‘Eastern Enchantment: Joyce’s Farewell to the Café Chantant’

«سحر الشرق: وداع جويس لمقهى شانتان»

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Abstract **Turnitin:9%**

James Joyce’s short story ‘Araby’ has often been regarded as a boy’s teenage love story and his coming-of-age in turn-of-the-century Dublin, Ireland; but it has seldom been read from a postcolonial approach, and only rarely, using Said’s theory of Orientalism. In ‘Araby,’ we can clearly see the Orientalist discourse at play as the ostensible simple narrative develops. But in a scrupulously mean style and furtive symbolism, Joyce subtly weaves images of the East with a political plot in the innocent narration about a boy’s infatuation with a girl. I attempt in this paper to show how Joyce’s story is essentially about the Irish plight under British rule and the Irish people’s usage of escapism in Oriental fantasies and dreamlands to endure their stifled reality. I attempt to show that by using the images of the East to portray the squalor and the downtrodden reality of his land, Joyce attempts to liberate both East and West. Critics have often read ‘Araby’ as an oppressive narrative that reinforces Eastern stereotypes and cliches. I will draw on Edward Said’s theory of Orientalism to investigate Joycean symbolism and narratological techniques in ‘Araby,’ that are used not for the sake of political or cultural oppression, but as a direct representation of Western imperialism. My paper shows how border between Britain and “Other” is crossed when Joyce uses the imperialistic tools of the oppressor to portray his personal political and national victimhood. By showing the hypocrisy of the Western representations of the ‘Other,’ Joyce effaces the border between powerful cultures and ‘strange’ ones whether they are named Arabic or Celtic. My paper revisits the Anglo-Irish historical strife and the Irish persistent longing for emancipation from British Rule. This oppression of Irish borders, society, politics, language and culture is shown in ‘Araby,’ but Joyce uses Arabia as his symbolic land of escapism and

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East and of Ireland by dismantling their enchanted images that are drawn by Western projections and ambitious fantasies. 'Araby' proves to be a manifesto of the ideological transgression and cultural imposition of West upon Eastern and Irish worlds.

later, of disillusionment. I will use an undiscovered technical tool to support this argument, which is an embedded onomatopoeic sonorous acrostic, that is related to the context of national liberation in the story. Joyce attempts at liberating the muffled voices of the

ملخص البحث

لطالما نُظر إلى قصة جيمس جويس القصيرة «أرابي» على أنها قصة حب مراهق ونضج وعيه في دبلن، أيرلندا، مطلع القرن العشرين؛ إلا أنها نادرًا ما قُرئت من منظور بوستكولوني، ونادرًا ما استُخدمت نظرية سعيد عن الاستشراق لقرائتها. في «أرابي»، نرى بوضوح الخطاب الاستشراقي حاضرًا مع تطور الحبكة البسيطة ظاهريًا. لكن بأسلوب دقيق ورمزية خفية، ينسج جويس ببراعة صورًا من الشرق مع حبكة سياسية في السرد البريء عن افتتان فتى بفتاة. في هذا البحث سوف أبين كيف أن قصة جويس تدور أساسًا حول معاناة الأيرلنديين تحت الحكم البريطاني، ولجوء الشعب الأيرلندي إلى الهروب إلى عوالم الخيال والأحلام الشرقية للتأقلم مع واقعهم الامبريالي لخانق و المهيمن. أحاول في هذه الورقة أن أبين أن جويس، من خلال استخدامه صور الشرق لتصوير البؤس والواقع المرير لبلاده، يسعى إلى تحرير الشرق والغرب على حد سواء. لطالما قرأ النقاد رواية «أرابي» كسردية قمعية تعزز الصور النمطية والمبتذلة عن الشرق. سأستند في بحثي إلى نظرية إدوارد سعيد عن الاستشراق لدراسة الرمزية والأساليب السردية التي يستخدمها جويس في «أرابي»، والتي لا تُستخدم لأغراض القمع السياسي أو الثقافي، بل كتمثيل مباشر للإمبريالية الغربية. توضح ورقتي البحثية كيف يتم تجاوز الحدود بين بريطانيا و«الآخر» عندما يستخدم جويس أدوات الاستعمار لتصوير شعوره بكونه ضحية السياسية ووطنية. من خلال إظهار نفاق التصورات الغربية عن «الآخر»، يطمس جويس الحدود بين الثقافات القوية والثقافات «الغريبة»، سواء أكانت عربية أم سلتية. يسترجع بحثي تاريخ الصراع الأنجلو-أيرلندي، وفي التوق الأيرلندي الدائم للتحرر من الحكم البريطاني. يتجلى هذا القمع للحدود الأيرلندية والمجتمع والسياسة واللغة والثقافة في قصة «أرابي»، لكن جويس يستخدم الشرق و العالم العربي كأرض رمزية للهروب، ثم لاحقًا، لخيبة الأمل. سأستخدم أداة تحليلية

تقنية غير مكتشفة لدعم هذه الحجة، وهي عبارة عن تورية صوتية في المعنى الضمني للقصة، ترتبط بسياق التحرر الوطني. يحاول جويس تحرير الأصوات المكبوتة للشرق وأيرلندا من خلال تفكيك صورها المسحورة التي رسمتها إسقاطات غربية وأوهام طموحة للسطوة العالمية. تُثبت «أرابي» أنها بيان للتجاوز الأيديولوجي والفرض الثقافي للغرب على العالمين الشرقي والأيرلندي.

Keywords: James Joyce- Ireland- Araby- Acrostic- Onomatopoeia- Nationalism- Other- Orientalism - Discourse- British Empire

الكلمات المفتاحيّة: جيمس جويس - أيرلندا - عربي - التورية - المحاكاة الصوتية - القومية - الآخر - الاستشراق - الخطاب - الإمبراطورية البريطانية

Importance of study

In an era marked by geopolitical upheavals, migration crises, and the globalization of knowledge, fiction arguably becomes the only place for catharsis and expression. Joyce's fictional representations of his Irish plight and of his cultural exclusion and marginalization in the powerful world shape the national identity of his Irish people. His boy narrator's escapism in 'Araby' to fantastical Eastern images as a way to cope with the bleak Irish reality shows the Western domination over East and Ireland. Joyce's short story analysis also proves that the insistence of hegemonic powers not to listen to its oppressed subjects like Ireland or the East continues to marginalize lesser subjugated cultures. Fictional borders thus, become mirrors for demarcated social, historical, political and cultural realities. Fictional walls or boundaries are also inadvertently built between two "strange" cultures, or between two worlds of "Otherness", instead of their rapprochement as a form of crossing between two oppressed realities and lands like Ireland and Arabia.

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By Maya Mohsen

"Moving from silence into speech is for the oppressed, the colonized, the exploited, and those who stand and struggle side by side a gesture of defiance that heals, that makes new life and new growth possible" (bell hooks)

In an era marked by geopolitical upheavals, migration crises, and the globalization of knowledge, fiction arguably becomes the only place for catharsis and expression. Joyce's fictional representations of his Irish plight, and of his cultural exclusion and

marginalization in the powerful world shape the national identity of his Irish people. His boy narrator's escapism in 'Araby' to fantastical Eastern images as a way to cope with the bleak Irish reality, and his awakening to his Romantic vanity, eventually highlight the Western oppression of both Ireland and Arabia. Joyce uses Orientalism as a means of escapism, as well as for exotic aesthetics that imbue his lines with the constructed mysterious and mythical allure of the East. Although Joyce appears to be using images of the East for the sake of the Orientalist agenda; nevertheless, he mainly invests these images to serve his political critique of Irish escapism and to deliver the message about the truth of hegemonic oppression. Joyce indirectly attempts to bring together two worlds of "Otherness" and to awaken the consciousness of his race in an act of psychological emancipation and an epiphanical revelation that transcend the national and hinges on the universal.

