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‘Khaki Hamlets’ and ‘The Absent Minded Beggar’: The Boer War in Joyce’s *Ulysses**

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I

Modernism cannot be defined without referring to World War I, since the impact of the Great War was so dominant, powerful, and pervading that artists and writers in the early twentieth century attempted to find ways to express and represent the devastating effects on their artistic environments. Joyce’s alter ego Stephen Dedalus’s “nightmare” remark regarding history is relevant to the Great War, in which the British government declared war to participate on August 4, 1914, since Joyce marked “Trieste-Zurich-Paris / 1914-1921” at the last line of *Ulysses*. Joyce finished the “Nestor” chapter during World War I, in which the theme of history as a nightmare is deployed (Spoo 99). But

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the historical setting of *Ulysses* fixed on June 16, 1904 makes it almost impossible to directly deal with the Great War, so this anachronistic positioning is Joyce's tactical approach to the problematic operations of war ideology in general. So this paper discusses how Joyce deploys strategically warfare and war ideologies not by directly discussing them, but by showing their operations in the strata of popular culture. I will deal with problematic warfare showing its absurdity in general, and with the ways in which the Boer War operated in the fields of mass media and commodity culture.

Although there are so many references to wars and battles in Joyce's work, the scarcity of researches and studies on Joyce's strategic deployment of warfare is surprising. References to the Boer War are scattered throughout *Ulysses*, interestingly, even in "Penelope," the most feminine chapter in *Ulysses*. Research on the significance of the Boer War in Joyce's work has been scarce. To name a few, Temple-Thurston argues that Joyce employs the Boer War as metaphors for Joyce's abomination of violence of any kind. M. Keith Booker focuses on the economic underpinnings of British imperialism, exemplified in the Boer War. Greg Winston convincingly explores the operations of British militarism.[1] Admitting that their approaches to Joyce's dealing with the Boer War are illuminating, I would like to emphasize on two points that are missing. One is why Joyce refers to many battles of the Boer War and their significance, especially in "Penelope." Secondly, just as Andrew

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1) See for detailed discussions about the role of the Boer War in *Ulysses*, Barbara Temple-Thurston, "The Reader as Absentminded Beggar: Recovering South Africa in *Ulysses*," *JJQ* 28 (Fall 1990): 247-56, and M. Keith Booker, *Ulysses, Capitalism and Colonialism: Reading Joyce after the Cold War* (Westport & London: Greenwood Press, 2000). Greg Winston, Joyce and Militarism (Gainesville: UP of Florida, 20120. For a discussion on Joyce's reference to Kipling's poems and stories, see Finn Fordam, "James Joyce and Rudyard Kipling: Genesis and Memory, Versions and Inversions," *New Quotatoes: Joycean Exogenesis in the Digital Age*, edited by Ronan Cowley and Dirk Van Hulle (Leiden: Rodopi, 2016): 181-200.

Gibson points out that the Boer War is "not a military or political but a cultural English presence" (185), so I will deal primarily with Joyce's deployment of the Boer War in *Ulysses*, and I will show that Joyce must have witnessed and interrogated the operations of war ideology in popular culture, exemplified in Kipling's jingoistic poem, "The Absentminded Beggar." The reason why Joyce deploys Rudyard Kipling's propagandistic poem is that as a fund-raising media event, Kipling's poem made a powerful contribution to the sustenance of wartime ideology as well as its complicity in the extension of British imperialism. In addition, Joyce's references to other historic battles and wars point to the absurdity and brutality of warfare, thus reinforcing his critique of imperial expansion and colonial exploitation.

Before dealing with the ways in which the Boer war plays a role in constituting the anticlimactic closure of the British Empire, I will discuss the ways in which the British buffoonery and unpreparedness in modern warfare, which is ironically perpetuated in Alfred Lord Tennyson's eulogistic poem, "The Charge of the Light Brigade." This poem describes one of the most glorified but tragic warfare in history in a heroic way, which is a failed military action during the Battle of Balaclava on 25 October 1854 in the Crimean War. Joyce criticizes the British troops for underestimating the enemy, who were equipped with modern weapons such as canons and howitzers, while the Light Brigade consisted of sabered soldiers and galloping horses. The similar incident took place in the Anglo-Transvaal War (1880-81), known as the First Anglo-Boer War, since the British army went to South Africa without being equipped with modern weapons, underestimating the Boers as "mere farmers or ill-disciplined citizen soldiers" (Spiers 57). Although the Boer War ended as a victory of the British army, Joyce must have been aware of the doomed fate of the British Empire at its moribund state.

