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Irish Situation Reconsidered: Jimmy's Case

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As an inverted sequel to the gloomy story of Eveline with her imperturbable indecision, James Joyce introduces Jimmy Doyle, a youth of twenty-six, as naive as Eveline but possessing higher social status and greater cultural sophistication. On the surface, the narrative of "After the Race" reads as a detached record of a youthful cameraderie centered on such luxuries as races, yachting, card games and drinking parties, which only a limited few among the impoverished Dubliners could afford. Beneath this thin veneer of polished entertainment, however, there lurks a pitiable aspiration for social prestige as well as unscrupulous exploitation of the willingly subservient Irish by the Continentals. In this hilarious narrative, Joyce shows by analysing the false consciousness of the Doyles how the cultural colonialization of a nation forms itself through willful identification of the oppressed with the oppressors in the course of political and economic subjection. We can see in the narrative the sharp conflict between two modes of cultural discourse, continental calculation and Irish naivete, which forces the Irish characters to adjust their perspective, according to the standard of supposedly "higher" culture. In this discussion, I will try to show how epiphany carries out its function of

revelation by betraying Jimmy Doyle's mistaken set of value and its role in his final disappointment and disillusionment.

The narrative consists of three major scenes — the race, Segouin's dinner, and the card game on Farley's yacht — and two interludes — one at Jimmy's house and the other on the street. Each of the major scenes builds up to an emotional climax which is immediately followed by an epiphanic moment of disillusioning self-recognition. The first passage as an introductory description summarizes well enough what is going to happen throughout the narrative:

> The cars came scuddling in towards Dublin, running evenly like pellets in the groove of the Naas road. At the crest of the hill at Inchicore sightseers had gathered in clumps to watch the cars careering homeward and through this channel of poverty and inaction the continent sped its wealth and industry. Now and again the clumps of people raised *the cheers of the gratefully oppressed*. Their sympathy, however, was for the cars — cars of their friends, the French. (*D* 35, italics mine)

What is noticeable from the first is the deplorable inversion between subject and object. The Dubliners passively witness Continental wealth and industry invading Ireland, the final "home" of colonial economics, while the cars of imperialism run so evenly that the Irish people do not even realize the devastating speed — i.e. like bullets shot from a gun — of their Continental subjection. Degenerated as it is to a mere channel of poverty and inaction, Ireland welcomes the French cars, willfully identifying them as prospective emancipators.[1] Granting that such a wholehearted cheering for the French cars

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1) Bowen points out that the crowd's enthusiasm recalls Irish hopes for liberation by the French during 1690s and 1790s.

> The cars here, literally embodying the wealth of the Continent with which the Doyles would like to ally themselves, are the means of freeing Jimmy, who represents Ireland, from the yoke of oppression imposed upon him and his country for seven hundred years. The hope that Segouin and the French will

has its historical backgrounds, and that the French were "virtual victors" in the race, their unreserved welcome seems excessive.[2] Furthermore, when the narrator reports the high spirits of the French racers as something that reaches above the level of successful Gallicism, it becomes hard to say where we are, in France or in Ireland. If British colonial rule has thus far paralysed Irish subjectivity so much that they unanimously express their servile infatuation with the French, they have good reason to be called as "the gratefully oppressed." Seen from this perspective the narrative of Jimmy's infatuation with foreign culture is another dramatization of racial subjection on the individual level.