James Joyce is an Irish cosmopolitan writer who is one of the heralds of literary modernism in the early 20th Century. Although he is best known for his epic novel *Ulysses*, his short stories collection, *Dubliners,* and his kunstlerroman, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, have been favored by readers across the world for their developmental themes and less complex narration. Moreover, there is little doubt that all of Joyce's works reflect on his experience as an Irish who was raised in turn-of-the-century Ireland. Joyce's multiple narrators in *Dubliners*, Stephen Dedalus in *A Portrait*, Leopold Bloom in *Ulysses*, and Shem in *Finnegans Wake*, are all mouthpieces for his national questions about home and identity. Moreover, Joyce wrote the fifteen stories that make up *Dubliners* between 1904 and 1907, and published them in 1914. They comprise, as Joyce explained, a series of chapters in the moral history of his community. While defending the pristine state of his writing that must remain intact, he says:

The points on which I have not yielded are the points which rivet the book together. If I eliminate them what becomes of the chapter of the moral history of my country? I fight to retain them because I believe that in composing my chapter of moral history in exactly the way I have composed it I have taken the first step towards the spiritual liberation of my country (Joyce, **1906, May 20)**

In addition, Joyce wanted to reflect the attitudes and the mindset of his characters as meticulously as possible so that the people of Dublin could

have "one good look at themselves in his finely polished looking-glass" (Joyce, 1906, June 23). The collection appears to be made of thematically unified parts about stories of the Dubliners in Ireland.

In *Dubliners*, Joyce reflects the feelings of imprisonment and helplessness which the Dublin inhabitants struggle with. Joyce says: "I chose Dublin for the scene because that city seemed to me the centre of paralysis" (Joyce, 1906, May 5). Emer Nolan says that, to escape their reality, Joyce's Dubliners "are afflicted by fantasies about better places (Buenos Ayres, the Orient, the Wild West, literary London)" (Nolan, 1995, p.31). Joyce emphasizes the theme of spiritual paralysis and inability to escape, in what Spinks calls: "the subjection of a life to an endless cycle of repetitive gestures" (Spinks, 2009, p.54). Indeed, everyone in Dublin seems to be caught up in an endless web of despair; even when they want to escape, Joyce's Dubliners are unable to.

Moreover, almost all of the stories of *Dubliners* contain the element of epiphany. Epiphany according to James Joyce is a sudden spiritual manifestation in which the whatness of a common object or gesture appears visible to the observer. Joyce explains his epiphany in *A Portrait* through Stephen Dedalus as "a sudden illumination if not a divine revelation, a slight but definite insight into other lives, a fragmentary clue to the meaning of life as a whole" (Levin, 1960, p.8). Almost all the voices in *Dubliners* have a moment of awakening or of realization, when they become aware of their reality and of their limitations. Indeed, even in the few cases when the main characters of the story remain stupefied or deluded by their own world, the reader can solely sense and experience Joyce's moments of illumination in the narrative.

In addition, the reading of *Dubliners* carries a possibility for "multiple interpretations," and it is this openness that bestows upon its stories their literary "enduring power" (Bulson, 2006, p.38). According to Bulson, "Joyce does not give us easy answers. Instead, he challenges us to search for them ourselves" (Bulson, 2006, p.38). He continues: "there is always an ambiguity in representation, a *gnomonic* part that we have to fill somehow as readers" (Bulson, 2006, p.39). The word gnomonic is often used to describe Joyce's narrative signature that is represented in incomplete and fragmentary language that unveils the meaning. Gnomonic is a term derived from Euclid's gnomon and it relates to

the design and use of sun-shadowing devices called **sundials**. Joyce's *Dubliners* challenges us to solve their puzzle without ever reaching a final explicit conclusion (Bulson, 2006, p.39). Joyce has also expressed the "scrupulous meanness" in his writing of *Dubliners*: "I have written it for the most part in a style of scrupulous meanness and with the conviction that he is a very bold man who dares to alter in the presentment, still more to deform, whatever he has seen and heard" (Joyce, 1906, May 5). All this indicates that every detail in his stories is connected to the connotative meanings that are open for multiple interpretations.

Beside their openness and numerous details, the episodes are arranged in gradual progression from childhood to maturity, broadening from private to public scope. Joyce says: "I have tried to present it to the indifferent public under four of its aspects: childhood, adolescence, maturity and public life. The stories are arranged in this order" (Joyce, 1914, June). Joyce wrote to his brother Stanislaus that the stories of childhood in *Dubliners* were "stories of my childhood" (Joyce, 1905, September 24). 'Araby' is one of three short stories that are organized around the theme of childhood. It has been a widely popular short story; it portrays a young boy's coming-of-age journey in one day. In it, the boy experiences a sense of bitter disillusionment about his idealistic projections and awakens to his personal reality. Bulson concurs that in every one of the three stories that revolve around the theme of childhood, "a child tries to make sense of events as they happen in a grown-up world" (Bulson, 2006, p.39). Like the rest of the *Dubliners*' stories, 'Araby' does not have an absolute reading, and it can always welcome all the possibilities of new interpretations, even discoveries, as I attempt to do in this paper.

Furthermore, "Araby" has often been read as a mere chronicle of the boy's infatuation with a girl, and of his gradual awakening to the mundane utilitarianism of life in the drab reality of Ireland. It has also been read as a tale of the shattering of idealism, romantic escapism, and of innocence. In the story, Joyce's young narrator is bewildered by the word *Araby* in the echoing words of 'Araby bazaar,' and is eager to visit it to bring a gift to his beloved. However, like all *Dubliners'* endings, the story's finale is a classic Joycean epiphany, as Joyce's narrator becomes disillusioned about his real sentiments toward the girl, or toward

romance. Through this gradual disillusionment, he realizes his place in the world as an Irish boy trying to escape in whimsical images.

Thesis Statement

Some critics have claimed that 'Araby' is a developmental story about the hardships of innocent love. Others have claimed it to be an imperial Eurocentric work that attacks and derogates the East. Joining the few critics who have read "Araby" using Orientalism's approach, I intend to add to the discussion by showing that Joyce uses Orientalism not for its own sake, but to unravel the truth about imperialism and the oppression of both Ireland and Arabia. I add a new analytical proof and comparative material in the story: an onomatopoeic acrostic, that adds to this argument and becomes further proof of Joyce's reasons to use Orientalism, even of his clandestine critique of it. In his usage of a simple storyline about a boy's innocent infatuation with a girl, Joyce structures a facade to cover many hidden narratological purposes. In 'Araby,' a scrupulously mean style and a furtive symbolism help to weave the images of the East with Joyce's political critique, under his ostensibly innocent narration about a boy's romantic idealization of a girl.

