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The Snapper: Sharon's Pregnancy and the Irish Catholic Ethos

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I. Introduction

Roddy Doyle's 1990 novel, *The Snapper*, is about the twenty-four-year-old girl Sharon Rabbitte's rape by her intimate's father and her pregnancy as its aftermath. What makes the novel sensational, in actions of the novel, is Sharon's persistence in keeping up her pregnancy. That is, she gives birth to the child of George Burgess, as old as her father is, while leaving her child's fatherhood unknown to the neighborhood and dismissing his offer of elopement with her in expiation of his misconduct. Making herself an unmarried mother, Sharon repels Barrytown's assumption of George as the true father of her child, which originates from his casual reference to Sharon as "a great little ride" (Doyle 79) in his bravado to his drinking pals in a pub. Instead, she disseminates a fictitious invention in which an imaginary Spanish

sailor is presented as the father of her child from her one-night stand. The novel's ending is Sharon's lying on the bed in a maternity hospital with a loving look cast at her new-born baby in the crib.

Sharon's unexplained determination to be an unmarried mother calls into mind the practices of the Irish Catholic ethos deeply ingrained in Irish mind. Firstly, there is an abortion issue. Despite her pregnancy from rape, her inability to abort the illegitimate baby in her inside signifies the ramifications of the 1983 constitutional referendum on abortion in Ireland. It was the Catholic Doctors that initiated the Pro-life Amendment Campaign (PLAC) and, henceforth, effected the 1983 referendum, the seeds of which were strewn in 1979 when Pope John Paul II visited Ireland. In his homily said in Limerick, the Pope advocated "the stability and sanctity of marriage" against "modern conditions and social changes." He particularly condemned abortion as "one of the abominable crimes" and punctuated "an absolute and holy respect for the sacredness of human life from the first moment of its conception" (Pope John Paul II).

Following the Pope's anti-abortion doctrine, the 1983 referendum aimed at a constitutional amendment against the possibility of an Irish court's liberal interpretation of sections 58 and 59 of the Offences against the Person Act 1861. In Ireland, penalizing any woman for abortion has been validated in legal accounts of the Offences against the Person Act 1861, which still survives in the Irish Statute books. PLAC feared that "in a suitable case an Irish court might give sections 58 and 59 a liberal construction so as to permit abortion in certain types of cases" (Hogan 76). In 1983, the pro-life group elicited a constitutional change affirming "the right to life of the unborn" "with due regard to the equal right to life of the mother" (Eighth Amendment).

Secondly, there is the issue of the unity between Irish Catholicism and the State. From the earliest stage of the Constitution of Ireland, it marks

Catholicism as a national character of Ireland. Article 44 of the 1937 Constitution, the first constitution of independent Ireland, states that "The State recognizes the special position of the Holy Catholic Apostolic and Roman Church as the guardian of the Faith professed by the great majority of the citizens" (The Constitution of Ireland). The statement in Article 44, sanctioning the acknowledged place of Catholicism in Ireland, was eradicated in the 1972 amendment for the purpose of extenuating a sectarian character of Irish nationality. Yet, the sanitized version of Irish Catholic identity as rephrased in the constitutional amendment contradicts Sharon's involuntary silence about her rapist in which she endorses a patriarchal perception that any non-conjugal pregnancy is an indication of female libertine nature. Such a gender stereotype is clearly an offshoot of the Catholic tradition confining a woman's place to the condition of a married mother.

The purpose of this paper is to put Sharon's silence into a cultural implication of the Magdalene Laundries, most of which were reputed to be Catholic affiliations or institutions. The Magdalene Laundries were run for disciplining and exploiting socially stigmatized women due to their sexuality not conforming to the Irish Catholic ethos. The Magdalene Laundries are prime examples of the Irish Catholic support for the State in implementing moral practices. Sharon is a modern-day Magdalene woman, the Magdalene woman in history who was condemned as a fallen woman and turned into a social outcast. Any unmarried mothers, as impregnated by rape, or any women in promiscuity and immodesty were consigned to the dire condition of fallen women and separated from society in the way of being locked up in the Magdalene Laundries, which were also called the Magdalene Asylums. The Irish degradation of socially incorrect women into public shame tells the history of the patriarchal control of women's sexuality. In an Irish case, such a patriarchal subjugation of women's body has been supported by the Catholic

moral norms.

