, was published in *Saturday Evening Post* in 1929. The story sketches life in Tarleton in the aftermath of World War One around the love affairs of Ailie, as the last of the Southern belles, and Andy, an old soldier from the North and revisiting Tarleton. Through the Southern city – Tarleton, Fitzgerald depicts the social and cultural transformation of the South in the aftermath of WWI. In the stories, on the one hand, the writer romanticizes the Southern tradition and culture in relation to the Southern landscape and women. On the other hand, he depicts the disillusionment in the South in the aftermath of WWI through the shattered dreams and memories of the characters. By reiterating the connections among the mentioned stories, this paper focuses on Fitzgerald's sense of physical space that closely interacts with Southern tradition and women to represent the cultural and social landscape of the South.

In the stories, Fitzgerald presents his fictional city with geographical details related to the Southern landscape. He introduces Tarleton as "Southern charm" under "Georgia sun" (LOB 449) and as "a little city of forty thousand that has dozed sleepily for forty thousand years" (JB 143). In like manner, "The Ice Palace" starts with references to climate and colors associated with Southern cities: "[t]he sunlight dripped over the house like golden paint over an art jar, the freckling shadows here and there only intensified the rigor of the bath of light. [...] only the Happer house took the full sun, and all day long faced the dusty road-street with a tolerant kindly patience. This was the city of Tarleton in the southernmost Georgia September afternoon" (IP 48). In the stories, the depiction of daily life in the city contributes to the emphasis on Southern characteristics. The Southern city provides a pleasing life under the sun and "even the shops only yawning their doors and blinking their windows in the sunshine before retiring into a state of utter and finite coma" (IP 50). Tarleton is portrayed as a radiant space shaped by its Southern characteristics.

Fitzgerald depicts Tarleton as a place capsuling Southern history through his characters' memories. The city, in that sense, becomes a discrete landscape conjoining personal memories with its Southern history. The American South is often romanticized through

its "picturesque elements of plantation life" (Gerster and Cords 572). Accordingly, when the characters in the stories take journeys to the outskirts of the city still preserving the elements of plantation, they come across the cultural landscape of the Old South. The journeys not only engender personal memories but also evoke Southern history by idiosyncratic symbols:

> They were in the country now [. . .] Here and there they passed a battered negro cabin, its oldest white haired inhabitant smoking a corncob pipe beside the door, and half a dozen scantily clothed pick ninnies parading tattered dolls on the wild-grown grass in front. Farther out were lazy cotton fields where even the workers seemed intangible shadows lent by the sun to the earth, not to toil, but to while away some age-old tradition in the golden September fields. And round the drowsy picturesqueness, over the trees and shacks and muddy rivers flowed the heat, never hostile, only comforting, like a great, warm, nourishing bosom for the infant earth. (IP 52)

The city of Tarleton becomes a southern city with lazy days and nights, and yet still preserves the legacy of the Old South. Together with the geographical features, the fading images of plantation life contribute to the portrayal of the cultural landscape. Likewise, there appear mutual idiosyncratic symbols like the golden fields and old negro cabin linking the collective cultural landscape with the personal memories and characters. An automobile ride to the outskirts of the city is narrated by the old soldier in the following excerpt:

> The three girls lost in the mysterious men's city felt something, too – a bewitched impermanence as though they were on a magic carpet that had lighted on the Southern countryside, and any moment the wind would lift it and waft it away. We toasted ourselves and the South. […] We parked under a broken shadow of a mill where there was restive

> squawky birds and over everything a brightness that tried to filter in anywhere – into the lost nigger cabins, the automobile, the fastness of the heart. The south sang to us. (LOB 458)

The cultural landscape of the South is characterized through the images of "the broken shadow of a mill" and "the lost negro cabin," besides the narration of geographical landscape. The landscape is mystified by fairy tale elements resembling the trip to "flying on a magic carpet" over the Southern landscape by automobile enabling them to hear the singing of the South. The images enrich the sense of space while encompassing Southern culture and history.

The romanticized images of the landscape couple with the characters in the narration of Southern culture and tradition. In the stories, Tarleton hosts Southern women who manifest Southern tradition in parallel with the landscape. Roland Berman argues that "Fitzgerald's Southern characters are important because their minds and manners have been shaped by time and place" (19). Accordingly, Southern tradition echoes in "The Last of the Belles" through characterization of Ailie. Her description as a Southern belle is deeply intertwined with the Southern landscape and history:

> Devoted to her background of devoted fathers, brothers and admirers starching back into the South's heroic age, the unfailing coolness acquired in the endless struggle with the heat. There were notes in her voice that orders slaves around, that withered up Yankee captains, and then soft, wheedling notes that mingled in unfamiliar loveliness with the night. (LOB 450)

As such, Southern women still keep the Southern tradition alive. They romanticize the Old South as Ailie also insists upon the dream of marrying someone who measured up to his dead brother (LOB 451). The devotion to the Southern background also reveals their romantic desire to rebuild the aristocratic life style possessed before the Lost Cause.