Methodology

I will draw on a postcolonial perspective, with a focus on Said's key concepts of 'othering' and 'exoticizing' from his theory of Orientalism. However, this usage will be read in the light of the national history of Ireland, Joyce's own political papers that are rarely discussed in this context, and his onomatopoeic acrostic. The paper shortly revisits the Anglo-Irish historical strife and the Irish persistent longing for emancipation from British Rule. This oppression of Irish borders, society, politics, resources, language and culture, that is represented in 'Araby,' reasserts the ideological transgression and cultural imposition of West upon Eastern and Irish worlds, and indirectly becomes a shared ground for a mutual national and political dilemma, victimization, and psychological self-oppression. This paper will clearly explain the definition of an onomatopoeic acrostic, its function in literature, and how it adds to the analysis of the story. The latter explanation will be directly followed by an overview of cultural trend of revivalist Irish Orientalism that was popular in Ireland, and how the British used it in their entertainment shows, which they made for the Irish subjects as a form of distraction. I will then detail the actual historical

event of the Araby bazaar in Ireland which Joyce had attended as a young boy, and how this event was regarded by the Irish people at the time. All these frameworks will help in the understanding of Joyce's manipulation of the Araby bazaar's actual events, its multiple symbolism, and their service in conveying the national messages in the story. 'Araby' then, is essentially about the Irish plight under British rule and the people's usage of escapism in Oriental fantasies and dream lands, that imitated the revivalist cultural trend of Irish Orientalism during turn-of-the-century Ireland.

Colonial History of Ireland

Historically, Ireland is a European country appropriated in the British commonwealth and it has been in a constant conflicting relationship with England. It was the first British colony, and it has gone through political and social predicaments from the twelfth to the twentieth century on the hand of the English monarch and the Protestant Church. Tomedi remarks that "through the thirteenth and into the fourteenth century, the English colonization of Ireland was largely unchecked and almost all-encompassing" (Tomedi, 2005, p.10). English rulers started war against each other, and provoked their opponent's Irish subjects to rise up against them (Tomedi, 2005, p.10). What made matters worse was a series of scarce harvests due to bad climate, which were proceeded by the plague between 1348 and 1349, and then by the Great Famine of 1846–50 (Tomedi, 2005, p.10). Ireland's population plummeted drastically, exacerbated by a rush of English migration from Ireland that left farms abandoned (Tomedi, 2005, p.10). The impact of this English colonization and abandonment would be felt in Irish history into modern days (Tomedi, 2005, p.10). Moreover, the Irish people were slowly being deprived of their lands. Gaelic landlords who were found to occupy the lands claimed by the British crown would be dispossessed (Tomedi, 2005, p.12). If Gaelic landlords decided to take up arms against the Crown, they would have their lands confiscated (Tomedi, 2005, p.12). In fact, any Irish insurrection was regarded as pretext for the English colonizers for further land grabbing (Tomedi, 2005, p.12). The British crown also viciously over stated the events of Irish Catholic actions, "where the rising" like that of Easter 1916, "was made to seem wide spread and downright genocidal" and "roused even more so by an effective propaganda campaign" (Tomedi, 2005, p.15). In the 19th century and early 20th century, British publications

often depicted Irish people as apes or monkeys to dehumanize them, particularly during debates around Home Rule or Irish nationalism (O'Reilly, 2017). British newspapers and satirical magazines frequently depicted Irish people as gorillas, apes, or "simianized" creatures with protruding jaws, sloping foreheads, and ape-like postures to suggest they were a separate, lower, and more primitive race. This caricature served as a form of cultural subjugation, arguing that the Irish were uncivilized, savage, and incapable of self-rule, thereby justifying continued British control (O'Reilly, 2017). Tragically, the portrayal of the Irish as savage people, and their insurrection as genocidal continued to be echoed centuries later in Joyce's remarks in his political writings, during the insurrections that were still constantly occurring in modern times. Joyce says "whoever has read the telegrams sent out by London will certainly believe that Ireland is going through a stage of exceptional criminality. This is a complete misjudgement" (Joyce, 2000, p.147). Similarly, the same Irish historical problematic is still reiterated by Joyce in the early 20th Century:

… [T]he Irish question is still unresolved today, after six centuries of armed occupation and over a hundred years of legislation that reduced the population of the unhappy island from eight to four million, quadrupled the taxes, and further entangled the agrarian problem with many extra knots. (Joyce, 2000, p.146)

Among many examples of the atrocities made and the lies spread by the British through their colonization of Ireland, Edmund Spenser's actions and words are most striking. Being the poet laureate of England, he had won a sinecure in Dublin and had leased the home of an Irish lord in 1581 (Tomedi, 2005, p.13). Spenser had been closely familiar with the Irish predicament, their misery, and their bloodshed in his residency for almost twenty years in Ireland (Tomedi, 2005, p.13). In fact, he was inspired from "his experiences with Irish turmoil for *The Faerie Queene*" (Tomedi, 2005, p.13). The heroes of his epic are "Queen Elizabeth and the New English leaders in Ireland" and his villains were the Irish whom he saw "as warmongering Papists, threats to English peace and Protestantism, they served as his models for wrath and lust." (Tomedi, 2005, p.13). He also finished that year his *View of the Present State of Ireland* (Tomedi, 2005, p.13), in which he propounded on the fact that, in spite of being a white race, the Irish should be exterminated as they were "barbarian

Scythians" or non-Westerners (Said, 1994, p.268). Clearly, the poet laureate of England at the times of Queen Elizabeth was encouraged to create "fibs" about the Irish to oppress them, and to justify the theft of their lands by the British Empire. Indeed, England had "the bulk of the land, the greatest share of the wealth, and virtually every position of power in education, ecclesiastics, and government," whereas "the overwhelming majority of the populace was comprised of impoverished, Gaelic-speaking Catholics" (Tomedi, 2005, p.18). Some Catholics slyly managed to keep their lands by adopting "English dress and tongue" to stave off the potential usurpation held by their Protestant neighbors (Tomedi, 2005, p.15). All this heralded the gradual complete Anglicization of Ireland.

Along with the historical events that entailed the marginalization of the Irish race, the British looked down at the Gaelic language as inferior to English. The Irish had their lands confiscated, their agricultural produces grabbed, and their culture, history and language debased and condemned. Thus, the Irish had a dissociated identity and were "disempowered by cultures that portrayed them as 'racially' inferior (Shaffer, 1997, p.221), or "Other". All these mentioned historical details are invaluable, because Joyce was born in an Ireland that was still marked by the scars of its political tumultuous past. Throughout his first forty years, he witnessed the series of nationalist movements that shaped the Irish political climate and that called for independence from the British state.

Similarly, McCourt remarks that unlike the colonial world of the far East, Ireland's "position in the history and geography of Empire is distinct: it lies in very close proximity to the imperial centre and shares linguistic, cultural, social and political traditions with it" (McCourt,2009, p.100). He explains Joyce's unshaken anti-colonial attitude:

Joyce's vision of Ireland is not the projection of an imperial fantasy the features of Irish colonial history that it shares with all other colonies, for the ruling Anglo-Protestants, who descended from early English and Scottish settlers, were defined by their social and cultural (even, in some important ways, racial) differences from the indigenous Gaelo-Catholic Irish. These latter were in fact subjected to precisely the kinds of colonial oppression that marked the experience of colonised groups throughout the Empire. (McCourt, 2009, p.101)

Clearly, Joyce was adamantly against the cultural, historical,

economic, and linguistic colonization of Ireland.

