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# The Politics of Interior Monologue
## — A Feminist Reading of "Penelope"

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## I

Why are Molly's voices captured in the interior monologue? Why does not she 'speak' about herself? Why does she remain within the utter silence of the thinking subject? Does she not have her own language? These are some questions that are lingering in mind my after reading "Penelope." This essay purposes to find some answers to these questions, focusing on Joyce's engagement as a male writer with the woman question and, per Irigaray, the ethics of sexual difference. Adorno provides a tactful comment on the implication of 'interior monologue' technique.[1] He writes: "The voice of the age echoes through their [Joyce, Beckett and modern composers] monologues" (Adorno 166). This pointed argument on the relation of a literary technique and

1) Many stylistic studies have been done on Joyce's revolutionary experiment with style and narrative technique in terms of 'stream of consciousness' and 'interior monologue.' But some confusions still come to happen for the unclear mixture of these two newly contrived literary notions. I qualify here, following Humphrey, the notion of 'interior monologue' as a narrative *technique* while narrowing down the notion of 'stream of consciousness' novel as a designator of the sub-genre of novel (Humphrey 24).

its social and historical background, is helpful in my engagement with the question of how Joyce endows Molly, a colonial woman, with a voice of her own in terms of the appropriateness of interior monologue in conveying "Nebrakada! Femininum!" (*Ulysses* 359; hereafter abbreviated as *U*). At issue is the relevance of interior monologue in bringing "Femininum" out from Molly. Joyce indicates that the female monologue of the "Penelope" chapter is the "indispensable countersign" (*Selected Letters of James Joyce* 278). This is an attempt to redress the balance with Joyce's following suggestion: "I have recorded, simultaneously, what a ***man*** says, sees, thinks, and what such seeing, thinking, saying does, to what you Freudians call the subconscious."[2] One answer is to suggest a colonial woman's imprisonment in her barren reality. "Confronted with a barren reality, the colonial subject [like Molly] is likely to retreat into the kind of internal dream and fantasy" (Eagleton 317).

Molly is a colonial subalternity. Molly is not a native of one colonial territory. She, with her heritage of Ireland and Gibraltar, is a subaltern native of the empire itself. She becomes a signifier of colonial subalternity in general (Duffy 184).

She is excluded from the web of social communication. Her confinement within home and bed is symptomatic of her exclusion from social communication. Molly is torn between her desire to speak herself and the inescapable confinement within the prison of social induction. In any case, Molly's interior monologue is not mere retreat. Her 'internal dream and fantasy,' conveyed in the peculiar appropriateness of interior monologue for a colonial subaltern, function as the "indispensable countersign." This invites us not only to rethink of Bloom (modern Ulysses) and Stephen's (modern Telemachus) returning to rest in maternity but also to dwell again on the implication of Bloom's vision of 'universal brotherhood' with Molly's corrective to his utopian ideal.

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2) Djuna Barnes, "James Joyce," *Vanity Fair* 18 (1922): 65; quoted from Boone 191. This is from Joyce's interview held in 1922.

A male writer's conveyance of a woman's interior dreams and fantasies is far from easy. The critical debate on Joyce's position toward Molly is a hot issue in recent feminist approaches to *Ulysses*. Since the publication of *Ulysses*, Molly has been considered either an archetypal representation of Joyce's 'eternal feminine,' or a debased stereotype of female eroticism. The pro-Joyce camp refers to Joyce's emphatic acceptance of the silenced women's voices. Molly's seemingly alogical, flowing, and inconsequential sentences are considered as a pre-intellectual, poetic consciousness (Froula 297). What we call the 'feminine style' transgresses masculine logical structures, and releases feminine flow. The feminine style of lack of ratio and logic is instrumental as a weapon to attack what the text depicts as mistaken illusions of patriarchal self-presence. "Penelope" makes a space where a woman has her voice. It is a countersign to male symbolic power. Molly's language documents a shattering of phallic modes of discourse and their systems of rational authority. It questions the male patterning of knowledge. It opposes the patriarchal image of 'Woman' as not-he, rather than woman herself.

It is too rash to presume that Joyce's writing is the emblem of 'ecriture feminine' or 'feminine writing.' A problem with the pro-Joyce reading of "Penelope" is that it easily leans toward a facile definition that Molly's language is an 'uncensored' and 'unsublimated' interior monologue. But this argument is subject to a basic refutation that her monologue is already mediated and filtered. Molly's complaint is directed toward her creator, Joyce. Reflecting Joyce's self-consciousness, Molly questions the male writer's qualification to write of "Femininum." Molly complains about her confinement within domesticity to Jamesy [Joyce]: "O Jamesy let me up out of this pooh sweets of sin whoever suggested that business for women what between clothes and cooking and children" (*U* 633). Molly's allusion to Jamesy makes us pause before effortlessly equating Molly's interior monologue with a colonial woman's inner world. Molly's complaint is a qualification of any easy identification of Joyce's writing with a feminine language. That a male writer's hand qualifies Molly's interior monologue does not automatically mean that it cannot

'represent' a colonial woman's inner world. Molly is the only thinking subject in this episode. She remains as the one constant, single fixity that a reader can always depend on. Molly's interior monologue redresses her authoritative narrative balance with Joyce's direct authorial voice. Writing goes beyond the (male) author's desire of authority.

