

# **ABSTRACTS**

IASIL Japan

The 39<sup>th</sup> International Conference

“Evolutions/Dissolutions”

**Saturday, 28 October**

**Panel Session 1: Gender and Zoomorphism in Irish Literature**

**“She set her white face to him, passive, like a helpless animal.”:**

**Zoomorphism in James Joyce’s ‘Eveline’”**

**Hawk Chang (The Education University of Hong Kong)**

James Joyce’s “Eveline,” initially collected in his book *Dubliners*, has been widely anthologized in literary readings. This short fiction features the eponymous female character’s dilemma between her obsession with the past and her craving for a brighter future via migration. It showcases the subjugation of women around the early twentieth century, and most readers construe Eveline’s conundrum as a result of family burden and socio-cultural tradition in the always already patriarchal Irish society. Notably, Joyce’s indication of Eveline’s animal imagery, which is crucial in the story but lacks thorough research, merits further investigation. Eveline’s animal quality is prominent near the end of the story, where the bewildered female protagonist is said to be “passive, like a helpless animal.” This paper discusses Joyce’s use of zoomorphism, aiming to figure out women’s subordination via the lens of animal imagery and evaluate Joyce’s animalistic conception in relation to women’s status. Hopefully, this paper will elicit further study on animals and zoomorphism in Joyce’s writing.

**Has Stevenson’s *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) Evolved Out of**

**George Moore’s *A Mummer’s Wife* (1885)?**

**Akemi Yoshida (Kyoto Prefectural University)**

“Jekyll and Hyde” has become an eponym for divided selves within one person: the good and conscientious aspect coinciding with the usually hidden, evil and violent impulse, and the former being gradually dominated and finally overcome by the latter. Several sources that seem to have inspired Stevenson in constructing such a striking and powerful image have been pointed to, including the figures of Deacon Brodie and John Hunter, who notoriously were leading “double” lives in Edinburgh and London, respectively—which means while the story of *Jekyll and Hyde* is set in London, there might be some Scottish element in it as well, reflecting its author’s background. Stevenson himself stated that the idea for this novella came to him as a dream in September 1885; but one might be tempted to speculate whether *A Mummer’s Wife*, written by an Irish writer George Moore and published in 1885, might not have been among the elements which impelled Stevenson to have such a dream.

There can be found some intriguing resemblances in the vicissitudes undergone by Kate Ede, the heroine of *A Mummer’s Wife*, and Henry Jekyll, who, though basically of pious and conscientious disposition, end up showing similar psychopharmacological cases: Kate becomes dependent on liquor, Dr. Jekyll on some mysterious “transforming draught.” Like Mr. Hyde whose fury famously is described as “ape-like,” reflecting the fear of degeneration at the *fin-de-siècle* period, Kate under her drunken rage is compared to non-human animals, mainly feline ones. It also seems worth noting that

almost identical episodes of violently breaking down the locked doors appear in both novels.

## **Panel Session 2: Evolutions/Dissolutions and Translations**

### **“Proper Names in Joyce’s Self-Translation of *Finnegans Wake* and the Multiplicity of the Italian Language”**

**Tomoya Arai (Hitotsubashi University)**

In “Towers of Babel,” the critical response to Walter Benjamin’s “The Translator’s Task,” Jacques Derrida mentions proper names as the epitome of the untranslatable. He also emphasizes the difficulty or impossibility of translating *Finnegans Wake* into one language in “Two Words for Joyce.” What matters is, in fact, that Joyce, himself, tackles the task of an “impossible” translation; he translates some parts of *Finnegans Wake* into Italian in collaboration with Nino Frank. This presentation discusses how proper names are represented in this self-translation. Expressions that function both as common nouns and as proper nouns simultaneously are dispersed throughout the original *Finnegans Wake*. For example, in the passage “they made the pigeonhouse” (*FW* 197.31–32), “pigeonhouse” not only conveys its literal meaning but also connotes the Pigeon House at the mouth of the River Liffey. Joyce and Frank render this passage as follows: “li chiamar a Colombia” (*Scritti Italiani* 221). In the translation, the name of the nation “Colombia” is a pun on *colombaia*, an Italian word meaning “dovecote.” Although the particularity of the proper name or the localness of Dublin is reduced in the self-translation, the multilayeredness of meanings is retained. Proper names are difficult to translate because they highly depend on the cultural backgrounds of the source language. However, Joyce and Frank transfer the story of the family in Dublin into another cultural context, with the operation of various types of Italian language: literary or colloquial, normative or dialectal. By analyzing how proper names are rendered into the Italian context, this presentation considers how Joyce represents the effects of the original text in his self-translation.