II

While looking at a military poster, Bloom tries to remember his father-in-law Tweedy's regiment, Royal Dublin Fusiliers, and continues to speculate on the effectiveness of military uniforms as sexually attractive items from the ad canvasser's point of view:

> He slipped card and letter into his pocket, reviewing again the soldiers on parade. Where's old Tweedy's regiment? Castoff soldier. There: bearskin cap and hackle plume. No, he's a grenadier. Pointed cuffs. There he is: royal Dublin fusiliers. Redcoats. Too showy. That must be why the women go after them. Uniforms. Easier to enlist and drill. (*U* 5.66-70)

Molly also confesses that she was fascinated with men in uniforms: "I love to see a regiment pass in review the first time I saw the Spanish cavalry at La Roque it was lovely" (*U* 18.397-99). Bloom's associative mind goes on to be reminded of Maud Gonne's protest against the military recruitment policy for the Boer War:

> Maud Gonne's letter about taking them off O'Connell street at night: disgrace to our Irish capital. Griffith's paper is on the same tack now: an army rotten with venereal disease: overseas or halfseasover empire. Half baked they look: hypnotized like. Eyes front. Mark time. Table: able. Bed: ed. The King's own. Never see him dressed up as a fireman or a bobby. A mason, yes. (*U* 5.70-75)

During the Boer War, Maud Gonne, an ardent nationalist, organized 'Daughters of Ireland' to promote the anti-British propaganda that denounced Irish women walking with men in British uniforms. Gonne's organization 'Daughters of Ireland' was founded in Dublin on Easter Sunday 1900, with

her being elected president. The main purpose of this organization was to provide a gift to Arthur Griffith, who defended Gonne against the accusation of being a British spy. Joyce’s Nighttown, which is based on Monto street, Dublin, is “not a time or place, singular, but a primal scene and event” (Schneider 193). In “Circe,” which stages anxiety and wish latent in the social strata, the girls of the “Nausicaa” chapter reappear as prostitutes in the red-light district, whose presence is an indicator of social anxiety about the Irish women’s role of “camp followers and prostitutes” as Greg Winston argues : “From the military perspective, prostitutes were both the boon and the bane of the armed forces in Ireland” (194, 196). Gonne’s anxiety was corroborated by Irish newspapers, especially Griffith’s *United Irishman*, whose 11 June issue encapsulated the public lamentation: “in the heart of the city at night-time conduct has been openly carried on by the British soldiery and the women who consort with them that could not be witnessed in the streets of any other city in the world” (qtd. in Winston, 218-19), because of the new policy of the British troops in Ireland, as Greg Winston summarizes: “Formerly, troops were confined to barracks at night, but in an effort to boost recruitment during the Boer War, military authorities had begun to permit troops stationed in Dublin to spend free evening hours away from the barracks” (219). So “Griffith’s paper is on the same tack now” with Gonne’s protest.

Another moot issue comes from Griffith’s newspaper, *United Irishman,* which speaks out “the urgent issue of sexually transmitted diseases that had become a public health crisis in Dublin and other garrison towns” (Winston 223). Joyce’s friend, St John Gogarty, contributed a series of articles entitled ‘Ugly England’ to Griffith’s newspaper, which deals with the issue of Irish girls associating with British soldiers (Ibid.). In the “Cyclops” chapter, in which focuses on the problems of the jingoistic Irish nationalism represented

by the Citizen, the issue of venereal disease culminates in a response to Bloom's concept of civilization:

> [...] Bloom trying to back him up moderation and botheration and their colonies and their civilization.
> —Their syphilisation, you mean, says the citizen. To hell with them! The curse of a goodfornothing God light sideways on the bloody thicklugged sons of whores' gets! No music and no art and no literature worthy of the name. Any civilization they have they stole from us. Tonguetied sons of bastards' ghosts. (*U* 12.1195-1201)

The Citizen does not only reveal the Irish anxiety about the spread of contagious diseases by British soldiers, but also expects the British Empire to be doomed. In "Circe," Kitty exposes this anxiety by telling a story about an infant's death:

> Kitty
>
> And Mary Shortall that was in the lock with the pox she got from Jimmy Pidgeon in the blue caps had a child off him that couldn't swallow and was smothered with the convulsions in the mattress and we all subscribed for the funeral. (*U* 15.2577-81)

According to the Contagious Diseases Acts of the 1860s and 1870s, which provided for the fortnightly gynaecological inspection of suspicious women from ports and garrison towns, diseased women was forcibly confined in 'lock hospitals' (Mullin 186). It is important to note that Mary Shortall got the disease from a soldier, whose blue cap signifies the Royal Dublin Fusilier regiment. This indicates the pervasion of the syphilis even among the British soldiers, no exception to the Irish barracks. Temple-Thurston encapsulates the Irish sentiment toward the Boer War: "the Boer cause was extremely popular

among the Irish nationalists, and pro-Boer sentiment was prevalent,” so the Irish people endorsed the street protests against British campaign for recruitment and in support for the Boers in South Africa, based on the compassion for the same fate of the two nations as well as on the Irish aspiration for independence (248).