Molly's nocturnal interior monologue does not remain a monologue, even though it takes that form. It is even a dialogical form. Molly's monologue concerns chiefly her social relationships with other people. She reflects on her experiences and memories. The polyphonic aspects in the Bakhtinian terms of *Ulysses* are no exception for this episode. Molly's interior monologue is in its own right a dialogue between herself, the dominant discourses of the male-dominated society, and the reader. Her narrative is "the site of interaction of a multiplicity of competing voices" (Bazargan 128). Her monologue mediates and negotiates the relationship between her domestic life and the (male-dominated) public life through mockery, parody, and mimicry. Joyce demonstrates how the hegemonic social and sexual relations are at work in Molly's seemingly private monologue. As a reader may have surmised, the setting of "Penelope" has its own logic. Her 'provocative' and 'flowing' thoughts are limited and qualified, for they take place in bed that is the emblem of domestic space. She is an active thinking subject, but she is not an acting subject. Bed is the place where Molly affirms her own "female authority" to defy the 'public' and 'neutral' values of the (male) public sphere. Molly complains about her confinement within the domestic space: "I was just like that myself they darent order me about the place its his fault of course having the two of us slaving here" (*U* 632). Woman's use of 'female authority' is, in a sense, an illusion. Her confinement within a private realm functions as a public sign of her *privatized* political nature. Molly does not escape this process of personalization and domestication. For Molly, the personal relationship is the only socially allowed form through which the public and social world may be known to her. Her interior monologue fits the nature of her personal relationships conveyed in dream and amorous reverie.

Joyce's greatness in his risky rendition of Molly's interior monologue as the countersign to male voices in *Ulysses* is that he is keenly awareness of the mechanism of a colonial woman's possible complicity with a phallocentric social system. Molly's thoughts are split and fractured. Her question does not come from an intellectual, and feminist woman. She is far from a political and intellectual person in the common sense of these terms. She is not properly educated. Molly bows to the given social convention on gender roles without many reservations. She is infatuated with mass magazines and advertising. Molly relies on popular magazines or pulp fictions. Molly accedes to such imperial goods as a British-made corset advertised in a London fashion magazine, an 'anti-fat' patent medicine, and the bedroom's flowered wallpaper. She wants to follow the commercial trends advertised in her favorite women's magazine *Gentlewoman*: "Id want advertised cheap in the Gentlewoman with elastic gores on the hips" (*U* 618). Molly wants to keep up the image of a 'gentlewoman' or 'lady.'

Despite the superficial similarities to Gerty in "Nausicaa" episode, Molly surely differs by rejecting the acculturated attitudes of female timidity and shame that Gerty internalizes: "I hate that pretending of all things with the old blackguards face on him." (*U* 619). Her rare candidness differentiates her from the other female characters in Joyce's fictions. Molly's candidness about her own experiences is a kind of touchstone against which she measures life. She is, like Bloom, "a student of the human soul" (*U* 524) who learns from "the university of life" (*U* 558). She is so confident in her learning from life: "God help their poor head I knew ore about men and life when I was 15 than theyll all know at 50" (*U* 627). She sounds a bit overconfident. But her confidence has its background. She acknowledges that Mrs. Riordan is a "well educated" lady. But Molly scorns her "chat" and lack of sexual appeal. The crucial motive of Molly's contempt of intellectual women comes from her empirical conclusion that their 'intellect' is ineffective for dealing with life: "she[Mrs. Riordan] had too much old chat in her about politics and earthquakes and the end of the world" (*U* 608). The reason for Molly's discomfort is that it is just

'chat.'

Men are usually interested in 'intellectual' talk. Molly's discomfort hits upon the blind point of the male discussion of the 'public' matters that Bloom terms "political complications." Even Bloom concludes that Molly is impermeable to any abstract ideas and philosophical thoughts: "She understood little of political complications, internal, or balance of power, external" (*U* 562). Molly's distrust of the male discourse on "political complications" has a ring for us in that male discourse is actually destructive in human history. But the point of concern here is the gendered mechanism of perception through which men and women come to grips with a social reality differently. Women do not come to public affairs as "political complications, internal, or balance of power, external." The generally private nature of Molly's thought is obvious. But she is not wholly ignorant of the public affairs such as politics and war. She has a *different* way to appropriate them. Molly's supposed vulgarity is, ironically enough, effective for revealing the faultiness of male discourses on such public affairs as "politics, earthquakes and the end of world." All these discourses sound intellectual, but they are far from true wisdom. The patriarchal definition of intelligence cripples the different forms of women's wisdom: "if someone gave them a touch of it themselves theyd know what I went through with Milly nobody would believe cutting her teeth too" (*U* 611). Molly takes issue with the old-fashioned definition of intelligence: "Where does their great intelligence come in Id like to know grey matter they have it all in their tail" (*U* 623). Molly makes a mockery of the value of male standards of intellect and reason. Molly's confidence, even though it sometimes sounds far-fetched, is understandable, for the male-dominated Western tradition of thought has put an unbalanced emphasis on the abstract intellect over the concrete wisdom derived from life.[3] Molly's harsh, but simple and direct critique of the nature of war

