

The Germination in the Narration of Colonial Reality: The Two Cases of Conrad and Joyce

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I

British modernist authors Conrad and Joyce shared an origin as colonial subjects: Conrad came from Russian Poland and Joyce came from British Ireland. In fact, the modernity of the two authors' texts, both in theme and style, expresses a nationality suppressed by colonial rule, which parallels individuality frustrated in modern society. In this sense, Conrad and Joyce were both modernists and nationalists and may be considered colonial modernists as opposed to metropolitan modernists like Forster and Woolf. In these colonial modernist texts, the individual is equivalent to the nation or the traditional community in the colony, whose individuality—that is nationality—is shackled by colonization, rendering their texts a battleground for the conflict between the individual and the colonial community. The isolated and oppressed in the colonial text represents not only the modern individual but also the colonial community that is struggling for individuality, which makes the colonial authors' attitude ambivalent—sympathetic yet critical—

toward the individual and the community.

Significantly, the narratives of Conrad and Joyce are structured on the struggle between the individual *and* the community, instead of on the resistance of the former *against* the latter as evidenced in the modernist or nationalist narrative. In Conrad and Joyce, the individual and the community, both in struggle, represent the colonized nation, which respectively embodies its ideal (or national consciousness) and its reality; in contrast, in the modernist or nationalist narrative, the community, which oppresses the individual, represents the empire. In this respect, Conrad and Joyce were more modern than the modernist and more radical than the nationalist, which renders their views post-modern or post-colonial and ahead of their time. Their narratives are peculiarly subjective and centered on the individual/national consciousness to the extent that the outer world—the empire—rarely exists in their texts.

It can be argued then that the “darkness” in Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, rather than serving as a symbol of colonial rule by autocratic Russia, signifies the state of Russian Poland—as well as the Belgian Congo—which is symbolically present in all of Conrad’s work. As Harpham argues, the absence of Poland in Conrad’s novels is “more expressive of the reality of Poland than any concrete rendering of Poland could possibly be” (62). Thus, the darkness of Patusan in *Lord Jim*, London in *The Secret Agent*, Sulaco in *Nostromo*, and Russia in *Under Western Eyes* all denotes the dark reality of Poland that suffers not only from Russian domination but from the repeated failure of Polish revolutionary movements led by the radically idealistic and individualistic nobility *szlachta*, as represented by Conrad’s idealistic heroes—Kurtz, Jim, Nostromo, and Razumov. In other words, Conrad’s protagonist, representing Polish national consciousness, embodies both the individual in resistance to his oppressive reality and the community in struggle with its colonial reality.

Similarly, Joyce’s “betrayal,” a persistent theme throughout his work, symbolizes the historical reality of Ireland, specifically of the (Catholic) Irish, rather than colonial occupation by the English or even the dominance of the Anglo-Irish

Protestant Ascendancy, which emerged with the Penal Laws restricting civil and property rights for Irish Catholics in 1695 (Foster 170). The Irish history of betrayal, which began with Devorgilla's adultery—which resulted in the first coming of the English in the late 12th century and “the sin” of which Joyce believed “the pathology of colonial Ireland originated [in]” (Gibson 124)—continued with the Act of Union that was supported by Irish Catholics in return for their liberation from the Penal Laws in 1800. Recently again in Joyce's time, the destruction of the “uncrowned king” Parnell and the consequent failure of the Irish Home Rule movement were incurred by the Catholics' denouncement of the Anglo-Irish Parnell's affair with Kitty O'Shea—disputes that are vividly depicted in the Christmas scene in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Thus, the motif of betrayal and adultery in Joyce's text, enacted by the woman with the “bat-like soul waking to the consciousness of itself in darkness and secrecy and loneliness” (*PA* 183)—like the woman of “Ballyhoura hills” in *A Portrait* and Molly Bloom in *Ulysses* inviting the stranger-man into her house—suggests the adulterous reality of Ireland that suffers not only at the hands of English rule and the Anglo-Irish nationalist movement but also at the hands of Roman Catholicism. Interestingly, Joyce's protagonists, like the Catholic artist Stephen Dedalus and the Jewish advertising man Leopold Bloom, represent less of the Irish national consciousness—which is appropriated by the Anglo-Irish—than of Irish reality as embodied by the suffering adulterous woman. In spite of his ambition to “forge” the “uncreated conscience of [his] race,” Stephen, like the Jew-Irish Bloom who is abused by both the English and the Irish, sees his reality as “a servant of two masters [the English and the Church]” and “a third [the Nationalist]” (*PA* 253; *U* 1.638-41).