So we need to look at the Irish response to the Boer War represented in *Ulysses*. In the “Lestrygonians” episode, Bloom witnesses a demonstration that is taking place near Vinegar Hill:

> —Up the Boers!
> —Three cheers for De Wet!
> —We’ll hang Joe Chamberlain on a sourapple tree.
> Silly billies: mob of young cubs yelling their guts out. Vinegar Hill. (*U* 8.434-37)

This scene describes the demonstration for the cause of the Boers, on which Don Gifford annotates: “Committed Irish nationalists were pro-Boer because the South African Boer War seemed so clearly another and all-too-familiar instance of English suppression of the legitimate national aspirations of a people who stood in the way of ‘course of Empire.’ Irish radicals even raised volunteer brigades to fight for the Boers against the English” (168-69). De Wet was such a distinguished Boer commander noted for extraordinarily brilliant tactics in the Boer War that the demonstrators in Dublin streets shouted for him. Here it is rather worth paying attention to why the demonstrators denounce Joe Chamberlain, by referring to a Civil War Union song, ‘John Brown’s Body’ (Gifford 169). The phrase, “Hang him on the sour apple tree,” is borrowed from the popular American Civil War Union army song: “We’ll hang Jeff Davis to a sourapple tree! As we go marching on!” Considering that Jeff Davis was provisional president of the Confederacy in

the American Civil War, Joseph Chamberlain is identified with the leader of the Confederacy, whose cause was to maintain slavery. Prime Minister Lord Salisbury was said to privately call the Boer War "Joe's War," since as Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain rubberstamped military commands only to prove ineffective, and his military and political career can be identified with the expansion of British imperialism (Rintala 127). In addition, Bloom is reminded of another historical battlefield, "Vinegar Hill" (*U* 8.437), which was "the headquarters of the Wexford rebels in the Rebellion of 1798 and the site of their defeats at the hands of the English on 21 June 1798" (Gifford 169). Wolfe Tone's revolution in 1798 was a crucial struggle that helped the British government facilitate the Act of Union in 1800. This strategic association produces a critical perspective on both the brutality of warfare and the absurdity of imperialism, even though these historical battles seem to be irrelevant on the surface. In the "Circe" episode, Bloom and Stephen are teased by two British privates:

> Private Compton
>
> Go it, Harry. Do him one in the eye. He's a pro-Boer.
>
> Stephen
>
> Did I? When?
>
> Bloom
>
> (to the redcoats) We fought for you in South Africa, Irish missile troops. Isn't that history? Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Honoured by our monarch. (*U* 15.4601-07)

The British soldiers regard Stephen as a pro-Boer, perhaps because it was widely understood that at that time most Irish people were opposed to participating in the Boer War. It is important to note that the Transvaal Committee, "the precursor of Sinn Fein", was formed on 30 September, 1899

(Matthews 100). Many Irish nationalists were members of this committee[2], and even James Connolly, a socialist politician, and Arthur Griffith, a supporter for a national government, got together for the cause of this committee (Ibid.). P. J. Matthews adds to explain about the Irish attitude against the British participation in South Africa:

> The Boer conflict rapidly captured the public imagination and generated an unprecedented level of street protest and civil disobedience in Dublin, the likes of which would not be seen again until the 1913 lockout. On 1 October the first major pro-Boer rally was held at Beresford place. Remarkably a crowd of up to 20,000 attended the proceedings which was, according to the *United Irishman* report, ‘representative of all shades of Nation opinion and was harmonious and enthusiastic throughout.’ (100-01)

To evade the accusation of being a traitor by the British soldiers, Bloom emphasizes on the participation of Royal Dublin Fusiliers in the Boer War, whose case blurs the manifest division between Irish pro-Boers and British imperial supporters about the Boer War issue. Joyce must have thought that the participation of Royal Dublin Fusiliers in the Boer War is a kind of thrust that operates to undermine the strict binary opposition in the political attitude toward the Boer War in Ireland. I will explain how the fact that Bloom’s father-in-law, Major Tweedy, served in the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, operates in Joyce’s dealing with the Boer War, in connection with Molly’s attitude.

