

Molly's Carnivalistic Discourse in the "Penelope" Episode of *Ulysses*

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The intersection of inner experience and external reality is characteristic of interior monologue in *Ulysses*. For instance, Stephen's monologue is saturated with issues of power and domination in a colonial context. Bloom is not only concerned with voices from an immediate, outer reality. He also engages in a critique of the dominant social forces. Such persistent adulteration of hegemonic social discourse would not find an easy place in Molly's rambling assessment of her situation which informs us of her speculations, desires, plans, and memories. But, as I will attempt to show in this essay, varied spoken Dublin voices are interwoven in Molly's monologue, and the dialogue of voices within her mind is inhabited by a carnivalistic playing of high against low. Carnivalistic language in the Bakhtinian sense emerges in Molly's interior monologue, in the juxtaposition of two incongruous categories of discourse - official and unofficial, high and low.

Although it is now commonplace for critics to analyze Joyce's Molly in terms of the political unconscious of *Ulysses*,¹ critical opinions about the issue of Molly's reaction to the words and actions of those in power are diverse. For instance, underscoring Joyce's aversion to the prevalence of boredom and convention in colonial Ireland, Seamus Deane sees Molly, not Stephen or Bloom, as the

embodiment of the resilient body's triumph over oppressive rule. Deane describes the ungrammatical, unpunctuated flow of the Joycean woman's language as emancipatory, and links her unrepressed thoughts about bodily pleasure to an overcoming of the isolation of the individual subject and to a rewriting of the history of the subject (Deane, 1997: 168-70). By contrast, Enda Duffy argues that Molly's flow of language and her discourse about sexuality imply her indulgence in the personal and the erotic as a result of her abjection as a colonized female subject. Molly's resistance to the regime of colonial surveillance, Duffy adds, is nevertheless discernible in the interrogativity of her thought/speech that comments on the opinions, prejudices, and beliefs of the Dublin of her day: Molly "effects a particular communication between divergent elements of the culture, marking the sign of a potential solidarity - and equality - in [an imaginary national] community and the text" (Duffy, 1994: 167).

I think Duffy is right in accentuating Molly's capacity to question authority, but I disagree with his argument that despite Molly's intervention in the language-economy of colonial power, she is nonetheless a completely interpellated, abject, subaltern subject (ibid.: 188-89). It seems to me that the significance of Molly's language resides neither in its undifferentiated flow and its disclosure of female desires, nor in her use of interrogativity to present us with a subaltern perspective on divergent elements of a culture. Rather, as I hope to demonstrate in this essay, the importance of the dialogic quality in her language should be emphasized as it not only institutes a process of socialization in place of rigid, socio-hierarchical interrelationships, but also constitutes a triumph over the interpellation of the colonial subject by imperial ideology. That is, her monologue is endowed with the significance and value of a "history", invoking the dialogized discourses that act as a counter to old hierarchies. For Joyce, Irish paralysis does not exactly result from colonial rule, but from the body's subjection to the pathetic seriousness with which official falsifications coat the world. What is lacking or erased, in Bakhtin's terms, is dialogic or parodic language that involves a re-evaluation of meaning by drawing ideas and languages into carnivalistic contacts and combinations (Bakhtin, 1981: 237). According to Bakhtin, carnivalistic language is linked up with "the familiar contact of 'absolute' dialogue" which points to the enactment of utopian community: the addressee of the utterance whose evaluative position is expressed

via his/her words is seen by Bakhtin as “someone who is lower, higher, familiar, foreign, and so forth” (Bakhtin, 1986: 95). Thus through Molly’s spacious memory, a carnivalistic intermingling of present and past, high and low, reality and fantasy is ushered in, breaking away from the metalanguage of dominant social discourse in Joyce’s Dublin.

To demonstrate Joyce’s emphasis on dialogic relations within discourse, we need to analyze the shared topics of Gerty’s and Molly’s interior monologues. As I will attempt to show in the first section of this essay, Gerty’s and Molly’s language are juxtaposed in a way that illuminates the limits of the languages of the high ideological genres. In the next section, I will turn to a discussion of how the dialogue of local voices within Molly’s mind is inhabited by a carnivalistic language, namely a “relocation of the levels of language” (Bakhtin, 1981: 237). In the conclusion, I will argue that a utopian strain emerges in an intimate, dialogic exchange between local Dublin voices and between diverse Gibraltarian voices constructed through Molly’s memory.

As Bakhtin suggests, in a hybrid construction, “it is obligatory for two linguistic consciousnesses to be present, the one being represented and the other doing the representing, with each belonging to a different system of language” (Bakhtin, 1981: 359). The representation of Molly’s and Gerty’s views of surrounding reality in *Ulysses* serves to illustrate the above Bakhtinian concept: what is represented through Molly’s and Gerty’s languages amounts to disempowered female existence imprisoned within domestic, social and economic structures, while simultaneously the representing consciousness opts for the capacity for Irish women to raise questions about the structures. Accordingly, Joyce does not accentuate Molly’s language as an antithesis to Gerty’s. Rather, what he pinpoints as the voice underlying the representation of Gerty and Molly is characterized by a process of hybridization. Preparing us for Molly, Gerty’s monologue presents a lot of topics they both share, including nuns, priests, wife-battering, menstrual periods, prostitutes, Martin Harvey, women-cyclists, toilets, a woman’s first kiss, moustaches, the intermediate exhibition, sentimental popular songs, Paddy Dignam’s death and organism. These shared topics are set up to unmask the structural tensions in Dublin society resulting from the conflict between authoritative discourse and unconventional, destabilizing discourse.

With the voice of hybridization in operation, not only is the double-voicing of Gerty's inner speech disclosed. Molly's taboo-breaking thoughts are saturated with dialogic interplay of voices and values, and also contribute to the empowerment of the oppressed Irishwoman's own authentic idiom.