In this respect, Conrad's and Joyce's narratives, with their protagonists emblemizing both the individual and the community of the oppressed nation in the colony, focus on the conflict within the nation—between its ideal and its reality—with a difference in that Conrad's protagonist embodies the ideal of colonial Poland, while Joyce's represents more of the reality of colonial Ireland. The conflict between the ideal (individual) and the reality (community), then, may be resolved

in Conrad and Joyce better than in other modernist texts. It is resolved when the isolated protagonist recognizes the reality of the community in conflict with his individuality, as Razumov with his faith in the “great autocrat” finally recognizes the reality of anarchic revolutionaries in Conrad’s *Under Western Eyes* (37), and as Bloom professes the Jew-persecuting Ireland as “[his] country” in Joyce’s *Ulysses* (7.87). The resolution enables the colonial protagonist to overcome and integrate the dark and betraying reality of the colony into a new reality that signifies the birth of a nation free from colonial oppression.

Conrad and Joyce sought the possibility of the creation of a new reality, or at least, the recognition of colonial reality throughout their narratives. The possibility, however, appears distinct from each other due to the difference in their colonial experiences in Russian Poland and British Ireland respectively. The chance to create the nation appears larger in Joyce, whose text deals with Ireland’s reality of having been occupied for nearly eight centuries by England, which represents Western Europe or the West. In comparison, Conrad’s narrative is concerned with the reality or rather, with the ideal of the Polish Republic that was annihilated—thus only symbolically present in the text—about a century before by the partition of the three neighboring powers of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, which represents Eastern Europe or the East. In this context, this essay, building on postcolonial studies on each author/text, intends to illuminate the difference between the two modernist authors from different or differently-conditioned colonies in terms of their narration of colonial reality as the germination of the nation.

II

A major difference in the colonial experience of Conrad and Joyce rests in the peculiarity of Russian Poland, which was the “Western colony of the Eastern empire” (Kil 3), while British Ireland resembles one of the Eastern colonies of the Western empire. The reversed situation in Conrad’s colonial experience, in

comparison to the experience of writers from the colonies of Europe, characterizes his ambivalent attitude toward the Western empire, which the Poles claimed as the roots of their cultural heritage. Moreover, Russian Poland was not a whole but only part of the colonial Poland that used to be the Polish Republic, which geographically ceased to exist on the map of Europe following the partitions in the late 18th century. In other words, Russian Poland was physically dead: only the spirit alive, the body was buried under the “gravestone of [Russian] autocracy,” which was simply incompatible with the Polish republican tradition (Conrad, *Notes* 86). This unique situation of Russian Poland brought forth Polish Romantic idealism that served as a driving force of Polish revolutionary movements, and which, like Conrad’s heroes, could not afford and refused to recognize the autocratic reality of colonial Poland. Ironically, however, the persistent destruction of the idealistic hero in Conrad’s narrative, with the exception of Razumov who nearly perishes but still survives, acknowledges the reality denied by the hero.

British Ireland, on the other hand, was the so-called Third-World in Europe. Unlike Conrad and more like Frantz Fanon in French Algeria half a century later, Joyce recognized the wretched reality of colonial Ireland, criticizing the colonial ideals and ideologies of both British imperialism and Irish nationalism as responsible for such a reality. While Conrad’s protagonist Razumov’s recognition of reality in the later novel *Under Western Eyes* still stops at the reconciliation between the ideal of the individual and the reality of the community, Joyce’s protagonist goes further, transforming the reality of the colony into a new reality of the nation. It may be said, then, that Joyce’s narrative of the Irish nation begins almost where Conrad leaves off—at the recognition of the truth of colonial reality. Joyce’s Stephen’s self-assigned mission to create the “conscience” of his race in the smithy of the “bat-like soul” in *A Portrait* is achieved by Bloom who unlike Stephen, embraces the soul in *Ulysses*, which Joyce refers to as the “symbol of the intellectual conscience of Ireland” (qtd. in Manganiello 170).

It is noteworthy that Joyce’s achievement of the creation of a new reality for Ireland was unique and advanced in comparison to Irish cultural nationalists or the

Irish Revival, such as Yeats and Lady Gregory who focused on the past and fell short of recognizing the prevailing reality of colonial Ireland. Inevitably, the Revival's backward-looking search for national identity created an image of Ireland that was as crippled as its perception of the reality: the suffering virgin queen of the nationalist, such as Mangan's Dark Rosaleen or Yeats's Cathleen ni Houlihan, was to Joyce "a crazy queen, old and jealous" of the English and Italian masters, the "third" master of Ireland that devoured the Irishmen like an "old sow that eats her farrow" and that was "near to die" (*U* 1.640; *PA* 203; *CW* 82). In this respect, while Yeats's Ireland needed to embrace the "Celtic past," Joyce's Ireland did "not" even have "spiritual reality" or national consciousness (Deane 99). Joyce thus had to create a new reality, firmly based on the treacherous reality of the present and in a new image of the Irish woman. The adulterous old woman of colonial Ireland needed to be transformed into the beautiful young queen modeled on the Celtic goddess "Sovereignty" —represented by the goddess-like Molly whose affair never ends in *Ulysses*—with two faces of a young woman and a hag: the goddess's "union with the rightful king," by turning her from an old hag into a beautiful young queen, results in the "fertility and prosperity of the land" (Tymoczko 97, 100). In this sense, Joyce's new woman was more truthful to the Celtic tradition than the Revivalist's virgin queen, who reflected the colonial ideology of Victorian and Catholic morality.