The unreserved Francophilism of the Irish crowds on the street makes the introduction of Segouin more than welcome. After the race, motoring back from the finish line to central Dublin, we see Segouin (The French owner of a race-car) and Riviere (a French-Canadian electrician) sitting in the front while Villona (a Hungarian musician) and Jimmy Doyle take the back seat. This kind of sharp demarcation is supported again when we observe the different reasons for the excitement among the international motorists. Segouin and Riviere, cousins in complicity, have good reason to be genuinely happy because the former has received advance orders for his motor-establishment while the latter is supposed to be appointed manager of it. Jimmy, not recognizing the capitalistic promotion of the motor race, feels too excited to be genuinely happy. He looks even more vulnerable than Villona who has neither social aspirations nor money to lose. A carefree person, Villona just feels satisfied with the decent lunch he had for nothing. The dubious nature of Jimmy's excitement looks quite similar to that of the Irish who, expecting monetary benefits and international prestige for Ireland, hosted the "Gordon-Bennett

provide this emancipation is reflected in the 'oppressed' Irish sightseers cheering on 'the cars of their friends, the French (Hart 57)

2) Traditionally the Irish people expected of the French help in their time of trial but they were disappointed twice, in the seventeenth-century wars and during the Rebellion of 1798. In the latter French troop enjoyed momentary success by defeating the British army in a battle known as the Races of Castlebar. (Brown 256)

International Automobile Racing Cup" in 1903. As a nationalist and naive socialist, Joyce deftly picks up the game as the backdrop for dramatizing the moral failure of a *nouveau-riche* family, scrutinizing in a detached manner the relentless logic of multi-national investment.[3)]

The motor-race provides Jimmy with a good opportunity to renew his acquaintance with Segouin whom he had met at Cambridge, where he put less emphasis on studying than on seeing life.[4)] His fanciful interest in Segouin is excited again by the rumour of his wealth, worldly experience, and fame, about which readers are invited to doubt. Young Doyle's infatuation with Segouin is supported by his father's shrewd calculation that "[s]uch a person . . . was well worth knowing" (*D* 36). At this point, we should notice that the elder Doyle's pursuit of social distinction has underhandedly stimulated Jimmy's reckless profligacy and cultural snobbery, thus spoiling his son. That Mr. Doyle has amassed a great fortune as a butcher, modifying his earlier nationalist views, thematically connects the narrative to other stories of betrayal.[5)] Mr. Doyle's

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3) Jimmy Doyle's behavior belies the editorial of Irish Times on January 20, 1903, that added educational value to whatever economic and advertising effect the motor-race might bring to Ireland.

> May we add another consideration? Would it not be immense educational value to our people to see these marvels to flying over the highways, and demonstrating how man is advancing in the annihilation of space and time? Might not many Irish boys, who would see such an extraordinary sight as would be presented by the Gordon Bennet Cup race, be brought to apply their minds and devote their energies to scientific pursuits to the unmeasurable advantage of the country at large. (Quoted from Fairhall 388)

4) Jimmy Doyle is fully qualified by his noteworthy education at Dublin and at Cambridge to make those national dreams come true, but he goes to the devil in his wild desire to be associated culturally and with financially with Segouin. Fairhall puts the pitiable outcome of his schooling like this: " . . . Jimmy is elated rather than educated by his own "rapid motion through space." (Fairhall 393)

5) Conspicuous examples of "the theme of betrayal" can be found in Corley's exploitation of his slavey (Two Gallants") and in the opportunistic gathering of political canvassers in "Ivy Day in the Committee Room."

"black money," accumulated as a reward for betrayal against his own race, is exploited again by becoming the easy prey of strangers to whose enterprises he delivers Ireland. The behavioral pattern of the elder Doyle and its significance in the Irish context goes further than the simple saying "Ill got, ill lost" indicates because it not only spoils his son's future but dramatizes, on a symbolic level, the self-invited plight of the Irish people. In this sense, that he was "fortunate" enough to secure police contracts as a meat-product supplier, securing him a fame of "a merchant prince" in Dublin papers, carries a sarcastic overtone of irony. As is often the case with the *nouveau-riche* who have everything except social prestige and cultural sophistication, the elder Doyle seems to project his own aspiration for social mobility onto his son at cost to them both. We hear that Mr. Doyle has always paid his son's bills, seemingly "remonstrative, but covertly proud of the excess" (*D* 36). He will recognize later, probably too late, that he has deepened the Continental complex as well as the wild debauchery of his son.[6)]