The hegemonic power structure of British colonialism manifests itself through the process of institutionalization and monologization: Gerty's body is institutionalized to the extent that she "voices" the standards and ideals of femininity set up by Victorian domestic novels and British advertising agencies and women's magazines. Nonetheless, her inner narrative reveals her responsiveness to voices from surrounding reality. For instance, in the following passage of interior monologue, the language of women's magazines refracted through Gerty's voice is undercut by the destabilizing force which sets to work her internalized chatter with an imaginary, female addressee about Mrs. Dignam: "Then there was blushing scientifically cured and how to be tall increase your height and you have a beautiful face but your nose? That would suit Mrs Dignam because she had a button one" (*U* 13. 113-15). Such interaction with an immediate, local voice is surely not dogmatically predetermined. Molly, like Gerty, pays attention to fashion and the beauty pages in women's magazines, but Molly does not adopt their advertising slogans and sentimental language. Although the language of the fashion magazine which Gerty intermittently mimics returns in Molly's monologue, its dominance is nonetheless destabilized by Molly's double-voiced utterances. According to Bakhtin, double-voicedness means that two contending socio-ideological positions (semantic positions, in Bakhtin's terms) coexist in one expression. These bifurcations are "spread out in a plane, as standing alongside or opposite one another, as consonant but not merging or as hopelessly contradictory, as an eternal harmony of unmerged voices or as their unceasing and irreconcilable quarrel" (Bakhtin, 1984: 30). For instance, Molly's language undermines the institutionalized discourse of fashion in several respects: by vagueness - "socks with the skyblue silk things on them" (*U* 18. 421; my emphasis); by transgressing the dependence of the signified on the signifier in the fashion system - "that vulgar way in the half of a shirt they wear to be admired like a priest or a butcher or those old hypocrites in the time of Julius Caesar" (*U* 18. 1373-75); and by parodying - "the second pair of silkette stockings" (*U* 18.482; my emphasis), "one of those

kidfitting corsets Id want" (*U* 18.446; my emphasis), and "so capable and sincerely Irish he [Arthur Griffith] is indeed judging by the sincerity of the trousers I saw on him" (*U* 18.1229-31). What motivates this distancing from the system of signification operative in the fashion magazine is the dialogizing voice that is integrated into Molly's interior monologue in protest against a monologic construct of femininity. Accordingly, as far as the shared topic of the language of fashion or women's magazines is concerned, Gerty's interior monologue reveals a polarity between dialogized and homogenizing discourses, whereas a subversive, parodic voice manifestly confronts monologic authority in Molly's interior monologue.

Certain dialogic or parodic overtones are also integrated into Gerty's and Molly's thoughts of nuns and priests respectively: "[Father Conroy's] confessionbox was so quiet and clean and dark and his hands were just like white wax and if ever she became a Dominican nun in their white habit perhaps he might come to the convent for the novena of Saint Dominic" (*U* 13.450-53); and "Id like to be embraced by one in his vestments and the smell of incense off him like the pope besides theres no danger with a priest if youre married hes too careful about himself then give something to H H the pope for a penance" (*U* 18. 118-21). First of all, Gerty's dialogic response to a view of nuns as sexless, pious Catholics is indicated by the indirect suggestion of the attractiveness of nuns dressed in white habits in her interior monologue. Such inner dialogue enables her to chafe against the idealization of clerical practice. Although this kind of dialogue of voices within Gerty's interior monologue is not really subversive, it allows us to anticipate the full-fledged "decrowning" of representatives of a dominant ideology embodied in Molly's interior monologue. Her bold remarks just quoted about an imaginary affair with a priest demonstrate this point. The utterance "give . . . penance" suggests that she is critical of the hypocrisy of the institution of the confessional. To further deflate the authority of an overwhelmingly male Catholic Church,² a subversive voice is ushered in as Molly accounts for the existence of the nuns: "soon have the nuns ringing the angelus theyve nobody coming in to spoil their sleep *except an odd priest or two for his night office*" (*U* 18.1542-43; my emphasis). Here we not only overhear the voices of those women almost completely absent from Irish literature – the nuns who serve the priests – but also Molly's protest against the Church. Molly's parodic language engages two linguistic consciousnesses in play:

the represented one opts for the supervision of the nuns by the priests, while the representing one exposes the hypocrisy of such a practice. Furthermore, there are two short references to the Blessed Virgin in her monologue, and both of them are resonant with a dialogizing voice. In the first instance (*U* 18. 497-99), Molly ridicules the myth of Mary's pregnancy without conception by deliberately linking Mary with Lillie Langtry in the utterance "I thought first it came out of her side because how could she go to the chamber when she wanted to" (*U* 18. 498-500). In this context, the third-person pronoun "her" can mean either Mary or Lillie Langtry.³ Such an overlapping is clearly ironic, functioning to assail the ideal of purity that the Virgin embodies. Then, in the second instance, Molly jokingly refers to a Gibraltar bride having her Catholic wedding as a "black blessed virgin" (*U* 18.759). Molly's earlier speech reveals that the girls in Gibraltar acted spontaneously without being restrained by the human-imposed standard of femininity: "either naked as God made them [or] that Andalusian singing her Manola she didn't make much secret of what she hadnt" (*U* 18.440-42). The image of a "black blessed virgin" is self-evidently intended to be antithetical to the image of the immaculate Blessed Virgin embraced by the Roman Catholic Church.

Indeed, the dialogue of voices within Molly's interior monologue manifests a carnivalistic relativization of official discourses which is still lacking in the double-voicing of Gerty's interior monologue. In an attempt to erode the conception of idealized motherhood that the Church and nationalism impose on Irish women, the text reveals that both Gerty and Molly elaborate on the topic of wife-battering in their interior monologues. Gerty's language informs us of her dim childhood memory and her mother's suffering from "raging splitting headaches" (*U* 13.327) as a result of the domestic violence of wife-battering: "But that vile decoction which has ruined so many hearths and homes had cast its shadow over her childhood days. Nay, she had even witnessed in the home circle deeds of violence caused by intemperance and had seen her own father, a prey to the fumes of intoxication, forget himself completely" (*U* 13.296-300). Molly's interior monologue similarly describes the phenomenon of the suffering body: "I wonder what shes got like now after living with that dotty husband of hers she had her face beginning to look drawn and run down . . . Well its not the one way everyone goes mad" (*U* 18. 217-25); and "now shes going such as she was on account of her

paralyzed husband getting worse theres always something wrong with them disease or they have to go under an operation or if its not that its drink and he beats her” (*U* 18. 1099-1101). Here the represented image of a drained, helpless, suffering Irish mother implicitly constitutes a political counter-type to the idealized mother-figure fulfilling her conventional role.

