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ARTÍCULO DE REFLEXIÓN



JOYCE'S PENELOPE: ASTUTENESS, A DESTINY FROM THE FEMININE

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Abstract

This article aims to discuss a destiny for the feminine that does not go through phallogentric Freudian solutions. For this purpose, it recaptures Freud and Lacan's course about femininity and the feminine, respectively. It resorts, however, to an episode of James Joyce's *Ulysses*,

namely Molly Bloom's monologue, to illustrate what a woman can astutely do with the know-how of feminine enjoyment.

Keywords: Feminine, James Joyce, Psychoanalysis.

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LA PENÉLOPE DE JOYCE: LA ASTUCIA, UN DESTINO DE LO FEMENINO

Resumen

El propósito de este artículo es discutir un destino de lo femenino que no implica las soluciones falocéntricas freudianas. Para ello, revisa los cursos de Freud y de Lacan sobre la feminidad y lo femenino, respectivamente. Sin embargo, recurre a un episodio del *Ullises* de James Joyce,

en específico el monólogo de Molly Bloom, para ilustrar lo que una mujer puede hacer astutamente con el saber hacer del goce femenino.

Palabras clave: femenino, James Joyce, psicoanálisis

LA PÉNÉLOPE DE JOYCE : LA RUSE, UN DESTIN DU FÉMININ

Résumé

Le but de cet article est de discuter un destin du féminin qui ne passe pas par les solutions phallocentriques freudiennes. Pour ce faire, on passe en revue les cours de Freud et de Lacan sur la féminité et le féminin, respectivement. On s'appuie cependant sur un épisode d'*Ulysse* de James

Joyce, notamment le monologue de Molly Bloom, pour illustrer ce qu'une femme peut faire astucieusement avec le savoir-faire de la jouissance féminine.

Mots-clés : féminin, James Joyce, psychanalyse

A PENÉLOPE DE JOYCE: A ASTÚCIA, UM DESTINO DO FEMININO

Resumo

O objetivo deste artigo é discutir um destino do feminino que não envolve as soluções falocêntricas freudianas. Para este fim, são revisados os cursos de Freud e Lacan sobre a feminili-

dade e o feminino, respectivamente. No entanto, um episódio de *Ulysses* de James Joyce, especificamente o monólogo de Molly Bloom, é usado para ilustrar o que uma mulher pode

fazer astutamente com o saber-fazer
do gozo feminino.

Palavras-chave: feminino, James Joyce,
psicanálise

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Only women understand what I say.

Lacan, class of December 15th, 1971

The 40 pages of non-stop run at the end is a string of veritable psychological peaches. I suppose the devil's grandmother knows so much about the real psychology of a woman, I didn't.

Excerpt from Jung's letter of September 27th, 1932 to James Joyce

Joyce's discovery (...) was that the ordinary is the extraordinary.

Richard Ellman

Introduction

If James Joyce, in fact, is many, like Jacques Aubert (2012) teaches, how to check the change from one to another? To verify this passage, it is a matter of entering his work having how “the letter develops” (Aubert, 2012, p. 83) as orientation and the need to read it without relying on meaning, taking the significant guiding effects. Joyce is another as he progresses. And it is the case of Joyce, “burdened by a father” in the saying of Lacan (2007/1975-1976, p. 23), yielding to the female Joyce.

This work aims to make a thematic and technical contribution to the extensive Lacanian production of the work of James Joyce. For, in general, it is possible to delimit such productions between the inventive and knotted character of the *sinthome*, the arrangement of paternity, meanings of psychosis, or the disruption of the search for meaning by the production of *lalangue*; not in vain, Lacanian immersion in the work of James Joyce is decisive to deepen questions to psychoanalysis.

The interest in the work of James Joyce awakened several authors and theoretical fields. On the one hand, one can highlight the letters exchanged with Jung and the growing interest on both sides. On the

other hand, the reduction of the euphoria of literary fascination by the acidity of the irreducible criticism of authors like Virginia Woolf (1978, p. 199), to whom the Irishman's work boiled down to an "it a mis-fire. I think it's great; but from the lower water".