The image of the woman as the representation of reality, as in Joyce, is not uncommon to colonial writers: while the protagonist-man represents the oppressive ideology or ideal of the colony, the woman-character embodies the colonial reality oppressed by the male ideologies of colonialism and nationalism. Interestingly, the woman rarely exists in Conrad, which marks him a masculine author. Focused on the male protagonist who is often sick or dying—as most shockingly evidenced by the sick Black sailor Jim in *The Nigger of the Narcissus*—which signifies the failure of Polish national consciousness, Conrad's narrative of the woman is marginalized as with Kurtz's betrothed in *Heart of Darkness*, Jewel in *Lord Jim*, and even Nathalie in *Under Western Eyes*. The woman hidden from the truth of

the protagonist appears mysterious in Conrad's text, just as the autocratic reality of Poland, which was remote from republican ideology, was incomprehensible and unacceptable, though undeniable, to the Polish nobles such as Conrad. In this context, Conrad's narrative is no more remarkable for the faithfulness of the protagonist to his ideal than for his eventual destruction, which signifies the "subversion of a coherent [ideological] project" (Roberts 22): the death of the idealistic hero implies the triumph of the incomprehensible "darkness" of the reality, which is personified not only by the woman but the colored people in the colonies of Europe in Conrad's text. Only his later hero Razumov sees the truth of the darkness of reality, the truth that the darkness originates in his blindness to the revolutionary reality: the darkness denotes the distance of his autocratic ideal from the anarchic reality. Still, Razumov, who insists on "[being] independent" from reality, resembles Stephen who "would not bend to kiss" the prostituting woman more so than Bloom who "kisses [the adulterous] womans bottom" (Conrad, *Under* 298; Joyce, *PA* 101; *U* 18.1402).

Significantly, the darkness or bat-likeness of colonial reality in Conrad and Joyce comes from the gap between the ideology and reality of the colony – that is, the falsity of the ideology. Ideology is necessarily false as it represents "the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" and thus veils the truth of the physical or material reality (Althusser 109). Both colonialist and nationalist ideologies, which are isolated from the material reality of the colony, create the darkness of "false consciousness," with each ideology representing its own social structure as the dominator or the dominated. As Althusser defines, the individual is the "*always-already subject*," which is over-determined by the ideology that represents the social structure (119). Conrad's heroes, then, in representing Polish Western ideology, which is over-determined by the social structure of the nobility "*szlachta*" and isolated from the reality of the peasant-serfs, are destroyed by the darkness of their own false consciousness. Likewise, the ideological representation of Joyce's Stephen as the creator of the conscience of the Irish race is false: over-determined by the position of the Catholic Irish, Stephen

cannot but fail to create the conscience of the Irish Catholic “betrayers,” not to mention the Anglo-Irish Protestant “pretenders.”

On the other hand, a vision of “totality,” which Lukács puts forth as the opposite of ideology or partial, false consciousness, is achieved by Bloom, the Hungarian-Jew-Irish, who was once a Protestant and a Catholic (*U* 17.542-546). Doubly oppressed by the English and the Irish, the Jew Bloom is similar to the proletariat in the capitalist society, whose class consciousness has the capacity to “totalize” the social order where they are oppressively positioned. Bloom’s vision of totality, however, is again over-determined by the consciousness of the petit-bourgeoisie and thus exempt from proletarian revolutionary politics. It can be assumed, then, that both Conrad and Joyce, who belonged respectively to the Polish nobility and the Irish petite bourgeoisie, were blocked by their class consciousness from revolutionary nationalism. Inevitably, Conrad’s Razumov, who recognizes the truth of the anarchic reality within Nathalie, still insists on his independence from revolutionary reality; Stephen, who aims to create the conscience of Ireland, rather bitterly says, “Let my country die for me”; even the Jew Bloom, who acknowledges Ireland as his nation, opposes the violent nationalism of “the citizen”: “Wouldn’t it be the same here if you put force against force?” (*U* 15.4474, 12.1360-61). Uniquely, thus, Bloom’s vision of totality, which integrates his individual Jewish consciousness with Irish communal reality, points to “a socialism without Marx, and an anarchism without violence” (Manganiello 233).