The representation of Gerty’s and Molly’s thoughts about the pervasive phenomenon of woman’s physical suffering serves two purposes: on the one hand, it reflects the circumscribed existence of Irish women in a monologic, patriarchal culture, while, on the other, it undercuts the system of hegemonic representations promoting such a perception of woman. For Joyce, the woman’s suffering body must not be overlooked. The Irish woman was not only the victim of socio-economic oppression and sexual repression.⁴ She was often susceptible to the disintegration of family life, frequently mistreated or battered. The prevalence of the domestic violence of wife-battering was precisely evidence of the indignity undergone by Irish womanhood. Even into the 1980s, according to Sawyer, the law in the Republic failed to offer sufficient support for the woman battered or raped in the home despite the continuing idealization of the mother in Irish society: “notwithstanding the Family Law (Protection of Spouses and Children) Act, 1981”, women in the Republic “persecuted by their husbands can subsist on supplementary welfare but are seldom given accommodation; many flee to England, where sanctuary is provided by Refuge (originally known as Chiswick Women’s Aid)” (Sawyer, 1993: 143-44).

However, in *Ulysses*, Joyce is less concerned with women’s role as victims in consequence of institutional oppression than with their potential to “voice” the oppressed Irishwoman’s own authentic idiom through active dialogic interaction with others. In particular, Molly’s polymorphous delight in seizing varieties of authoritative discourse and re-accentuating them facilitates a carnivalization of female interior monologue. That is, the double-voicing in Molly’s interior monologue enables her to confront, or dialogize with, the ideological values articulated by the authoritarian voices in public life. In this respect, it is no coincidence that the theme of the resilient female body as disclosed in Gerty’s interior monologue is developed further in Molly’s. This not only serves to illuminate the context of the struggle between powerful institutional discourses and

the body's wish for emotional and physical fulfillment, but also reinforces the stratification of language into concrete social languages. For instance, in Gerty's thoughts on the photo of Martin Harvey, the idiom of Irish girl chatter is allowed to enter into dialogic relations with the dominant discourse of popular theater: "She could see at once . . . that he [Bloom] was a foreigner, the image of the photo she had of Martin Harvey, the martinée idol, only for the moustache which she preferred because she wasn't stagestruck like Winny Rippingham that *wanted they two to always dress the same on account of a play*" (U 13. 415-19; my emphasis). Molly also considers Martin Harvey briefly. In her case, however, in re-accentuating the discourse of popular theater, she ridicules romantic love as depicted in a play in which Harvey was the lead: "it must be real love if a man gives up his life for her that way for nothing I suppose there are a few men like that left its hard to believe in it though unless it really happened to me" (U 18. 1056-58). As far as the shared topic of Dignam's death is concerned, Gerty's thoughts on this topic are couched in the clichéd, sentimental terms employed by the community of Joyce's Dubliners (U 13. 319). Her mother's reproachful speech addressing her father is nonetheless integrated into those thoughts. When Molly considers this shared topic, she deflates the hypocrisy of the funeral cortège by interpolating a parodic intonation into her thoughts: "yes they were all in *great style at the grand funeral in the paper Boylan brought in . . . the poor horse walking behind in black L Boom and Tom Kernan that drunken little barrelly man . . . they call that friendship killing and then burying one another*" (U 18.1261-71; my emphasis). Dialogue within Gerty's thoughts on her first kiss likewise foreshadows Molly's taboo-breaking thoughts about her first kiss and lovemaking: "when they were alone and he stole an arm round her waist she went white to the very lips. He called her little one in a strangely husky voice and snatched a half kiss (the first!) but it was only the end of her nose and then he hastened from the room with a remark about refreshments" (U 13. 201-5). Here dialogue within Gerty's interior monologue does not merely reside in her borrowing from Wylie's former words and colloquial Dublin speech. The discourse that hints at her recognition of Wylie's kiss as a mischievous act also dialogizes with the mawkish language of serialized novelettes in women's magazines.⁵ Such hidden polemic underlying Gerty's dialogic interaction with alien voices and outer

forces is triggered by the body's potential for a carnivalistic subversion of the dominant ideology. Molly's thoughts on her first kiss and lovemaking are characterized by their matter-of-factness and a dramatic prowess: "It never entered my head what kissing meant till he put his tongue in my mouth his mouth was sweetlike young I put my knee up to him a few times to learn the way what did I tell him I was engaged for for fun to the son of a Spanish nobleman named Don Miguel de la Flora and he believed me that I was to be married to him in 3 years time theres many a true word spoken in jest . . . I got him excited he crushed all the flowers on my bosom he brought me" (U 18. 770-78). In addition to Molly's and Mulvey's voices, we overhear a recognizable, dialogizing voice in this passage of interior monologue. This dialogizing voice insists on enriching the spectrum of viewpoints interwoven in Molly's inner narrative sufficiently for her discourse to become public, heteroglot and dialogic. The carnivalization of her language manifests itself in her refusal to be the victim of sexual repression and deprived of the opportunities of spiritual or emotional fulfillment. It is thus evident that the representation of dialogue within Gerty's and Molly's thoughts on the first kiss partly adumbrates a movement towards or manifestation of carnivalistic language in the colonized subject's mind.