In this work, we will not make a cross between the biographical and the Joycean artistic exercise, seeking to find causes and consequences. In the end, Joyce allowed himself very well, as Lacan says, without needing analysis. What should surprise us is not this feat, but the light that his work allows us to shed on the feminine and, by extension, on the clinic.

For such an endeavor, we will use the Lacanian reading of the feminine, a very particular reading, restricting the scope of a vast literature on the subject. In this direction, key moments of his teaching and of Freud's path in the highlighted theme are resumed, as well as of interlocutors of his thought.

In this direction, we investigate a destiny to the feminine through the work *Ulysses* from James Joyce. Not a *standard* escape. Nor a universal destiny. We take Molly Bloom's monologue, the ultimate episode of *Ulysses*, the key piece in our study, to question the feminine in the light of Lacanian psychoanalysis. Well, on the way out, we have to ask: Where does Molly's monologue take us? Definitely, at the heart of the question regarding the female, which at all times Molly asks herself - what does a woman want?

What does a woman want?: Freud and femininity

Freud said that women were real riddles. To a certain extent, in *Ulysses*, the plot can be considered composed exclusively of men. When Molly Bloom speaks up in *Ulysses*, it is to say a sleepy «— Mn», after being asked by Bloom if she wanted something for breakfast (Joyce, 2010, p. 49). It does not seem trivial to us that the first appearance of one of the protagonists of the text is having her desire deduced by a man while her voice is almost totally suppressed. The Joycean

narrative crosses dozens of male characters between ordinary scenes, digressions and reminiscences, dreamlike scenes, conscious and unconscious (Galindo, 2016). Women in the *Ulysses*, in a certain way, are also in the wake of what Freud said (2010/1933) – they are riddles.

On the other hand, it is necessary to recognize the Freudian effort, undertaken throughout the entire project of psychoanalysis, to answer “What does a woman want?”. We stress, in passing, that interest falls under what does *the* woman want. If the Freudian permanence in the studies of child sexuality after the publication of the *Three Essays* allowed realizing peculiarities in the construction of child sexuality, we must all remember that Freudian works on the difference between the Sexes link to the *have* (2016/1905; 2015/1907b; 2015/1908)³. Such works that concern children’s fantasies are illustrative: in them, Freud dealt with the issue from an early age. It is true, however, that the consolidation of *Penisneid* came sometime later. At first, he placed the complaint of women addressed to the mother for not having received from them the penis. The formulation of the *Penisneid* concept refers to this lack in women. It is known that in the two equally remarkable and final essays of the 30s, Freud (2010/1933) proposed three destinies to the feminine: refusal of sexuality, masculinity in a phallic identification to the father, and motherhood. All universal answers from phallic trait – answers that correspond to the register of *having*:

- a) not *having* sexuality,
- b) *having* an attachment to masculinity,
- c) *having* a child.

But even when faced with the Freudian universalizing theory, the Oedipus complex, Freud himself (2010/1933) realized that something was wrong with the female side. Some women held themselves in the maternal bond.

3 We follow a reading pointed out by Jacques-Alain Miller (2012).

Our bet is that such a revision of the Oedipus complex, situating distinct senses of realization between girls and boys, also had distinct developments and, as a result, pointed to – albeit in part – remarkable insufficiency of the universal model. Freud describes that in boys the Oedipus complex happens first, and the castration complex marks its exit towards the object choices. The terror caused by the imaginary observation of the boy, when checking the absence of a penis in the female genital, would be proof of the horror of castration's existence that would focus on the realities of his own body. In girls, however, the exact opposite would happen, *i.e.*, there would be an inversion ascertainable by Freud himself: the Oedipus complex would occur as a “secondary formation” (Freud, 2011/1925, p. 296), since the girl would only enter the Oedipus complex⁴ after leaving the castration complex. Indeed, Freud (2011/1925) argues that the castration complex makes it possible for the girl to enter Oedipus. But this would be a phallically oriented organization, that is, directing these women to the “loving dimension of paternal function” (Soria Dafunchio, 2011, p. 51). And that *still* wasn't enough. “But how does she find her way to her father?”, he asked himself, “how, when and why does she part with her mother?” (Freud, 2010/1931, p. 372).