In addition, Joyce lived in Dublin for his first 22 years. He chose the Dubliners not only because of a personal psychological and emotional attachment to his memories, but also because Dubliners were in many ways singular compared to the rest of the Irish population. Most notably, Dubliners never spoke Irish; they were comprised of English colonizers and their Anglo-Irish children, who too often dismissed, or sought to erase, the culture of the country's Gaelic-speaking, Catholic population (Tomedi, 2005, p.1). It is no wonder, Tomedi remarks, "that Dublin's literature has always been in English" (Tomedi, 2005, p.2). He insightfully adds that "even the fact that Dublin's is a markedly different literary tradition from that of the rest of English literature can be explained in post-colonial terms" (Tomedi, 2005, p.2). Indeed, what proves this even more is that "Dublin has offered up some of the *greatest* authors in the English language" (Tomedi, 2005, p.2) such as Wilde, Joyce, Shaw, Yeats, Beckett, and Swift. Dublin, "once an English-speaking outpost on foreign soil, became the administrative headquarters of Anglo-Ireland" (Tomedi, 2005, p.14) and "the great stronghold of the British government"(Tomedi, 2005, p.16). Likewise, Dublin's cultural colonization and inhibited agency inspired Joyce to write *Dubliners*. In *Dubliners*, Joyce represents not only a moral paralysis, a reading that for decades has busied critics and researchers, but also a political and social paralysis, that is the outcome of the colonial imposition itself.

Similarly, Joyce resented early the plundering of English imperial policy in Ireland, and considered the English presence in Ireland an occupation. This conviction emerges forcefully in the lecture 'Ireland, Isle of Saints and Sages' he delivered in Trieste in 1907. "Ireland is poor," Joyce maintained, "because English laws ruined the country's industries" (Joyce, 2000, p.146). He adds that: "Ireland cannot appeal to the modern conscience of England or abroad" (Joyce, 2000, p.146). Naturally, Joyce reflects his personal attitude and he is, as Spinks described, "unswerving" in portraying the "resolutely anti-colonial emphasis" (Spinks, 209, p.14) in *Dubliners.* He is also obstinate in showing his personal "denunciation of the misery and deprivation inflicted upon Ireland by imperial British policy" (Spinks, 2009, p.15). In a similar vein, Shaffer confirms that "Joyce was a highly self-conscious Irish writer who was hardly

apolitical" (Shaffer, 1997, p.224). Bulson also affirms that Joyce's works are "deceptively straightforward", because they "are restricted to the first decade of the twentieth century when it was still a colony of the British Empire" (Bulson, 2006, p.33). Joyce condemns the British Empire for "forcing Ireland into political and economic submission" (Bulson, 2006, p.33). There were also psychological consequences: "after centuries of foreign invasion, the Irish learned to oppress themselves" (Bulson, 2006, p.33). Bulson adds: "It was precisely this self-oppression that frustrated Joyce most, and he believed that his writing could in some modest way change the way the Irish saw themselves" (Bulson, 2006, p.33). In other words, by holding a ruthless mirror to show the reality of the Irish history and people, he hoped to amend their self-image, and to appease their private and public frustrations, by inviting them for a national awakening.

Moreover, Joyce was aware that the Irish people's sense of unity was based on their shared Catholicism and sense of belonging to an Irish past, culture and language. This sense of identity "in which a persisting ancient Gaelic culture and language" exists, "would act as the basis for the formation of one of the non-imperial and culturally distinct states that the modern European ideology of nationalism sought to promote" (McCourt, 2009, p.184). McCourt adds that this Irish past and the sense of identity derived from it were "shared by Joyce, his family and their Catholic peers". (McCourt, 2009, p.184). They were mainly the result of "vigorous re-presentation" of Irish culture "in the translations, histories, antiquarian researches and above all songs and lyrics of nineteenth century literary and musical culture" (McCourt, 2009, p.184). Nevertheless, despite Joyce's adoption of much national literature and culture in his works, he remained vehemently critical of "the antiquated and conservative cultural politics of revivalism, with its cast of pious and beneficent rural types and its infantile mythic reconfiguration of the Irish character" (Spinks, 2009, p.15). In other words, Joyce was familiar with the popular revivalism culture in Ireland; and he used it not only as a portrayal of an Irish past or shared culture, but also to criticize what he often saw as unrealistic escapism and magical thinking.

Irish Revivalism and the Araby Bazaar in Dublin

One of these main trends in Irish revivalism which Joyce caustically criticized was Irish Orientalism.

As a reaction to their historical oppression, Bongiovanni talks about the contradictory dynamic for the "self-conscious" Irish to want to associate with the Orient as a place of civilization and historical heritage to elevate their cultural status in the world vis-a-vis "its more powerful neighbor" (Bongiovanni, 2007, p.27). While the East had often been seen as a mysterious and alluring place, Ireland was viewed as a poor and defeated country, making it less appealing as a story compared to the Orient's exotic allure. This portrayal of the East as a place of longing and mystique occupied Irish culture. Irish Orientalism was intensely portrayed in the writing of romantic poets, most importantly Irish ones such as James Clarence Mangan and Thomas Moore, who themselves were seen as "Orientals" and yet were often following British "Oriental" representations of Western writers like Lord Byron (Kershner, 1998, p.260). In all this, Joyce was both a "documenter of Irish Orientalism" and a "participant in it", both "consumer" and "producer" (Kershner, 1998, p.260). Arabia was an image of emancipation as well as historical and cultural elevation. Joyce uses these images to inflate the Irish Romantic escapism, and then to capsize it in the purpose of criticizing the trend.

Moreover, among the events that the Irish people held to celebrate this fascination with the East was the Araby bazaar. It was a public yearly event held in Dublin, and sponsored by the British empire to entertain the Irish. Having attended the "Araby" bazaar in Dublin or the Grand Oriental Fete in May of 1894, Joyce had direct experience of what such an event was like. It was one of the largest public spectacles held in Dublin in the late nineteenth century. Rains describes it in details:

It was attended by 92,052 visitors, it filled the large indoor and outdoor spaces of the RDS for over a week, with elaborate stage-set backdrops, a wide range of goods for sale, multiple restaurants, bars, firework displays, tight-rope demonstrations, and 'Princess Nala Damajante, Hindoo Serpent Charmer, with her Boa Constrictors and Pythons' […] It was staffed by over 1,400 female volunteers, who received detailed daily coverage in *The Irish Times*, and was served by special trains […] (Rains, 2008, p.17)

The spectacle "featured a variety of exotic animals as well as Eastern Magic" (Ehrlich, 1998, p.143). It had "dancing, orchestras, and fireworks, all in the imitation of Oriental excesses and exuberance"(Ehrlich, 1998,

p.143). All this, Ehrlich adds, "must have been great on the thirteen-year-old Joyce, who sought excitement and intrigue in these stylized depictions of the Orient that emphasized the strangeness and extravagance of the East" (Ehrlich, 1998, p.143). Clearly, the Araby bazaar has left a great impact on the imagination of Joyce as a boy.

Nevertheless, in reality, Joyce based his story very loosely upon the real event in his childhood; and he changed important details in his narrative fiction. In the story, the bazaar is a dark place that is about to close, bare of all the opulent colorfulness and strange extravagance of the original historical event. Tomedi remarks that Joyce's choice of "specific places" in *Dubliners* was very intentional and calculated (Tomedi, 2005, p.119). He adds: "those places were always important to the story, because he presented the city as he experienced it or imagined it experienced" (Tomedi, 2005, p.119). Joyce's reference to the Oriental bazaar, in fact, is most valuable for its representation of the Irish fascination with Oriental entertainments and the Irish mythologization of the Orient, not in its accurate depiction of the bazaar's historical reality. Still, Joyce manages to show many true historical aspects about the Araby bazaar, among which is the fact that it was organized by the British empire to entertain its Araby subjects, and to further encourage them in their whims and Eastern escapism, impeding them from effectuating a concrete action toward their liberation. In the bazaar, the East is sketched as an exotic, magical, mysterious and romantically sensuous region to which one can escape. Suzette Henke asserts in her "James Joyce East and Middle East: Literary Resonances of Judaism, Egyptology, and Indian Myth" that in *Dubliners*, "the Orient functions largely as an image of alterity," it stands for "a symbolic escape from the nets of paralysis associated with Ireland, western Europe, and the heathen 'West Country' beyond the pale of Anglo-Irish sophistication" (Henke, 1986, 308). Thus, Joyce wrote his story as a response to the predicament of his people and adapted the reality of the event to suit his authorial purpose of showing the futility of Eastern escapism.