It would be too simplistic to claim that Joyce identifies his female character's intervention in the inscription of the power structure on the body with the Irish subject's struggle against the twin domination of Church and State. Molly, like Gerty and Bloom, is also susceptible to escapist romantic or sexual fantasy, and is not primarily concerned with consciously polemicizing against self-enclosed systems of thought. Nonetheless, as suggested by some of my examples above, the re-accentuation of ideological values and re-evaluation of meaning in Molly's interior monologue is made to project the cross-fertilization of voices taking place elsewhere in *Ulysses* as dialogue-in-laughter in the Bakhtinian sense. Being "an intentional dialogized hybrid" within which "languages and styles actively and mutually illuminate one another" (Bakhtin, 1981: 76), Molly's interior monologue is in reality the *terminus ad quem* of the carnivalization of interior monologue in *Ulysses*. Of course, Molly's lengthy but ebullient interior monologue is not merely a development from the echoes of the repressed woman's voice as refracted through Gerty's interior monologue. It is also resonant with the struggle of the

obstinate body with orthodox, authoritarian discourse. What Joyce pinpoints as evidence of the body's obstinate vitality is Molly's "blunt homeliness" (Kiberd, 1982: 166), her irreverence, her humor and, above all, her double-voiced utterances. In particular, the final sequence of Molly's interior monologue is an amalgam of variegated social voices and is happy and open-ended: her recollection of kissing Bloom on Howth Head is accompanied by memories of sexual encounters amid a culture nonetheless subject to the same domination as Ireland, that is, the Gibraltar of Molly's childhood and adolescence (*U* 18.1597-1609). This unbridled heteroglossia, as I shall show in the next section, is a consequence of her evocation of a diversity of speech and voice constitutive of contemporary reality.

In interior monologue in *Ulysses*, utterances can indicate borrowings from others' words, not merely one's expressions of thought. In Molly's language, the theme of carnivalization manifests itself in resisting the incorporation into a single view and in intermingling varied sorts of voices and languages. Throughout "Penelope", two mingled voices of the speaker-protagonist coexist, namely, the voice of immediate experience and the voice of retrospection, both of which are open to all kinds of dialogized voices and contrary social forces. However, occasionally the viewpoints of the two main mingled voices collide, resisting totalized unity. This deployment of language accords with Joyce's emphasis on process – both writing and man as process: "In writing one must create an endlessly changing surface, dictated by the mood and current impulse in contrast to the fixed mood of the classical style. . . . everything is inclined to flux and change nowadays".⁶ Take, for instance, the following passage. Molly's voice of retrospection reveals that "her [the maid's] face swelled up on her with temper when I gave her her weeks notice I saw to that better do without them altogether do out the rooms myself quicker" (*U* 18. 69-71), while the voice of immediate reality complains, "am I ever going to have a proper servant again" (*U* 18. 1079-80). Such self-contradictory comments suggest Molly's capacity to activate a non-determined relationship with others, not her inner conflict.⁷ Likewise, her voice of retrospection recalls an incident in which "she [Milly] broke off the hand off *that little gimcrack statue*" (*U* 18.1013-14; my emphasis), while, in response to Stephen's voice, the voice of immediate reality gives an account of the loveliness

of the statue: “thered be some consolation for a woman like that lovely little statue he bought I could look at him all day long curly head and his shoulders. . .” (*U* 18.1348-50). Here the relativity of Molly’s language is stressed; her past is fluid and can be reduplicated with a difference. More importantly, Molly is capable of incorporating alien social voices from daily reality into her inner narrative so as to call into doubt patriarchal, religious, or social authority. Take, for instance, the following passage: “the stink of those rotten places the night coming home with Poldy after the Comerfords party oranges and lemonade to make you feel nice and watery I went into 1 of them it was so cold I couldnt keep it when was that 93” (*U*18. 352-55). Joyce re-creates, through Molly, the voice of the disempowered Irish female at the turn of the century, at the time when public toilets in Ireland were only for men, not women. Accordingly, in this section, I will attempt to show in detail how the presence of alien voices contributes to mobilizing meaning in Molly’s interior monologue. It is not conflict or contradiction that causes the intersection of voices within Molly herself; rather, Molly anticipates and evokes immediate Dublin voices so as to underscore popular speech and liberate life/the body from authoritarianism. In other words, the dialogized voices in Molly’s interior monologue are not removed from the sphere of familiar contact, which, according to Bakhtin, suggests an antithesis to “all authority and privilege, all lofty significance and grandeur” (Bakhtin, 1981: 20). In addition, the familiarization of the world through popular speech and degrading bodily imagery is indispensable in assimilating and intermingling the opinions of the living people who occupy contemporary reality. Through the carnivalization of Molly’s language, Joyce questions the self-presence of voice and consciousness, inviting free interplay of relativized utterances and affirming the subversive potential of the female voice that is resistant to the stability of a patriarchal order.

Molly’s eagerness to situate herself in the realm of social communion is discernible in two respects. Firstly, a carnivalesque playing of high against low enhances dialogic interaction between the speaker and her listeners-acquaintances, as, for instance, in the phrase “at the Gaiety for *Beerbohm* tree in Trilby the last time Ill ever go there to be squashed like that for any Trilby or her *barebum*” (*U*18. 1041-43; my emphasis). The word “barebum” not only plays with the English actor-manager Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree’s name, but also with the

modified version of “My Girl’s a Yorkshire Girl” appearing in the “Wandering Rocks” episode – “Baraabum” (*U* 10. 1253). In establishing a link between joyful popular speech and degrading bodily images, Bakhtin remarks that “[w]herever men laugh and curse, particularly in a familiar environment, their speech is filled with bodily images” (Bakhtin, 1968: 319).⁸ Through unexpected association of authoritarian words with “crude” words, one laughs away seriousness and assimilates parodied models of languages and styles in everyday communication.