The mother is, in this sense, the first object of love for both the girl and the boy. Both respond differently to the problems of constitutive bonds. The boys would be able to embark on an identity and conflictual relationship with their father. Freud wondered, then, if it would be possible for girls to overcome the strong bond with their mother. The hysterics identified with the love of the father, yes. But it should be noted: the question puzzled him because there was no definitive answer - some deteriorate in the original maternal connection, situated in the pre-Oedipal phase (Freud, 2010/1933), and therefore would not be able to overcome or get rid of it; they would maintain such a particular relationship with the mother that they would repeat it with their partners (Freud, 2010/1931); sometimes, they would be trapped in a complaint to the mother for not having the phallus, the result of a disadvantage considered unforgivable (Drummond, 2011). It is for

4 Freud rejected comparing the female Oedipus complex and the Electra complex (Freud, 2011/1920).

this reason that Lacan (1995/1956-1957; 1999/1957-1958) will say that the problem for women is at the entrance. It seems clear, however, that Oedipus is not enough to answer the riddle of the feminine, for Freudian outputs are answers to answer femininity.

What does a woman want?: Lacan and women

Lacan's interpretation of the Freudian Oedipus complex and Castration complex results in the operation of the Name-of-the-Father metaphor (Lacan, 1999/1957-1958). The function to which it must serve concerns barring maternal enjoyment. In this equation, the phallic signifier would give «meaning to maternal desire» (Fuentes, 2012, p. 133), bringing the unrestrained enjoyment of the mother to a halt. In a certain passage, Lacan (1999/1957-1958, p. 211) says: «it is in so far as the object of the mother's desire is put in question by the paternal prohibition, that the paternal prohibition prevents the circle from closing in on him completely, namely that he should become purely and simply the object of the mother's desire». The relationship established between mother and child would have in the figure of the father the interdiction that would make it enter the field of desire. Without the inscription of the phallic signifier, maternal desire can acquire forms of an «impossible to bear» (Fuentes, 2012, p. 135). Another function will be reintroduced to the phallus: if before it was a significant support for identification in the first Lacanian clinic, especially in the first seminars markedly influenced by Lévi-Straussian structuralism (Lacan, 1999/1957-1958), it will pass, in the last Lacan teaching, to inscribe the function of enjoyment in the formulas of sexuation (Lacan, 2008/1972-1973; Fuentes, 2012)⁵.

5 Among other important transformations in Lacan's last teachings, we highlight that the Father will be designated from the relationship of the *Père-vers*, one who takes a woman in the place of cause of his desire; the Name-of-the-Father will be a mode of tying, among others. Lacan equates, in the last phase of his teaching, the paternal function as a symptom among others (Brousse, 2018). The law, recalls Marie-Hélène Brousse (2018, p. 113), now finds assurance in enjoyment and in the "real at stake in the countenance".

In *Elementos de biología lacaniana*, Jacques-Alain Miller (1999) distinguishes philosophical and psychoanalytic knowledge in a brief commentary. The knowledge of psychoanalysis is distinct from philosophy, roughly speaking, in the nature of its object. While philosophy would look to the world to extract its knowledge from it, psychoanalytic knowledge, in opposition to philosophical knowledge, would concern enjoyment.