Endeavoring to maintain Southern tradition, the characters reanimate their personal memories intertwined with the cultural landscape. "The dead South" is considered "the most beautiful thing in the world" (IP 54) to die for. Sally's personal attachment to Southern tradition is empowered in her visit to the cemetery of the Confederate dead. In the story, the cemetery represents the character's close connection with the Southern landscape and history. This personal connection alludes to Fitzgerald's personal memories since Fitzgerald and Zelda visited the Oakward Cemetery on the day of their engagement and noted it as one of Zelda's favorite trip routes (Donaldson 5). Resembling Fitzgerald and Zelda, Sally and her fiancé Harry pay a visit to the cemetery before their journey to the North. Sally asserts that her frequent visits to the cemetery strengthen her as she suggests the cemetery has a fragrance through which "shadowy memories could waken in living minds" (IP 52). As a Southern belle, Sally insists on keeping the South alive in her memories through her last visit to the cemetery. On the other hand, the romanticized representation of the South through the cemetery can be interpreted as the death of glory as James Nagel puts forth: "Her fascination with her region is underscored by her interest in the cemetery for the Confederate dead from the Civil War, a suggestion that the old civilization of the South has exhausted its useful life" (122).

As opposed to the tradition and stability the landscape and characters embody, the social and cultural transition in the 1920s can be witnessed in Tarleton. Fitzgerald indicates the opposition of the old and the new coming together while introducing Sally Carol Happer. Sally's resting "her nineteen-year-old chin on a fifty-two-year-old sill" (IP 48) indicates her dependence on southern tradition but at the same time she interacts with the social progress as she is watching "Clark Darrow's ancient Ford turn the corner" (IP 48). As a strong symbol of the period, the automobile represents the newly blooming culture and strengthens the idea of freedom (Fitzgerald, "Echoes" 14). In "The Ice Palace," Jefferson Street is depicted as the center of the city through which Clark and Sally drive:

> The Ford having been excited into a sort of restless resentful life Clark and Sally Carol rolled and rattled down Valley Avenue into the Jefferson Street where

> the dust road became a pavement, along opiate Millicent Place, where there were half a dozen prosperous, substantial mansions; and on into the down town section. Driving was perilous here, for it was shopping time; the population idled casually across the streets and a drove of low moaning oxen were being urged along in front of a placid street-car. (50)

The shift from rural life to modern life is indicated in the passage with references to mobility. The street-car ridden by oxen representing the tradition contradicts with the automobile representing progress and youth culture.

The cultural transition of the period can be traced though the unconventional female characters that people Fitzgerald's South. After WWI, the young society had a tendency to treat tradition as "outmoded and embarrassingly old-fashioned" (Nagel 120). The newly blooming consumer culture channeled young people into shopping, socializing, and commuting (Currell 27). Fitzgerald defines the characteristic of the age by having "no interest in politics at all," and adds that "[w]e were the most powerful nation. Who could tell us any longer what was fashionable and what was fun?" ("Echoes" 14). Accordingly, in the stories, the new burgeoning youth culture is characterized by late night-parties, alcohol consumption, gambling and automobile rides in which the radical image of flappers is suited with their fancy clothes, high-heeled shoes, and bobbed hair. As Currell further explains "[w]omen's smoking, drinking, and jazz dancing represented a further rejection of prohibitive Victorianism and Feminism as 'the flapper emerged as the most overt rejection of the 'old'" (29). As Mangum proposes, the girls of Tarleton are Southern belles with flapper features (450) that distinguish them. As a more experienced Lieutenant, Bill Knowles points out the appearance of the new Southern flapper by telling Andy that "there are really three girls here" (LOB 449). Sally, Nancy and Ailie's flapper features make them more liberated than other girls of the town. For instance, Ailie's self-reliance stands out as a significant attribute when compared to conventional women in the town: "It was her acquaintance with the traditional way of behaving against Kitty Preston's naive and fierce possessiveness, or if you prefer it, Ailie's 'breeding' and the other's

'commonness'" (LOB 455). In like manner, Piper defines Nancy Lamar as a "belle with rebelliousness and daring of the newly emancipated post-WWI American girl" (68). Nancy is portrayed as a careless, charming, wild, and unpredictable flapper who enjoys smoking, drinking and gambling at late night parties.