3) A point of discussion in recent feminist theory turns around the question of how to highlight women's different experiential knowledge from men's abstract intellect. Women's experiential knowledge from their life has been oppressed as the inferior in the dominant intellectual tradition of science and knowledge of abstract intellect and

discloses the dark side of the complicated male discourse on public affairs. She highlights that the true nature of war is, irrespective of the male politicians' defense of it in any gaudy rhetoric, the destruction of life, especially of youngsters (*U* 616-17). It is a trenchant critique of any chauvinistic defense of war. Molly grasps the connection of politics and war: "I hate the mention of politics after the war" (*U* 616). Any 'good war' does not exist, for the sacrificed are "any finelooking men" instead of such politicians as "old oom Paul" or "the old Krugers." The old politicians may carry on an exaggerated propaganda about war. But its true nature is the loss of (young) life. Accordingly Molly distrusts male friendship as only the mask of violence: "they call that friendship killing and then burying one another" (*U* 636). Rather she believes in the possibility of "a preestablished natural comprehension in incomprehension between the consummated females" (*U* 606).

## II

Molly's vision of a new society governed by women is not just an uneducated woman's innocent fantasy. This dream comes from her wisdom learned from life. She envisions a new society governed by women, which would ensure peace:

> I dont care what anybody says itd be much better for the world to be governed by the women in it you wouldnt see women going and killing one another and slaughtering when do you ever see women rolling around drunk

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reason. In this process of sexualization of knowledge, women's experiential knowledge is considered inferior and unscientific. Molly's refutation of intellect seems to demands the place of women's experiential knowledge. In the field of knowledge, "epistemic discrimination" is at work (Dalmiya and Alcoff 220). Molly's belief in her experiential knowledge from the university of life and her deep distrust of intellect could be reconsidered positively in this context of sexuation of knowledge.

> like they do or gambling every penny they have and losing it on horses yes because a woman whatever she does she knows where to stop sure they wouldn't be in the world at all only for us *they dont know what it is to be a woman and a mother* how could they where would they all of them be if they hadnt all a mother to look after them. (*U* 640; emphasis mine)

Molly's vision of "the world to be governed by the women" is not merely a wild idea. Her vision is far from a theoretically refined blueprint of future human society, but no doubt that she is closer to the truth in hitting upon the fatal drawbacks of modern civilization. Patriarchal society is first of all scarred by "the fundamental lack of civility between people" (Irigaray 1994, 71). It lacks of the mind of peace, respect and admiration. The results are violence, hatred and slaughter. Molly's vision, though too sweeping, appears extraordinarily penetrating now that we can, with the advantage of hindsight, survey so many episodes of violence and hatred done in our male-dominated history. Molly's onslaught on the male-dominated society is qualified in terms of sexuality and gender roles. The old-fashioned notion of neutral 'citizenship' cannot exist any longer. A pivotal imminent question is to find "a new *ethics* of sexuality" (*Sexes and Genealogies* 3; Irigaray's emphasis) in the field of language and discourse. War and violence are just two extremes of a chronic lack of civil mindedness. It is true that Molly's 'feminist manifesto' sounds too idealistic. But the limits of her sweeping injunction against the phallocentric society reflect her "legal position, her status as citizen, wife, and mother in 1904" (Pearce 8).

Molly's inconstancy as a female subject is well rendered in her ambiguous position toward men. She "condemns men, but depends on them for her identity" (Brivic 7). Molly's self-consciousness as a woman reminds us that she differs from other Joycean female characters not only in her attempt to find a loophole within Irish patriarchal culture but also in the very dilemma of her quest, since she cannot fully escape the symbolic power of the socially given gender role. Molly's sexual fantasies and her preoccupations express her ambivalent attitude toward men. From such confusion and ambiguity, Molly

certainly deserves, and duly gets, an outlet or escape, whether in her reservations about her partnership with Boylan or in her continuing care about Bloom's attitude toward her. She wants to express her own sexual desire. But her desire is expressible only in the symbolic.

A crucial problem is that the symbolic logic and forms of communication are eventually enforced by male standards. Molly's entrapment in the fantasy of sexual competition is explainable in this context. She is still the prisoner of the masculine validation of feminine self-worth. The standard of masculine validation is physical beauty and youth. Molly's infatuation with mass magazines and cosmetics follows the standards of physical beauty and youth that are instrumental in attracting men. Molly tends to regard other women as sexual enemies and competitors. But she poses an important question of "what it is to be a woman and a mother" (*U* 640). Her mention of "a big hole in the middle of us" (*U* 611) articulates the question of female sexuality. It refutes the imaginary projection of psychic wholeness onto 'the feminine' by male need and erotic longing. The hole in woman is the hole in the seemingly unified texture of male culture. It is an affirmation of the value of sexual difference that is not reducible to the phallic.[4] The big hole symbolizes the disruption of the masculine projection of wholeness onto women. Women's voice is concealed or masked in the crack of male discourse. But it is not absent. It is just covered or masked. Molly's interior monologue is a symptom of this cover up. Her interior monologue intends to deliver a silenced voice not to be uttered in the male-dominated symbolic.