Secondly, in Molly’s interior monologue, the quotidian randomness that is characteristic of everyday oral communication not only breaches the norm of established speech but also helps to promote a dialogic interaction with people around her. This quotidian randomness is evident in her borrowing from colloquial Dublin speech and her use of abusive language – the latter particularly manifesting an unofficial, imaginative excess. For instance, “there was the face lotion I finished the last of yesterday that made my skin like new I told him over and over again get that made up in the same place . . . God only knows whether he did after all . . . if not I suppose Ill only have to wash in my piss like beeftea of chickensoup with some of that opoponaz and violet” (*U* 18. 458-63). Here Molly’s use of abusive language in association with the discourse of beauty and fashion not only challenges the operation of disciplinary power. More importantly, its prioritizing of imaginative excess over conventions and clichés also foregrounds Molly’s dialogic relation with the voices around her.

If Molly’s interior monologue serves the purpose of turning upside down a set of generally accepted social criteria, it equally assimilates a conglomeration of utterances that are directed at a marginalized, female community. Take, for instance, the following utterance: “asking me had I frequent omissions where do those old fellows get all the words they have omissions . . . that was all thinking of him [Bloom] and his mad crazy letters . . . everything connected with your glorious Body everything underlined that comes from it is a thing of beauty and of joy for ever something he got out of some nonsensical book” (*U* 18.1169-78). Here the utterance “asking . . . words” is addressed to an imaginary interlocutor; and, since the phrase “they have omissions” triggers off a dialogic interplay between a Dr. Collins’s voice and the Irishwoman’s voice, we can reasonably suppose that Molly’s

listener is female. Furthermore, fragmentariness and emphatic expressions like “all thinking of him” and “mad crazy letters” are effectively employed to hint at the presence of a female listener. The interpolation of “underlined” into Bloom’s cited words undoubtedly indicates Molly’s dialogic interaction with this imaginary listener. Molly’s phrase “something . . . nonsensical book” then enables us to discern that her listener, like Molly herself, is not highly educated and probably has the same mundane domestic role in Irish society as Molly. As a result, a sense of women’s solidarity with each other manifests itself in female monologue of this kind. Despite the fact that this listener’s voice is barely audible on the level of representation, Molly’s active interaction with her epitomizes a kind of unofficial, popular speech which transcends their defined place in a society. A few examples will easily demonstrate the point: “O this nuisance of a thing I suppose theyll have something better for us in the other world tying ourselves up God help us” (*U* 18.1210-11); “why should we tell them even if it’s the truth they dont believe you” (*U* 18.1237); and “hes such a born liar no hed never have the courage with a married woman thats why he wants me and Boylan . . . yes its some little bitch hes got in with even when I was with him with Milly at the College races” (*U* 18.1253-57). In the first example, Molly uses the words “we” and “ourselves” in echoing the socio-ideological position of Irish women. In the second and third examples, the expressions “why should we tell them” and “some little bitch” clearly suggest the presence of a community of female listeners who actively anticipate and respond to each other. Molly’s evocation of such a community of voices is thus both a sign of Molly’s imprisonment within social and domestic strictures and a mark of the resilient body’s wish for interpersonal relationship and emotional attachment.

But in order to specify the extent to which Molly “dialogizes” with reference to a female community, it is necessary to consider how far this community is imaginary and how far real. Although the voices of Molly’s female interlocutors are muffled, they nonetheless hint at the opinions of a marginalized, female community. As indicated by the above passages of Molly’s interior monologue, her invocation of a specific Dublin location or event in addressing an imaginary female interlocutor strongly suggests an anticipation of or response to a concrete social voice, namely an Other from a local community. In this case, her speech becomes dialogic, engaging two voices in play. Molly’s discourse about a medicalization of

the female body illustrates Joyce's emphasis on the marginalized, female Other's unauthoritarian, potentially liberating discourse in relation to the conditions of Irish existence. A thorough medicalization of women's bodies and sex is a mechanism of power and is promoted to guarantee the health of their children, to safeguard the prosperity of society, and ultimately to establish bourgeois hegemony.⁹ Major Tweedy bought "Concone's exercises" for Molly (*U* 18. 617-18); Bloom obtained a prescription for Molly to stop her flow of milk (*U* 18. 575-76); Molly consulted Doctor Collins "for womens diseases" (*U* 18. 1153-54); and Molly once used "the Albion milk and sulphur soap" coated with gelatine (*U* 18. 1194-95). Over and above the physical benefit, the ascription of a moral worth to be derived from a thorough medicalization of women's bodies and sex is what helps to enforce conformity to the standard set up by the power network. Anticipating a female interlocutor's opinion about such a medicalization, Molly recalls how Bloom wanted to "milk [her] into tea" and sucked her breasts "like some kind of a big infant" (*U* 18. 581-82). Here her breasts simultaneously reflect and undercut the ideology of the medicalization of the female body. The following passage likewise exemplifies Molly's dialogizing with an imaginary, female listener with regard to this specific ideological value: "better go easy not wake him have him at it [my hole] again slobbering after washing every bit of myself back belly and sides" (*U* 18. 903-4). The phrase "washing . . . sides" suggests the context of a medicalization of the female body, a context with which both Molly and her listener are concerned.

The marginalized, female community's comments on various matters which Molly anticipates or responds to help her to situate herself in the realm of social communion regardless of her domestic role. This is also true of Molly's evocation of Bloom's opinion about or observation of immediate, outer reality. The use of utterances rendered from Bloom's point of view pervades Molly's interior monologue. For instance, the italicized parts of the following utterances belong to Bloom's idiom refracted through Molly's language: "begging me to *give him a tiny bit cut off my drawers . . .* asking me questions *is it permitted to enquire the shape of my bedroom*" (*U* 18. 284-87); "all that *Doyles said he was going to stand for a member of Parliament . . .* sending me that long strol of a song out of the Huguenots to sing in French *to be more classy*" (*U* 18.

1186-89); and “comical little teetotum *always stuck up in some pub corner* and her or her son waiting” (U 18.1281-82). Here Bloom’s voice as incorporated into Molly’s interior monologue concerns itself only with trivial reality. However, his use of vernacular language is invested with vitality. This reflects a disruption of the hierarchical order of high and low that takes place in Molly’s interior monologue.