Whereas Joyce’s Bloom is endowed with a total or integrated consciousness, Conrad’s heroes and Joyce’s Stephen are cursed with their individualistic ideological representations. The individualistic ideology of the Polish nobility or the Irish bourgeoisie in the colony not only resists but also reproduces the ideology of the colonial power, as Fanon points out: the national elite or middle class that “lives to itself and cuts itself off from the people” constitutes “the transmission line between the nation and a capitalism” and “puts on the mask of neo-colonialism” (Fanon, *Wretched* 152-54). In other words, Conrad’s narrative is rendered empty at the center by the ceaseless construction and deconstruction of the ideological

representation of the hero—by their “mutual cancellation” (Eagleton, *Criticism* 138): Kurtz, the emissary of European civilization, eventually turns wild and savage, which reveals him as “hollow at the core” (Conrad, *Heart* 57). Similarly, Joyce’s Stephen, the creator-to-be of Irish conscience, rejects the bat-like soul of the Irish race: “[He] has a shape that can’t be changed” into a vision of nation (Budgen 263). Joyce’s narrative of Bloom, however, overcomes its “cancellation” or emptiness by incessantly transforming the ideological representation of Bloom—by adopting the concept of “metempsychosis” in *Ulysses*. The ideological representation of Bloom continuously changes even into that of the woman as he turns into a “womanly man” (*U* 15.1798).

From this perspective, Conrad’s and Joyce’s texts are not only the product of colonial ideology repeating itself but a “necessity of [the] ideology” resisting itself (Eagleton, *Criticism* 77). The text, representing the ideology of the colony, also represents the absent or repressed reality of colonial history—a discovery in fact that becomes the quest of Joyce’s Stephen and Conrad’s hero. The truth of colonial reality, which is hidden from the false consciousness of the ideology, germinates the soul of the nation. The nation is thus not imagined in the “official consciousness” of either colonialist or nationalist ideology but in the “practical consciousness” or “structures of experience” of the “social and material” reality (Raymond Williams 130-32). Still, the colonial experiences that conceive the truth of the reality and the soul of the nation are confusing, simultaneously reproducing and criticizing the ideology. The mixed experiences, which Homi Bhabha designates as “in-between” reality or “hybridity” (Bhabha 13), are personified by the narrator like Marlow in Conrad, who persistently regards the idealistic hero of his tale against the hero’s wishes as “one of us,” as part of his reality. The personification of colonial hybridity, which constructs the identity of the colonized nation, is best achieved by Joyce through Bloom who can “see [himself (his reality)] as others see [him]” (*U* 8.662).

The colonized nation as a cultural hybrid, however, is “always less than one nation and double,” which merely reproduces and simultaneously resists

assimilation with the dominator, with the difference between the dominator and the dominated “never quite add[ing] up” (Bhabha 168). The “not-one” nation in a subaltern relation to the colonial power is troubled by the problem of the “minus in the origin” (245), the pre-colonial past that has been repressed and buried by authority. Ironically, Conrad’s trouble with conceiving the Polish nation lies in the fact that Poland, having already achieved a national unity before the Partitions, had *no* “minus in the origin” of the Polish nation, which renders its colonial reality more intolerable. On the other hand, Ireland “had *never* been a nation,” “a *sovereign* state” (Cheng 216), a problem that Joyce overcame by imagining a yet-to-be-born nation of Ireland, a “loveliness which has not yet come into the world” (Joyce, *PA* 251). It can be argued that Conrad, in insisting on the nationhood of Poland as “Polonism,” as an outpost of Western culture, resembles the Irish Revivalist who vainly tried to resolve the lack of Irish nationhood in the pre-colonial past through a Gaelic nation, instead of creating one founded on present reality. Then again, Conrad’s narrative of the conflict between the ideology and reality of colonial Poland demonstrates that there is in effect “no need for a resolution because there is nothing” to “resolve” (Eagleton, *Criticism* 140): no conflict exists, with the reality acknowledged by the destruction of the ideology. In other words, Conrad was more advanced than the Irish Revival in narrating a nation, hesitating only where Joyce moved on. Conrad’s “undying hope” may signify a vision of a new Polish nation (Conrad, *Notes* 8).