II. Rape Myths and Sharon

The Snapper is Sharon's story about her own experience of internal and external changes in her pregnant body. Early signs of her pregnancy, "her stomach" "harder and curved" (34), raise her keen sense of a sexual incident that ended up with her pregnancy, the incident that was one of the multiple episodes in her sexual life. Yet, her acknowledgment of her active part in sexuality entails her confusion about the fact that she is truly a victim. When she recalls "she wished she'd had sex a lot more often" and she once felt "doubts about the father would have been very comforting" (43), now she wonders "a few times if what had happened could be called rape" (45) and she doesn't know it was exactly a rape. Pressured by more of her pregnancy symptoms, in the thirteenth week of pregnancy, Sharon feels she has to tell her friends and family about her pregnancy. She feels that it was only a dream, her rape by her younger brother's soccer club coach who is also the father of her friend, Yvonne. For her, the sexual assault by her acquaintance reinforces its surrealistic side all the more so because she was really drunk, as much as she was absolutely "paralytic" (44). It happened when she went out of the pub to get a fresh air because she felt so sick and she was often blank. Since she is not able to remember much of the sexual intercourse, she is not sure whether he and she herself had done it or "just he'd done it" while she was standing, "leaning back against the car" (44) parked there. The only thing she remembers is "She knew [he] was gone" and "she didn't know if it had happened" (45).

Her unawareness of her victimhood tells the prevalence of the moral

paralysis generated by a rape myth. Carol Burt distinguishes "Prejudicial, stereotyped, or false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists" (Kelly and Staunton 2) as rape myths. The most common form of rape myths is that rapes are women's faults. Ingrid Kelly and Ciara Staunton find that in Irish society there are sympathetic gestures towards rape victims, i.e. women, but only as contradicted by a belief that they deserve to be blamed (1). Rape myths are social discourses made of masculine misrepresentations of women's sexuality. They are "supported or reinforced by cultural and family norms, such as a living in a male dominated society" (Kelly and Staunton 2). In *The Snapper*, George's view of Sharon as "a great ride," a sexual objectification of women's body, really reflects the "ideology of male sexual entitlement" in terms of Kelly and Staunton, which contributes to unsanctioned perpetuation of male sexual violence. What is more striking in the case of Sharon as a rape victim is that she is raped by her acquaintance, who is the father of her friend. It is pitted against the most fundamental form of rape myths, which says that sexual violence takes place between strangers. Kelly and Staunton state:

> This is an utter falsehood that has the immediate effect of inadequate reporting to the authorities by those who experience it within existing relationships or marriages. Time and again, research highlights that most sexual assaults on adult women are carried out by someone known to them – up to 86% in most recently reported figures . . . . Unfortunately, it is those who are attacked by a stranger in a public place who are most likely to have their case prosecuted in what is considered a "Real Rape." Perversely, those who choose not to report their experience of rape to the police are more likely to possess higher levels of [rape myths]. (2)

Sharon's unquestioned acceptance of her pregnancy, not seeing her pregnancy as attributed to a rape, proves a socio-cultural practice rarely identifying as a rape the sexual violence driven in relationships with acquaintances.

Possibly, Sharon's drinking sprees could be a factor in giving rise to her hesitance in taking as an offence George's sexual misconduct. She is aware that it happened in one of her intoxicated conditions. As Kelly and Staunton report, "alcohol [is] a critical factor in sexual violence" (2). But it exactly affirms the rape myths because women's inebriated condition is often used as a stratagem to mask the masculine predatoriness in sexual behavior in the way of simulating women's consent. Moreover, Ireland's "binge drinking culture" exacerbates men's sexual mistreatment of women, in particular, in deceptively making a forced sex appear to be a consented sex. Strikingly, the masculine hegemony creating such a rape myth has a long history of gendered violence in Ireland. The Irish strictness of gender roles illuminates the gender doctrines of the Irish Catholic Church, the gender doctrines supporting the ideologies of male domination. For example, in Article 42, Section 2, of the 1937 Constitution, the State is required "to ensure that mothers shall not be obliged by economic necessity to engage in labour to the neglect of their duties in the home." Further stating that "by her life within the home, woman gives to the State a support without which the common good cannot be achieved," it makes it a national ethos that women's place is home and family. This constitutional statement overtly manifests Catholic moral values. It is well-known that the 1937 Constitution carried the voices of the Church hierarchy, which criticized "the lower moral fibre of the [Irish] people" and condemned "the growing craze for pleasure" (Whyte 24).