In “Scylla and Charybdis,” Stephen Dedalus plays a role as an exponent in analyzing Shakespeare’s plays, thus producing his own theory. At first, Stephen’s response seems to be farfetched, but in his mind a complex

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2) P. J. Matthews enumerates some famous nationalists who actively participated in the committee, such as James Connolly, Maud Gonne, Arthur Griffith, and John O’Leary, and W. B. Yeats, Michael Davitt, and William Rooney were said to attend the meetings (100).

association seems to be working:

> *Hamlet*
> *Ou*
> *Le Distrait*
> *Piece de Shakespeare*
>
> He repeated to John Eglinton's newgathered frown:
> ―Piece de Shakespeare, don't you know. It's so French. The French point of view, *Hamlet ou* ...
> ―The absentminded beggar, Stephen ended. (*U* 9.119-26)

While Mr. Best is talking about Mallarme's prose poem, Stephen abruptly responds to this conversation by mentioning Rudyard Kipling's jingoistic poem, "The Absentminded Beggar." This poem was published in the *Daily Mail* on 31st October 1899, was widely popular, and contributed to raising a lot of money for "the wives and children" of the soldiers serving in the Boer War, at that time called the Transvaal War. By Christmas Day 1899, this poem had been in circulation for some 8 weeks and the newspaper's main headline announced 'Poem Fund Now ₤ 50,000' (Lee 6). Furthermore, it was eulogized as "the incarnation of the national spirit" and "the poem of an epoch" (Lee 6). Sir Arthur Sullivan set the poem to a song, whose record-breaking success was reverberated through theaters, music halls, clubs, concerts, even barracks and schools. It was Maud Beerbohm Tree, a music hall singer, who promulgated this political event into a mythical phenomenon. She recited many patriotic songs in music hall performances, and donated the ₤ 100 per week she received for doing so to the fund. As Peter Bailey argues, the late Victorian music hall was "a perfect platform for promoting Kipling's poem" (Bailey 28). At that time, you could have often heard the poem's famous refrain, "Pass the hat for your credit's sake, and –Pay! Pay! Pay!"

which was “a line familiar to anyone who knew of the poem and its significance” (Loukopoulou 207). It also proved “a clear market of imperial unity” (Potter 53). Considering Bailey’s insistence that “the London music hall of the period has been represented as a powerful conservative influence on its working class clientele, identifying strongly with the Tory party, pumping up patriotic and imperialist sentiments” (32). Joyce recognizes that the success of Kipling’s patriotic poem attests to the effect of the cultural operations of imperialistic ideologies. Kipling was not only appointed as literary advisor to the Imperial War Graves Commission” (Loukopoulou 208), owing to his contribution to the fund raising and active participation in promoting war campaigns. He even visited Bloemfontein, and wrote some verses and articles to an English-language newspaper there (Farwell 249). Another popular Boer War song, “Good-bye, Dolly Gray” is also mentioned in “Circe”:

> Dolly Gray
> (*from her balcony waves her handkerchief, giving the sign of the heroine of Jericho*) Rahab. Cook’s son, goodbye. Safe home to Dolly. Dream of the girl you left behind and she will dream of you. (*U* 15.4417-20)

This song tells a story that a British soldier who is going to South Africa is saying goodbye to his sweetheart Dolly Gray. Here two Boer war songs—“The Absentminded Beggar” and “Good-bye, Dolly Gray”—are mingled, since “Cook’s son” is the phrase from the former song, thus indicating how powerful and pervasive these propagandistic songs were among the ordinary people. As Booker argues, “Dolly’s appearance in Joyce’s text thus places Joyce, Kipling, and Shakespeare in dialogue with popular culture, thereby participating in the ongoing assault on ‘high-low’ cultural compartmentalization that is a central project of *Ulysses*” (97). Joyce must have recognized how powerful and influential Kipling’s poem was.

Stephen also associates Kipling's poem with the last scene of *Hamlet*, thus producing the phrase, 'Khaki Hamlets.'

> —A deathsman of the soul Robert Greene called him, Stephen said. Not for nothing was he a butcher's son, wielding the sledded poleaxe and spitting in his palms. Nine lives are taken off for his father's one. Our Father who art in purgatory. Khaki Hamlets don't hesitate to shoot. The bloodboltered shambles in act five is a forecast of the concentration camp sung by Mr Swinburne. (*U* 9.139-35)

By way of a complicated association, Stephen produces a connection between the last scene of *Hamlet* and the atrocious massacre executed by the "brutish empire" (*U* 15.4569-70). Stephen also theorizes the relationship between Shakespeare and the British imperialism by referring to Mafeking: "His pageants, the histories, sail fullbellied on a tide of Mafeking enthusiasm" (*U* 9.753-54). Furthermore, Joyce criticizes the brutality of British imperialism with coercion policy impinged on Ireland by referring to the Croke Park massacre, which is mentioned in a form of parliamentary debate in "Cyclops":