III

The difference in the vision of a nation between Conrad and Joyce is rooted, again, in the peculiarity of Poland. As a “stateless political nation,” Poland was “a kind of antination,” the antithesis of Benedict Anderson’s claim that nationalism imagines nations where they do not exist rather than awakening them to self-consciousness (Harpham 20-24), which resonates with Joyce’s conception of the

nation. Anderson assumes that with the development of “capitalism and technology,” the nation is imagined or created in the process of resistance to colonial rule (Anderson 42-43). Yet, long before deteriorating into a partitioned colony, Poland achieved the united Republic of Poland-Lithuania as “a spontaneous and complete union of sovereign States” in 1569 (Conrad, *Notes* 120). Poland was the perfect negative of both Anderson’s concept of nation as the “imagined community” and Bhabha’s nation that lacks an origin. In fact, the modern conceptions of nation and anti-nationalism were born from the destruction of the Polish Republic—the “prototype of the modern nation”—which contributed to the emergence of Russia and Germany as strong modern powers of Europe: Poland, as the “token of that *which did not forget* [the nation] *and which must therefore be forgotten*,” was the negation of the theory of nationalism (Harpham 14, 17). Not surprisingly, Conrad was indifferent to Irish nationalism, which he considered to be remotely distant from Polish nationalist tradition. He was ambivalent to the Boer War as well, which seriously put the British Empire to the test: while critical about the manner in which the English fought the war, he did not believe in the Boers who had “no idea of liberty,” which could “only be found under the English flag all over the world” (Jean-Aubrey 1: 288). To Conrad, nationalism was the cause of the Poles, who, like the English, had been a nation with the tradition of “liberty.”

The national consciousness was strong in Conrad, as evidenced by his lifelong relationship with R. B. Cunninghame Graham, the Scottish radical socialist who supported home-rule for Ireland and Scotland in Parliament. Notwithstanding his apparent conservatism, Conrad’s attitude was similar to Graham’s, as he wrote to him in 1919, “When I read you, I identify myself so completely with your words”; again towards the end of his life, he confessed to him, “You have been one of my moral supports through my writing life” (Conrad, *Joseph Conrad’s Letters* 187, 191). Graham—among his pro-revolutionist or anarchist friends, including the Garnetts and Ford M. Ford—was Conrad’s double or “secret sharer,” as Conrad’s writing may be compared to Graham’s socialist activity. In fact, Conrad’s writing in English, just like his previous career of seamanship, signified his own way of

maintaining “fidelity” to the Western Romantic tradition of Poland against the Eastern reality, as he stressed, “If I had not known English I wouldn’t have written a line for print” (Jean-Aubrey 2: 206). The seamanship and writing in English were thus two demonstrations of Conrad’s Polish identity in which he took pride, as evidenced in his letter:

It does not seem to me that I have been unfaithful to my country by having proved to the English that a gentleman from the Ukraine can be as good a sailor as they, and has something to tell them in their own language. I consider such recognition as I have won from this particular point of view, and offer it in silent homage where it is due. (qtd. in Najder 272)

Conrad proudly offered the “recognition” to his Poland that he was “as good” a sailor and a writer in English as the English “in silent homage where it is due.” It can be said, then, that he was one of the most patriotic Poles, which, despite his resistance to hard-line nationalism, rendered him opposed to any anti-national sentiment that masked “fraternity”: “[Such] propaganda tends to weaken the national sentiment the preservation of which is my concern” (Conrad, *Joseph Conrad’s Letters* 116).

The Polish national consciousness, however, personified by the fatally idealistic hero in Conrad’s text, did not reflect colonial reality but instead evolved into an ideology that Conrad termed “Polonism,” summing up the Western characters of Poland and struggling “against Asiatic despotism at its door” (Jean-Aubrey 2: 336). Yet the radically republican or democratic ideology of Polonism was more of a dream than reality, as Conrad confessed: “I haven’t the taste for democracy and democracy hasn’t the taste for me” (Conrad, *Collected* 1: 390). He clearly recognized the evils of democracy, especially capitalism, as he stated that “industrialism and commercialism” would ultimately “appeal to the sword” and that “democracy,” with “its faith [in] the supremacy of material interests, [would] have to fight their battles to the bitter end, on a mere pittance” (Conrad, *Notes* 107). In fact, the corruption of an ideal by “material interests” is vivified in *Nostromo*:

Gould's ideal of "order" and "security" embodied by the silver mine ultimately turns it into a symbol of "barbarism, cruelty, and misrule," just as Nostromo's ideal of "trust" reified into silver corrupts him into a thief (*Nostromo* 406). Meanwhile, the deterioration of Western capitalist ideology to the extent to which it displays a cannibalistic reality is also acutely observed by Joyce. The cannibalistic nature of British capitalism, which is exposed through Stevie's destruction that "might have been an accumulation of raw material for a cannibal feast" in Conrad's *The Secret Agent* (77), is vividly emblemized by the British king "sucking red jujubes white" and turning "the Irishman's house" into "his coffin" in Joyce's *Ulysses* (8.4; 6.821).