In the final part of his teaching, Lacan will distinguish two forms of enjoyment. The first concerns the joy situated in the all phallic register. Let's take *Totem and Taboo* as the founding myth of castration: in the game of sexual sharing, there would be a Man not subjected to the order of castration, a mocker of all women, whose interdiction would not affect (Freud, 2012/1912-1913). The thesis then founds the set of men by exposing there is an exception: the one who would enjoy all women. Men would be subject to an *all phallic* register (Lacan, 2009/1971).

Why wouldn't the myth of the father of primal horde apply to women? Here is a key question asked by Lacan (1998/1960). In a pitch, he will conclude by referring to the fact that Oedipus produces «the man», and «not (...) the woman» (Soler, 2005, p. 17). The second form of enjoyment established by Lacan in The Seminar XX is that of not-all phallic supplementary enjoyment, which may be related to the phallus, but marked, above all, by the enigma of the $S(A)$. Lacan operates disjunction in the field of enjoyment, establishing by unfolding the very answer to the enigma of the feminine that Freud pursued. «Nothing can be said of the woman», Lacan will say (Lacan, 2008/1972-1973, p. 87), that is, there is no woman, in the symbolic register: the woman is not amenable to meaningful definition, «can not be written» (p. 86). In short, it does not exist, as Brousse (2008A) recalls regarding the insistence of the post-Freudians who sought to answer the enigma of the feminine, The Woman. In this sense, we could follow the author understanding that such radicalism is expressed in the exact implosion of femininity, that is, there isn't, therefore, neither The Woman nor the Feminine, but women - not as a group or set, because only «there are women one - by-one» (Solano-Suárez, 2009, p. 7) - and the «feminities» (Brousse, 2008b, p. 60).

Jorge Chamorro's comment locates that the woman does not exist, as Lacan said, because she has no reference in the field of symbolic:

S(A): a signifier of the Other barred, which has as a reference what we can call a signifier in the real, outside the field of the Other. A signifier that, by not articulating in a chain, does not produce effects of signification, but that produces the removal of these effects (Chamorro, 2009, p. 14).

Indeed, it draws our attention that it underlines this signifier in the real, that is, without an entirely phallic orientation at the same time as it breaks with the effects produced by the chain. Fuentes (2012) rightly calls this a *forclusão* symbolic of the signifier of the woman; which means that although the woman can use the phallus, it happens to be able to enjoy infinitely the absence of signifiers in the field of the Other that can name what a woman is (Fuentes, 2012). From then on, it opens up to the woman the requirement to, in the confrontation with this absence, «to make exist what does not exist» (Fuentes, 2012, p. 143), namely, the other sex for her.

Women, defines Miller (2012), are friends of the real. To the extent that they are *friends of the real*, women dislike the countenance, understand that the function of the countenance is to veil the void. Miller (2012) demonstrates that there are two solutions to the female position. The first - Freudian - is on the side of having. The second female solution is that of being. Where, undoubtedly, other implications impose themselves. How would women produce, one-by-one, in the absence of signifiers, the being for themselves? The question comes before because, if formulated from the void, from the hole, the production is dialektized; indeed, it is from the production of a being with nothingness, which most often can become, Miller points out, the production of a being *of nothing*, that is, stripped of any identity where to take root, what said so is to identify oneself in the place of *nothing* to the Other.

Marie-Hélène Brousse (2004), in her seminal work, exemplifies with the *Penisneid* the female devastation: women would be trapped in the complaint addressed to the maternal Other, as the father would not bar excess female enjoyment (putting himself instead of a whim),

as they would not advance, themselves, to symbolic exchanges. In his view, the devastation, in Freudian terms, would illustrate the phallic fate in girls, or rather saying: their complaint about not receiving it from the maternal Other. The clinical data revealed by Brousse (2004) is that, when deciphering the *x* from maternal desire, where the phallus did not confer limit, the subject perceives itself as unwanted. «The *x* of maternal desire», writes (p. 63), assumes «always, at a certain moment of analysis, the value of death». Since no signifier provides certain appeasement in this enjoyment, the subject does not yield towards the field of desire in which love must be inserted, but perpetuates with the loving partnership a certain revival of the relationship with the maternal Other, putting himself, in both, in the scrap of the Other's desire.