Although, on the one hand, they feel devoted to the Southern tradition, on the other hand young women feel stuck in the past in Tarleton. They feel the urge to escape from the city. The women characters and their romance stories unveil the change in social life and gender roles. In fact, Sally's romantic relation with Clark reflects her emotional detachment from Tarleton:

> 'Clark,' she said softly, 'I wouldn't change you for the world. You are sweet the way you are. The things that will make you fail. I'll love always – the living in the past, the lazy days and nights you have, and all your carelessness and generosity.' […] You have a place in my heart that no one ever could have, but tied down here I'd get restless. (IP 51)

In Sally's memory, the Old South offers a careless and generous life; however, she makes up her mind on getting away from "living in the past" that makes her restless in Tarleton. Sally Carol defines Tarleton as a place where "things [are] happening on small scale" (IP 55). As a matter of fact, Sally's flapper side forces her to go away and search for freedom (Kuehl 159) as she adds, "I'm not sure what I'll do, but – well, I want to go places and see people. I want my mind to grow. I want to live where things happen on big scale" (IP 55). Similar to Sally, Nancy also regards Tarleton to be rather dull and simple, and is in search of a more sensational life. She regrets living there: "The one thing I regret in my life is that I wasn't born in England […] Nobody has style here. I mean the boys here aren't really worth dressing up for or doing sensational things" (JB 151). Young women of Tarleton desire to escape from the stability in the small Southern city and to establish a new life. The young people of Tarleton have a common desire to escape from the stability in the small city to the newly established North. Their escapism is a result of the change in the economic balances that affects social life.

In the stories, rather than the glory and devotion they represent before the Lost Cause, Southern men fail to keep the pace with the social transition. The young men return to Tarleton after the war as they "paraded through the streets for their dead, and then stepped down out of romance forever and sold you things over the counters of local stores" (LOB 458). Following the war, the southern men are depicted in quest of a new social position. While some young men of Tarleton are likely to set off for New York, Philadelphia, and Pittsburg "to go into business" (IP 50), they mostly insist on staying "in the languid paradise of dreamy skies" and "gracious soft-voiced girls who were brought up on memories instead of money" (IP 50). Fitzgerald supports the notion of idleness constructed upon the established Southern culture through the depiction of Southern male characters' life in the town. As a fact, characterization of Jelly Bean associates Southern men with idleness:

> Jim was a Jelly-bean. […] Jim was long and thin and bent at the waist from stooping over pool-tables, and he was what might have been known in the indiscriminating North as a corner loafer. "Jelly-bean" is the name throughout the undissolved Confederacy for one who spends his life conjugating the verb to idle in the first person singular – I'm idling, I have idled, I will idle. (JB 143)

Upon his arrival, Jim cannot position himself in the society which is solely based on economic power. Indeed, he "was an outsider – a running mate of poor whites" (JB 145). To be accepted by Nancy as well as the society, Jelly Bean dreams of going north:

> Name they call me by means jelly – weak and wobbly like. People who weren't nothin' when my folks was a lot turn up their noses when they pass me on the street. So I'm goin' to-day. And when I come back to this town, it's going to be like a gentleman. (JB 157)

Jelly Bean dreams of leaving Tarleton behind and returning after

gaining economic power to achieve social recognition. However, his dream does not last long as he hears in the morning that Nancy eloped with a rich man from Savannah (JB 57). Therefore, rather than taking a journey, Jim decides to continue his settled life in Tarleton, "–so after a while the Jelly-bean turned into a pool hall on Jackson Street where he was sure to find a congenial crowd who would make all the old jokes–the ones he knew" (JB 158). As a result, in the turmoil of war, what Jelly Bean could have is disillusionment and a short-lived dream of a journey. However, in a later work by the writer, "Dice, Brassknuckles and Guitar," the protagonist of the story this time takes a journey to the North. In the story, Southern culture is symbolized with the dice, brassknuckles and guitar as Jim teaches Northern high society how to use them as a school he opens for the young wealthy youth in the North. However, his school closes as he gets into conflict with a member of high society who forces him to return to Tarleton and his old life.