Orientalism

Before examining Joyce's work, one must understand the origin of the concept of the Orient, a notion heavily explored by Edward Said in his postcolonial theory of Orientalism, and which will be used in the reading of

'Araby,' not as a proof of an insidious scheming by Joyce, but as a discourse which he finally subverts. Orientalism addresses imperialism, colonization, and the various injustices of culture and power transmitted through discourse. In his book *Orientalism*, Said discusses the necessity of attempting to understand how the term "Orientalism" originated:

Without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage—even produce—the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period. (Said, 1979, p.i)

According to Edward Said's analysis, the "Orient" is a "stage" where the entire East is confined; it is a theatricality invented by the West to imagine places and ideas they don't fully grasp because they lack real knowledge about them (Said, 1979, p.ii). The West uses stereotypical symbols and images of the East to represent an entire culture, and to invent instrumental knowledge that only serves to reinforce its power.

Likewise, in 'Araby' there is no real knowledge or true representation of the authentic Arabia or the East. The narration is confined in limited stereotypes and models given by Orientalist stories and popular anecdotes. In fact, the Western population's knowledge of the Orient rests on children's literature, fantasy fiction, and some Arabian myths. Zack Bowen demonstrates that "the effects of such Orientalist tales, especially the *Thousand and One Nights*, had an impact just about everywhere" in England, Scotland and Ireland, "as the tales of flying carpets, harems, and dark-skinned strangers enthralled both children and adults (qt. in Bongiovanni, 2007, p.33). Also, the most powerful origins of the fictionalized images of the East that shaped the Irish consciousness were the traveling bazaars that appeared in Dublin a few times each year, many of which featured Eastern themes (Ehrlich, 1998, p.143). This enchantment, Joyce is keen on portraying, not to adopt an Orientalist attitude toward the East, let alone to oppress it, but to eventually deflate the bubble of whimsical illusions created by the West in both Irish and Arabic nations, as a means to control and delude them away from having agency to implement actual change.

Furthermore, Orientalism framed the East as inferior and backward to legitimize Western cultural and economic domination; it provides the

West with a "European superiority over Oriental backwardness" (Said, 1979, p.7). This hypocritical portrayal of a race and a culture group that is both romantic and repulsive, is filled with cultural and ideological oppression. The industrialized West (mainly Europe and America) has had capitalistic and imperial interests and schemes to establish foreign markets, and to obtain precious raw materials from the Orient. Similarly, Orientalism also describes the Western creation of a stereotyped and exotic "Orient" to establish a binary between "Us" (the West) and "Them" (the East), often serving as justification for imperialism to exploit Eastern resources and labor. In 'Araby,' the demarcation between "West" and "Other" is evident. This "Other" stands for both Ireland and Arabia. The East was seen as exciting and different, but at the same time, it was used to help the West grow and spread its influence. The Araby bazaar itself is a cultural appropriation. The British organizers trade and profit from the images of Arabia in a colonial Ireland. In other words, Ireland itself stands for another colony that is also a subject for the trend of Orientalism; the British empire profits of the bazaar sales, distracts its Irish subjects, and gives them a psychological illusion of liberation.

Similarly, "all Orientalist literature depends on an intertwined web of references," and "the descriptions of Orients in different texts gain authenticity through the repetition of similar symbols and identical motifs" (Sen, 2008, p.59). In other words, for the West, "the Orient can only be narrated within the delimited and symbolic referentiality supplied by Orientalism" (Sen, 2008, p.59). It is insignificant if the authenticity is defied (Sen, 2008, p.59), what is important is "the replication of the phantasma" (Sen, 2008, p.60). Indeed, Orientalism is an incessant cultural, socio-political endeavor that uses "the vagaries of miscellaneous theories … for illustration" (Said, 1979, p.153). It is "the free floating mythology about the Orient" (Said, 1979, p.52) and contributing to what V. G. Kiernan labeled as "Europe's collective dream of the Orient" (qt. in Said, 1979, p.52), that derives not only from contemporary attitudes, but from what Vico called "the conceit of nations" (qt. in Said, 1979, p.52). This Orientalist "phantasma" or "mimesis" is represented in Joyce's literal repetition of Oriental signifiers and literary devices in 'Araby' to bestow a mystical appeal upon the story, and to caustically critique the Irish Eastern escapism.

New Analytical Tool: The Acrostic

The acrostic is seldom explored in mainstream literary circles. It stands for some of the most intriguing intersections of language, structure, and visual art within the poetic tradition. It relies on vertical alignment of letters hidden within the horizontal flow of the poem or message. Acrostics stretch back to ancient Greece, where they were used as mnemonic and devotional devices. The word "acrostic" is derived from the Greek words "akros," meaning "at the end," and "stichos," meaning "line or verse". The traditional acrostic involves the use of a word or phrase spelled vertically down the margin of a poem. The first letter of each line corresponds to a letter of the hidden word, creating a parallel layer of meaning. To make an acrostic poem, one must write a word vertically and then use each letter to begin a line (Collom and Noethe, 2024). Writers can make their poems or message "relate to the spine of the word or not, or have the poems "close to" or distant from" it. Usually the spine word will influence the other words" (Collom and Noethe, 2024). Acrostics give a sense of riddle or puzzle, which adds another layer of enjoyment for a savvy reader.

Moreover, the acrostic's form has ancient roots. Hilton highlights the "typically Egyptian combination of concealed meanings and sheer enjoyment" (Hilton, 2013, p.88). He also shows how "ancient readers of Homer … believed that his poetry contained hidden meanings in the form of acrostics" (Hilton, 2013, p.88); and they "diligently hunted for" them in his poetry (Hilton, 2013, p.89). Horace also was "interested in acrostics" (Mitchell, 2020, p.170); while Ovid is considered "the richest source of such wordplay among all these poets" (Mitchell, 2020, p.171). Particularly, Ovid is known for his political acrostics (Mitchell, 2020, p.171). Ovid's "provisional and encrypted expression" had given "its author some measure of satisfaction and achievement in the face of a ruthless and unrelenting Augustan domination" (Mitchell, 2020, p.180). Even in the history of slavery, "the Brer Rabbit tales of North American slaves are among the best-known examples of an oral tradition of trickster tales" (Mitchell, 2020, p.175). They represent "the muffled, oblique version of [the 'hidden transcript' or 'backstage discourse consisting of what cannot be spoken in the face of power']" (Mitchell, 2020, p.175). An acrostic "carves out a public, if provisional, space for the autonomous cultural expression of dissent" (Mitchell, 2020, p.175). A political acrostic, eventually, "is spoken to power. This is no small achievement of voice under

domination" (Mitchell, 2020, p.175).