Molly's divided and dislocated attitudes toward her sexuality as a female

4) Molly's reference to feminine holes may conjure up a countersign to the Lacanian valorization of phallus that functions as the defining character of both sexes: "The process by which the phallus, a signifier, becomes associated with the penis, an organ, involves the procedures by which women are systematically excluded from positive self-definition and a potential autonomy . . . the phallus is the valorized signifier around which both men and women define themselves as complementary or even supplementary subjects. Because the penis and the phallus are (albeit illusorily) identified, women are regarded as castrated" (Grosz 1990, 116).

subject are impressively rendered in her sexual affair with Boylan. Her post-orgasmic thoughts about Boylan are imbued with some complex feelings of sexual pleasure, and tinged with emotional solitude. Molly enjoys sexual pleasure with Boylan, a sexual macho. He is compared to "a stallion driving it up into" (*U* 611) her. Boylan's stallion image symbolizes his animal prowess.[5] Although amazed by Boylan's sexual prowess, she feels uncomfortable that she is only a sexual object to Boylan: Molly does not shy away from sexual pleasure. But she simultaneously projects herself as a sexual object of man's desire. She does not feel comfortable with Boylan's treatment her as a sexual object. Boylan wants only sexual pleasure from Molly. Women are responsible for pregnancy, the result of sex: "they have us swollen out like elephants" (*U* 611).[6]

Molly's seemingly inappropriate concentration on sexuality is twofold. It is a positive, liberating force. But it is also limited. Her sexual pleasure is programmed in a male libidinal economy in accordance with a certain phallic order. Her sexual pleasure is the mirroring of men's desire (Boone 211). Molly

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5) Bloom conducts a clandestine epistolary affair with Martha with a pen name Henry Flower. The contrast of the image of Boylan's bestiality and Bloom's vegetability is noteworthy. Bloom's last name and his pen name Henry Flower suggest his pacifism: 'Flower Bloom(s.)' Bloom's names symbolize pacifism.

6) In the discourse of the phallic economy, pregnancy is perceived as a mere waiting. Women's reproductive labor is located outside society, out side the public debate. The aboriginal meaning of pregnancy as the reproduction of human species is disregarded in the scientism of modern capitalism. Productive labor is 'scientifically' calculated and organized. Joyce takes issue with this phallic notion of pregnancy through Bloom's meditation on Mrs Purefoy's delivery and his distance from the other young intellectuals' 'scientific' discussion on her pregnancy and immediate delivery (*U* 234). In the episode "Oxen of the Sun," the contrast between Mina Purefoy's experience of painful delivery and the inflated argument of the male characters is sharply established. She is objectified and off the stage, being reduced to an object of male discourse. The inflated and various 'scientific' arguments of male medical students on the history of women's pregnancy and delivery have no meaningful contents. The attended young 'intellectuals' are just confined to their exaggerated medical knowledge. They don't have any real understanding and respect of the opposite sex.

even wishes she could be a man who can enjoy "a lovely woman": "I wouldnt mind being a man and get up on a lovely woman" (*U* 633). She wants to feel "all the pleasure those men get out of a woman" (*U* 621). This is an expression of a kind of sexual subalternity of "the feeling of mental inferiority and habits of subservience and obedience which necessarily and structurally develop insinuations of domination" (Jameson 76). Molly's frank expression of sexual desire is symptomatic of a common woman's confinement within phallic economy. In the given norms of phallic economy, women do not succeed in living their affects, emotion and sexual desire. This is the power of phallic economy that makes Molly submit herself to Boylan's sexual desire. On this level, Molly is likened to a tradable commodity.[7] Only men are the marketers to trade women:

> men again all over they can pick and choose what they please a married woman or a fast widow or a girl for their different tastes like those houses round behind Irish street no but were to be always chained up *theyre not going to be chaining me up no damn fear* once I start I tell you for stupid husbands jealousy why cant we all remain friends over it instead of quarrelling. (*U* 639; emphasis mine)

Women are reduced to exchangeable objects in the economy of phallic authority. And the logic of market plays by the rule of efficiency. It a commodity is no longer useful, it is thrown away. So much for women's situation in a phallocentric society:

> the greatest earthly happiness answer to a gentlemans proposal affirmatively my goodness theres nothing else its all very fine for them but as for being a

7) Femininity' is a role, an image, a value, imposed upon women by male systems of representation. In this masquerade of femininity, the woman loses herself, and loses herself by playing on her femininity. In our social order, women are 'products' used and exchanged by men. Their status is that of merchandise, 'commodities (Irigaray 1985, 84).

> woman as soon as youre old they might as well throw you out in the bottom of the ash pit. (*U* 624)

Molly refuses to be submissive to this commodity logic of phallic economy. She envisions a feminine community: "why can't we all remain friends over it instead of quarreling."

She demands her sexual subjectivity. This is related to her recognition of the different 'jouissance' keeping with her own body and sexual desire.[8] Molly is aware that she becomes a whore in her sexual affair with Boylan: "can you feel him trying to make a whore of me" (*U* 610).[9] What is at issue is that she positions herself as a whore who hopes to receive "a nice present" for her play as a whore: "his father made his money over selling the horses for the cavalry well he could buy me a nice present up in Belfast" (*U* 617). A sign of Joyce's genius is that he does not lose a keen touch with the complex and even contradictory movements of her mind. Molly's dislike of "books with a Molly in them" indicates her deep wariness of the possibility of falling herself into the state of whore (*U* 622).