In this respect, Conrad's idealization of Polish nationality founded on Western ideas—in spite of his clear recognition of the cruel reality incurred by the Western materialistic democracy—indicates the desperate conflict between Polish national consciousness and reality, leading to "mutual cancellation," as Eagleton notes. As Eastern colonial reality assumed the complete negation of the Polish nation that had once existed, the national consciousness modeled upon Western ideology was never to be destroyed: the Polish Republic "live[d] on" "in the Poles' own hearts," as Jean-Jacques Rousseau advised at the peril of the Republic in "The Government of Poland" (1772) (qtd. in Marcus 208). In comparison, the national consciousness of Ireland, advocated by the Protestant Anglo-Irish, was founded on an imaginary nation that had never been: Ireland had never been a sovereign state, as noted earlier, for it had been ruled by the English for nearly eight centuries. Moreover, the Gaelic nation created by the Anglo-Irish was limited in its representation to Ireland before the Union. To Joyce, then, to whom "a Protestant Ireland [was] almost unthinkable" (*CW* 169), the Irish national consciousness or conscience, far from being in conflict with reality, did not even exist. In this sense, it was easier for Joyce than Conrad to accept colonial reality as it was and germinate the nation in it.

For Conrad and Joyce, colonial reality, particularly the physical or material reality of colonial Poland and Ireland was undeniable, though hard to accept. As Fanon points out, "In the colonies, the economic structure is also a superstructure"

(Fanon, *Wretched* 40). Interestingly, the material reality of Poland, oppressed by Western ideology of Polonism, is represented by the material reality of the West in *The Secret Agent*. The material reality of the West, which is shockingly demonstrated by the Stevie's bombed carcass, is reified to the point of "metaphysical materialism," which renders the material reality almost indestructible (Eagleton, *Criticism* 139). In this sense, again, it is arguable that Conrad's narrative, focused on ideology, subsists in the "gap" between ideology and material reality, or between "what can be known" and "what can be shown," neither endorsing nor denying the latter (Eagleton, "Form" 28-29). Nonetheless, the narrative in the gap, otherwise designated as the "practical consciousness" or the vision of "totality," succeeds in revealing what Frederic Jameson deems the "message of *ressentiment*," which resists the material oppression of colonial ideology (Jameson 268-71).

While Conrad adhered to the idea of Polonism as Polish nationality, neither accepting nor denying the material reality, Joyce's conception of nationality was firmly based on the material reality resulting from the oppression of colonial ideology. Joyce's task of creating the nation was a way "to rescue matter—the physicality of bodies, the importance of proper living conditions—from disregard," as Richard Ellmann argues (qtd. in Trevor Williams 29). Although Ellmann may overemphasize Joyce's regard for Arthur Griffith's program of economic development, as Trevor Williams notes, Joyce was deeply concerned with the material or economical reality of Ireland, as he stated that "if the Irish question exists, it exists for the Irish proletariat chiefly" (*SL* 109). Still, the material reality of Ireland narrated in Joyce's text signifies "counterhegemony," just as the material reality in Conrad represents "metaphysical materialism," which resists the hegemony of the materialistic British colonialism and equally materialistic Roman Catholicism (Trevor Williams xiii-xiv). Joyce's materialistic representation of materialistic colonial ideology or hegemony resists it in the form of counter-ideology/hegemony, as all the ideological representations resist and reproduce the ideology: Stephen's "illclad, illfed, louse-eaten" "body," which alludes to colonial exploitation, resists as much as it reproduces the colonial

ideology of the Irish as savage (*PA* 234).

In fact, colonial ideology is more aggressively countered by the representation of Irish reality from a materialistically different perspective in *Ulysses*. While Stephen, the “hydrophobe,” declines “Bloom’s offer” of soap to wash his hands and gives away what little money he has, Bloom demonstrates the clean Irish “body” “oiled by scented melting soap” and preaches an economic “patriotism”—in contrast to the citizen’s nationalist racism against the English—that “everyone” should have “a comfortable tidysized income” (*U* 17.231; 5.566; 16.1133-38). In this sense, Joyce attacked the materialistic ideology of the dominator by appropriating it, instead of merely rejecting it, to create a different new material reality of the colony. Likewise, the materialistically new reality of the Irish woman is represented by Molly Bloom whose sexual affair can be compared to an “act of consumption” that leads to “a climax of spending” (Leonard 153): Molly, who like Gerty in “Nausicca,” cares about her appearance, regards her relationship with Boylan as “a change in a way not to be always and ever wearing the same old hat” (*U* 18.83-84). The reality of Ireland is no longer narrated by the woman with a “batlike soul” who flirts with the conqueror but by the woman with the flower-like “body” who chooses her man as if changing a hat. In this way, the materialistic or counter-ideological representation of Irish reality in Joyce’s *Ulysses* conceives the seed of the Irish nation as the integration of the ideology and reality of the colony.