It is remarkable that the bishops after the Civil War in 1922-23 until the first creation of the Irish constitution in 1937 particularly raised serious apprehensions about the growing frequency of sexual depravity. What caused the Church's anxiety about sexual misconducts in the post-independence Ireland was the increase of illegitimate births, which was regarded as a barometer of a degenerated state of moral standards. In Ireland, illegitimate

births increased gradually onward from 1920s to 1960s: 2.6% in 1921-23, 3.5% in 1933-34, 3.9% in 1944-46 (Whyte 31), with some years in which it slightly dropped below average. The figures of illegitimate babies were never higher, as compared to those in the other European countries (Whyte 31). As Whyte pointed out, nevertheless, the Catholic Church's crusade for the recuperation of sexual morality could be "some kind of [the Catholic hierarchy's] inner necessity that obliges Irish people to harp on" (31) the ordinance of physical and spiritual purity in the light of Catholic moral norms. In the Catholic morality, the object of moral condemnation is always women in that masculine supremacy makes moral responsibility fall on women.

III. Sharon's Barrytown and the Magdalene Laundry

In *The Snapper*, Barrytown is set as a small place, where the whole neighborhood knows each other. Barrytown was modelled on Kilbarrack, northeast of Dublin, the birthplace of Doyle. In *The Snapper*, Barrytown must be an invoking place where the old Kilbarrack in the 1950s and 1960s, which Doyle remembers as "a great time to grow up—surrounded by all [the] kids—a lot of freedom" (White 26), is recalled into "Kilbarrack today" of "an average lower-middle-class neighborhood" (White 26). What characterizes Barrytown is over-intimacy in social relationships. The neighborhood feeds on gossips and rumors about their neighbor's matters, spying on their privacy. Sharon points out the isolated state of her muted truth against the transgressing power of such communal over-intimacy: "She felt a bit lonely now. She'd have loved someone to talk to, to talk to nonstop for about an hour, to tell everything to. But—and she was realizing this now really—there was no one like that. She'd loads of friends but she only really knew them in a gang"

(41).

The gang represents the public opinions supervising private minds by reciprocal monitoring, as indicated by Sharon's friends' inquisitiveness about her pregnancy. She is determined not to disclose the true father of her baby, which is the embarrassing effect of her rape by Yvonne's father whose outrageous perversity the masculine scenario of a rape myth is to make unchallenged:

> — I'll start gettin' bigger in a few weeks.
> — Well, said Jackie, —you can start hangin' round with someone else when tha' happens. No fellas'll come near us if one of us is pregnant.
> They laughed.
> — Sharon, said Yvonne. —Who're yeh havin' it for?
> Your fat da, thought Sharon.
> —I can't tell, she said. —Sorry. (54)

Sharon's pregnancy by an unknown man, as assumed by her neighborhood, makes her an outcast in the prison-like structure of close interdependency in social life. As Doris, George's wife, supposes that George impregnated Sharon, for example, she goes to see Veronica, the mother of Sharon, to remonstrate with Sharon, whom she presumes to seduce her husband. Doris says to Veronica, "Well, if you must know, she's been messin' around with George. —He's the father" (118). Provoking Veronica's bitterness, Doris says, "[Sharon] is your daughter . . . what else would you expect from a [bitch?]" (118). Sharon is figured as a social anathema to be shunned away: Barrytown kids call her names when they say to Sharon: "How's Mister Burgess? . . . Yeh ride yeh" (125). Sharon's pregnancy also puts Jimmie Sr. into his own misery, as mortified by Sharon's scandal: "But, fuck it, his life was being ruined because of her. It was fuckin' terrible. He was the laughing stock of

Barrytown. It wasn't her fault—but it was her fault as well. It wasn't his. He'd done nothing" (147). Doris is also ashamed of herself, who is found to be the object of mockery. She feels ridiculed: "People probably knew already. They always did around here. Oh God, the shame; the mortification. She'd never be able to step out of the house again" (116).