### **“Third Time’s a Charm?”**

**—On ‘Oxen of the Sun’ in Liu Xianyu’s 2021 Chinese Translation of *Ulysses*”**

**Chih-hsien Hsieh (Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages)**

To translators all over the world and from different generations, translating *Ulysses* into their own languages seem to have become a way of challenging themselves. Moreover, in some languages, such as German, French, Italian, Japanese, Chinese, and so on, there are even more than one translations, as if one translation alone cannot fully represent/recreate the brilliance of the novel in its source language. Such an attempt of retranslating *Ulysses* of course implies the complexity and the difficulty of the novel itself that no single translation of one language can fully deliver. The competition of the two Chinese translations published in 1994 by Xiao Qian and Wen Jieruo, and in 1996 by Jin Di exemplifies this point, as the translators of these two versions employ different approaches respectively to translate Joyce’s writings, and the best example demonstrating their translation strategies is “Oxen of the Sun,” in which the translators must have a comprehensive plan in dealing with the different prose styles of English literature that Joyce parodied. Many studies have already tackled this issue, analysed, and compared these two translations. Yet, little known to the world of the Joyceans, there

is actually another Chinese translation by Liu Xianyu published in 2004. Although it is not a complete translation of *Ulysses*, it still covers most of the “difficult” episodes of the novel including “Oxen of the Sun.” And in June, 2021, Liu finally published his own complete translation of the novel, in which the translation of “Oxen of the Sun” has undergone a major revision of the 2004 version. In this paper, by comparing Liu’s translation of “Oxen of the Sun” in the 2021 version with the 2004 version, I want to show how Liu’s own schema of this episode evolved into a more comprehensive one and his efforts in trying to make the new Chinese translation stylistically closer to Joyce’s text.

## **Symposium 1**

### **“Evolutions/Dissolutions: Changes in Irish writing and performance”**

**Chair: Beverley Curran (ICU)**

In his introduction to *Irish Drama and Theatre since 1950* (2019), Patrick Lonergan observes that the repetition of old tropes, themes, and characters in Irish theatre is one way of understanding the new through conversation with the familiar as well as provoking thought on new ways for living in the world (7). Lonergan’s remark can be extended to apply to modes of change in other cultural productions, as well. This symposium will examine different departure points for evolutions and dissolutions in Irish poetry, translation, fiction, and dance theatre that unsettle comfortable iterations of history and delimit assumptions about what constitutes ‘Irish’ in selected works. Naoko Toraiwa will consider how different poets, such as W. B. Yeats and Seamus Heaney situate poetry in terms of evolution and dissolution in order to track the changes in their understandings how poetry operates in terms of cultural change. Rina Kikuchi will explore the way translation in general, and poetry in particular, allows an understanding of change in terms of relationships and choices. Specifically, Kikuchi discusses the collaborative 2022 Japanese translation by Ohno Mitsuko, Tochigi Nobuaki, Yamada Kumiko, Kawaguchi Kazuko, and Kawai Rie, of Paula Meehan’s collection *As If By Magic: Selected Poems* (2020) and how poetry evolves through interlingual translation and cross-cultural circulation. Beverley Curran looks at the works of two women writers whose approach defamiliarizes essentialist geographic identifications of Ireland by locating it in international contexts and cultural influences. Under examination will be playwright and short story writer’s Lucy Caldwell’s novel *These Days* (2022), which looks at the 1941 Belfast Blitz through women’s eyes and voices to offer a different perception of WWII and how it is remembered by women. Also considered is Nicole Flattery’s *Nothing Special* (2023), which looks at the dissolution of geographic parameters of ‘Irish’ writing (or any other kind) in a world that has gone online and where figures like Andy Warhol can be as familiar as our local neighbourhood. Mika Yoshimoto looks at the evolution/dissolution of Ireland in somatic terms in her consideration of the dance theatre of Michael Keegan-Dolan, which rattles and repurposes canonical works, such as Tchaikovsky’s ballet *Swan Lake*, by creatively adapting them by setting Ireland as the site of the story. In the process, the telling of embodying rather than voicing stories in dance theatre suggests that multiple modes of storytelling are crucial to evolving cultural productions and encouraging change through new stories.