> Mr Orelli O'Reilly (Montenotte. Nat.): Have similar orders been issued for the slaughter of human animals who dare to play Irish games in the Phoenix park?
>
> Mr Allfours: The answer is in the negative.
>
> Mr Cowe Conacre: Has the right honourable gentleman's famous Mitchelstown telegram inspired the policy of gentlemen on the Treasury bench? (O! O!)
>
> Mr Stalewit (Buncombe, Ind.): Don't hesitate to shoot. (Ironical opposition cheers.)
>
> The speaker: Order! Order! (The house rises. Cheers.) (*U* 12.872-76)

The debate culminates in a reference to a Land League anti-coercion rally in

Mitchelstown, County Cork in 1887. While the police were trying to go through the crowd in order to gather evidence for the prosecution of John Dillon, Parnell’s associate, Lieutenant “Pasha” Plunkett of the Royal Irish Constabulary was reported to have shouted to his men the notorious command, “Don’t hesitate to shoot.” So the riot resulted in three men “being killed by the fire from the police barracks” (Gifford 341). Stephen’s tactic of association points to the similarity between the Boer War and Croke Park massacre in terms of brutality and atrocity. In this context, khaki Hamlets can be identified with Kipling’s Tommy Atkins, the generic name for the common British soldier, although this nomination was not first used by Kipling, but “popularized through Kipling’s writings” (Fordam 195). The phrase, “a gentleman in khaki,” derived from Kipling’s “The Absentminded Beggar,” reinforces the equation of “khaki Hamlets” with Tommy Atkins, a common name for British soldiers.

Joyce’s reference to the concentration camp brings up Swinburne’s poem, ‘On the Dead of Colonel Benson,’ part of which are citied in “Scylla and Charybdis,” reminding us of the Battle of Bakenlaagte, in which the British troops were outnumbered and outpowered by the De Wet-led Boer guerrillas. This defeat was characterized by the unpreparedness of the British army for the Boers, who were adept at constructing entrenchments and waiting for the British army coming into firing ranges. Since Colonel Benson died as a result of the wound inflicted during this battle. Swinburne seems to praise Benson’s heroic death and the bravery of the British troops, but poignantly implies the fact of the mismatched warfare, symptomatic of the debacle of the British Empire. It was according to Kitchner’s ‘scorched policy’ in 1901 that the British troops spearheaded the warfare by burning villages, with a suspicion that the village people may have helped the Boer guerillas, and this policy proved to be a successful and crucial watershed that changed the mainstream

of the British attacks. So this policy produced a lot of Boer casualties and left Boer women and children homeless, thus being held in the concentration camps. The reports of the deteriorating conditions of the concentration camps in South Africa triggered a debate on the homeland, especially, the issue of the internment of dead Boer women and children by the British in the Boer War. Swinburne supported the British policy of internment, by citing Boer women and children as "whelps and dams." So the last scene of *Hamlet*, in which Fortinbrass orders his soldiers to treat Hamlet as a soldier, is a foreshadowing of the concentration camp in the Boer War, a horrible massacre itself. Taking advantage of this victorious moment, the prime minister held the general election, called as "khaki election" (Farwell 313).

It is worth exploring the role and function of Major Tweedy's regiment in the Boer War. In "Circe," Bloom's reaction to First Watch's question about regiment shows his pro-British attitude by referring to the Royal Dublin Fusiliers:

> (turns to the gallery) The royal Dublins, boys, the salt of the earth, known the world over. I think I see some old comrades in arms up there among you. The R. D. F., with our own Metropolitan police, guardians of our homes, the pluckiest lads and the finest body of men, as physique, in the service of our sovereign. (*U* 15.785-89)

The Royal Dublin Fusiliers were an Irish infantry regiment of the British army from 1881, and Molly's father served in this regiment in the 2nd battalion stationed in Gibraltar. After his time, the regiment sent both of its regular battalions to South Africa to fight in the Second Boer War from 1899 to 1902 (Gifford 86). Joyce's Dubliners knew that the entrance gate to St Stephen's Green park is called the Fusiliers' Arch, erected in 1907, in memory of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers killed in the Second Boer War. Molly's father, Major

Tweedy, was enlisted for the Boer War. At the surface, there was no discrimination, but the colonized people became victims to other people's war, since they were regarded as subjects of the British Empire. This shows that Irish young men's fate was one of the colonized under the British Empire, revealing the subaltern's ambivalent position. One example is mentioned in the "Ithaca" episode: "Percy Apjohn (killed in action, Modder River)" (*U* 17.1251-52). Joyce's obsession with Parnell is revealed in a reference to a rumor: "One morning you would open the paper, the cabman affirmed, and read: *Return of Parnell*. He bet them what they liked. A Dublin fusilier was in that shelter one night and said he saw him in South Africa" (*U* 16.1297-99). The mythic status of Parnell produced a lot of rumors about his death and internment. One of them is that the coffin brought in from France was empty, so the Irish public believed in Parnell's immortality: "—Some say he is not in that grave at all. That the coffin was filled with stones. That one day he will come again" (*U* 6.923-24). Joyce's reference to the Boer War reveals the complex political situation of turn-of-the-century Ireland under the British occupation.