The true reason for Molly's dissatisfaction with Boylan is that her sexual pleasure is disconnected from a feeling of mutual respect.[10] The key point is

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8) Lacan mentions on the feminine jouissance (Lacan 73). Lacan's explanation of women's jouissance is wrong or at least falls short of delving sincerely into women's sexuality, insofar as his logic turns stubbornly around of the centrality of the phallic. Why are women only allowed to have 'a supplementary jouissance?' Who draws the limits between the principal and the supplementary? Why is she only 'being not-whole?' Molly refers to men's neglect or ignorance of women's sexual subjectivity: "not a notion what I meant arent they thick *never understand what you say* even youd want to print it up on a big poster for them not even if you shake hands twice with the left he didn't recognise me either" (*U* 623). We need to find in women's language the expression of "the sexuate woman's body in non-phallic and non-maternal terms" (Irigaray 1991, 74).

9) Molly's image is as both a virgin and harlot. This suggests Joyce's ongoing deconstruction of the binary logic of harlotry and virginity in Catholicism. Molly shares the birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 8 September.

Boylan is out of touch with Molly's deep thoughts and subjectivity. Boylan is not a man who can get any serious grip on Molly's own female subjectivity.[11] She realizes that Boylan is far from "a marrying man," for marriage is not merely sex: "hes not a marrying man so somebody better get it out of him" (*U* 617). Molly's sex with Boylan lacks a real tenderness, affection, and mutual respect. To say it provocatively, it is just a bestial coition. Boylan is a "savage brute" (*U* 621). What Molly wants is love, not merely coition. Sexual relationship is not a disguised or polemic form of the master-slave relationship. It can be a celebration. Sex has its human cultural status when it amounts to a mutual respect and emotional sympathy with each other. The very word 'love' takes on a new meaning in Molly's long reminiscence of her relationship with

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10) All most all the conjugal relationships in Joyce's fictions are flawed. Molly's problematic sexual affair with Boylan may be a variation of Richard-Bertha relation in *Exiles*. The idea that Richard gives 'freedom' to Bertha is only his idea. In reality, Bertha is entirely beholden to Richard's male desire of possession. Richard's and Robert's struggle over Bertha's body functions on the logic of phallic economy. Bertha is reduced to a phallic object as a symbolic property that ensures the exchange of patriarchal power and privilege between Richard and Robert. Richard is more intellectual character than Bloom. But Richard falls far short of Bloom in the latter's understanding of the opposite sex. Richard does not, in spite of his pompous self-assertion as a male feminist, come to grips with Bertha's desire of freedom. She insists on "her affective, centripetal interpretation of liberty as the heartfelt, consensual production of a jointly anticipated happiness" (Valente 163). *Exiles* documents with other Joyce's fictions the difficulty of establishing the ethics of love in authentic thoughtfulness. A clue for the possibility of "the heartfelt, consensual production of a jointly anticipated happiness" is matured in Bloom-Molly relation. Their mutual respect embedded in their silent understanding would set the Blooms off from other conjugal couples in Joyce's fictions. Molly and Bloom's mutual understanding is worthy of a full attention. I will dwell on this issue later.

11) This conjures up a sharp contrast with another sexual tryst between Bloom and Gerty in "Nausicaa." It is true that Bloom shows some biases toward Gerty's female subjectivity as typically illustrated in his unrelaxed and aggressive 'gaze' on Gerty. Gerty is, like Molly, largely reduced to a sexual object of Bloom's sexual desire. Bloom, nevertheless, shows an unmistakable sympathy with Gerty's physical disadvantages.

Bloom. Sexual pleasure is unquestionably a valuable thing for Molly. But sexual pleasure without respect becomes a horrible thing as her after-orgasm thoughts disclose. Love "is only possible when there are two parties and in a relationship that is not submissive to one another, not subject to reproduction" (*Sexes and Genealogies* 4). It is therefore hardly surprising that Joyce's intentions in the description of the Molly-Boylan couple is to delve into the reason for men's dissociation from women. Our civilization lacks an ethics of love in sexual difference.[12] With all these considerations, Molly's mental disengagement from Boylan is inevitable. Her spiritual dissatisfaction with Boylan marks a crucial turning point in her further relationship with Bloom. Molly should, irrespective of all her sexual pleasure with Boylan and without a possible future relationship with him, turn to Bloom for something she has not yet achieved. Her decision is a rare chance to portray the ethics of love.

12) For Irigaray's elaboration on the sexual ethics and its relation with the divine, see *Sexes and Genealogies* 55-72. The starting point for the ethics of love is the recognition of the irreducibility of each sex. Each sex should have his or her sexed language, subjectivity, and law. After that, a possibility of true sexual exchange may be possible: "Only when women take (up) a space and a time that are capable of mapping their unique morphologies, desires, and discourses can there be an encounter between, or touching of, the two sexes. Until then, we exist within a hom(m)osexuality that regards women only as objects, not partners" (Grosz 1994, 346). The notion of 'hom(m)osexuality' here is more philosophical. It does not merely refer to sexual modality. It takes, philosophically speaking, issue with the logic of 'homosexual' sameness of phallocentrism. Irigaray's ongoing engagement with the question of sexual difference tries to undermine this logic of 'homosexual sameness' in Western phallocentrism: "Irigaray's critique of phallocentrism is a challenge to the hom(m)osexual reduction of woman to a sexual sameness with men. She introduces a hetero(=other) sexuality, a sexuality different from its phallic homo (=same) sexual definition" (Grosz 1994, 349).

