

“An Encounter”: Blooms Day and Goobo’s Day

Taeun Min

In 1930 Joyce went to Zurich for operation of his eyes, came back to Paris, left for London, and came back to Paris again. While he was crossing the borders of the European countries, his work *Ulysses* was also visiting Asian countries for the first time. “In February 1930 some selections from *Ulysses* appeared [in Japan], although a complete translation began to come out only with the publication of “*Shi: Genjitsu*” (“Poetry: Reality”) in June of the same year” (Keene 168). In that year Yokomitsu Riichi’s experimental short story, “Kikai” (The Machine) was published in the September issue of *Kaizo*. His noticeable sudden change in his style is largely due to the influences of European modernist writers including Joyce and Proust. During this period Japanese readers had access to *Ulysses* (either in translation or pirated editions). That is why Joyce complained about the Japanese illegal edition in his letter to T. S. Eliot in June 20, 1931: “Two Japanese pirated editions of *Ulysses* have appeared this spring and 13,000 copies have been sold to date” (*Letters*, I 320).

Park Taewon, admittedly the first Korean modernist writer, went to Japan to study at Hosei University in 1930 and was exposed to the Western psychological novels which were challenging young Japanese authors in that specific year (Sangtae Kim 21). He must have felt more interested in *Ulysses* than others, as he made it clear in his newspaper essay, "Expression, Description, and Technique," that he actually read it. He even mentions the novel twice in his novella, *A Day of Mr Goobo the Novelist* (1934). In the tale, "Kim Yujeong" by Lee Sahng, another Korean modernist and Park's friend, moreover, Park appears and mentions Yokomitsu Riichi's "Kikai" as if he were very familiar with this experimental story. This suggests that Park also read this experimental story of Japanese modernism, a story which is, in turn, supposed to have been influenced by the Western writers including Joyce.

Even a brief, superficial comparison of Joyce's *Ulysses* and Park's *A Day of Mr Goobo the Novelist*, will show that there are many correspondences between them that engage our interest. First of all, both cover an uneventful, "ordinary day" of the protagonist, who leaves home at the beginning, wanders in the street all day and returns home at the end. Dublin, a colonized nominal capital of Ireland, is shown for the most part in its most negative aspects. Likewise, Kyungseong, an old name of Seoul, the counterpart of Dublin, is shown in its gloomy aspects. Also, as Bloom cowardly flees from the man who will have illicit intercourse with his wife, instead of courageously confronting him, so Goobo regrets that he did not have the passion to weather all the difficulties for the love for a girl. Unlike Homer's Odysseus, both of them are antiheroic.

Most important, Park employs Joyce's method of narration—stream of consciousness and interior monologue. Even though Park's story is narrated from the third person point of view, it focuses on the consciousness of the main character. Goobo, for instance, looks at a person and this triggers associations. The same is also true of Joyce's character, though Joyce's interior monologue gradually expands to engulf all other reality.

그의 앞에 어떤 젊은 여자가 앉아 있었다. 그 여자는 자기의 두 무릎 사이에도 양산을 놓고 있었다. 어느 잡지에선가, 구보는, 그것이 비(非)처녀성을 나타내는 것임을 배운 일이 있다. 짝은, 머리를 틀어올렸을 뿐이나, 그만큼 나이로는 저 여인은 마땅히 남편을 가졌어야 옳을 게다 (Day 30).

A young woman was sitting in front of him. She put her parasol between her knees. Goobo has learned from a magazine that this reveals her not being a virgin. No wonder, though *she put her hair up*, as a married woman does it is a matter of course for her to have a husband, when her age is considered. (my translation).

Mr Bloom gazed across the road at the outsider drawn up before the door of the Grosvenor. . . . She stood still, waiting. . . . Stylish kind of coat with that roll collar, warm for a day like this, looks like blanketcloth. Careless stand of her with her hands in those patch pockets. Like that haughty creature at the polo match. Women all for caste till you touch the spot. Handsome is and handsome does. Reserved about to yield. The honourable Mrs and Brutus is an honourable man. Possess her once take the starch out of her. (U 5.98-106, my ellipsis)

Both of them begin with the observation of a woman and end with the ideas that flash on their minds. They fidget over many things in their thoughts. Although it is true that the diversity of allusions, which link history, literature, theology, philosophy, politics, and art with characters makes *Ulysses* encyclopedic, Park's story does not contain as many allusions as Joyce's. But Park tries not to hide whatever knowledge his character may have. Goobo reveals his extensive knowledge about medicine. And his awareness of Western ideas as well as Japanese and Chinese ones seems to be remarkable, compared with that of average Koreans at that time. In this connection it is worth noting that Goobo admits that "all kinds of knowledge are necessary for a novelist" (37).