People have produced acrostics for thousands of years (Collom and Noethe, 2024). There have been many experimentations of "the form throughout history — in the Bible, and in works by Plautus, Boccaccio, Chaucer, Ben Jonson, Poe, and others" (Collom and Noethe, 2024). For intance, Poe's lesser-known poem "An Acrostic" hides the name "Elizabeth" along its vertical spine, while Carroll famously embedded names in his poetry for children, particularly in the "Through the Looking-Glass" collection. Even contemporary experimentalists and digital poets have found new life in the form, using acrostics to challenge readers assumptions about linear reading. In every case, the acrostic stands as a marriage between form and content, demanding from the poet both structural discipline and a sense of inventive play. Eventually, acrostic writing invites readers to reconsider how language can function—not just as message but as shape, as artifact, and as experience. These forms illuminate how much is hidden within the process of writing, and they reward those who are willing to look twice and conduct an atypical reading.

The acrostic's writing "technique goes back to the very beginning of Latin poetry" (Mitchell, 2020, p.165). Often, a Latin motto is used or a "Roman Connotation" (Mitchell, 2020, p.175). Mitchell further differentiates between the haphazard and inadvertent acrostic and the intentional one, he says that their types oscillate "between virtual certainty and complete accident, and whether or not including hints or signa to facilitate recognition, acrostics" (Mitchell, 2020, p.166). By this token, what proves that an acrostic is premeditated and part and parcel of the narrative is not only its sound or mimetic property, but also its contextual relation to the work. Mitchell adds that acrostics "vary between the long and short, the simple and complex, the obvious and impenetrable, the serious and humorous, the partial and full, the forward and reverse (and the palindromic), the Latin and Greek or both…" (Mitchell, 2020, p.166). Joyce's acrostic in 'Araby' is onomatopoeic, contextual, short, simple, not so obvious, and has Latin roots. Most importantly, it highlights the theme of the Irish (and Arabic) oppression by the British imperialism, and of Joyce's frustration of his milieu. I want to argue its relevance to the text. I attempt to use 'Araby's' context to link Joyce's acrostic with the rest of the text to show his critique of the state of colonial Ireland or its imperialistically catered Eastern escapism.

Analysis

'Araby' is one of those short stories in which vestiges of the colonization of Ireland by Great Britain in the nineteenth century can be traced. 'Araby' is not a prototypical Arabian or Oriental setting for the simple reason that it is set in Dublin, Ireland. Harrington mentions that "while Oriental novels usually had settings in an (inauthentic) East, 'Araby' is set in an imagined East which has been plopped down by the English in Dublin" (Harrington, 2007, p.62). In 'Araby,' the narrator goes on a metaphorical trip to the Orient, where every descriptive detail is symbolic and carries an underlying meaning. Particularly, one embedded acrostic in 'Araby' gives an additional colonial nuance to the text. Joyce's manipulation of language serves his anticolonical discourse in the story, and I intend to excavate a previously undetected acrostic in Joycean studies that serves my argument.

The drab reality of Ireland is evident from the very first page of 'Araby'. The story begins in the narrator's house where looms a dead priest's spirit through his remaining books, for he was the former tenant of the house. This opening scene symbolizes the deadening status of the dominant Roman Catholicism within Ireland. It reflects the bleakness of Irish reality and the stasis of its people. Moreover, Ireland's reality is gradually narrated through the boy narrator's eyes. The adjective "blind" reiterated twice in the first paragraph, confirms the narrator's unawareness of himself or his surrounding. Also, a string of words that connote a gloomy mood open the story, further symbolizing the desperate state of the country. Words like "short days of winter," "dusk fell," "houses had grown sombre," "feeble lanterns," "shouts echoed," "silent street," "dark muddy lanes," "dark dripping gardens," "odours arose from the ashpits", "dark odorous stables," all cluster to represent the desolate state of the city of Dublin. Similarly, this reflects the boy's state of despondency and hopelessness: stasis and paralysis prevail over the boy and the city.

In addition, the "enervated tone of Joyce's mean little sentences, with their emphasis upon the uninspiring detachment and mutual watchfulness of suburban existence, contributes to the boy narrator's sense that life is always being lived elsewhere" (Spinks, 2009, p.56). The narrator attempts to escape his depressive environment by imagining himself desperately in love with the idealised figure of Mangan's sister. In this lifeless atmosphere, the

allure of new love beckons the boy, as he gradually fixates on how to capture Mangan's sister's attention and admiration:

Every morning I lay on the floor in the front parlour watching her door. The blind was pulled down to within an inch of the sash so that I could not be seen. When she came out on the doorstep my heart leaped. I ran to the hall, seized my books and followed her. I kept her brown figure always in my eye and, when we came near the point at which our ways diverged, I quickened my pace and passed her. This happened morning after morning. I had never spoken to her, except for a few casual words, and yet her name was like a summons to all my foolish blood. (Joyce, 1976, p.40)

The story proceeds with a long series of affectations, indicating his utter sensitivity toward his neighbor's charms. Joyce contrasts his narrator's sensuality with the ascetic atmosphere of the city; this hermetic attitude frustrates the boy. Joyce's narrator is trying in vain to adapt to the suffocating social and spiritual norms in the city of Dublin. With Mangan's sister, the boy escapes his decayed and shackled reality into the world of romance. In the tale, the boy imagines the rude business of Dublin against his romantic purposes:

On Saturday evenings when my aunt went marketing I had to go to carry some of the parcels. We walked through the flaring streets, jostled by drunken men and bargaining women, amid the curses of labourers, the shrill litanies of shop-boys who stood on guard by the barrels of pigs' cheeks, the nasal chanting of street-singers, who sang a come-all-you about O'Donovan Rossa, or a ballad about the troubles in our native land. These noises converged in a single sensation of life for me: I imagined that I bore my chalice safely through a throng of foes. (Joyce, 1976, p.41)

Hence, his adolescent infatuation with Mangan's sister recklessly transforms the mundane into a sacred realm. He carries his aunt's parcels through the market as he carries thoughts of Mangan's sister through his day, like a priest would carry a Eucharistic chalice to an altar, or an Arabian knight would bring luxurious riches to his princess. He thus "fuses eastern mystery with the sacred legend of courtly love" (Henke, 1986, p.308). He imagines himself an *Arabian Nights* hero pilgriming to the zestful East to bring his princess a token of his love in what seems like "a holy grail legend" (Henke, 1986, p.308). Indeed, Spinks remarks that "the boy's most profound feelings are represented in

a dead language culled from popular romance and sentimental novels" (Spinks, 2009, p.57). This further highlights the synthetic, effortful, and pretentious quality of the boy's feelings which further proves his whimsical unrealistic and escapist Romanticism.

Furthermore, the ballad in the excerpt above has political overtones and it functions in Joyce's overall thematic structuring of the story. O'Donovan Rossa was a revolutionary figure who worked to overthrow the British Empire within Ireland. Joyce uses these "synthetic Irish forms from the nineteenth century that are quoted and sung throughout" his work "both as a mnemonic for the unresolved history of that century and a scattering of the obsolete detritus of its culture" (McCourt, 2009, p.186). In other words, through such reiterated songs, Joyce reminds his readers of the Irish plight under British domination. The motif of nationalism, thus, begins to be iterated very early on in the story, especially with Joyce's choice of the narrator's friend's name Mangan. Mangan's sister's choice of name serves the motif of both escapism and nationalism and has a critical meaning in the context of the story. James Clarence Mangan was a mid-nineteenth century nationalist Irish poet who had a relish for the East and the Orient. In real life, Joyce wrote two pieces of criticism on Mangan, the first in 1902 for an Irish audience and the second in Italian in 1907. In them, he emphasizes the poet's originality, individuality and national faith: "Mangan, it must be remembered, wrote with no native literary tradition to guide him" (Joyce, 2000, p.56). He favors his eclectic artistry where "East and West meet in that personality" (Joyce, 2000, p.57), while contemplating his humanism. Joyce says: "whether the song is of Ireland or of Istambol it has the same refrain, a prayer that peace may come again to her who has lost her peace" (Joyce, 2000, p.57). He adds: "the most celebrated verses by Mangan, those in which, under a veil of mysticism, he sings of the fallen glory of his country" (Joyce, 2000, p.134).