## Ⅲ

On a superficial reading, the Bloom-Molly conjugal relationship looks broken. Through the whole story of *Ulysses*, Bloom is obsessed with Molly's adultery with Boylan. Bloom also enjoys sexual pleasure in Gerty's exposure. He relishes the epistolary love affair with Martha. Bloom has been to the point of sexual impotence after their only son Rudy's death (Henke 254). The Blooms' conjugal relationship is problematic and barren: "there remained a period of 10 years, 5 months and 18 days during which carnal intercourse had been incomplete" (*U* 605). More significantly, their "mental intercourse" is also rare. The chief reason for the loss of their "mental intercourse" (*U* 606) is their son Rudy's death: "I knew well Id never have another out 1st death too it was we were never the same since" (*U* 640). After confirming Molly's copulation with Boylan, Bloom even envisions the possibility of "Divorce, not now" (*U* 603). With all these obsessions with adultery, Bloom even confesses his deep disenchantment with love: "Man and woman, love, what is it? A cork and bottle. I'm sick of it. Let everything rip" (*U* 407).[13]

But all these understandable 'negative' readings of the Blooms in their problematic conjugality remain, with some convincing points, a superficial review of the profundity of their relationship. The profundity and deepness of their relationship may not be understandable in the bourgeois morality of marriage. First of all, Bloom acknowledges "The counterbalance of her[Molly] proficiency of judgment regarding one person, proved true by experiment" (*U* 562), although he thinks of Molly's "deficient mental development." They are both students of "the university of life." The apparent difference in vocabulary and political stance between Bloom and Molly should not lead one to disregard the deeper resemblance in their ability to sympathize and respect. More

13) Moretti argues that just as *Dubliners* expressed a situation of paralysis, *Ulysses* expresses a lack of relationships. The situation expresses a total dissociation (Moretti 184).

importantly, Molly sees into who Bloom *is* as a man, and vice versa. The evidence for their seemingly broken conjugality in terms of the bourgeois notion of marriage does not mean that the Blooms totally resign themselves to the hopelessness of a relationship of self-respect, as their final convergence may provide a clue for the ethics of love, following Irigaray, "as a third term" (*An Ethics of Sexual Difference* 27). Irrespective of all the apparent problems in their conjugal relations and her sexual enjoyment with Boylan, Molly feels that Bloom is the only person who acknowledges who she is as a *woman*:

> we are flowers all a womans body yes that was one true thing he said in his life and the sun shines for you today yes that was *why I liked him because I saw he understood or felt what a woman is* and I knew I could always get round him. (*U* 643; emphasis mine)

Molly's allusion to the association of women with nature implies the difference of female knowledge from male knowledge. It also refers us to Bloom, "the womanly man" with penname Henry Flower who "bloom[s]" in women, the flowers: "we are flowers." More importantly, Molly already knows in her mind that Bloom may be the only man who "understood or felt what a woman is." Joyce's ongoing rendition of Bloom as a womanly man is an attempt to envision the way of how a man or woman understands or feels the opposite sex. Molly also believes that "nobody understands his cracked ideas but me still" (*U* 639). Chances are that this may be partly her illusion. But the whole context in *Ulysses* supports the other direction that she is right. This is the reason for Bloom's final rest in Molly. Bloom lies in the pose of "the manchild in the womb" (*U* 606). He travels and returns to Molly: "Womb Weary? He rests. He has traveled" (*U* 606). It is of interest that Molly plays a mother role to Bloom here, and vice versa. "Searching for the patriarchal signifier that will heal the gap of maternal absence, Molly reverts to a pre-Oedipal model of emotional satisfaction in her conjugal relationship with Leopold Bloom" (Henke 1990: 132).

A shared ground for the Blooms is that their care for Milly and Stephen, the surrogate son, which often goes with a genuine respect for others. The chief reason for Molly's taking Bloom in marriage is that he is tender and caring: "I like that in him polite to old women like that and waiters and beggars too" (*U* 608). Molly has a similar capacity for compassion with other people's suffering: "the poor men that have to be out all the night from their wives and families in those roasting engines stifling" (*U* 621); "I threw the penny to that lame sailor for England home" (*U* 615). But Bloom is not merely "a channel, a surrogate, an instrument for the articulation of primordial feminine desire" (Henke 161). Neither is Molly as she repeatedly asserts: "I suppose he thinks Im finished and laid out on the shelf well *Im not no*" (*U* 630). What Molly finds in Bloom's personality is that he is responsible for his family as a *man*. He does not forfeit his own *manliness* in its true nature. What Joyce suggests in the characterization of Bloom is that we may rethink and modify our rigid preconception or biases for the notion of manliness and womanliness. This sets against Boylan's masculism, an extreme symbol of the old-fashioned notion of manliness. Joyce invites us to incorporate the disregarded values such as kindness, generosity, compassion, and respectfulness into a newly envisioned notion of (wo)manliness. Joyce's project seems yet incomplete and reveal problems upon a detailed examination. But the point is that he challenges the rigid and unquestioned preconception of manliness and womanliness. Joyce's challenge urges us to take on a long-standing exploration of this question of sexual identity and difference. There may not be a final answer, for the notion of sexual identity is not fixed and unchangeable. What is at stake is to situate always the question of identity in a sexual *relation* that does not exclude the role of the given social, cultural contexts. Molly's flowing and unfixable interior monologue also questions the notion of identity detached from relations.