Devastation

What is a man for a woman? And what is a woman for a man? There is no symmetry in the questions. Lacan marked such a difference when pointing out that a woman is at the level of the symptom for a man, which makes her responsible for revealing the *truth* of his symptom; a man, on the other hand, is worse than an affliction, a devastation (Lacan, 2007/1975-1976).

The devastation arises within psychoanalytic theory in *L'étourdit*, as a response to the complaint in the relationship between daughter and mother:

The Freudian elucubration of the Oedipus Complex, which transforms the woman in a fish in the water, by castration being in it the starting point (*Freud dixit*), contrasts painfully with the reality of devastation that constitutes, in the woman, for the most part, the relationship with the mother, from whom, as a woman, she really seems to expect more substance than from the father – and it does not suit him to be second, in this devastation (Lacan, 2003b, p. 465).

The daughter's complaint is that her mother owes her something that only she owns. Such a complaint addressed to the mother is commonly worked out by Freud. It can even be said that Lacan recovers

the Freudian term of *catastrophe* to investigate the relationship between mother and daughter in a way beyond the phallic signification register, inserting it into the not-all phallic enjoyment (Freud, 2010/1931; Drummond, 2011). What comes to be devastation is the maintenance of this complaint guided by the excess of love, hatred, enjoyment.

This means that the daughter would not address the father, the symbolic exchanges, because she would be trapped in the «enigmatic enjoyment perceived in the mother» (Alvarenga, 2003, p. 46). The answer is the belief in the Other who owns *this* significant, forcing the subject to confine himself in the illusion to which the maternal Other *is* the phallus owner. The mother is taken, in effect, in the character of the fetish; the father presents himself unable to bar such enigmatic enjoyment. Drummond (2011, p. 4) is peremptory: devastation «is one of the names that Lacan gives to the failure of the paternal metaphor». This is a very precise definition of the paternal function of devastation. Failure, we point out, in the sense that there is in the devastation something of female enjoyment not saturated by the Name-of-the-Father, placing itself less in the place of the operator than at the service of the whim of maternal enjoyment (Brousse, 2004). Not saturating the maternal enjoyment and perceiving in the Other the owner of the phallus, the subject does not transit the symbolic field of exchanges.

From this seminar focused on sex is evident the predicative logic of the loving record in devastation as a synthesis of the utterance made by Lacan (2008/1972-1973, p. 12) in the opening of *Encore* «love demands love», guided, it should be noted, by the supergoic imperative of *Enjoy!* – the origin, if any, par excellence of anguish⁶. It is about exposing enjoyment beyond the significant dimension, without being saturated by the phallic regime; crazy and enigmatic, therefore. In other words, Dupim (2014, p. 112) will write about it: “the devastation reveals the other face of love, its face of infinite joy, of that which cannot be said.” Incessant demand without quantification of enjoyment. Isn't the question of devastation with love, where love is seen

6 «*Enjoy!* - it's really the last straw. Enjoying on command, after all, is something which everyone feels that, if there is a source, an origin for the anguish, it must be somewhere around there» (Lacan, 2005/1962-1963, p. 91).

as pure enjoyment? As a result, due to the absence of a signifier who represents her and with whom she can identify, the woman has difficulties in coping with this limitless. The synthesis in which «more... more... asks the woman» (Carraro, 2008, p. 118).