## **Senses of Evolution, Shadows of Dissolution in Contemporary Irish Poetry**

**Naoko Toraiwa (Meiji University)**

Poetry in Ireland has been preoccupied with the sense of evolution/dissolution, as Ireland is one of those places which experienced quite a few political and cultural upheavals and whose poets, such as W. B. Yeats, experienced and witnessed such unbalanced conditions.

In fact, poets and poetry, as Percy Bysshe Shelley's claims in "A Defence of Poetry," are in a kind of reverse way, "the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present." Shelley continues, "[The poet] not only beholds intensely the present as it is, and discovers those laws according to which present things ought to be ordered, but he beholds the future in the present, and his thoughts are the germs of the flower and the fruit of the latest time." In other words, the poet observes the shadow of dissolutions in the present laws which brings forth, hopefully, more fruitful future evolution.

For W. B. Yeats, evolution may be the process of Celtic Revival flourishing and dissolution can mean the decline of his Ancestor's House in 'The Meditations in time of Civil War', let alone the evolution and dissolution of Christian Civilization; while for Seamus Heaney, evolution and dissolution might be his simple nationalist sentiment. I will discuss senses of evolutions and dissolutions in the poems in contemporary Ireland and the status of the poets witnessing them.

## **As If by Magic: The Importance of Reading/Translating Women/Poetry**

**Rina Kikuchi (Shiga University)**

Is poetry what gets lost in translation? Do we always lose and never gain? Can't poetry translation enrich both the original and the target languages and cultures?

Poetry translation has been described in many different ways, such as transcreation and transplantation. Would it be possible to discuss it as an artistic evolution? In this presentation, I would like to explore what we may gain by poetry translation and by reading poetry in translation, focusing on the poems on gender and social issues in Paula Meehan's *The Man who was Marked by Winter* (1991), *Pillow Talk* (1994), *Dharmakaya* (2000), *As If By Magic* (2020), and the Japanese translations published in *Marude-maho-no-youni (As If By Magic, 2022)*.

Women's writing from abroad has inspired and influenced women writers since the first feminist movement in Japan in the 1920s. I believe translating women's works from contemporary Ireland and reading them in translation can expand and evolve women's writing in contemporary Japan. At the same time, women's writing from Ireland can evolve by being read in a new cultural context. I hope to discuss the impacts of chronological 'evolution' as well as trans-cultural/linguistic 'evolution' of women's poetry.

## **The Embodiment and Disembodiment of Ireland: Michael Keegan-Dolan's Dance Theatre**

**Mika Yoshimoto (Nagoya University of Foreign Studies)**

This paper examines the representation of Ireland as portrayed on stage by Michael Keegan-Dolan's dance theatre (Fabulous Beast Dance Theatre (1997-2015) / Teac Damsa (2016-)). In particular, I pay attention to *The Bull* (2005), an adaptation of the Irish myth of *The Táin Bó Cúailnge*. Keegan-Dolan and his company often use canonical works, such as *Giselle* and *Swan Lake*—titles that are instantly familiar to the public. Relocating the setting of the stories to contemporary Ireland, the image of the

original works is subverted through the characterisation, choreography, music, and the various elements on the stage, with the story of Ireland being reconstructed and recounted through physical dance movements and sporadic dialogue. On Keegan-Dolan's stage, traditional representations of women are undermined, with alternative images taking presence. His work also challenges the hegemony of dialogue-oriented theatre by centring physical movement and bodies as core aspects of storytelling. In focusing on the female characters and their corporeal storytelling, I would like to explore how Keegan-Dolan's dance troupe performances deconstruct canonical works and conventional theatre and reconstruct new stories in terms of their representation and their connection to the conventional constructs of Ireland.

### **Change of Place:**

#### **Shifting Sites and Stories in Lucy Caldwell's *These Days* and Nicole Flattery's *Nothing Special*** **Beverley Curran (ICU)**

This presentation examines two recent novels, namely Lucy Caldwell's *These Days* (2022) and Nicole Flattery's *Nothing Special* (2023), to look at how Irish writing and iterated and accepted versions of stories and characters can change when they are relocated or remapped.