In Tarleton stories, Fitzgerald adopts the romantic plot that resembles *The Great Gatsby*. The plot is structured upon the romantic relationship between a high-brow Southern heroine and a young man desiring to obtain her (Nagel 41). In the stories, the romantic relationships depend upon class and wealth. "In the paradigm male identity depends upon acceptance not so much by the individual woman as by a masculine structure of wealth and privilege. Women; therefore, are not women but commodities obtained by those who have mastered the system" (Callahan 273). Accordingly, in ""The Ice Palace," Southern men are unable to acquire economic wealth. In line with Jim, Clark is introduced as a man "dozing in the lazy streets of his hometown, discussing how he could best invest his capital for an immediate fortune" (IP 49). Sally declines his marriage proposal since he has "'an income' –just enough to keep himself in ease and gasoline" (IP 49). Clark represents the decline of the prosperous past of the Southern male. In such a society of expense, they eventually fail to compete with Northern men to marry the dream girls of the male world, as one is expected to be financially powerful. However, not only the Southern males but also the Northern soldiers, without the status they gained through their positions in the army, fail to reach the Southern belles. Following the war, Northern soldiers return to their gauche working class status in the North as before. For the soldiers with Northern working class status, Southern women remained an unaccomplished dream. While leaving the city, Earl Cohen tells Andy that "She [Ailie]

is a wonderful girl, but too much highbrow for me. I guess she's got to marry some rich guy that'll give her a great social position. […] This aristocrat stuff is all right if you got the money for it, but–" (LOB 459). The shift in their social position also changes their status in the eyes of the Southern women.

The romantic plot enables the writer to illustrate the opposition between the South and the North. In contrast to the declining power of Southern men, young and economically powerful Northern men couple with Southern women. Sally's fiancé Harry Bellamy represents the progressive North through his self-reliance and newly-established culture. While the South is represented by women in the story, the North is depicted as the "man's country" (Kuehl 35). As a Northerner, Harry blames the Southern men for being shiftless: ""Those damn Southerners!" Harry continued, "[...] you know what I think of them. They're sort of – sort of degenerates – not at all like the old Southerners. They've lived so long down there with all the colored people that they've gotten lazy and shiftless" (IP 63). On the other hand, the North also has a romantic tendency for the established culture of the Old South as their romantic relationships with the Southern women evidence. However, the Northern men fail to value Southern tradition and culture, as Sally asserts "I couldn't ever make you understand, but it was there" (IP 54). As a result, both Sally and Ailie break their engagement with the North, which brings them self-confirmation rather than a radical transformation at the end of their journeys. This makes the two young women of Tarleton symbols of the post-war generation with feeling of escapism. However, both journeys end with the disillusion of that dream.

In the stories, the conflict between the South and the North is built upon the symbolic settings (Kuehl 34). In "The Ice Palace," that clearly depicts the cultural distinction between the South and the North through the journey motif. Sally visits the North with intention of making the land her new home as she thinks "[t]his was the North, the North – her land now!" (IP 55). The Southern landscape is described as sunny, warm, dreamy, steady and traditional whereas the Northern landscape is cold, distant, arrogant, dynamic and progressive. For Sally, the North lacks the tradition (Kuehl 37). She compares the family tradition of the South with the newly rising family culture of the North as she depicts the room she is in as "simply a room with a lot of fairly expensive things in that all looked about fifteen years old" (IP

56), which contradicts the coach in their house "that had been mended up for forty-five years and was still luxurious to dream in" (IP 56). Sally could not feel the connection with the North since her image of home is connected to the established Southern tradition and culture.

The distinction between the South and the North is built upon the depiction of the North as lacking Southern characteristics. With its distinctive history and landscape, the South is mostly contextualized through what is not Northern since the North is identified as "the unsouth" (Kolchin 566). The Ice Palace built for the winter festivals in the Northern landscape represents the progressive Northern culture and its dynamism as opposed to the stability of the South. The cemetery visit in the South directly contradicts with the winter festival in the North. As the former reflects the memories of the old South with the dead and stability, the latter proposes dynamism and a new beginning. The Palace manifests the progressive Northern culture that desires to build up a tradition and history of its own. As a Southerner, Sally regards the Palace as a "mighty altar to pray the gray pagan God of Snow" (IP 66). She feels more alienated as she gets more intimate with the North. The contradiction between the South and the North leads Sally to get lost in the Ice Palace indicating the triumph of her confusion. "She felt things creeping, damp souls that haunted this place, this town this North [...] She couldn't be here to wander forever – to be frozen, heart, body, and soul […]. These things were foreign, foreign" (IP 68). Going through the North is also a journey to her unconsciousness where she comes across with the woman archetype that refreshes her in her illusionary moments of being lost in the Ice Palace. At the end of her journey in the Ice Palace, she decides to return to her home, the South, unmarried.