Significantly, the narration or creation of Irish reality through Molly involves the creation of Irish national consciousness or “conscience,” which has not even existed for Irish Catholics. Whereas Polish Catholicism, which was more Polish than Roman or “more Catholic than the Pope,” constituted Polish national consciousness against the Russian Orthodox (Davies 2: 215), Irish Catholicism, which was purely Roman, did not so much speak for as it did control Irish Catholics. Although dubiously proclaiming itself as the central force of Irish national spirit, the Irish Catholic Church, which rid itself of Irish elements during the Penal Laws, supported the English so as not to lose its authority in Ireland (Mackey 255). In short, the Catholic Church acted as another foreign “master” of

the Irish: Stephen “must kill the priest and the king” before creating the conscience of his race (*U* 15.4437). In this context, the creation of a new Irish reality and national consciousness required liberation from the Church that was aligned with British authority and specifically under the influence of Victorian morality, which was oppressive to the woman. In other words, a new Irish reality is embodied by a new Irish woman: the image of adulteress is transformed into that of “a flower of the mountain” in Molly that belongs to “no-one” Bloom and thus always and freely desires to be “loved by somebody” (18.1575, 1409).

IV

As examined thus far, the colonial realities of Conrad and Joyce were clearly different, which led to their different perspectives in narrating reality. Conrad had difficulties acknowledging the reality of Poland as Eastern autocracy, while the Western ideology or ideal of Polish Republic repeatedly failed. It is thus inevitable that his idealistic protagonists are doomed: they represent Polish national consciousness that fails to integrate colonial reality into a new vision of the Polish nation. In contrast, Joyce accepted the reality of Ireland as the Irish’s own and not the English or the Anglo-Irish. Further, Joyce’s Ireland never had its own national ideology or consciousness but the Gaelic nationalism of the Anglo-Irish, which was created in reaction to British colonialism. Therefore, the conscience of the Irish race created in *Ulysses* not only embraces colonial reality but transforms it into a new vision of the Irish nation.

Conrad was a man of his time whose narrative was torn between the ideas of the West and the East, while the concept of West emerged to disguise the deteriorating reality of Europe that was shunned as the East, as GoGwilt argues. Edward Said claims that Conrad, “both criticizing and reproducing the [Western] imperial ideology,” was the “precursor of the Western views of the Third World,” (Said, *Culture* xvii-xix). Said’s critique, however, which has become classic in

post-colonial discourse on Conrad, neglects the fact that Conrad was not just an exile living with double visions in the margin of an empire but an exile from the Eastern (Russian) empire. In fact, what Said calls Conrad's "Western view" originated in the Eastern Russian view of the West. In this respect, Conrad's novels that depict the doomed hero Poland (West)—as well as Joyce's that reveal the shameful reality of Ireland—can be compared to Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal," which highlights the failed reality of the colonized. Paradoxically, Said, speaking of a "contrapuntal reading" that takes account of "both processes, that of imperialism and that of resistance to it" (*Culture* 66-67), reads Conrad only as the representation of the process of imperialism without being concerned with his "ambivalence," as exploited by Bhabha. Said himself is not "beyond" post-colonial critics whose limits in the continuities of the old colonialist practices he points out (Said, *Orientalism* 348): "Said's culture, for all his reservations, resembles nothing so much as that of Arnold, Eliot or Leavis" (Young 133). In other words, Said's own views are no less Western than Conrad's.

Joyce's Ireland presented a no-less difficult situation than that of Poland, as it had been oppressed too long by the English and even by the Catholic Church, which made the search for true Irish tradition or culture impossible. Yet, for Joyce, that very impossibility was an advantage: he could create the nationality of Ireland. And that was precisely what Fanon tries to do in creating a "new man" or "whole man," like Joyce's Bloom, whom "Europe has been incapable of bringing to triumphant birth" (Fanon, *Wretched* 313-16). Fanon initiates post-colonialism in his recognition that orthodox nationalism is in effect extending the hegemony of imperialism: "Europe is literally the creation of the Third World" (102). He notes that "self-division is a direct result of colonialist subjugation," that the colonized "exists triply," being responsible "for [his] body, for [his] race, for [his] ancestors" (Fanon, *Black Skin* 17, 112). Given such heterogeneity of the colonial existence, Fanon recognizes the necessity of creating a new identity rather than clinging to the pre-colonial one:

There is no Negro mission; there is no white burden. . . . One duty alone: That of not renouncing my freedom through my choices. . . . I am not a prisoner of history. . . . The real *leap* consists in introducing invention into existence. In the world through which I travel, I am endlessly creating myself. (*Black Skin* 228-29)

Interestingly, the “*leap*” of the invention or endless creation of “new man” in Fanon is accomplished through the idea of “metempsychosis” in Joyce’s *Ulysses*: the identity of Bloom is endlessly recreated from a slave to a king, and that of Molly from an adulteress to a goddess. However, with the ambiguous colonial elite and the underdeveloped middleclass, Fanon supports violence as a cleansing force, whereas Conrad of the Polish nobility and Joyce of the Irish middleclass opposed it.