Lucy Caldwell's Walter Scott Award winning historical fiction novel *These Days* (2022) is a shift in approach from her work as a playwright and short story writer. Caldwell tells the story of the Belfast Blitz through different women in the same family, who each experience the war in diverse ways, but share a sense of social limits which impose an expected destiny on them and impede their ability to shape their public, private, and secret selves. The women all recognize, though, that resistance to cultural expectations takes courage and that personal and social evolution require effort, awareness, and solidarity.

Like Caldwell's novel, *Nothing Special* (2023) by Nicole Flattery looks at women and how they see themselves reflected by expectations and assumptions about identity. In the process, this story is constituted of memories of a young woman who gets hired at Andy Warhol's Factory, and the relation between identity construction and a world of self-conscious image-making and consumption fueled by compulsive want. Ireland and being 'Irish' is not explicitly mentioned in the story, but it can be seen like the other locations and identities considered in the novel as provisional and performative.

This presentation's examination of these two novels looks at two different times and places, and how they both reflect and resonate in 'these' times where we all online, evolving and dissolving, looking for ourselves and our communities.

**Sunday, 29 October**

**Panel Session 3: Evolutions/Dissolutions in Contemporary Irish Literature**

**Louis MacNeice and His Contemporaries:**

**The Creative Impact of Edith Sitwell and Dylan Thomas**

**Nao Igarashi (Utsunomiya University)**

While Louis MacNeice's poetic legacy has been extensively examined, the extent to which his poetic voice reacts to and resonates with the works of his precursors and contemporaries has yet to be thoroughly analysed. This paper aims to shed light on an undiscovered correlation of poets—MacNeice, Edith Sitwell, and Dylan Thomas—to demonstrate that MacNeice's practice was nurtured in a broader context than the literary landscape prepared by the major poets of his time, including T. S. Eliot, W. B. Yeats, and W. H. Auden.

The influence of Sitwell on MacNeice has been undervalued and often considered fleeting, despite being duly acknowledged. As several critics have already shown, *Blind Fireworks*, his first poetry collection in 1929, bears clear marks of the overflow of symbolic and flamboyant Sitwelleian images. MacNeice himself recalls being fascinated with the Sitwells' 'rococo ornament, their gallery of fantastic figures' (*Modern Poetry: A Personal Essay*, p. 52). On the other hand, the existing understanding of MacNeice's relationship with Thomas primarily focuses on their personal friendship rather than a creative interaction between them. The call for a joint critical assessment of MacNeice and Thomas is partially satisfied by Chris Wigginton's *Modernism from the Margins: The 1930s Poetry of Louis MacNeice and Dylan Thomas*, which defines them as modernists who occupy marginal but unique positions.

However, the existing studies and understandings lack closer comparative readings of these poets. This paper starts by analysing the elegies written by MacNeice and Sitwell for Thomas, the youngest poet who died first in 1953. It then explores the creative impact of the exuberance of imagery and sound found in Sitwell and Thomas's works. This impact remains enduring and ubiquitous, contributing to the development of MacNeice's meticulous yet playful arrangement of words and his imaginative contemplation of fundamental aspects of human existence, such as sensuousness, faith, and the life cycle of birth, aging, and death.

**“Ironic Normality: Metamodern Subjectivity in Caitriona Lally's Eggshells”**

**Shan-Yun Huang (National Taiwan University)**

Caitriona Lally's *Eggshells* (2015) features a female protagonist, Vivian Lawlor, who according to Lally is her rendition of the familiar “oddball narrator” figure in post-crash Irish fiction. Vivian believes herself to be a changeling, and the novel consists mainly of her wandering around the city of Dublin in search of a portal back to the fairy world. She visits places with magic-sounding names, examines graffiti for occult messages, looks for hidden small doors everywhere, and occasionally

performs folk rituals in public. Perhaps not surprisingly, Vivian suffers great anxiety whenever she interacts with people. In her mind she rehearses what normal conversations should be like, but given her peculiar worldview, even prepared speeches could not save her from constant embarrassment: either she feels embarrassed, or she embarrasses others, all the time. Interestingly, Vivian oscillates between an implicit consciousness of eccentricity and a self-righteousness about her own normality. While she seems to know that she is the weird one, she perceptively comments on other people's supposedly normal thoughts and behavior as truly *strange*. Vivian's comments show that the oddball understands normality better than normal people. This twist reinforces the oscillation between normality and eccentricity, while it also serves as the major source of irony within the novel. Another source lies in Vivian's persistence on returning to the other world. Even though the text suggests that Vivian knows the world she seeks does not actually exist, she still fully commits herself to the project as if it did, demonstrating an informed naivety towards impossible possibilities. As oscillation and informed naivety are two of the core concepts of metamodernism, this paper aims to present a metamodernist reading of *Eggshells* and argues that Vivian's ironic normality exemplifies a metamodern subjectivity that emerges from and simultaneously critiques the socio-economic conditions in Ireland's post-crash years.