Joyce explains why he repeatedly inserts 'yes' in "Penelope:" "I had sought to end with the least forceful world I could possibly find. I had found the word 'yes,' which is barely pronounced, which denotes acquiescence,

self-abandon, relaxation, the end of all resistance" (Ellmann 712). What does Joyce have in mind when he used such a provocative expression that may be regarded as acquiescence, self-abandon, relaxation, and the end of all resistance? 'Yes' to whom? Following literally Joyce's explanation, Molly's repeated 'yes' may be considered a token of her acquiescence in response to the social order from which she is excluded physically and symbolically. Another answer may be set to the question of 'yes' to whom. Her self-abandon may not be truly self-abandon, if she only abandons herself *to herself*. Accordingly, her 'yes' reads as a resistant 'no,' the refusal of an acting subject to submit her thoughts to others' desires and demands (Kenner 262). It expresses Molly's acknowledgement of her subjectivity and sexuality as irreducible to others' demands. My premise is that the meaning of the repeated 'yes' may be discussed in consideration of the question posed in *Finnegans Wake*: "Is there one who understands me?" (*Finnegans Wake* 627.15; hereafter abbreviated as *FW*). It is a question of how we can establish the ethics of love between two sexes and between the same sex. As Molly thinks, "they[men] cant get on without us" (*U* 613). So much for women. The Blooms' mutual respect in their seemingly troubled conjugal relationship is a desirable germ apart from its effect upon actual life. Their love beyond the morals of bourgeois marriage is an expression of the required common endeavor for a qualitatively different life from what we have now. Their reminiscences of Howth are not merely a sad memory of the lost paradise for them. It is a vision of a peaceful harmony of men, women and nature:

> All quiet on Howth now. The distant hills seem. Where we. The rhododendrons. I am a fool perhaps. He gets the plums and I the plumstones. Where I come in. All that old hill has seen. Names change: that's all. Lovers: yum yum. (*U* 308)

The beautiful scene is reminiscent of their happy sexual experience on Howth, which testifies to the new sense of love. Howth is a place Bloom and Molly

often walked to, one that recalls their youth and romantic feelings for each other. It is the place where they confirm the possibility of mutual respect. More importantly, their shared memory of walks and love on Howth may illustrate a radically new relation between them, with the emphasis on achieving a mature love and respect. It is "a sense of family as community" (Herr 178). The image of Howth is charged with flowers and music: "Ben Howth, the rhododendrons. We are their harps. I. He. Old. Young" (*U* 223). Love is like a music that is not reducible to a musician or a harp, a musical instrument. Love is "a third, mediator between us thanks to which we return to ourselves, other than we were" (Irigaray 1991, 180-81). Love, like music from the harmony of a musician and a harp, transcends the couple of lovers who are musician and the musical instrument that creates music, the third mediator. The harmony of the lovers, like the relation of a musician and a musical instrument, gives birth to a love, the music, which is "the third mediator between us." More importantly, a couple of lovers' lives and souls are deepened by the power of love, the third mediator that does not belong to either of lover.

More clearly than ever before, as her repeated yes demonstrates, Molly realizes that she must accept Bloom to have any fulfillment at all:

> O and the sea the sea crimson sometimes like fire and the glorious sunsets and the figtrees in the Alameda gardens yes and all the queer little streets and pink and blue and yellow houses and the rosegardens and the jessamine and geraniums and cactuses and Gibraltar as a girl where I was a Flower of the mountain yes when I put the rose in my hair like the Andalusian girls used or shall I wear a red yes and how he kissed me under the Moorish wall and I thought well as well him as another and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and then he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes. (*U* 643-44)

The reason for the Blooms' final arriving at a rare peace and ripeness as

Molly's expresses her repeated 'yes' is the convincing possibility of a new conjugal relationship of respect between them. Sex itself does not give them this peace of mind and spiritual maturity. The very repetition with added emphasis of "yes, yes" brings home at once the inexorable presence of her soul partner Bloom: "another of their sex of course hed never find another woman like me to put up with him the way I do" (*U* 613). Molly acknowledges that only Bloom, in spite of all apparent problems in their conjugal relationship, has the potential power of tolerance and affection for others, including Molly. Love is made possible when grown out of an ethics of sexual difference. This goes beyond both the egoistic male superiority and the female subalternity of the binary logic of 'Self'/'Other.' Molly's 'yes' confirms her unconditional commitment to the ethics of love in respect of the singularity of the opposite sex. We are something insurmountable, a mystery, a liberty that will never be 'mine' to each other. Each sex is irreducible to the other. From this acknowledgment of sexual difference, a true humility of oneself arises that invites us, as Irigaray puts, to "return to ourselves, other than we were."