Woven into Molly’s monologue, Milly’s former speech, or Molly’s version of it, can also be heard: “your blouse is open too low she [Milly] says to me” (U 18.1033-34); and “I told her over and over again not to leave knives crossed like that because *she has nobody to command her* as she said herself” (U 18.1075-76; my emphasis). Here through Molly’s mimicking of Milly’s voice, Joyce hints at the social circumstances under which Milly’s voice is related to his other urbanized, Catholic female characters. It is noteworthy that apart from Bloom and Milly, the people Molly addresses in her dialogic monologue are members of the local Dublin community, a lot of whom appear in the earlier episodes of *Ulysses*. In addition, the recurrent Irish social voices Molly addresses have a special vitality that signifies their potential for a new life envisaged by Bakhtin as the utopian future.¹⁰ For instance, the language of the Mary Driscoll who appears in “Circe” (U 15. 861-93) is transmitted through Molly’s language: “stealing my potatoes and the oysters 2/6 per doz *going out to see her aunt* if you please common robbery so it was” (U 18. 63-64; italics Mary’s language). Insignificant though Driscoll’s voice is, she, unlike some Joycean women who are revealed to be thinking only of men,¹¹ is struggling for survival in difficult economic circumstances. Molly refers to Josie Breen several times and quotes her words: “youre always in great humour” (U 18. 213); “sometimes he used to go to bed with his muddy boots on when the maggot takes him” (U 18. 222-23); “youre looking blooming” (U 18. 843); and “that forlornlooking spectacle” (U 18. 1255). The first and third utterances suggest Breen’s deep-seated yearning for opportunities to live like Molly who escapes from menial and domestic tasks during her singing tours, at least. Bartell d’Arcy’s words in response to Molly – “what are we waiting for” (U 18. 275) – are repeated, and the utterance rendered from d’Arcy’s point of view – “wasnt it terrible to do that there in a place like that” (U 18. 278) – is subsequently reproduced, underscoring the obstinate body’s struggle against Victorian respectability. Simon

Dedalus's chatter about Stephen enters into Molly's thoughts: "his son [Stephen] that got all those prizes for whatever he won them in the intermediate" (*U* 18. 1090-91). Such chatter is free from the complacent assumptions and clichés which typify Simon Dedalus's speech. It is the expression of the body's emotional need and a certain carnival consciousness, rather than that of narrow-minded seriousness. The utterance "they call him [Larry O'Rourke] the old mangy parcel" (*U* 18. 452) not only suggests Molly's adherence to the common tongue of Dublin speech, but also implies an acute awareness of the class that makes a profit out of Irish alcoholism. Accordingly, Molly's quotations from other Dublin characters' previous speech give us a glimpse of the liveliness of the Dubliners' popular spoken language and of the resilient body's desire for emotional or intellectual fulfillment.

The dialogic aspect of Molly's thoughts signals her awareness of others as well as her eagerness to situate herself in the realm of social communion. Molly not only celebrates an unofficial popular speech by dialogizing with varied spoken Dublin voices. Her dialogue with an imaginary, female community has also set the stage for the re-accentuation of authoritarian words. According to Bakhtin, "[o]ne ridicules in order to forget" (Bakhtin, 1981: 23). That is, ridiculing (laughter) destroys any hierarchical distance and "demolishes fear and piety" (*ibid.*: 23). As a result, memory, history and tradition are banished, and free experimental fantasy is generated in their stead. Re-evaluation of meaning in Joyce is likewise inseparable from a sense of dynamism in social consciousness and language and a subversion of official truth and power. Both the dialogized local voices and the imaginary, female community in Molly's interior monologue illustrate this emphasis on heteroglossia as a political protest. In the former case, this is achieved through carnivalization of varied ideological positions, and in the latter, through the body's liberation from generally accepted social criteria. The resultant carnivalesque intermingling of high and low, official and unofficial is a source of and blueprint for a new, dynamic form of social life. In reality, the spirit of carnival was what was missing from Joyce's contemporary Ireland. Before the Famine, the fair with its associated patterns,¹² festivals and games provided much popular recreation in Ireland. The correspondences between the Irish fair and the European Carnival are notable: as Elizabeth Malcolm suggests, they shared "the themes of food, sex and violence, providing a focus for much popular recreation" (Malcolm, 1983: 42).

With the decline in carnival festivities in the 1830s and 1840s as a result of the Famine, clerical opposition and modernization, an important aspect of Irish culture gradually faded out.¹³ The Irish were proscribed by authoritarian force from acting independently, from acquiring a critical awareness of its operations of power. In the setting of gloomy seriousness so widespread in turn-of-the-century Ireland, the unofficial popular speech, the decrowning of established power and indecencies in Molly's interior monologue convey the themes of abundance and joyful relativity embraced by pre-Famine religious and recreational practices. In short, it is in restoring the heritage of carnival and in coming to a new historical awareness that Joyce sees a way out of the double bind of official ideology and colonial control to which the Irish in *Ulysses* have fallen prey.

According to Bakhtin, "[t]he relative nature of all that exists is always gay; it is the joy of change" (Bakhtin, 1968: 48). He suggests that the relativity of linguistic consciousness in Rabelais is generated not out of "a perfected and fixed linguistic system but at the intersection of many languages and at the point of their most intense interorientation and struggle" (Bakhtin, 1968: 471). The Rabelaisian, carnivalistic images seek to relativize or disintegrate hierarchical values, whilst, simultaneously, such images of "decrowning" embody the principle of a laughter that "free human consciousness, thought, and imagination for new potentialities" (Bakhtin, 1968: 49). In other words, a utopian philosophy lies at the heart of Bakhtin's conception of carnival: "Laughter open[s] men's eyes on that which is new, on the future" (ibid.: 94). In Joyce, carnival is likewise connected up with a utopian future. He not only celebrates the coexistence of the established social hierarchy and the gay word of the people. Popular laughter as created through the carnivalization of interior monologue also helps reverse the exclusion of the colonized subject from future power. Molly's recollection of Gibraltarian voices can thus be seen as an example of my emphasis on the utopian dimension to Joycean interior monologue. Carnival in Molly's discourse about Gibraltar resides mainly in her linguistic exuberance with reference to dialogized local voices.