The Doyles find an excellent opportunity for emancipation from middle-class provincialism by investing in Segouin's motor-project, which develops into a sort of allegory of Irish history and international relations. We suspect, however, that neither young Doyle nor his father has balanced perspective on the investment they are making. Jimmy's judgment of the project is based on his vague impression of Segouin: "Segouin had the unmistakable air of wealth" (*D* 38). Indeed, Jimmy's confidence in his "solid instincts"

6) We observe how Jimmy does his utmost to catch up with the Continental culture: "Segouin . . . had a very refined taste" (*D* 39). He sometimes makes humiliating efforts to fill in the missing parts of Segouin's "quick phrases," and sometimes he feels so elated to be seen in Continental company that he speaks in a "confused murmur" to Segouin's friends. Jimmy's continental complex reaches its height when he degraded his own people a spectators from "profane world" who sends him, he supposes, "significant looks" (*D* 37). Continental complex is frequently reported among Dublin intellectuals as in the cases of Little Chandler in "A Little Cloud" and Gabriel Conroy in "The Dead." These characters, lacking in any confidence in their own cultural tradition, continually pay homage to European culture and thought.

inherited from his father, his carefulness in investment, and his keen consciousness of the source of his money do not guarantee the profit he expects. Similarly, the elder Doyle's shrewd sense of business turns out to be no more than a wild expectation of "pots of money" from motor business which has not yet been launched. Instead of depending on illusive appearances and reputations, they should have made an extensive investigation of the prospect of Segouin's motor establishment. It is Segouin who takes advantage of the situation. Instead of feeling grateful for the amount of Jimmy's capital, Segouin gives the "impression" of doing a favor to Jimmy by including "the mite of Irish money" (*D* 37) in his motor-project. Ironically, it is Jimmy who feels anxious about whether Segouin would think it small amount of money. At this point, we have to ask whether Jimmy is really interested in his investment or simply interested in being included in Segouin's project he so admires. Going further, we even wonder whether Segouin's project is anything more than a scheme to entrap the naive Doyles.[7)]

Our conjecture is partially justified when we observe Segouin's dubious attitude as well as the credulous perspective of the father and son. Jimmy's fantasy about Segouin, and his personality and wealth, leads him to estimate Segouin's "lordly" car in terms of human labor. He would like to calculate the reliability of a person by his possessions, and this is an extreme case of corrupted capitalism — the transformation of man into a commodity.

> Jimmy set out to translate into day's work the lordly car in which he sat. How smoothly it ran. In what style they had come careering along the country roads! The journey laid a magical finger on the genuine pulse of life and gallantry *the machinery of human nerves* strove to answer the bounding courses of the swift blue animal. (*D* 38, *italics mine*)

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7) Bowen also fears the failure of investment of the Doyles' because their decision-making largely rests on empty assurance inferred from Seegouin's car, his Cambridge background and his friends. (Hart 58)

In Jimmy's admiration for the fancy car, the "nerves" of human being are converted into "machinery" and respond to the inhuman bidding of the car. Here we witness the deplorable displacement of human dignity by a machine. A collection of people also gather around the vehicle, paying "homage to the snorting car" (*D* 38). The Irish people would like to abandon their subjectivity in admiration of the automobile. In this way, they establish a subtle complicity with the Doyles.[8)]

The "swift blue animal" is an apt metaphor to bring the epiphany to a close, when Jimmy feels deflated, walking home with Villona. Their despondency is depicted in sharp contrast with pale lights of downtown Dublin.