I would say the ending of *Finnegans Wake* forms a pendant to Molly's 'yes' to Bloom. These dimensions are certainly not lost in Joyce's final masterpiece *Finnegans Wake*, regardless of its infamous unreadibility and difficulty. The final scene negates any such simple solution between HCP and ALP. ALP flows into the ocean, the "cold mad feary father" (*FW* 628.2). Is ALP truly claiming her female identity at the end of *Finnegans Wake*? The answer will prove convincing only if the final mingling of ALP and the father sea is a crowning of the opposite sex's mutual understanding and respect. The togetherness of HCP's and ALP's distant views on love have been fused again in this moment of ALP's awakening of HCP: "I'll be your aural eyeness" (*FW* 623.18). Both Molly's rapprochement with Bloom and ALP's final merging with the father sea bear witness to this hope of a newly sexed culture of respect and compassion in which one becomes the partner's "aural eyeness." ALP invites HCE to their walk in harmony: "We will take our walk before in the timpul they ring the earthly bells. . . . Or the birds start their treestirm shindy"

(*FW* 621.33-36). Echoing the Blooms' walk on Howth, "The walk on which Anna wants to take HCE will carry him toward the vibration of birdsong that represents release from the alienation of their moribund conventional relationship" (Brivic 34). This rarely achieved community of peace and respect is a seed for Bloom's vision of 'Bloomusalem' composed of "acute sympathetic alien[s]" (*Stephen Hero* 73). This community of respect is an expression of human solidarity based on (sexual) difference that is "anarchistically respectsful of the liberties of the noninvasive individual" (*FW* 72.16-17). This community encompasses "the reality of the sexual identity in which each person enjoys rights appropriate to her or his sex" (Irigaray 1994, viii). But the release from "the moribund conventional relationship" is undoubtedly far from offhand. This culture cannot be established right away. The how and the when of building a new sexed culture rooted in mutual respect in awe of (sexual) difference becomes precisely a big issue of our civilization. But as Anna's final merging with the father sea symbolically shows, Joyce certainly believes in the likelihood of the emergence of a new culture in the ethics of love.

(숙명여대)

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**Abstract**

## 내적 독백의 정치학—"Penelope"의 한 여성론적 읽기

오 길 영

이 논문은 여성론적 입장, 특히 뤼스 이러거러이(Luce Irigaray)의 「성적 차이의 윤리」(The Ethics of Sexual Difference)에 관한 이론적 논의에 기대어 *Ulysses*의 "Penelope" 에피소드를 분석한 것이다. 본 연구에서는, 먼저 조이스가 이 에피소드를 '내적 독백'(interior monologue) 기법으로 구성한 이유를 살펴본다. 한 인물의 '의식의 흐름'을 포착하기 위한 현대 '모더니즘' 소설의 주요 기법으로 조이스가 혁신적으로 끌어 들이고 발전시킨 이 기법이, '식민지 여성성'(Colonial Femininity)의 전형적 형상화라 할 Molly의 삶과 의식을 그리는데 어떤 정치적, 문화적 함의를 지니는지를 따져보는 것이 논문의 서두를 이룬다. 이를 위해 세기 전환기 아일랜드의 식민지 상황, 특히 가부장제가 강력하게 지배했던 아일랜드 문화 상황에서 여성들이 처했던 위치와 그에 대한 자의식이 Molly의 '내적 독백'에서 어떻게 드러나는지를 분석한다.

그리고 Molly가 Boylan가 가졌던 '혼외정사'의 의미를, 남녀간의 사랑의 본질에 관한 이러거리이의 설득력 있는 입론에 비추어 살펴본다. Molly는 Boylan과의 관계에서 양면적 태도를 보인다. 그리고 그 양면성은 '식민지 여성성'의 전형적 모습이다. 그녀는 이 관계에서 단지 남성의 성적 대상으로만 한정되지 않는 고유한 자신의 (성적) 욕망을 지닌 '주체'임을 강조한다. 그러면서 비록 깊이있는 지적인 분석에 따른 것은 아니지만 남성 지배적 현대문명의 문제점을 날카롭게 지적한다. 그러나 동시에 Molly는 자신의 욕망의 가치를 대개는 남성적 시각에서 평가하는 한계를 드러내기도 한다.

논문의 결론부분에서는 Molly의 이런 양면적 태도가, 그 양면성에도 불구하고 진정한 성적 차이의 인식과 그에 따른 새로운 남녀관계의 모색으로 나아가고 있음을 Bloom과의 관계에서 조망한다. 물론 그들의 관계가 완벽한 형태의 새로운 남녀관계의 모습을 보여주는 것은 아니다. 그러나 조이스는 이들의 관계에서 현대 문명에서 왜곡된 남녀관계, 사랑, 인습화된 결혼의 치명적인 문

제점들이 무엇인지를 묻고 있으며, 성적 차이를 인정한 뒤에야 진정으로 가능한 남녀간의 관계맺음의 모습의 가능성을 탐색한다는 것이 이 논문의 결론이다.