### **“Pastoral Elegy in Stephen Sexton's *If All the World and Love Were Young*”**

**Iain Twiddy (Kyushu University)**

Stephen Sexton's 2019 book *If All the World and Love Were Young* has a complex root system: its title traces back more than four centuries to Walter Raleigh's 1600 poem, 'The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd', an anti-pastoral reality-check for Christopher Marlowe's invitation a year earlier, to 'Come live with me and be my love', in 'The Passionate Shepherd to His Love'. Generically, the book goes further back, to the Classical mode of pastoral elegy, but its content derives from a more recent source, Shigeru Miyamoto's 1992\* video game *Super Mario World*. Sexton's poetic sequence adopts and adapts the mode of pastoral elegy in order to engage with the early death of his mother from cancer: the pastoral setting for that work of mourning is *Super Mario World*. In taking an ekphrastic approach, writing a poem for every level of the video game, pastoral is both the medium of the mourning quest and – in part – that which is being mourned. As the hero journeys through the artificial world, overcoming myriad dangers and challenges, seeking to rescue the Princess from an unwelcome fate and to escape with his life, he explores the osmotic relationship between real and imaginary worlds, the communal quality of mourning, as well as the nature and desirability of consolation. This presentation will examine how Sexton's book deploys, subverts and rejects conventions of pastoral elegy, and it will assess the book's radical presentation of digital memory and threats to memory, as it tests the extent to which pastoral elegy should aim ultimately to process or to preserve.



## Symposium 2

### “How were they cuttin’?:

#### Joyce, Beckett, O’Flaherty, and Corkery and post-Independence Ireland.”

**Chair: Masaya Shimokusu (Doshisha University)**

The people living in Inisherin overhear the distant boom of guns and cannons in the mainland. The backdrop of the movie *The Banshees of Inisherin* (2022), written and directed by Martin McDonagh, is the Civil War raging in Ireland in 1923. This year, 2023, is the centenary of the end of the Civil War. The film suggests that we are still in the distant aftermaths of the wars occurring in Ireland relating to her independence. Surely, in post-Independence Ireland, their aftermath was enormous.

This symposium will probe what four Irish writers did and wrote in the 1920s and 30s, heavily influenced by the historical events taking place in the early 1920s. Its panelists will address James Joyce, Samuel Beckett, Liam O’Flaherty, and Daniel Corkery. Publishing *Ulysses* in 1922, Joyce had been already a conspicuous literary figure in the early 1920s. Beckett entered Trinity College, Dublin, and O’Flaherty published his first novel, *Thy Neighbor’s Wife*, in 1923. They, thus, were the writers making careers in the aftermaths of the wars in Ireland. Corkery published dramas and short stories in the period of the War of Independence, and his study newly spotlighting the legacy of the Irish poetry, *Hidden Ireland*, came out in 1924. While the other three writers were active overseas, Corkery firmly set his feet on the Irish soil, developing his literary, academic, and political careers. The kaleidoscopic activities of the Irish writers under the aftermath of the wars in Ireland will be represented through the four papers.

#### **Liam O’Flaherty’s Dear Dark Dublin**

**Masaya Shimokusu (Doshisha University)**

Liam O’Flaherty (1896-1984) lived long, but most of his well-known works came out in the aftermaths of the establishment of the Irish Free State and of the publication of James Joyce’s *Ulysses*. The Aran islander O’Flaherty started his career by describing the lives of Irish country folks, and later in the 1920s and early 30s, he eagerly wrote the works set in Dublin including the filmed *The Informer*. In his dangerous and dark Dublin, most of his characters are outsiders, even if they are described as genuine Dubliners. Among his melodramatic novels set in Dublin, *The Assassin* (1928) will be mainly discussed in this presentation. The work has been considered to be written in response to the real assassination of Kevin O’Higgins, the then Minister of Justice. In the novel, a remarkably early reference to Joyce’s *Ulysses* may be found, which, therefore, clearly implies that O’Flaherty drew keen attention to Joyce, his Irish predecessor, who emerged as a big writer in the Continent in the period. Bearing Joyce in mind, the reader can find several striking correspondences between *The Assassin* and some stories of *Dubliners*. Some of the correspondences may have been coincident. Even if so, however, these correspondences suggest what places, situations and social environments are shared as important literary subjects both by Joyce and by O’Flaherty, and that may also clarify certain connections between the two Irish writers describing dear dirty Dublin.