> They walked northward with a curious feeling of disappointment in the exercise, while the city hung its pale globes of light above them in a haze of summer evening. (*D* 38)

The first moment of lyrical epiphany leaves Jimmy in a mood of "curious" disappointment. The revelation of his "defeated" feeling is significant, in that it anticipates the final, bitter recognition of his "folly" after the card-game. His broken self-complacency is restored by his father who, calling Segouin's dinner an "occasion" (*D* 38), flatters his pride. Mr. Doyle even feels *commercially* satisfied at the *unpurchasable* qualities his dressed-up son possesses. He feels happy to see in his son an embodiment of the kind of "foreign accomplishment" he so respects. Despite the *commercial* significance Mr. Doyle assigns to the party, the "international" gathering turns out to be another version of the power-game between England and France, excluding Ireland again. Joyce's introduction of Routh, an English fellow, seems quite dextrous here, for Jimmy alludes to Ireland's situation as a "willing victim" of multinational capitalism when he finds in Segouin a happy combination of

8) After dinner, on their way to the harbor, a ticket collector salutes Jimmy in a mnner that instigates his snobbery: Fine night, sir!" (*D* 40)

English manner and French vivacity.[9] Jimmy cannot even notice the "elegant" intrusion of French power into Ireland upon which England has already consolidated her "framework." The Doyles are completely ignorant of such political implications, blinded by "refined taste" and disarmed by "loosened tongues" (*D* 39). While the party lose themselves in the voluble and unreserved talk and in the beauties of English madrigal, Riviere deftly explains to Jimmy "the triumph of the French mechanics." and Segouin "shepherds" the party into politics.

> Here was congenial ground for all. Jimmy, under generous influences, felt the buried zeal of his father wake to life within him: he aroused the torpid Routh at last. The room grew doubly hot and Segouin's task grew harder each moment; there was even danger of personal spite. The alert host at an opportunity lifted his glass to humanity and, when the toast had been drunk, he threw open a window significantly. (*D* 39)

Segouin initiates a heated political battle among the international members. It is beyond our ability to specify the topic they discuss but we can guess that it may be the Irish question, setting Jimmy against Routh in a recapitulation of the mimic battle between Ireland and England: "Jimmy . . . felt the buried zeal of his father wake to life within him: he aroused the torpid Routh at last" (*D* 39). Jimmy's heated debate with Routh leads him to "personal spite," which makes the host "politically" embarrassed. In this matter, however, Segouin seems to be much more skillful, modifying his view "each moment." He avoids the problematic topic by proposing a toast to humanity in general. Moreover, his *significant* gesture of opening the window is also "political," because it not only calms the high-pitched excitement but also betrays his hidden motives for hosting the dinner. It even foreshadows the final gesture of Villona who opens

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9) See *D* 39: "Jimmy, whose imagination was kindling, conceived the lively youth of the Frenchman twined elegantly upon the firm framework of the Englishman's manner. A graceful image of his, he thought, and a just one."

the door of the cabin later on. Such an anti-climax to the steamy dinner helps to deconstruct the "mask of a capital" (*D* 39) Dublin wears on this night. Jimmy's political defeat is to be reenacted in the ensuing card-game, another version of economic defeat.

In the cabin of Farley's yacht the Belle of Newport, named after the yachting town of Rhode Island, the international group dance, waltz, eat and drink. Jimmy is excited by the luxurious supper, music and cards. Note his exclamations: "What excitement!", "What merriment!" and "What good company they were!" (*D* 40-41) The card game proves, however, increasingly uninhibited as they "boldly" fling themselves, passing papers of I. O. U.'s: "It was a terrible game" (*D* 41). As ill luck would have it, Jimmy cannot concentrate on the card game: he frequently mistakes his cards and he "does not even know exactly" who is the winner. He gradually loses control of himself, so that others calculate his I. O. U.'s on his behalf. His inability to play card-game in his proper mind is a pungent political satire on the Irish situation. The political significance of the card game is once again betrayed when Jimmy understands that the last "great" game lies between Routh and Segouin, in which Routh wins. History repeats itself in the struggle between France and England. Farley, an American and Jimmy, an Irishman are the heaviest losers. Jimmy, a representative of Ireland gladly takes the role of a pathetic loser: "he would lose, of course" (*D* 41). Such a defeatism is far more fatal to him than the amount of money he loses in the game. Relating the card game to the "races of Castlebar" in 1789, Fairhall reads the political economy of the scene (Fairhall 391):

> The card game at the end of history loosely suggests this outcome: the game lies between his French friend and Routh, the Englishman, his recent verbal adversary on the subject of Anglo-Irish politics; Jimmy knows that "he would lose, of course" (*D* 41); and he dose in fact lose heavily, the loss at cards foreshadowing the greater potential loss of his investment. Irish involvement on any side in conflicts among the great powers, Joyce seems to be hinting,

is folly.