The relational proximity enmeshing Sharon in a morbid state of violated privacy is a consequence of the blurred boundary between private life and public life, which characterizes Barrytown's social relationships. It also insinuates the consolidated relationships in Irish life curbing interpersonal freedom, which are constructed by the unifying power of the Irish Catholic ethos. The Catholic ethos leaves nothing of individual privacy intact: "what is crucial in the Irish context" is, to borrow Clair Wills's words, that while the consolidated relationships are formed by "Catholic nationalist hegemony," "the concomitant ideal of privacy [is] decried" (Wills 46). Doyle's Barrytown displays what McGlynn and Wills take as Irish domesticity: "the inevitability of gossip and public critique, and the denial of individual will or mobility" (McGlynn 142) and "the relation between the public and private spheres" "particularly entangled in the case of Ireland" (Wills 38). Sharon's endurance of her unwanted pregnancy is a sign of her impaired independency, which the totalizing power of the Catholic ethos brings into effect, while making her the reincarnation of a Magdalene Laundry woman.

The last Magdalene Laundry was closed down in 1996, a historical legacy materializing the Irish aspects of gendered violence. Historically, the inception of the Magdalene Laundries dates back to the eighteenth century, when some laywomen ran shelters for the defamed women who had nowhere to go because they were shunned by their family and community. These women were those who were deemed to be socially incorrect in the light of the Catholic moralism in women's sexuality. The shelters named after the biblical

figure, Mary Magdalene, were part of relief efforts organized by civilians assisted by Catholic or Protestant institutions. Just as Mary Magdalene was a biblical woman absolved by Jesus Christ of carnal sins she committed as a prostitute, the stigmatized women in the Magdalene Laundries made themselves penitents through praying and laboring by following their biblical example. In the post-famine period, after the mid-nineteenth century, however, the Catholic Church was increasingly engaged in operating these refuges, making them more religiously oriented institutions, with "a new emphasis on the value of women's modesty and respectability" (Smith 26). These defamed women were brought to the Magdalene Laundries "as a result of unmarried motherhood, rape, incest, or sexual abuse" (31), as they were branded as sexually immoral. Undoubtedly, the Catholic convents having run these institutions profited from the inmates' laboring which was regarded as professedly charitable.

The large percentage of the defamed women were coerced by their family to go to the Magdalene Laundries. Some inmates were inescapably kept in such penitentiaries during the prolonged period of their life or even their lifetime:

> [I]t is hardly surprising given the levels of intolerance and bias they were likely to encounter, that some women were hesitant about reentering society. Social prejudice must also explain, at least in part, why many more penitents died in the [Magdalene Laundry]'s walls in the nineteenth century than were provided with positions of employment or emigrated to start life over abroad. (Smith 33)

Irish Independence in 1922 fortified Irish nationalism in the way of removing the lingering effects of British cultural vestiges from Irish national identity through making Irishness more ideological by the Catholic ethos. Furthermore,

with more opportunities made for female employments and educations after the advent of the Irish Free State and the following Irish national independence, Jennifer O'Mahoney says, the Magdalene Laundries "turned toward unmarried mothers, victims of sexual assault, and girls who were sexually aware or demonstrating marked tendencies towards sexual immorality" (457). These Magdalene Laundries were rendered more and more subservient to the State's social and cultural crusades against the women who didn't confine their role within domesticity and, as a consequence, were assumed to be sexually corrupted.

Sharon's condition is not unlike that of a Magdalene Laundry woman. She strives to extenuate the notoriety of her pregnancy, opting to create a foreign sailor as her man in place of George. Sharon threatens George, saying that she would divulge his vices if he doesn't keep the affair under hat. She says to George, "1 don't mind bein' pregnant but I do mind people knowin' who made me pregnant" (88) and George says to her, "I'll never open me mouth about you again" (90). Sharon herself acts out the patriarchal double standard in women's unwanted pregnancy: the inculpability of male-perpetrator and the condemnation of female-victim in sexual abuses. As an unmarried mother, Sharon contradicts the Irish Constitution making marriage and motherhood inseparable. What she internalizes is the Catholic-patriarchal moral values because she makes herself subjected to the infamy of sexual immorality when she deserves no blame for her pregnancy. Her persistence in keeping her shameful pregnancy embodies a long history of patriarchal disciplining of women's sexuality, institutional practices of which were performed in the Magdalene Laundries to rectify sexual aberrations violating ascetic norms. Jennifer Yeager and Jonathan Culleton point out an Irish way of viewing sexuality in the following way:

> Historical discourse surrounding the sexuality of the Irish has rarely challenged the self-proclaimed belief in Irish moral superiority. Evidently, those guilty of such crimes as extramarital sex contradicted the prescribed national narrative that emphasized conformity, valued community over the individual, and esteemed conservative Catholic moral values. The control of sexuality (or that of Irish women, at least)—as a practice and a discourse—became one of the strategies by which the Catholic Church maintained power. The interaction between notions of female sexual purity and the nation is critical. . . . women are constructed as biological and moral bearers of the nation, responsible for its future existence. . . . (135)

The Snapper came six years before the termination of the last Magdalene Laundry. Evidently, the fictional character Sharon labelled as a fallen woman testifies the undying practices of the Irish idealism of sexual purity even under the growing modernization of Irish life. In 2011, the UN Committee prompted the Irish government to investigate the violations of human rights committed in the Magdalene Laundries.

IV. Collective Sentiments of Honor and Relational Over-Intimacy

One of the conspicuous things in *The Snapper* is Sharon's self-consciousness about the internal and external symptoms of her body as she grows bigger. She is so curious about a variety of physiological or physical changes to happen in her body in different phases of her pregnancy. As her pregnancy progresses, she gets aware of maternal deaths by reading the murderous effects of pregnancy-related illnesses: "All these things were bad but when she read about eclampsia she went to the toilet and got sick. She shook and shivered for ages after it. She read it again: protein in the urine—blurred vision—severe headaches—hospital—swelling of face and fingers—she

read it very slowly this time—eclampsia—convulsions—coma—death. She was going to catch it, she knew it" (33). And she feels "her stomach" "harder and curved, becoming like a shell or a wall" (34). The murderousness of the unborn child in her inside, which is felt to be the uncanny, mysterious power growing inside, betokens her deadly confrontation with the dispositional power of the Catholic patriarchal ethos played out through the myriad female bodies in Irish history.

Sharon is predisposed to keep her baby in her inside by internalizing a shame, which she is forced to feel in a self-delusive way as a consequence of cognitive adaptation to prescribed modes of Irish habits. The directed social habits are made by a cultural ethos accommodating individuals to a regulated way of moral practices as shown in rape myths. The cultural ethos is what Pierre Bourdieu calls *habitus*. Bourdieu conceptualizes *habitus* as "systems of durable, transposable dispositions . . . predisposed to function as structuring structures . . . which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them" (Bourdieu, *The Logic* 53). Sharon's enforced shame on herself is an unconscious outcome of the Irish predisposition to Catholic patriarchal norms in which the patriarchal distinction between honorableness and dishonorableness is consolidated by the Catholic doctrines based upon the ideal division of bestial lowness and spiritual supremacy. As a Bourdieuian *habitus,* the Catholic ethos is, to borrow Bourdieu's words, "a product of history, [producing] individual and collective practices—more history—in accordance with the schemes generated by history" (54). Sharon's Magdalene body, which is humiliated by collective drives, embodies a history of gender discrimination. In terms of Bourdieu, her disgraced body is the site of "the active presence of past experiences, which, deposited in each organism in the form of schemes

of perception, thought and action, tend to guarantee the 'correctness' of practices and their constancy over time . . ." (54).

Barrytown people's over-intimacy, which spawns undue interdependency on mutual expectations over conformity to preset behavioral patterns, is none other than communal dispositions sanctifying particular cultural predilections. The "wall" or "shell," denoting an incarcerating structure, as Sharon feels her swelling belly as such, is symbolically a trope signifying the over-intimate relationship surveilling personal choices, which locks her away into the cell of cultural determinisms taking control of subjective possibilities. In *Locked in the Family Cell*, Kathryn Conrad discerns the Irish way of relational closeness as a cultural drive to turn any extended social relationship into a family-like relationship. She argues that, as quoted in her proposition, "the trope of the national family" (8) in Irish historical discourses stresses that "the nation [is] . . . a 'natural extension of family and kinship relations'" (8). Barrytown people's interdependent relationship resembles the kinship relationship as an extension of family relationship in that they mutually supervise their social, personal behaviors, as seen in a clan society. Conrad sees the family cell as the site of enclosure and containment, whose patriarchal structures are extended into national constructions. The family cell represents the basic unit of any social bond promoting the high degree of close relationship: a parent-child relationship is assumed to be one of the strongest bonds in human relationships ever existing in the world. As Conrad notes, yet, the family cell is a breeding bed for "gender and status distinctions" (4) engendered by "a patriarchal system of familial relationships" (5), which Catholicism in Ireland invigorates.