Joyce champions "his poet's soul free from any blemish"; even though "he wrote such admirable English, he refused to work for English magazines or journals; although he was the spiritual focus of his age, he refused to prostitute himself to the rabble or become a mouthpiece for politicians" (Joyce, 2000, p.134). Joyce hails Mangan's national spirit where with him "a narrow and hysterical nationality receives a last justification" (Joyce, 2000, p.60). Finally, he

champions him with the remark: "all those who have written in noble disdain have not written in vain even if, tired" (Joyce, 2000, p.136). In 'Araby,' Joyce's narrator recites Mangan's translation from Gaelic of "Dark Rosaleen," a sixteenth century poem that allegorizes Ireland as a young woman awaiting deliverance from her English oppressors (Harrington, 2007, p.57). This allusion also emphasizes the theme of Irish nationality: modern Ireland is oppressed by England and in need of a savior (Egan, 2011, p.189). Clearly, in "Araby," Joyce uses Mangan's motif as a symbol for Irish nationalism.

Mangan's verses not only reflect Irish unity, but also they idealize the East for beauty and sensuality. In Joyce's critical article on Mangan, he says that: "the lore of many lands goes with him [Mangan] always, eastern tales […] which have rapt him out of his time" (Joyce, 2000, p.56). He explains his Oriental erudition in "oriental languages, probably Sanskrit and Arabic" (Joyce, 2000, p.129); and he mentions his zealous enchantment with "the oriental drug" or Eastern escapism (Joyce, 2000, p.131). Bongiovanni says that "Mangan's Oriental verses reified the East's reputation as a place of almost unbearable sensual delights" (Bongiovanni, 2007, p.41). Clearly, by including plentiful references to James Clarence Mangan, Joyce points to the significance of the Irish fascination with the Orient.

Likewise, Mangan's sister also functions as a symbol for the exoticism and the licentiousness of the East. Mangan' sister is portrayed as a "brown-clad figure" with "soft rope of hair" (Joyce, 1976, p.40) and wearing a "silver bracelet" (Joyce, 1976, p. 42). Her skin evokes the skin color of romanticized stereotypical images of Arabia that flood the narrator's head. Sen says that: "such a feminization […] is in itself a classic colonial construct" (Sen, 2008, p.66). The sight of her "petticoat" (Joyce, 1976, p. 42) and the sexual titillation of her hand that "held one of the spikes" on "the railing" (Joyce, 1976, p.42) teases the boy out of his thoughts. Sen remarks that "sexual titillation through partial vision is a constant motif attached to the Orient" (Sen, 2008, p.66). In fact, of all Orientalist attitudes, this perception of the sexualized East was the most pervasive. Particularly, in Victorian England, when the most important characteristic of the Orient was its role as a place of "licentiousness" and "dangerous sensuality" (Bongiovanni, 2007, pp.4243-). Bongiovanni says that the East is "the manifestation of Oriental sexuality, a symbol that

Joyce sets against the Irish need to suppress, at least publicly, their natural eroticism" (Bongiovanni, 2007, p.43). The East was not only viewed by the Irish as a "stark contrast" to their society and culture, but also as an "Irish fixation on the idea of the Orient, as they imagined it to be a place of sexual freedom, libidinal fantasies, and easy divorce" (Schloss, 1998, p.336). The stereotypical images of the East offer what Heyward Ehrlich calls a "utopian alternative" and an "epitome of difference" compared to Ireland's reality (Ehrlich, 1998, p.320). This is a classical colonial construct which again, Joyce invests in his story's Romantic escapism, as the boy looks at Araby as a place where he could flee the nets of Dublin's orthodox religious and ethical codes, and express his latent sexual desires.

Undoubtedly, the girl is a metaphor that stands for the East, or Araby. The boy projects a fantasy on Mangan's sister to make his days feel bearable, like the Western commodification and essentialism of the East as a place of lust, escapist fantasies, and capricious whims. The boy's love is a pretentious state of mind and heart and represents his country's Eastern escapism. In fact, he revels in his state of unawareness and blindness; he says " I was thankful that I could see so little" (Joyce, 1976, p. 41), and "I thought little of the future" (Joyce, 1976, p. 41). Such motif of blindness are again mementos for the reader that indicate the Irish people's blindness to their reality and to their delusional acts of escapism. Evidently, Mangan's sister stands as a symbolic signification for the boy's idealized and sexualized romantic ideas, and of Joyce's fusion of the sacred with the profane, of Ireland and its obsolete synthetic culture.

Moreover, in this state of blind desperation and whimsical projection, the boy is willing to do anything to prove himself worthy of Mangan's sister's love. In another Oriental motif, her image lures him to bring her a souvenir from the Arabian market:

At last she spoke to me… She asked me was I going to Araby. I forget whether I answered yes or no. It would be a splendid bazaar, she said; she would love to go.

—And why can't you? I asked.

…. She could not go, she said, because there would be a retreat that week in her convent …

—It's well for you, she said.

—If I go, I said, I will bring you something. (Joyce, 1976, p.42)

In this passage, the boy pledges to himself that he will bring his love interest "something" from the bazaar. We can also see Mangan's parents

sending their daughter to a retreat, showing another indicator of how the Araby bazaar was viewed as a place of dissolution. After this scene the narrator proceeds to say:

What innumerable follies laid waste my waking and sleeping thoughts after that evening! I wished to annihilate the tedious intervening days …. The syllables of the word Araby were called to me through the silence in which my soul luxuriated and cast an Eastern enchantment over me. (Joyce, 1976, p. 42)

And:

[...] I asked for leave to go to the bazaar on Saturday night …. I had hardly any patience with the serious work of life which, now that it stood between me and my desire, seemed to me child's play …(Joyce, 1976, p.42)

Both passages above indicate the impatience and the excitement of the narrator to go to the bazaar. He was daydreaming about it, and was anticipating the Arabian luxurious day. In *Orientalism*, Said mentions how Napoleon himself was 'attracted' to the Orient and was 'impatient' to go to the lands of the Arabs:

… Napoleon had been attracted to the Orient since his adolescence …. [A]nd it is evident from all his writing and conversation that he was steeped … in the memories and glories that were attached to Alexander's Orient generally and to Egypt in particular (Said, 1979, p.80)

Accordingly, the following quote from Said indicates how Lamartine, an Orientalist French writer, expressed the same longing to venture into the Orient. Lamartine said that a trip to the Orient was something he had always dreamed about: "Un voyage en Orient comme un grand acte de ma vie intérieure"' (qt. in Said, 1979, p.177). In Joyce's short story, the Araby bazaar is a metonymy that stands for the whole of the Orient, where the young narrator—like Napoleon and Lamartine—is desperately longing to venture. The boy's imagination, like the Orientalists', "has been guided by clichéd images of the Orient as a place of … ultimate fulfillment" (Schloss, 1998, p.103). Joyce uses the Orient as a "topos – a set of references, a group of characteristics" and "a space of Otherness" (Schloss, 1998, p.103). To the Westerners, the East is "inflated" with "their visions" of "romanticism and with their own projected need" (Schloss, 1998, p.104). Indeed, the phantasm of Mangan's sister is passed onto the bazaar; and the boy's incessant brooding about the word 'Araby'

plays a central role in creating what Henke calls, a "phantasmal projection" (Henke, 1986, p.308) about the Orient.