Let's resume the famous title: *encore*, more, again – title in French of the 20th seminar - and its direct homophony with *encorps*, in the body: Lacanian caustic bricolage demonstrating that the enjoyment acts directly on the body. Therefore, there are no limits «to the concessions that a woman makes to a man: of his body, of his soul, of his goods». (Lacan, 2003/1974, p. 538). Devastation is the «plunder that extends to everything, that does not end, that knows no limits», continues Miller (2015, p. 99), «and it is because of this structure that a man can be the partner devastation of a woman, for better and for worse». The partner can rekindle the infinity of female enjoyment: it is enough that for this we remember – once again – how surprised Freud said he was to observe the repetition of some women in the relationship with their partners as a repetition of the relationship with mothers. The partner-devastation is the one to whom the demand for infinite love is launched that, finding no place, returns to the feminine speaking-being itself, as Miller (2015) points out.

Freud (2013/1912) established that the logic of male love life is the attachment to the degraded object. Unconsciously, the desired object is lowered, aiming to achieve it through depreciation. With women, sometimes discovering that one has not been desired by the Other can make them identify with the position of a waste object. Would we not have, in some loving partnerships, the exact reproduction of what happens above, that is, that the partnership leads to the union between the degraded object of the mode of male enjoyment with the rebound position of the devastation assumed by the woman? And so, some women would not definitely embody the object «of defamation that ruins them»? (Fuentes, 2012, p. 139).

It is undoubtedly an infinite logic of demand for Love, whose risk of falling into *the worse the better*, to identify with the object of waste, is imminent. This preliminary conclusion of the kind of partnership produced in the devastation forces us to ask some questions. What

kind of outlets can a woman find when confronted with the lack of a woman's signifier, other than to devastate herself? What to do with the infinite enjoyment of the female position?

Female astuteness

The limit of Freudian analysis with women, we saw, was the *Penisneid*. It seemed logical, following the phallic meaning, that, once not possessing the phallus, the woman was stuck in this complaint addressed to the maternal Other. We follow the Lacanian effort to point out the Freudian limit while establishing disjunction in the field of enjoyment and in the way of understanding the female position. But, when establishing a not-all phallic logic, what is the destiny of the analysis for women?

For Solano-Suárez (2009, p. 99), «is to know that the relationship with the real is proper to its position». It is necessary to deal with the absence of a signifier that designates what it is to be a woman in order to then invent a singular way of relating to female enjoyment and its feminine being.

Astuteness is know-how, an artifice, says Carraro (2008), with female enjoyment, with lack. It is also a position before the phallus. In short, it is know-how with phallic countenances that the woman comes to embody and with the emptiness of castration. Cheating the sufficiently phallic position and Other for oneself by promoting know-how with enjoyment, that is, «not all-phallic and not all Other for oneself» (Fuentes, 2012, p. 145).

Joyce's Penelope

James Joyce's *Ulysses*⁷ is a polyphonic novel, narrated in eighteen episodes and divided into three parts. It is formed, roughly spea-

7 *Ulysses* was written throughout the First World War and continued for a few subsequent years. The year of publication of *Ulysses* is 1922. The

king, by three protagonists. The first of them is Stephen Dedalus, a young Irishman, professor of history and literature, cult and obsessed with Shakespeare, who is tormented by The Mother Ghost⁸; the other is a 38-year-old gentleman named Leopold Bloom, son of a Jewish father and Catholic mother, Irish, advertising broker, married to Molly Bloom (Joyce, 2010/1922)⁹. Two incomplete forms of James Joyce – two portraits of the artist. This connection of Joyce to

consecration of the period of writing the text, including the cities through which Joyce lived while writing the book, is remembered in the final lines of the work. It reads: «Trieste - Zürich - Paris, 1914-1921» (Joyce, 2010/1922, p. 682).