Goobo's mind also jumps from one association to the next one in the unpredictable way, like Bloom's. We are allowed to move up and down temporally in the consciousness of Goobo. The observation of the present happens and then

follows the flashbacks of reminiscence; after that, the story comes back to the present. This is the montage technique Joyce uses in *Ulysses*. As Levin argues, “[t]he movement of Joyce's style, the thought of his characters, is like unreeling film; his method of construction, the arrangement of this material, involves the crucial operation of montage” (88). While talking, for example, walking, or eating together with his friend in Kyungsung, Goobo's mind goes back to the “little romance,” the memory of a girl in Tokyo:

어서 읍쇼. 설렁탕 두 그릇만 주—-. 구보가 노트를 내어놓고, 자기의 실례에 가까운 심방(尋訪)에 대한 변해(辯解)를 하였을 때, 여자는, 순간에, 얼굴이 붉어졌었다. 모르는 남자에게 정중한 인사를 받은 까닭만이 아닐 게다. 어제 어디 갔었니. 유시아 노부코. 구보는 문득 그런 것들을 생각해내고, 여자 모르게 빙그레 웃었다. 맞은편에 앉아, 빗은 손가락 든 손을 멈추고, 불안히 구보를 바라보았다. 그 눈은 무슨 생각을 하고 있느냐, 물었는지도 모른다. 구보는 생각의 비밀을 감추기 위하여 의미 없이 웃어보였다. 좀 올라오세요. 여자는 그렇게 말하였었다. 말로는 태연하게, 그러면서도 그의 붉은 역시 처녀답게 붉어졌다. (Day 62)

Welcome. Two dishes of Solnongtang[beef and rice soup], please—. When Goobo showed her the notebook and apologized for his abrupt, almost impolite visit, all of a sudden, her face blushed. Perhaps not merely because she was greeted courteously by an unacquainted man. Where did you go. Yosiya Nobuko. Being reminded of these, he smiled to himself. The friend sitting opposite peered into Goobo's face, with his hands holding a spoon. He might have asked what my eyes thought. Goobo smiled in order to conceal his secret thought. Please come up, the girl said. Though she said it with composure, her cheeks turned red like a shy maiden. (my translation)

Goobo and his friend go to the restaurant and the food is served. His mind moves to the girl whom he met in Tokyo, and then back to his friend in the restaurant and again to the girl. “Where did you go” and “Yosiya Nobuko” are the words which were written in the notebook he happened to find at that time in Tokyo and now he remembers after a long stretch of time. Bloom in *Ulysses* also

thinks of phrases or words which he read or heard a while ago, words from Martha's letter, the novel *Sweets of Sin*, and advertisements etc. Anyhow, Goobo's vivid recapturing of the romantic moment seems to provide a refuge for him from his present dismal situation, if only momentarily. Since he is alone and has no place to go, he envies the couple he sees and feels "a bachelor's sorrow" (*Day* 59). Similarly, Bloom savors the memory of making love to Molly on Howth Head, the happiest moment in his life in which he wants to find comfort while the hour of the Molly's tryst with Boylan approaches nearer (*U* 8.896-916). Incidentally, as Goobo is very sensitive to the change of color on the girl's face in the above passage, so Bloom vividly remembers the color of her clothes at his first meeting with Molly, as if it were happening now: "First night when first I saw her at Mat Dillon's in Terenure. Yellow, black lace she wore. Musical chairs. We two the last. Fate" (*U* 11.725-26).

To return to Bloom's memory of Molly on Howth Head, he compares and contrasts himself of the past and the present one with economy: "Me. And me now" (*U* 8.917). This is as much as to say that in his consciousness two selves of himself are in juxtaposition. Likewise, Goobo of the past and the present are merged in the following passage:

그들이 무사시노칸 앞에서 자동차를 내렸을 때, 그러나 구보는 잠시 그곳에 우뚝 서 있을 수밖에 없었다. 그것은 뒤에서 내리는 여자를 기다리기 위하여서가 아니다. 그의 앞에 외국 부인이 빙그레 웃으며 서 있었던 까닭이다. 구보의 영어 교사는 남녀를 번갈아 보고, 새로이 의미심장한 웃음을 웃고 오늘 행복을 비오. 그리고 제 길을 걸었다. 그것에는 혹은 삼십 독신녀의 젊은 남녀에게 대한 빈정거림이 있었는지도 모른다. 구보는 소년과 같이 이마와 콧잔등이에 무수한 땀방울을 깨달았다. 그래 구보는 바지 주머니에서 수건을 꺼내어 그것을 씻지 않으면 안 되었다. 여름 저녁에 먹은 한 그릇의 설렁탕은 그렇게도 더웠다. (*Day* 63-64)

When they got off the car in front of Musashino-kan Movie Theater, Goobo had to stand still there for a moment. Not because he needed to wait for the girl who alighted from the rear seat, but because he found a foreign lady

standing smiling in front of him. Goobo's English teacher looked at the couple by turns, said "Good luck" with a significant smile, and pursued her way. Maybe the sarcasm of a spinster in her thirties on a young couple. Goobo felt the beads of sweat on his brow and nose as if he were a boy. So Goobo had to take out a handkerchief and mop them. A bowl of Solnongtang was so hot in the summer night. (translation and underline mine)

In the underlined sentence, who is sweating profusely? One who encounters his English teacher at his supposedly secret date and is very embarrassed like a boy? Or one who is eating the hot soup? It is almost impossible to decide. The line between the present and the past is very hard to draw. Goobo in Tokyo hesitates at the verge of becoming Goobo in a restaurant of Kyung-sung.