The dispositional ties in Barrytown towards a self-regulative conformity to the Catholic ethos make it look like a sectarian community in which cultural exclusivism is strategically mobilized for strengthening an internal bond within

the community. The case of Savita Halappanavar shows the discriminative performance of the sectarian politics promoting a cultural homogeneity. Halappanavar was an immigrant woman from India and died of septicaemia and E. coli at the period of her seventeen-week pregnancy on 28 October 2012. Prior to her death, her husband's and her call for the hospital to abort her pregnancy was declined when she was miscarrying with her amniotic fluids breaking. The hospital's reason for their inaction was that there was a still living fetus in her uterus and there was a legal ban on abortion in Ireland. Eight years earlier, in 2004, the Citizenship Referendum confirmed that migrant children born by migrant mothers are not entitled to Irish citizenship. The Catholic ethos having traditionally formed Irish identities shows distinctively its sectarian nature in the case of Halappanavar. On the one hand, like Sharon, as a pregnant woman, Halappanavar's body was policed by Catholic practices. On the other hand, as an immigrant woman, she was excluded from the process of Irish self-identification by the sectarian politics of a racial homogeneity constituting part of Irish cultural identity.

Sharon's fall to shame illustrates the patriarchal practices centered on gender and status distinctions. Barrytown bears resemblance to Andalusia, Spain, in 1950s, as pictured by Julian Pitt-Rivers in his anthropological study of the region. A cultural characteristic of Andalusia is, in Pitt-Rivers's view, its holding on to "a collective honor in which [its] members participate" (35). As Pitt-Rivers says, basically, "the honor which is paid by the society sets the standards for what the individual should feel" (38). In the society immersed in the collective honor, "the dishonorable conduct of one reflects upon the honor of all, while a member shares in the honor of his group": "'I am who I am' subsumes 'whom I am associated with'" (35). A remarkable thing is, as he finds, that the collective honor regulates gender-specific values as well as gender-neutral values. That is to say, men and women in common are

required to have certain virtues to keep their honorable condition, the virtues which are such as patience, diligence, trustfulness, and so on. Yet, the honor also validates gendered behavioral modes:

> A woman is dishonored . . . with the tainting of her sexual purity, but a man does not. . . . Shame . . . as shyness, blushing and timidity is thought to be proper to women, even though it no longer constitutes virtue, while honor . . . becomes an exclusively male attribute as the concern for precedence. . . . (42)

So, showing timidity or blushing is regarded as men's dishonorable conduct and committing "physical violence or attempts to usurp the male prerogative of authority, or very much so, sexual freedom" (42) is women's dishonorable conduct.

Andalusia illuminates Sharon's Barrytown driven by the collective propensity that a nexus of gendered honor and Catholic moral norms propels. Jimmy, head of the Rabbittes, feels that he himself is publicly shamed by his daughter's pregnancy, fearing his family's disrepute by her scandal. It shows that a masculine honor makes the basis of a social order, whose patriarchal values hold a regulative authority representing a familial honor. Turning Sharon's pregnancy into a shameful state, the Catholic ethos only fosters the collective honor that obliges all the community to be sensitive to public reactions to their conduct and validates gendered norms of social behaviors. As shown in the rape myths, the masculine authority making the honorable values produces collective contempt for female victims, not male perpetrators. The collective honor is also a main culprit in making a community more inclined towards the dispositional affinity for a cultural unity. The bifurcating system of honor and shame sets in motion the collective sentiments for social standards of expected behaviors, making social members to be so anxious not

to transgress the behavioral standards. Pitt-Rivers sees the driving force of the collective sentiments for an honorable status as a principal factor in making Andalusia analogous with a small peasant society, the peasant community whose neighbors are closely interconnected to each other, making it a homogeneous society. As compared to Andalusia, yet, an urban province shows a less degree of the collective honor:

> [Moral sanctions'] effectiveness varies with the size of the community . . . [In the urban area,] the possibility of a relative anonymity is open to the man who moves from one district to another, and the force of public opinion is diminished when it is no longer omniscient. The diminished concern with the ethical aspect of honor in the large towns must surely be related to this fact. (61)