## **Daniel Corkery and Anglo-Irish Literature**

**Fuyuji Tanigawa (Konan Women's University)**

Daniel Corkery (1878-1964) is generally recognized as a main pillar of the Irish Ireland through his main work, *The Hidden Ireland: a Study of Gaelic Munster in the Eighteenth Century*. With this phenomenal work, Irish language poets in Munster, such as Eoghan Rua Ó Súilleabháin (1748-1784), became dominantly canonical in the aftermath period of the Irish Civil War. Even Myles Dillon's 1961 Teach Yourself Series *Irish*, which attempts to teach Munster Irish in order to enable readers to understand their poetry, may be regarded as its further influence. So, how does this canon of Corkery's, which had dominated the south of Ireland for about half a century, relate to the Anglo-Irish literature, which could be regarded as another canonic Irish literature from the viewpoint of this association? Corkery published another outstanding book, *Synge and Anglo-Irish Literature* (1931). How should we now interpret Corkery's evaluation of the Anglo-Irish literature? The self-claimed Native Irish living within the border of the Free State, the later Republic, experienced their first post-colonial crisis (and opportunity) in the aftermath, while the people, who could not deny their Anglo-Irish ancestry, had already experienced the same crisis (and opportunity) after the turbulent years from the 1798 Uprising to the 1801 Union. In this presentation, I would like to consider the two post-colonial conflicts that had been distanced by more than 100 years, using the hindsight gained half a century after the 1960s.

## ***Finnegans Wake* and the Wars in Ireland**

**Yuta Imazeki (Edogawa University)**

It is well known that the central setting of James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* (1939) is modern Dublin, though a dizzying array of times and places are portrayed throughout the text. Joyce completed later episodes of *Ulysses*, published it and then began working on the final novel in the period between 1919 and early 1923, during which Ireland underwent the Anglo-Irish War, the Irish Civil War and their aftermath. However, while he frequently and assiduously mentions numerous wars ranging from the Battle of Clontarf to the Great War in the *Wake*, as well as political events in pre-independence Ireland such as the Phoenix Park Murders and the downfall of C. S. Parnell, these revolutionary wars and their aftermaths in Ireland are only sparsely and vaguely mentioned in the novel, as James Fairhall, Luke Gibbons and other critics have pointed out. Why did Joyce, despite his persistent attention to the political circumstances of his homeland up to and beyond the publication of the *Wake*, almost ignore or avoid directly depicting these great historical events throughout the text? This presentation aims to provide clues to answer this question and to contextualise the novel in light of the literary history of post-independence Ireland, by assembling the scattered references to the Anglo-Irish War and the Irish Civil War found in the *Wake*.

## **Is the Apocalypse Near?: Tragicomic Dublin in Early Beckett**

**Kiminori Fukaya (Hosei University)**

"A Wet Night," a short story in *More Pricks Than Kicks* (1934) by Samuel Beckett (1906–1989), depicts a Christmas party held in Dublin in the home of a woman named Frica. Belacqua, the hero in this story, is named after an artisan who made musical instruments that appears in Dante's *Divine Comedy*, who intends to join the party but is abused by a city guard and has a fall in the rain on his

way. This representation by Beckett of a miserable character is loyal to Dante's model, which depicts him as prohibited from going into purgatory and is forced to sit on the ground. The misery of this character even tempts us to say that Beckett viewed Dublin in the aftermath of the Irish Civil War as a Dantean ante-purgatory. The religious allusions and comic elements dispersed across the story mitigate this pessimistic view and provide a feeling closer to the apocalyptic (not eschatological) world, which presents Dublin as hopeful. In this study, I will explore how Beckett perceived Dublin and the Irish Free State in the aftermath of the Civil War by analyzing his tragicomic style that blends sacred and secular images. James Joyce's influence on early Beckett will be also considered as several scholars have noted out that "A Wet Night" refers to "Grace" and "The Dead" in *Dubliners*.