Additionally, Bloom tries to remember somebody's name in vain: "What was the name of that priest-looking chap. . . . Pen something" (*U* 8.176-78). After about 22 pages his name occurs to him: "Penrose! That was that chap's name" (*U* 8.1114). In a parallel fashion, Goobo asks himself how much money he should have for his happiness (*Day* 33). When a reader finds an incomplete sentence, "how much I should have" in the next page (34), he or she should be reminded of his previous question for his comprehension.

In many respects, thus, Park's story parallels *Ulysses*, and Bloom does Goobo. But it could be also said that Goobo bears a strong resemblance to Stephen. To begin with, Goobo and Stephen are gloomy young artists, jobless in their twenties. They are so poor that they cannot even pay the rent for the house. They are typical protagonists of modernist fiction—intelligent, sensitive, and alienated from the society. Goobo, for example, feels as if he were an outsider from the society where "even the lyrical poet becomes a maniac for gold" (*Day* 45). Both of them are artists, carry a stick, have weak eye-sight. Stephen guiltily remembers all that he did not do for his mother and feels "Agenbite of inwit," (*U* 1.481) remorse of conscience. Goobo also admits of "Amor matris," (*U* 2.164) "mother's love" (*Day* 17) and is troubled with the thought that "he is a cause of all kinds of anxiety for his mother" (*Day* 14). Mother indicates the traditional values for both of them and

the two artists reject Mother to discover radically new ways of creating art, modernist art. Interestingly, the dismissal of tradition involves the rejection of conventional expectations in life as well as in art. Goobo cannot satisfy his mother's expectations by finding a spouse and getting a job, just as Stephen cannot succumb to his mother's wish that he should be a good Catholic. Though once the hopefuls who went overseas for study, they now wander aimlessly in the colonized street.

Stephen lives in a country where he has to serve his "conqueror" (*U* 1.405), "master" (*U* 1.8), "the sea's ruler" (*U* 2.6), that is, England. Similarly, Goobo lives in "a miserable country" (*Day* 77), ruled by imperial neighbor.

Joyce felt that "to call oneself a nationalist in the Dublin of his day was to demote art, to advance one's country before everything else" (Manganiello 35). And his position is illustrated in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* when Stephen refuses to join the group of belligerent nationalists, as his friend Davin insists that "a man's country comes first," and that Stephen can be a poet after (*P* 203). Goobo goes farther than this; becoming a mere observer of grim realities, he distances himself from politics, running the risk of appearing apolitical:

"좋은 소설을 쓰시오."

벗은 진정으로 말하고, 그리고 두 사람은 헤어졌다. 참말 좋은 소설을 쓰리라. 번(番) 드는 순사가 모멸을 가져 그를 훑어보았어도, 그는 거의 그것에서 불쾌를 느끼는 일도 없이, 오직 그 생각에 조그만 한 개의 행복을 갖는다. (*Day* 88)

"I wish you write a good novel."

Friend said it in earnest and parted from him. I will write a really good novel. Though the cop on duty gave him the once-over with contempt, he did not feel unpleasant; rather, he was a little bit happy at the thought [of a good novel].
(my translation)

Goobo puts art in the first position of priority to the extent that he can almost ignore the oppressive Japanese police. Like Gabriel in "The Dead," he might want to say that "literature [is] above politics" (*D* 188). Of course, I do not say that Goobo is indifferent to politics. When he finds a probably Japanese police inspector

in Western clothes “eyeing people with suspicion,” he gets away from the place “in a depressed mood” (*Day* 43). It seems more likely, as well as more appropriate, that Goobo is so preoccupied with writing a good novel, like Stephen who wishes “to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of [his] race” at the end of the novel (*P* 253).