On the personal level, the card-game also deconstructs Jimmy's class-consciousness and *nouveau-riche* snobbery because it exposes the falsity of his value-system in which "seeing life" is identified with superficial interaction with foreign imposters.

If Jimmy, not knowing exactly how much he has lost, is still eager to participate in the "losing" game, he must be one of the "gratefully oppressed" who feel joy in being exploited. In this context, Jimmy's case ironically embodies the Irish case which paralyses their conscience, perspective and self-assurance. He is not ignorant of the poignant regret the next morning will bring him, although he would like to enjoy the moment and the "costly" rest after the exhausting game of trickery: "He . . . was glad of the rest, glad of the dark stupor that would cover up his folly" (*D* 41-2). He simply wants to defer his painful awakening from the "dark stupor". This is certainly typical of mental, volitional and moral paralysis. He cannot, however, avoid the cold reality of the morning that approaches moment by moment. The dawn has already come, although he does not recognize it in his dull state of consciousness.

> the cabin door opened and he saw the hungarian standing in a shaft light:
> — daybreak, gentleman! (*D* 43)

Jimmy's reluctance to recognize what has happened cannot delay the coming of the day, nor can it diminish the illuminating power of epiphany. The inevitable arrival of the "unwanted truth" cannot simply be avoided, as Hart suggests (Hart 60):

> Jimmy doesn't want any sort of light shed on his misdoings. The glimmerings of his gross foolishness are enough to make him shrink from having to confront the whole truth . . . but day has already come; full awareness of the

> folly is not to be avoided any longer; and the total epiphany of the unwanted truth comes with a Platonic-Dantesque shaft of light. The most interesting thing about this visualized metaphor of epiphany is that the light frames the figure of Villona, and it is he who announces that the hour of the truth is at hand.

Who is the harbinger in the scene of dramatic epiphany? Joyce does not call him by his name. Even the readers who remember his name are deceived by the fresh defamiliarization of Villona. True, he is not the new light of dawn. He is splendidly illuminated from behind, so that he seems transfigured to Jimmy's blood-shot eyes, too bright for him to bear. Jimmy's moment of illumination may lie in the momentary blindness caused by the exposure to the new light Villona is bringing into the "stupefied" cabin. Concerning the eligibility of Villona as an agent of epiphany, more things need mentioning. First, he has remained aloof in the "international" gang of which he is part. Granting that he, as a Hungarian, is not directly connected with the power politics illustrated in the narrative, Villona is shown as a character free from either the patronizing manner of the French or the mean subservience of the Doyles. He seems happy when he is fed a "satisfactory" luncheon after the race and an "exquisite" dinner at Jimmy's house. Such a down-to-earth preoccupation seems sound when compared with Jimmy's priorities: rapid motion, notoriety and money. He does not pay attention to Continental accomplishments, either. (He is already a brilliant pianist, according to Jimmy, although very poor also.) He deplores the loss of the old instrument with which he could play the English madrigal. Second, and most significantly, he does not participate in the international card game, volunteering to play the piano as a lyric backdrop to the uncontrollable frenzy. (It is possible that he has no money to bet in the game.) As the game becomes wilder, he suddenly disappears until he, perhaps after a sound sleep, opens the door of the hellish cabin. Simply put, he is a gnomonic character, always present but strategically absent for a time, one who offers a sharp contrast to the reckless pack of youths around him. If so, the

whole narrative reads as a dialogue between the discourse of Villona and that of the others.[10]