Although one might argue that the Gibraltar of Molly's childhood and adolescence is no less subjected to English values than Joyce's contemporary Ireland, Joyce's purpose here is to reflect conflicting ways of seeing historical

experience and partly to adumbrate a utopian future including political freedom. On the one hand, some of the Dubliners' lack of vitality is discernibly a consequence of their conformity to powerful historical discourses: "when do you ever see women rolling around drunk like they [some Dublin men] do or gambling every penny they have and losing it on horses" (*U* 18. 1436-38). Their reality is fixed and purposeless as a result of the subordination of the body to the power network, rather than of authoritarian commandments and prohibitions. By contrast, that the Gibraltarian voices Molly recalls are marked with ebullience and energy demonstrates a kind of partial liberation from external historical determinants. For instance, the plebeian Mrs. Rubio – "a regular old rock scorpion" (*U* 18. 786) – is given a significant and memorable voice not only because she has strongly held beliefs with regard to both nationality and religion, but also because her expressions about familiar reality are poignant and jocular: "her face a mass of wrinkles with all her religion domineering because she never could get over the Atlantic fleet coming in half the ships of the world and the Union Jack flying with all her carabinieri because 4 drunken English sailors took all the rock from them and because I didn't run into mass often enough in Santa Maria to please her" (*U* 18. 753-58); or "Oharas tower I told him it was struck by lightning and all about the old Barbary apes they sent to Clapham without a tail careering all over the show on each others back Mrs Rubio said . . . robbing the chickens out of Inces farm and throw stones at you if you went anear" (*U* 18. 783-87). Certain fishermen's voices are also evoked in the utterance "the sardines and the bream in Catalan bay . . . they were fine all silver in the fishermens baskets old Luigi near a hundred they said came from Genoa" (*U* 18. 973-96). The exuberant popular images of "silver [fish] in the fishermens baskets" and "old Luigi near a hundred" here implicitly hint at a carnival atmosphere with which Molly's discourse about Gibraltar is permeated. Associated with everyday discourse, the "crude" words about sex voiced by Ines also point to the recurrent motif of the body's libidinal depths: "embarazada that old servant Ines told me that one drop even if it got into you at all" (*U* 18. 802-3).

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that in Molly's recollection of Gibraltar, the quoted Englishmen's voices – Mr. Stanhope's and Gardner's – are imbued with what Bakhtin calls plebeian humor: "yes he [Stanhope] used to break his heart at

me taking off the dog barking in bell lane poor brute and it sick" (*U* 18. 634-35); and "Gardner said no man could look at my mouth and teeth smiling like that and not think of it . . . he always said theyre so snotty about themselves some of those cads" (*U* 18. 888-92). It is not important whether such humor is embedded in Stanhope's and Gardner's personalities or not. What matters is rather the context out of which their voices are generated – that is, Molly's discourse about Gibraltar as exemplary of the utopian strain operating within the ideological resonances of language in *Ulysses*. Earlier, in Molly's recollection of the Glencree dinner at which the Lord Mayor of Dublin presided (*U* 18. 427-34), an uninhabited, carnivalistic fantasy is manifest in the language that describes her preoccupation with the removal of a couple of hallmarked silver forks and fishslicers from the dinner. Here Molly is a rebel not a thief: she refuses to surrender herself to the official apparatus. Similarly, in the following passage about the military policeman on sentry duty outside the governor's house, a temporary suspension of the oppressive colonizing power results from a struggle of the carnival spirit with British authorities: "the sentry in front of the governors house with *the thing* round his white helmet poor devil half roasted" (*U* 18. 1585-86; my emphasis).

Only through Molly's spacious memory can the discourse about Gibraltar be intermittently ushered in, breaking away from the metalanguage of dominant social discourse in Joyce's *Dublin*. In the Bakhtinian sense, carnival in the discourse about Gibraltar is pitted against colonial surveillance and plays a primary role in the recovery of politically utopian consciousness as it "offers the chance to have a new outlook on the world, to realize the relative nature of all that exists, and to enter a completely new order of things" (Bakhtin, 1968: 34). In Molly's interior monologue, the conjoining of carnival images with variegated voices from Gibraltar is reminiscent of an optimistic, utopian philosophy, and consequently she transmits to us a new historical awareness that finds its most radical expression in laughter. In conclusion, "Penelope" offers a "myriorama" (*U* 18. 40) of views and voices and articulates a new outlook on life with regard to the Joycean character's formation as a subject in dispossessed Ireland. As Bakhtin suggests, the hierarchical order of high and low, mind and body, official and unofficial is disrupted in carnival as the latter is characterized by "[p]opular laughter, the material lower bodily stratum, extreme grotesque exaggeration and clowning, and

the comic folk elements” (Bakhtin, 1968: 110). Operating as a kind of traffic in ideas and languages, Molly’s interior monologue epitomizes the centrifugal, carnivalistic tendencies of language in *Ulysses*.