This paper originally started from my curiosity about why many references to the Boer War appear in Molly's chapter, 'Penelope' in addition to Molly's connection to Gibraltar. Molly's recollection shows that she must have been teased by anti-British supporters for the Boer cause "on account of father being in the army and my singing the absentminded beggar and wearing a brooch for Lord Roberts" (*U* 18.376-78). Molly enumerates three reasons for being molested by pro-Boer people, not only because she sang a patriotic song, based on Kipling's poem, "The Absentminded Beggar," which has been already discussed, but also because she wore a brooch for Lord Roberts, a symbol of pro-British sentiments, in addition to the fact that her father took part in the Boer War. Molly's references to Kipling's propagandistic song and

"a brooch for Lord Roberts" reveals how pervasively the war ideology permeates into the Irish emotions toward England. Although these two things seem to appear trivial, Joyce grasps the powerful operations of ideological statuses in both mass media and commodity culture, which I will discuss later.

In the fantasized episode, "Circe," Bloom testifies that Molly's father served in the Boer War as a member of Royal Dublin Fusiliers.

> I am a respectable married man, without a stain on my character. I live in Eccles street. My wife, I am the daughter of a most distinguished commander, a gallant upstanding gentleman, what do you call him, Majorgeneral Brian Tweedy, one of Britain's fighting men who helped to win our battles. Got his majority for the heroic defence of Rorke's Drift. (*U* 15.776-81)

The battle of Rorke's Drift was an engagement in the Anglo-Zulu War, not in the Boer War. In the war, the British army successfully defended the mission station of Rorke's Drift, which was the former trading post of James Rorke, an Irish merchant. Bloom defends himself strategically by way of his father-in-law's service in the British army.

> I'm as staunch a Britisher as you are, sir. I fought with the colours for king and country in the absentminded war under general Gough in the park and was disabled at Spion Kop and Bloemfontein, was mentioned in dispatches. I did all a white man could. (with quiet feeling) Jim Bludso. Hold her nozzle again the bank. (*U* 15.795-98)

Ordinary people got news about the situation of the Boer War through dispatches, forms of speedy newsletters from war correspondents. I would like to add to say that commercial advertisements and commodities were used to promote wartime ideologies. Of them, two famous items are Pears' soap and

Bovril. In one advertisement of Pears’ soap, whose copy is “The first step towards lightening The White Man’s Burden is through teaching the virtues of cleanliness” with a picture of a man in military uniform, who resembles Lord Roberts [Figure 1]. As it is known that Bloom never participates in any war, he could be “a kind of allegorical figure of the Irish people, particularly of British sympathizers among the Irish” (Booker 91). Here once again the Boer War is expressed as the absentminded war. Bloom is confused by two different Goughs, a tactic that Joyce frequently deploys in order to produce a remarkable effect resulting from this mistake. According to Gifford, General Hugh Gough, whose statue is located in the Phoenix Park, took part in the Peninsular War against Napoleon, and later became the target of frequent anti-British demonstrations (463). Another Gough is Sir Hubert de la Poer Gough, who participated in the defense of the key supply depot of Ladysmith in the Boer War on 28 February, 1900.

> On this day twenty years ago we overcame the hereditary enemy at Ladysmith. Our howitzers and camel swivel guns played on his lines with telling effects. Half a league onward! They charge! All is lost now! Do we yield? No! We drive them headlong! Lo! We charge! Deploying to the left our light horse swept across the heights of Plevna and, uttering their warcry *Bonafide Sabaoth*, sabred the Saracen gunners to a man. (*U* 15.1525-30)

This scene also makes a confusingly overlapped depiction of two battles, the relief of Ladysmith in the Boer War and Plevna battle in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78, both of which Major Tweedy are said to have participated in. In a fantasized episode, “Circe,” Joyce seems to complicate these two battles by adding another battle, “the Charge of the Light Brigade” in the Crimean War, which is regarded as one of the most tragic military buffoonery

in history.

Another memorable victory in the Boer War is the Mafeking battle, as Stephen Dedalus associates it with Shakepeare's plays: "His pageants, the histories, sail fullbellied on a tide of Mafeking enthusiasm" (*U* 9.753-54). But the Boer War was not a British-dominating one, since there were a lot of attacks and counterattacks on the crucial strategic points such as Ladysmith. Another example of the defeat of the British army is referred to in the "Cyclops" chapter: "—An imperial yeomanry, says Lenehan, to celebrate the occasion" (*U* 12.1318). Byron Farwell describes this defeat as "The 13th Yeomanry, surrounded by 2,000 burghers under Piet de Wet, surrendered after suffering 80 casualties" (269). He adds to mention "an uproar in Britain," since they consisted of 'men of gentle birth and wealth' (Ibid.).