- 8 The allusion to Hamlet is not fortuitous. From the first episode, the reference to The Bard is explicit. When Buck Mulligan, Stephen Dedalus, and Haines are leaving the Tower, Haines becomes interested in knowing Stephen's opinion on Hamlet, in one of the most anticipated episodes of the text; what then happens is that Haines glimpses that landscape Elsinore (Joyce, 2010/1922) – Tower of *Hamlet*, Shakespeare's most famous play (Shakespeare, 2013) and fundamental reference for reading the *Ulysses* (Bloom, 2010).
- 9 In Brazil, there are three translations of *Ulysses*. Released in moments and with different titles (the first two translate the title with the original *y* replaced by *i*), they are signed, here ordered according to the publishing date, by Antonio Houaiss, Bernardina da Silveira and Caetano Galindo. Deciding for a translation to the detriment of the others is justified, far from the idiosyncrasies of the translator, by the search to achieve the same effect produced in the source language in the target language. For example, at one point in the monologue, Molly talks about sex: the difference in experience between men and women, and not just the subjective ones, but the practical ones, such as comparing the amount of sperm between Poldy, Bloom's nickname, and Boylan, her lover. In the original: «I don't know Poldy has more *spunk*» (Joyce, 2010/1922, p. 645). *Spunk* in English it carries less courage than the vulgar form of the word sperm. We then acknowledge the different versions established by the translators. The first version, by Caetano Galindo: «I don't know Poldy has more *porra*» (Joyce, 2012/1922, p. 1044). The second, by Bernardina da Silveira: «I don't know Poldy has more *garra*» (Joyce, 2007/1922, p. 792). The third, from Houaiss: «I don't know no Poldy has more *espermo*» (Joyce, 2005: 901). Galindo's version expresses Joyce's writing more accurately in Portuguese by transporting the impact produced in the original text to its translation, because that is exactly what *Ulysses* offers to the reader as an experience: the dizzying alternation between erudite and popular. With

Dedalus does not go unnoticed by Lacan in the seminar dedicated to the writer (Lacan, 2007/1975-1976).

Reference to Odysseus through its Latin form, the name Ulysses - stamped on the title of the work -brings us closer to the Joycian way of producing art. Firstly, because in fact, *Ulysses* is about the «common man» (Burgess, 1994) and then distinguishes itself from the hero and the Greek classic in several aspects: Bloom, unlike Odysseus, is not a man of arms, he is a pacifist, a type of subject capable of sustaining, when questioned by enraged nationalists, that the greatest force that there is in the world is love (Joyce, 2010/1922, p. 301). The epitome of *Ulysses* is a narrative about a day in a man's life, with his encounters, mismatches, thoughts, going through the daily activities of ordinary life. It's a narrative that doesn't just go through a day in someone's life, *Ulysses* is *why* a man postpones the return home as much as he can.

Molly Bloom, the third protagonist, is an opera singer; she, in the rare moments that she is present in the book, will not get out of bed: either at breakfast when her husband asks what she wants to eat or, after her husband leaves, waiting for her lover, Boylan. In all these moments, Joyce's Penelope, the antonomasia stamped in our title, is the opposite of Homer's Penelope¹⁰ in a particular way: they await the return of their respective husbands, but while the Queen makes and undoes the threads, Molly undoes the sexual journeys.

The last episode of *Ulysses*, Molly Bloom's monologue, in the words of Galindo (Galindo, 2016, p. 338), is the «hour of revenge» - it's more than 40 pages from the female point of view, without commas, exclamations, with a dot only in the middle of the monologue; the *yes*, for example, appears more than 90 times (Galindo, 2016). Molly's monologue begins in the misconception: she, when awake, does

this, we also conclude that it is not mistaken to point out that there are three Joyces in Brazil, one according to the version of each translator.

10 You will remember the endless work of Penelope waiting for Odysseus, surrounded by suitors for the King's place.

not know if Poldy¹¹ ordered or not breakfast in bed. The female entrance starts there. Leopold Bloom, pages ago, prepares coffee while Molly yawns sleepily in bed – since the death of her youngest son, it is he who takes charge of the morning task. At the end of the Joycean Odyssey, Molly is bored with her husband's supposed request. Did he ask her to prepare breakfast or not? The fact must seem no less important because of her uncertainty because doubt caused her to awaken by putting her to speak. And even if the answer is not known for sure, it matters what has been reignited.