Notes

- 1 Take, for instance, Carol Shloss’s account. She suggests that, in Molly’s private thoughts, “we can see a pattern of response, which far from being irrelevant to the Irish political situation, acts as a gouge for it” (Shloss, 1994: 107). Shloss is right in pointing out Molly’s sensitivity to hegemonic systems of power. But her argument that the “private and public remain separate domains in Molly’s consciousness” (ibid.: 107) fails to take into account the mimicking of voices and active intermingling of high and low discourses within Molly herself. Brian W. Shaffer does understand Molly’s monologue as a fusion of private and public domains, suggesting that she implicitly polemicalizes with “discourses of the colonial authority in which she lives” (Shaffer, 1994: 147). However, the problem with his account is that he takes Gerty to be the opposite pole of Molly and argues for the latter’s dialogue with authority as the beginning of “the process of freeing herself from the strictures of the ‘official line’ [the *status quo* authority]” (ibid.: 147-48). As I shall show in this essay, Molly’s carnivalistic language is foreshadowed by double-voicing in Gerty’s interior monologue, and is a manifestation of a full-fledged independent struggle, rather than the beginning of the struggle.
- 2 By the beginning of the twentieth century, the number of nuns in Ireland, in fact, was more than double that of priests (Innes, 1993: 120). Yet despite the importance of nuns in Irish society resulting from their influence as educators and their charitable works, they could only perform roles that were traditionally not defined as male roles according to the Catholic hierarchy.
- 3 To impose sexual chastity on the body, Lillie Langtry’s jealous husband mortified and punished her body by making her wear “a kind of a tin thing round her” (U 18.486), namely a chastity belt.
- 4 Niamh O’Sullivan suggests that, with the modernization of Ireland, “the social and economic value of men’s work increased, that of women correspondingly decreased”; and consequently women were reduced to “virtual slave status” in the domestic sphere (O’Sullivan, 1998: 183). The Catholic Church’s teaching on Irish motherhood also discouraged women from participating in public life: Archbishop McCabe’s denunciation of the Irishwoman of the Land League as devoid of “her birthright of modesty” and “unworthy as a Child of Mary” exemplifies the attempts of the Church to quarantine women within the home (cited in O’Sullivan, 1998: 189).
- 5 The following passage from the novelette *Love the Conqueror* serialized in the *The Princess* on 1 January, 1898 provides a good example of the sugary prose of popular

romance Joyce parodies: "Oh, how good it was to have him near her again, to feel the touch of his hand, to hear his dear voice saying her name – the name by which no one else ever called her – then to look up and meet that loving, earnest gaze! It was worth all the terrible hours she had gone through, all the misery of those past months, all the dread of that dreary journey, with its chill loneliness, to find him at the end. . . . She suddenly put up her hand, caught his fingers in her clasp, and drawing them down, pressed them passionately to her lips".

- 6 A. Power (1974), *Conversation with James Joyce*, 75.
- 7 Critics have tended to see contradictions in Molly's interior monologue as a reflection of inner conflict. For example, James V. D. Card suggests that everything "passes through [Molly's] mind is contradicted by something else that passes through", and goes on to suggest that "contradictions, not just opposing images, are truly characteristic of Molly Bloom" (Card, 1984: 38, 52). However, recent Joyce critics have suggested that such contradictions enrich the ideological resonances of Molly's language. Take, for instance, Susan Bazargan's account that ambivalence (dialogue) and contradiction within Molly epitomize "the colonized psyche" in which "the duality of inside/outside has to be constantly challenged and shifted to establish one's own time/space and language" in a colonial context (Bazargan, 1994: 132). See also Shaffer, 1994: 148-49.
- 8 It is discernible that Molly's use of abusive language is often linked up with her use of decrowning bodily imagery. For instance, "theres the kind of villainy theyre [men are] always dreaming about with not another thing in their empty heads they ought to get slow poison the half of them" (*U* 18.1241-43); "put his hand anear me drawers drawers *the whole blessed time* till I promised to give him the pair off my doll to carry about in his waistcoat pocket *O Maria Santissima*" (*U* 18.304-6; my emphasis); "*God help their poor head*" (*U* 18.886; my emphasis); and "wheres the chamber gone easy Ive a *holy horror* of its breaking under me" (*U* 18.1136-37; my emphasis). Such use of abuse and mockery is characteristic of the unofficial speech of the people.
- 9 As is well-known, Foucault suggests that the body bears the inscription of discourses and disciplines: sexuality is "linked from the outset with an intensification of the body – with its exploitation as an object of knowledge and an element in relations of power" (Foucault, 1981: 107). Such subjugation of the body is to be seen in the "disciplinary power" that manifests itself in the ritual of the confession, in punishment, in the doctrine of a spiritualized, housekeeping wife/mother, or in prohibited words about sex. Foucault further argues that the technology of control toward the end of the nineteenth century turns to the treatment of sex as an object of political struggle exercised through particular medical knowledge. In short, as a result of bourgeois ownership and the prevalence of dominant ideological values, sex is employed as a locus for disciplining the body and as a basis for regulating populations (*ibid.*: 146).

- 10 According to Bakhtin, the popular-festive images created by unauthoritarian, potentially liberating discourse are related to time, to the utopian future, as they become the expression of the gay funeral of the old world (Bakhtin, 1968: 99). For instance, Bakhtin suggests that Rabelais's Pantagruel is "the hero of the free parodies of eschatology, divine providence, and world catastrophes". He goes on to say that the grotesque concept of the folk body that "live[s] especially in the familiar and colloquial forms of the language" is crucial to the development of this theme of the struggle against a cosmic terror related to the events in and thoughts of Rabelais's contemporary France (Bakhtin, 1968: 340-41): "[t]he bodily depths are fertile; the old dies in them, and the new is born in abundance" (ibid.: 339).
- 11 Take, for instance, Mamy Dillon: "who knows whod be the 1st man Id meet theyre out looking for in the morning Mamy Dillon used to say they are and the night too that was her massgoing" (*U* 18. 1501-3).
- 12 Patterns or patrons were celebrations of the feasts of local patron saints (Malcolm, 1983: 43).
- 13 For instance, in the Ordnance Survey letters of the 1830s and 1840s, there were a lot of references to the disappearance of religious festivals (Malcolm, 1983: 46); and although "an examination of the number of the fairs listed in *Thom's Directory* for the years 1845 and 1900 shows an increase of some 700", during this period, the distribution of fairs throughout the year changed significantly: the number of fairs held monthly increased drastically, and the traditional seasonal pattern of fairs linked with the practice of holy days was disappearing (ibid.: 46). More importantly, the recreational element of these fairs was gradually subdued because they concentrated more and more on the livestock trade (ibid.: 47).

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