The Boer War campaign turned out to be frustrating and costly for the British army, because a force of British, including a battalion of Royal Dublin Fusiliers, was defeated in the Tugela River valley on 18-27 February 1900. In "Penelope," Molly refers to Paul Kruger, a pivotal person in the South African politics: "old oom Paul and the rest of the other old Krugers go and fight it out between them" (*U* 18.394-95). She also recollects "the Dublin that won Tugela" (*U* 18.402-3). This battle was a big blow to the British reputation of military valor, thus becoming a sign of the decline of the British Empire.

> The Tugela River valley was the scene of a Boer War campaign that was both frustrating and costly for the English. The point of the campaign was to relieve the pressure on Ladysmith.... A force of British, including a battalion of Royal Dublin Fusiliers, crossed the Tugela on 18 February 1900 and, on the night of 23-24 February, stormed Spion Kop, the key of the enemy's position; but the next day the British were cut to ribbons in a murderous crossfire (the Dublins suffered thirty percent casualties). They were forced to abandon the position and retire beyond the Tugela on 27 February 1900. (Gifford 614-15)

To Molly, the Boer War seems to function just as a reminder of her lover, Gardner, and of his father’s career, but her hatred of male-oriented discussions of politics is a thrust into grand narratives of war ideology and nationalist politics. In Gibraltar, Molly had a bad impression on soldiers: “that disgusting Cameron highlander behind the meat market or that other wretch with the red head behind the tree ... when I was passing pretending he was pissing standing out for me to see it ... theyre always trying to show it to you” (*U* 18.544-48). Molly points to the phallic prowess that Cameron highlanders boasts of, by showing their male symbols. Nevertheless, Molly feels an ambiguous attitude: “a pity a couple of the Camerons werent there to see me squatting in the mens place” (*U* 18.556-57). Molly loves soldiers in uniforms as well as she hates the warfare that forced her lover to die in action:

> I hate the mention of their politics after the war that Pretoria and Ladysmith and Bloemfontein where Gardner Lieut Stanley G 8th Bn 2nd East Lancs Rgt of enteric fever he was a lovely fellow in khaki and just the right height over me Im sure he was brave too he said I the lancers theyre grand. (*U* 18.387-402)

Gardner’s disease, enteric or typhoid fever, was reported to kill more soldiers at war than to be lost due to enemy combat, until the vaccine was used successfully by the British during the Second Boer War. As Farwell explains, the carcasses of animals for transportation such as horses and mules and the scarcity of potable water caused the endemic to spread out in the battlefields, and so “[t]he germs of enteric acquired in the field, [...] now flourished in the bodies of Roberts’ soldiers” (241). Here it is noteworthy to look at the statistical reports of the fatalities of the enteric in the Boer War:

> There was no known cure for enteric fever; the treatment was merely

> symptomatic. The British army in South Africa suffered more casualties from this disease than had any other army before (as far as is known) or since. Of the 13,250 deaths from disease, most were from enteric; 31,000 men had to be invalided home because of it. Among the 30,000 troops Roberts had at Bloemfontein, Dr. Conan Doyle estimated that there between 8,000 and 9,000 cases of the disease. (Farwell 241)

These statistics of fatalities show why Molly complains about the cause of her lover's death: "I wanted to give him a memento he gave me that clumsy Claddagh ring for luck that I gave Gardner going to South Africa where those Boers killed him with their war and *fever*" (*U* 18.865-68, my emphasis). Joyce must have witnessed that the British imperial authorities encouraged commercial items to be actively employed in the promotion of war ideologies. For example, the copy of Bovril is worth looking at: "In the South African War Bovril gave Vigor to the Fighter, Strength to the Wounded, and *Sustenance to the Enteric*" (my emphasis) [Figure 2]. The brand name of Bovril, "a beef tea," is coined from the two words, combining *bovlinus* (meaning ox) with an electromagnetic substance named Vril, originated from Edward Bulwer-Lytton's popular novel, *The Coming Race* (1870).