If we read "After the Race" as a serious study of a practical mode for achieving Irish independence, tearing "the mask of a capital" away from Dublin, the epiphanic message Villona carries bears far more potential significance than would otherwise be possible. It is hard to tell how much redemptive recognition his message brings to Jimmy's false-consciousness, but his function as a bringer of dawn can hardly be denied. He provides an unscrupulous criticism on the parasitic behaviour of the Doyles which ultimately causes the willful subjection of Ireland. The criticism proves all the more pungent, for the Doyles belong to a caste which could potentially change the Irish situation. Seen from the case of Jimmy who loses his money in the card game and will possibly lose his investment, Ireland cannot play with the "great powers" as long as she is "grateful" for being oppressed. This is Joyce's message on the occasion of the race for the Benett cup — a message very different from those of contemporary Irish journalists.

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10) Villona's Hungarian nationality is significant because Joyce may be referring obliquely to Arthur Griffith's advice concerning the nonviolent resistance of Hungary as a promising model for Irish Independence. (Bowen 138-39)

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국문 초록

지미의 경우를 통해서 되돌아본 아일랜드의 상황

윤 희 환

"경주가 끝난 다음"은 제임즈 조이스의 단편모음집 『더블린 사람들』에서 청소년기를 다루는 작품인데, 조이스는 이 단편에서 신흥 중산층 도일 부자의 소비행태와 허위의식을 추적하면서 영국을 비롯한 제국주의 유럽의 각축장이 된 아일랜드 상황에 대한 적나라한 비판을 시도한다. 이 단편의 구성은 자동차 경주, 세구엥의 만찬, 카드게임이라는 세 장면에 지미의 저택과 더블린 거리에서의 짧은 에피소드 삽입으로 되어 있다. 각각의 장면은 인물들의 정서적 클라이맥스를 향해 치닫다가 결국 자기확인이라는 환멸의 순간으로 끝남으로써, 제국주의 침략에 대한 아일랜드 사람들의 불감증 고발이라는 이 작품의 주제를 거듭 환기시킨다. 먼저 자동차 경주 장면에서, 프랑스인 카레이서 세구엥로부터 불투명한 자동차 사업에 투자제안을 받고 감격스러워하는 도일 부자의 모습은 다국적기업의 냉혹한 시장논리에 무방비상태로 노출된 아일랜드 사람들에 대한 조이스의 가감없는 비판이고, 세구엥이 초대한 만찬에서 정치적 이슈를 둘러싸고 벌어진 영국인 루우쓰와 지미 도일의 격렬한 논쟁은 아일랜드에 대한 영국의 오랜 침탈의 역사에 대한 통렬한 극화이다. 다양한 국적의 선수들이 참여한 카드게임에서, 몽롱한 정신으로 차용증서를 마구 남발하면서, 자신의 카드 패를 착각하기도 하고, 누가 승자인지도 모르는 채 게임에 말려들다가, 결국 미국인 선수와 함께 참패를 당하는 지미의 모습은 이미 주체로서의 자기정체성을 상실한 아일랜드의 또 다른 형국일 뿐이다. 이미 새벽이 왔음을 알리는 헝가리 출신 빌로나의 에피파니적인 외침으로 작품은 끝을 맺지만, 선상에서의 폭음과 카드놀이로 광란의 밤을 지새운 도일에게 어느 정도의 각성효과가 있을지는 의심스럽다. 그러나 오랜 피식민지배의 결과로 주체로서의 실천의지와 도덕적 균형감각을 상실한 채, 온갖 패배의식과 대륙에 대한 콤플렉스를 벗지 못한 아일랜드에 대한 이 단편의 탁월한 재현은, 책임 있는 중산층

으로서 현실개선의 책무를 방기한 도일 부자에 대한 조이스의 가열한 비판의 실증일 뿐이다.