The two authors overlap each other, as we may have suspected all along. It may not be farfetched, then, to see that Park was influenced by the styles and themes of *Ulysses* in one way or another, and in varying degrees. This modernist work is discussed briefly in Park's text:

구보는 그저 『율리시스』를 논하고 있는 벋을 깨닫고, 불쑥, 그야 ‘제임스 조이스’의 새로운 실험에는 경의를 표하여야 마땅할 게지. 그러나 그것이 새롭다는, 오직 그 점만 가지고 과중 평가를 할 까닭이야 없지. 그리고 벋이 그 말에 대하여, 항의를 하려 하였을 때, 구보는 의자에서 몸을 일으키어, 벋의 등을 치고, 자-그만 나감시다. (*Day* 56)

Realizing that his friend was still discussing *Ulysses*, Goobo said bluntly, indeed James Joyce's new experimentation deserves our homage. But you should not give him too much credit only because of its novelty. As his friend was about to protest against this remark, Goobo rose from his seat, patted him on his back, and said, OK—let's get out. (my translation)

Goobo, who speaks for Park, warns his friend against overestimation of *Ulysses*, though he cannot deny the significance of Joyce's experimentation in style. His friend seems to be obsessed with *Ulysses* about which he keeps talking, but Goobo has some reservation about this. This suggests that he will not be merely an imitator of Joyce, even if he is much impressed by him.

Goobo seems to be more interested in what is termed “modernology” and wants to write a novel on the basis of this method.

한길 위에 사람들은 바쁘게 또 일 있게 오고 갔다. 구보는 포도 위에 서서, 문득, 자기도 창작을 위하여 어디, 예(例)하면 서소문정(西小門町) 방면이라도 답

사할까 생각한다. '모테로노로지오'를 게을리하기 이미 오래다. (*Day* 37)

People went hurriedly back and forth in the street. Standing there, Goobo suddenly thinks that he will make a field investigation of the place like Seosomoonjeong to write a novel. Have been neglectful of modernology for a long time. (my translation)

"Modernology" is a Japanese neologism coined by Kon Wajiro (1888-1973). According to him, just as archaeologists dig archaic remains from underground, "modernologists" follow their discipline by digging into the everyday life of their contemporaries, in both their material culture and their behavior patterns. It is certain, in context, that Goobo supports for "modernology"; he intends to make an on-the-spot survey for his novel and even blames himself for his negligence of "modernology." As a matter of fact, this story is nearly a record of what he sees, hears and thinks in the street of Kyungsung. Goobo walks in the street and watches people passing by to record their activities and manners in his "notebook" which he always carries. According to Yunsik Kim, "it is only the notebook that makes Goobo a novelist and it is also the notebook, not any person, that wanders in the street all day long" (140). Consequently, this novella is nothing other than the notebook, which could present a picture of social life of the particular time. When Goobo stops walking in the street and recording in the notebook, the novella will reach the end. Kim further argues that "Goobo is simply showing the process of writing rather than walking" (140). Actually, Goobo "opens his notebook" to write, that is, to create, when he is "interested" in the scenes he observes (*Day* 43). In this way he is revealing the process of writing itself in the text.

Then, does "modernology" make Park different from Joyce? Park investigates not only the manners or customs of 1930s Kyungsung but the atmosphere of minds of characters; Joyce does not differ greatly from Park. This Irish writer once said, "I want to give a picture of Dublin so complete that if the city one day suddenly disappeared from the earth it could be reconstructed out of my book" (Budgen 69). *Ulysses* is full of concrete details of the contemporary Dublin to such an extent that

Dublin might seem a main character in the novel. Significantly, Joyce also carried a notebook to record epiphanies. It is interesting to see that both Joyce's epiphanies and Goobo's writings in the notebook are roughly a sort of sketches. Another point worth noticing is that Park wanted to be in the neutral and objective position like that of a chronicler. Joyce also supported impersonality of an author by saying that "[t]he artist, like the God of creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails" (*P* 215). One would not be wrong, then, to say that they differ in degrees, not in kind, at least in these two works. The difference is that Joyce is more thorough, complex, and subtle in his experimentation with styles and his use of the stream of consciousness and allusions. As a result, Park's novella is less obscure and less open to many interpretations, unlike Joyce's text which is full of enigmas.

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Abstract

“An Encounter”: Blooms Day and Goobo's Day

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In the year when a complete translation of *Ulysses* appeared in Japan, Park Taewon, admittedly the first Korean modernist writer, went there to be exposed to the influences of Joyce. After reading *Ulysses*, it seems to me, Park was influenced by its styles and themes in one way or another, and in varying degrees. He mentions this novel twice and even discusses it briefly in *A Day of Mr Goobo the Novelist*. This paper traces the resemblances between them, including narrative technique. True, Park opposes what is termed “modernology” to Joyce's modernist technique, but these two do not seem to differ greatly. In short, Joyce and Park differ in degrees, not in kind, at least in these two works. The difference is that Joyce is more thorough, complex, and subtle in his experimentation with styles and his use of the stream of consciousness and allusions. As a result, Park's novella is less obscure and less open to many interpretations, unlike Joyce's text which is full of enigmas.

■ Key words : Park Taewon, Goobo, interior monologue, Agenbite of inwit, modernology