Molly shows her hatred toward political disputes, but remembers Gardner's military information and the names of the famous battles in the Boer War. This shows that at that time the Boer War was not a war taking place in a far-away foreign country, but an influential event on the minds of ordinary people like Molly. I am not convinced by Schwarze's argument that "it is no coincidence that, for her upcoming tour, Molly will travel to Belfast, a Protestant-Unionist stronghold presumably more in sympathy with her own antinationalist politics" (187). Even though she shows anti-nationalist sentiments, based on her scorn for Griffith and his organization Sinn Fein, which is mistakenly called as "Sinner Fein" (*U* 18.383), Molly does not take

any side of political ideologies. She rather escapes being “interpellated,” in Althusser’s term, by any political category, whether antinationalist or imperialist: “I don’t care what anybody says itd be much better for the world to be governed by the women in it you wouldn’t see women going and killing one another and slaughtering” (*U* 18.1433-36).

I agree on Fairhall’s argument that “Molly’s notion of petticoat government rejects the existing order” of patriarchy (183), since Molly’s personal experience of the loss of her lover in the war undermines the androcentric war ideologies, which are destructive of and hostile to the peaceful co-existence between two opposing forces in terms of gender, race, class, etc. Molly’s rejection of warfare as a mutual massacre is a direct critique of destructive androcentric ideologies of warfare. In this sense, Joyce’s deployment of references to the Boer War in “Penelope” is an effective strategy for.

III

As I have discussed above, Joyce never loses sight of the pervasive operations of war ideologies and British imperialism in the cultural strata, exemplified by Kipling’s poem, its music hall adaptations, and commercial advertisements such as Pears’ Soap and Bovril. In *Ulysses*, the Boer War is not a topic for those characters who are interested in Irish politics, but Molly’s indifference to politics is not simply her political stance, but rather a critique of androcentric society.

James Joyce once remarked: “the English debacle in South Africa in the war against the Boers had made the English army an object of scorn in the European press” (*CW* 164). In “Eumaeus,” Skin-the-Goat insists that “There

would be a fall and the greatest fall in history....The Boers were the beginning of the end," and that "Brummagem England was toppling already and her downfall would be Ireland, her Achilles heel" (*U* 16.1000-03). In conclusion, Joyce deploys references to the Boer War overtly as well as implicitly through *Ulysses* in order to criticize the brutality and absurdity of war, but Joyce also denounces grand narratives of war ideology with Molly's indifference to them. It is obvious that Joyce attacks on the absurdity of warfare and war ideologies and the brutality of British imperialism by referring to the Boer War. But Bloom and Stephen, male characters, seem to actively participate in political debates while Molly's personal experience related to the Boer War works as a thrust into both male-centered war ideologies and virile Irish nationalist politics through ordinary people's points of view.

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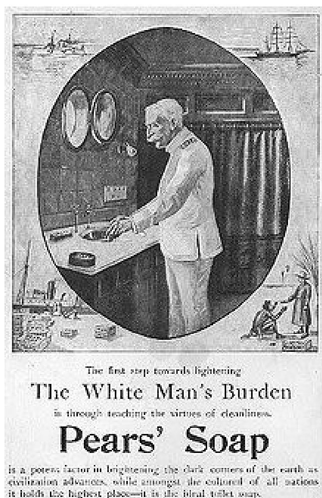

[Figure 1]

Copy: The first step towards lightening The White Man's Burden is through teaching the virtues of cleanliness. Pears' Soap.

[Figure 2]

Copy: In the South African War BOVRIL gave Vigor to the Fighter, Strength to the Wounded, and Sustenance to the Enteric.

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Abstract

‘Khaki Hamlets’ and ‘The Absent Minded Beggar’: The Boer War in Joyce’s *Ulysses*

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Joycean critics and scholars have paid little attention to the references to the Boer War, especially in “Penelope,” the most feminine chapter in *Ulysses*. The historical setting of *Ulysses* fixed on June 16, 1904 makes it almost impossible to directly deal with the Great War, so this anachronistic positioning is Joyce’s tactical approach to the problematic operations of war ideology in general. Joyce’s references to Boer War-related events and characters scattered throughout *Ulysses* show the ways in which Joyce criticizes the operations of war ideologies in the cultural strata, exemplified in Kipling’s poem, ’The Absentminded Beggar,’ and its endorsement of British imperialism.

In “Penelope,” Molly compains that she was teased by pro-British people for three reasons: her father participated in the Boer War, she wore a brooch for Lord Roberts, the British hero of the victory over the Boers, and she sang a song, “The Absentminded beggar,” based on Kipling’s patriotic poem. In thise sense, Molly could be regarded as pro-British, but she also scorns Bloom’s talks about politics, by showing indifference to such Irish famous politicians as Arthur Griffith. So it is difficult to categorize Molly either antinationalist or supporter for British imperialism, since she exists outside the world of androcentric values.

■ Key words : James Joyce, *Ulysses*, the Boer War, warfare, imperialism
(제임스 조이스, 율리시스, 보어전쟁, 전쟁, 제국주의)

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