World War I was a significant event for Fitzgerald and his contemporaries. The experiences and observations of the war and the mobilization of the soldiers leading to different love relations became major themes of the period (Gandal 9). In the selected stories, Fitzgerald distills his personal experiences during the war period in the Southern landscape. Similar to Andy in "The Last of the Belles," Fitzgerald worked in the Southern Army Post during the war. In the Tarleton stories, the time moves towards the years of World War I. As mentioned in the stories, Maxwell Air Force Base and Camp Sheridan are two places where Fitzgerald served for the army and experienced World War I (Curnutt 4). In the course of this time, Fitzgerald witnessed the decline of Southern aristocracy and the Old South (Gandal 9). His fiction, in

that sense, interprets the First World War in the Southern context in relation to personal memories and dreams of his characters.

"The Last of the Belles," in like manner, presents the psychological perception of the Southern landscape. The story is structured upon Andy's insistence on reanimating memories of his youth in the South in the time of the Great War through Southern landscape and women. Andy decides revisiting Tarleton in search of his youth and the South in the years of the Great War. Through this journey, he reanimates memories of his youth. He describes the South as "the lost midsummer world of my early twenties where time had stood still, and charming girls, dimly seen like the past itself, still loitered along the dusky streets. I suppose that poetry is Northern man's dream of the South" (460). Opposing Andy's romantic description, Tarleton, as a Southern city, transforms into a landscape with the ruins of memories that signal the fading glamour of the South as Andy expresses: "Tarleton's getting quite doggy in its old age" (463). The stability of time in Tarleton stuck in the memories contributes to the romantic city image. The army camp presents the profound change in the landscape that also stands for the decline of the Old South. The old army camp in Tarleton symbolizes the Old South and the postwar generation. Parallel to the cemetery alluding to Civil War in the first story, Andy's visit to the old army camp is an attempt to reanimate personal memories. However, the army camp turns out to be a ruined place without any attraction. The place is indifferent to him which causes his alienation Andy asserts his disillusionment as follows: "I stumbled here […] and there in the knee-deep underbrush, looking for my youth in clapboard or a rusty tomato can" (462). Andy's search for the Old South and his youth is futile in the new landscape. The days of his youth turn out to be a rusty empty can used up and thrown away after the war like many members of his generation.

Different from the first two stories, this story manifests the decline of Southern tradition symbolically through the marriage of the last of the Southern belles. In the story, Ailie's transformation indicates the disillusionment of the Southern women of the period. In parallel with the Southern landscape, the romantic idealization of the South collapses with romantic failures surrounding Ailie as the representative of Southern women. Nagel suggests, "[f]or her, romance is a matter of surfaces, and she has little genuine feeling for any of the sequence of men she encourages. Indeed, there is so little beyond her beauty that

she seems as false as the romantic idealization of the South as a setting" (123). Accordingly, upon meeting Ailie, Andy also feels "a profound change". Andy recognizes Ailie: "At once I saw she had a different line. The modulations of pride, the vocal hints that she knew the secrets of a brighter, finer ante-bellum day, were gone from her voice, there was no time for them now as it rambled on in the half-laughing, half desperate banter of the new South" (LOB 460). Together with Ailie, like in the days of the wartime, they go to country-club dance. As a place, the country club represents the old South during the war time as a Southern setting in Andy's personal memories. However, Andy recognizes there that their time passed as "there was a new generation upon the floor, who are lazier with less dignity" (LOB 461), signaling that Ailie's generation is "doomed" (LOB 461). By joining the youth on Saturday night, "Ailie, in fact, "reinvents her past" (LOB 461). Upon returning to Tarleton, Andy realizes that Ailie is defeated because her escapism and South, both with its landscape and women, changed forever. He finally assures himself that "this place that had once been so full of life and effort was gone, as if it had never existed, and that in another month Ailie would be gone, and the South would be empty for me forever" (LOB 463). Hence, together with the members of the generation, with the marriage of the last of the belles, the Old South is lost.

All in all, in Tarleton trilogy, Fitzgerald sketches the cultural and social change in the South in opposition to the North in the aftermath of World War I through the Southern landscape tightly coupled with the characters. Tarleton represents the unpreventable dissolving of the Southern tradition and culture that leads the characters to escapism. However, neither escaping from the South nor returning there brings any personal resolution. As Callahan asserts, the land for Fitzgerald becomes a dream land that reflects the human dream (11). Through Tarleton, Fitzgerald not only reflects the disillusionment of the South, but also complies with the collapse of individual dreams. Rather than reaching their dreams, journeys of the characters bring them disillusionment. Eventually, the youth of the transition period ends up with dead born dreams at the end of the decade.

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