Significantly, Conrad’s and Joyce’s common resistance to violence, which may reflect their class-consciousness, represents their radically new conception of colonial reality: the colonial authors accepted, or at least tried to accept the colonial reality so as to create the nation of colonial hybrid in their narrative. In this sense, Conrad and Joyce were no less radical than Fanon, who advocates that the national culture is neither “a folklore nor an abstract populism”—like the Irish Revival—but that which is found “at the very heart of the struggle for freedom” (*Wretched* 233). Said, who criticizes Conrad’s (anti-)imperialist view and refrains from discussing Joyce’s, acknowledges that Fanon’s narrative of anti-imperialist decolonization is “cadenced and stressed from beginning to end with the accents and inflections of liberation,” whereas the Irish nationalist poet Yeats “stopped short of imagining the full political liberation he might have aspired toward” (Said, “Yeats” 89, 93). Like Fanon, Conrad and Joyce struggled in their narrative for freedom from colonial reality. Unlike Fanon, however, they struggled with spiritual (ideological) reality, while accepting material reality. The struggle for the spiritual freedom of the colony to create the nation, which would be followed by material or political freedom, needs not violence but truth, as revealed in Conrad’s Razumov and Joyce’s Bloom.

Again, Joyce’s struggle for the freedom or the conscience of the Irish race was

more radical than Yeats's, which was limited or overdetermined by his Anglo-Irish class-consciousness. When discussing Joyce's nationalism, it should be noted that his outlook for the Irish nation was completely different from and even opposite to Anglo-Irish nationalists such as Yeats. In other words, "the race" for which Joyce tried to create the conscience was Catholic (Potts 123). In addition, the radical nature or peculiarity of Joyce's struggle for freedom from colonial reality lies in the fact that he, the modernist, was more concerned with the individual than with the colonial community of compound race. Still, Joyce's individualism was "distinguished from both an Anglo-Irish and an English liberalism," for the Catholic Ireland "lacked virtually any tradition of bourgeois, liberal or individualistic dissent" (Nolan 44-45). Therefore, Joyce could synthesize the individual and the community, inventing a new conception of the individualistic national conscience through the Jew-Irish Bloom.

Conrad's individualism, however, which came from the Polish democratic tradition of *liberum veto* or unrestricted veto that led the Polish Republic to anarchy, did not allow him to create Joyce's synthesis of the community and the individual. As Poland's tradition was individualistic, rendering Conrad's national consciousness inseparable from his individualism, Conrad's consciousness was at an ambiguous or conflicting stage of the two conceptions, in a process of their dialectic, between the community and the individual. Thus, Conrad's struggle for the freedom of the individual from colonial reality should be understood in the historical context of the Polish nation. In his ambiguous struggle for freedom, a desire for the Polish nation is present in the form of an "undying hope," although he never reached a synthesis such as is represented in Joyce's Bloom.

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Abstract

The GerminNation in the Narration of Colonial Reality:
The Two Cases of Conrad and Joyce

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Both Conrad and Joyce can be designated as colonial modernists, as the modernity of their texts represents the nationality of Poland and Ireland, which was suppressed by the colonial rule of Russia and Britain, respectively. In Conrad's and Joyce's text, the individual is equivalent to the nation or the traditional community –the individuality of which is shackled by colonization. In this respect, the conflict narrated in Conrad and Joyce between the individual and the community, both in struggle, signifies the conflict within the colonized nation between its ideal –or national consciousness –and its reality. The conflict is resolved when the idealistic protagonist recognizes and integrates the colonial reality into a new reality of nation. Conrad and Joyce, thus, aspire for the creation of a new reality, or at least, the recognition of colonial reality throughout their narratives.

In Conrad's narrative, the strongly idealistic protagonist who struggles with the reality of "darkness" represents, though symbolically, the radically democratic ideology of the Polish Republic fighting with its autocratic reality. With the reality of Eastern autocracy being unacceptable and the ideal of Western democracy having failed, Conrad's heroes who deny the reality are doomed, which ironically endorses the reality and potentially suggests hope for the Polish nation. In Joyce's narrative, on the other hand, the protagonists, such as the poor artist Stephen and the Jewish advertising-man Bloom, embody the reality of colonial Ireland as much as its national consciousness, which is yet to be created. In other words, Joyce accepted the colonial reality, from which he created the "conscience" or consciousness of the Irish race that had never been a sovereign nation, unlike Conrad's Poland. Joyce's

Bloom, who integrates the Jewish individual consciousness and Irish communal reality, personifies a vision of the Irish nation.

■ Key words: colonial reality, Conrad, consciousness, ideology, Ireland, Joyce, narration, nation, Poland

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