Doyle makes it his authorial stance not to design a homogeneous society, which the collective sentiments of honor and shame bring about when he wrote *The Snapper* in 1990. It is because he replied, "Priests in working-class parts of Dublin are peripheral figures" (White 169), when an English critic of *The Snapper* asked, "Where was the priest, where was the Church? This is a pregnant girl" (169). It is, thus, assumed that Doyle's self-proclaimed position in writing *The Snapper* was not "a priest or moralist" (171). His Sharon is perhaps part of a modern-day Irish reality, as he argues:

> [Sharon is] going through a stage in her life. When I was that age, when I stopped being a student and was caring money, one of the things I'd buy with that money is alcohol, and not because I had the burning need for alcohol, but for the sheer pleasure of being with a group of friends and talking all night and getting pleasantly drunk. . . . I don't see any problem with young people getting drunk . . . I'm not advocating it as a nightly exercise, but there's no point in moralizing. . . . (White 170)

Ironically, yet, Doyle's realism in portraying a contemporary Irish society discloses the fatalism of the violated privacy in which all the community is involved in the tribunal of mutual recrimination. Doyle's attempt to make Sharon's privacy with her pregnancy to be a new possibility of Irish individual sphere paradoxically shows a more dramatic revelation of her enmeshed in the requiring forces of Irish honors. The demanding sentiments of the Irish collective honor create a society in which relational intensity is increased. Bourdieu says, in such a society "the relationship with others, through its intensity, intimacy and continuity, takes precedence over the relationship one has with oneself" (Bourdieu, "The Sentiment" 212).

V. Conclusion

The Snapper makes its final scene the would-be radio DJ, Jimmy Jr.'s first-time live broadcast of pop music when he is made the substitute for a regular DJ in a radio station. While Jimmy Jr.'s facetious voices are being heard from the radio in the living room at the Rabbitte residence, Sharon feels the start of her labor. The 1980s' songs of American pop artists, James Brown and Alexander O'Neal, Jimmy Jr. plays on the radio signify an Irish daily life turning into a more modernized condition in which capitalist commercialism nullifies tribal, parochial, and national interests. The world-wide pop cultures in which Jimmy Jr. is saturated denote Ireland's growing ties with European economy and European lifestyle's influence on the Irish life in the post-independence era. Juxtaposed with the social backdrop of such a modernizing process, yet, the start of Sharon's labor ironically revives the perennial practices of the Catholic patriarchal ethos, which make an unregulated woman a public shame. A rape victim, Sharon's labor pains

backwardly conjure up the tragedies of the Magdalene victims, who were shamed as fallen women by the cognitive and motivating structures of the patriarchal honor.

In 1990, Ireland saw the election of the first female president in history, Mary Robinson—a feminist lawyer. Even in her presidency, the Magdalene Laundry was never terminated. The rape myths have survived even in a progress in the public awareness of women's underprivileged conditions. Many of the rape victims, i.e. women, are still compelled to go abroad to get access to abortions due to the Catholic moral norms equally treating the life of a foetus and that of a pregnant woman. Sharon's shamed body is a performance of gendered values at the heart of historical experiences from the past. That is, her body is a repository of Irish traditional practices enacting the Catholic patriarchal ethos perpetually tailoring new experiences to its cognitive-emotional structures, which guarantee the correctness of behavioral modes.

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Abstract

The Snapper: Sharon's Pregnancy and the Irish Catholic Ethos

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This paper is designed to historicize Roddy Doyle's novel, *The Snapper*, and its character Sharon's perseverance to keep her privacy with her pregnancy in terms of Irish gendered morals. It is particularly argued that Sharon is a modern reincarnation of the Magdalene women, whose misrepresented sexuality made them reduced to being moral opprobrium by the means of turning them into social outcasts. The Magdalene Laundries in history, which accommodated the defamed women, are prime examples of the Irish Catholic support for the State in implementing moral practices. Sharon's shamed body is a practice of the collective honor by which patriarchal values are respected in the way of restricting women's sexuality only to marriage for domesticity. Her body is a repository of Irish traditional practices playing out the Catholic patriarchal ethos perpetually adjusting new experiences to its cognitive-emotional structures, which effectuate the correctness of women's sexuality.

■ Key words : Irish Catholicism, gender, patriarchy, Magdalene, *The Snapper*
(아일랜드 가톨릭교, 성, 가부장제, 막달레나, 『스내퍼』)

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