We would say that Molly's monologue is the episode to break definitively with a certain conception crystallized in the literature about the place of the woman by exposing her in her desires, wishes, and anxieties, without subsequent condemnatory justification as an appeal. Point what a woman can do with her body, her over-enjoyment, her loving partnership. Molly's monologue is not simply splattered with punctuation-free phrases, but a flood of signifiers thrown without warning to the reader. Freud (2015/1907a) has never been more certain in concluding that artists are a few steps ahead of psychoanalysts. Joyce accurately relocated the discussion of the feminine beyond phallogocentric responses - even anticipating psychoanalysis itself. If Homer's Penelope weaves threads waiting for Odysseus, Molly weaves words about what it's like to be a woman. Not in vain, part of her conflicts with her daughter Milly are due to the concern with the sexual emergence of the daughter and the impossibility of maintaining between them a mother and daughter relationship, an impediment underlined in the impossible to speak. In her accounts, concerns and questions about the condition of women in Irish society unfold, thus promoting an emancipatory and equanimous discourse.

Molly reveals the sexual adventures in which she participated without falling into the shadow of naivety. She doesn't allow herself to be caught as a whore by her husband. After all, astuteness is one of the weapons resorted to by her not to fall into the madness of love: when, as a child, she tells her boyfriend that she plans to marry another

11 The nickname of Leopold Bloom.

er in up to three years, she describes the future companion as a nobleman named Don Miguel De La Flora. *Flora* means to flower in Spanish, whose English equivalent is *Bloom*, Poldy's last name. Therefore, she adds, jokingly, confirming that her boyfriend had believed her: «theres many a true word spoken in jest» (Joyce, 2010/1922, p. 660).

It is a cunning anecdote to unravel the phallic pretension of the partner as he gives way to the belief that he will fully surrender to future love. In fact, Galindo's following comment, focusing on the final sequence of the monologue, is enlightening by enumerating the concessions Molly made to the loving partner:

she was actually thinking about Gibraltar, the loves of the past and the past she loved. She was making a decision (...), was giving up her single life for this promising man, with a poet's face and scientist's intelligence, who would reveal, for her, the man and the disappointment of her life (Galindo, 2016, p. 352).

Perhaps already at this moment, the clairvoyance of Bloom's role in Molly's life jumps to the eye, because he is the man and the disappointment of her life does not inform of the very place that she allowed herself to place him and be? However, Molly's account does not underlie the complaint of a love that will not simply avenge, but the expectation of having chosen him for his alleged knowledge about women and, therefore, there is in this fascination the possibility of tricking him. A curious observation made by her: if *he* knows about women, she'll show him otherwise. Once again the female astuteness is at stake. What better example than the sequence where Molly kisses Poldy, cleverly thinking about the choice for him while recalling the loves of the past?

my God after that long kiss I near lost my breath yes he said I was a flower of the mountain yes so we are flowers all a woman's 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 as or felt what's a woman is and I knew I could always get round him and I gave him all the pleasure I could leading him on till he asked me to say yes, and I woudnt meantime, fist only looked out over the sea and the sky I was thinking of so many things he didnt know of

Mulvey and Mr Stanhope and Hester and father and old captain Groves and the sailors playing all birds fly (...) and all the queer little streets and pink and blue and yellow houses and the rose gardens 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, which I was, 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. (Joyce, 2010/1922, p. 682).

Conclusion

The lesson of *Molly's Yes* is the opposition to an unlimited concession. It is more demanding to understand if we think that its subjective position, therefore, is in the opposite to phallic position. Nor is Molly Bloom *The Woman*, nor her monologue is *the* destiny. If astuteness is a counterpoint to devastation, it is by not allowing women to completely surrender to love or virile claim (Dupim, 2014). It is therefore a question of using an artifice, know-how: not to be any Other for herself or identified *fully* with a phallic countenance. The lesson of *Yes* is the singular female invention to answer the enigmatic "what a woman?".

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