The boy henceforth, begins to prepare himself mentally for his journey. The narrator on the evening of the bazaar is expecting his uncle to come early so that the latter could give him money. The same passage reflects the theme of time and waiting:

When I came home to dinner my uncle had not yet been home. Still it was early. I sat staring at the *clock* for some *time* and, when its *ticking* began to irritate me, I left the room. I mounted the staircase and gained the upper part of the house …. I may have stood there [on the front window of one of the rooms upstairs] for *an hour* […] When I came downstairs […] I had to endure the gossip of the tea-table. The meal was *prolonged beyond an hour* and still my uncle did not come... [I]t was *after eight o'clock* […] I began to *walk up and down* the room, *clenching my fists* (Joyce, 1976, p.43, my emphases)

Among other Orientalist motifs which Joyce adopted to intensify Eastern escapism is the motif of time. The boy has waited for so long, too long, yet at the same time, too impatiently. Said mentions that Napoleon himself has waited for ten years before he could finally conquer the East. He planned for preparations that took roughly more than ten years (Said, 1979, pp.8085-). The Napoleonic *Description de L'Egypte*, published in twenty-three enormous volumes, took alone nineteen years to be finally finished (Said, 1979, p.84). Furthermore, Jean-Baptiste-Joseph Fourier, one of the orientalist figures who contributed in shaping Napoleon's *La Description de L'Egypte*, says that the spirit of the Europeans is 'impatient' to finally conquer the Orient (qt. in Said, 1979, p.29). Joyce, by depicting his young narrator as a driven yet impatient conqueror, relied on such collective pseudo knowledge about the Orient and Orientalist mythical obsessions. Joyce, in parallel, employs the same mood of impatient vigilance prior to his boy narrator's ravishment of the East as a form of tension before his story's epiphany is revealed. Time also indicates the spiritual paralysis of the *Dubliners*. They are waiting for something that never happens, and the bazaar is the boy's chance at spiritual liberation and revivification.

The boy's aunt is also very skeptical and anxious about him going to the exotic Araby bazaar, and her attitude is typical of the conservative Catholic society of Ireland. When the boy asked for leave to go to Araby his "aunt was surprised and hoped

it was not some Freemason affair" (Joyce, 1976, p.43) and reminded him that it is the night of "Our Lord" (Joyce, 1976, p.43). When we hear his uncle's latchkey, he is drunkenly reciting 'The Arab's Farewell to his Steed,' (Joyce, 1976, p.44) the reader realizes that he indirectly suggests the uselessness of attending the bazaar so late. This poem was written in the middle of the nineteenth century by Caroline Norton and it has astonishing Orientalist connotations that refer to the defeat of the Orient and its sorrowful fall. The poem obliquely indicates Ireland's betrayal at the hands of base self-interest:

My beautiful! My beautiful!/ That standest meekly by/ […] I may not mount on thee again—/ Thou'rt sold, my Arab steed!/ The stranger hath thy bridle rein –/ Thy master hath his gold—/ Fleet-limbed and beautiful! Farewell! –/ Thou'rt sold, my steed— Thou'rt sold! (Norton, 1835)

In a clandestine narration, this poem too serves the story's thematic construct. The "farewell" in the poem is a goodbye to the glory that was Ireland (the beautiful fleet-limbed meek steed), now that it had been sold to imperialist colonial British powers (stranger) for the self-interest (gold) of some corrupt politicians (thy master). This poem has profound national implications, and it once again presents Joyce as a very intentional national and postcolonial writer. By relating Ireland and the East in this poetic innuendo, he gives the reader another conceit of his underlying purpose behind using images of the East. With great difficulty and hesitation, the boy's uncle hands him a florin before he goes on his way. A Florin was a silver coin that is now obsolete and worth two shillings. It had the picture of Queen Victoria on one side; for the Irish people, it was a constant reminder and symbol of the domination of the British rule and of postcolonial Ireland. It also reminds the reader of the state of poverty of the Irish people, including his narrator's.

Finally, the boy goes his way to marvel at Araby's luxuriant majesty. The following is the beginning of a crucial passage in the short story: "I held a florin tightly in my hand as I strode down Buckingham Street towards the station. The sight of the streets thronged with buyers and glaring with gas recalled to me the purpose of my journey" (Joyce, 1976, p.44). Only the crowded market reminded the narrator of 'the purpose' of his journey, which is going to the bazaar (a symbolic representation of the Orient) after he got distracted by the throngs of buyers on his way. Indeed, both the market (where Irish

buyers are crowded) and the bazaar (Araby) have a shared characteristic, that is, of 'trade'. One of the earliest reasons for the West infringing upon the East was trade. Said says:

… [I]n an age [the 19th and the 20th C.] where the original Orientalist program of aiding commerce and trade with the Orient had become exhausted, the specialized learned societies whose products were works displaying the potential (if not actual) values of disinterested scholarship. (Said, 1979, p.165)

This also stands for the mercenary relation between British Empire and its colonial subjects like Ireland and the East. Joyce uses another symbol earlier in the story, where the visitor at his uncle's place, Mrs. Mercer, is portrayed as a hypocritical person who ostensibly uses charity for her own financial gain; she symbolizes the "mercenary and petty" spiritual state of the city (Egan, 2011, p.191). Nolan mentions that Irish culture is "a culture which, while lacking either inventiveness or imagination, combined urban materialism with rural complacency" (Nolan, 1995, p.27). Joyce depicts an Ireland that "has lost her identity and integrity because of the exploitation of foreign … England" (Egan, 2011, p.191). Words like "florin" and "buyers" all connote the motif of trade that reminds of Arabia, but also works as reminiscence to the reader of the "sold" Irish country or "Arab steed". Thus, the motif of trade and merchandise functions as an imperialistic reminder of the oppressed state of Ireland and Arabia.

Consequently, in the second part of the same passage, the narrator proceeds with his 'quest':

I took my seat in a third-class carriage of a deserted train. After an intolerable delay the train moved out of the station slowly. It crept onward among ruinous houses and over the twinkling river. At Westland Row Station a crowd of people pressed to the carriage doors; but the porters moved them back, saying that it was a special train for the bazaar. I remained alone in the bare carriage. In a few minutes the train drew up beside an improvised wooden platform. I passed out on to the road and saw by the lighted dial of a clock that it was ten minutes to ten. In front of me was a large building which displayed the magical name. (Joyce, 1976, p.44)

After striding down Buckingham Street towards the station, passing by streets of buyers, then off the train to the 'creeping' upon old houses, then passing by the twinkling river and stopping briefly at Westland Row

Station, the young narrator finally encounters 'the magical name' i.e. Araby. This long classification of places passed by the narrator in the mystical "special train". toward his final enchanting destination represents the motif of quest or pilgrimage. In the eighth section of *Orientalism*, Said says:

From one end of the 19th C. to the other—after Napoleon, that is—the Orient was a place of pilgrimage, and every major work belonging to a genuine if not always to an academic Orientalism took its form, style, and intention from the idea of pilgrimage there. (Said,1979, p.168)

Indeed, Joyce took his form, style and intention from the idea of pilgrimage. Words like "carriage", "train", "seat", "road" indicate how his whole journey to the bazaar is indeed Joyce's own homage to the orientalist pilgrim's motif. This further proves Joyce's adaptation of Oriental classical motifs in his story to serve his own ends. 'Araby' is eventually about an adolescent boy going through sexual awakening and trapped in cultural idealism of romance and eroticization of the East. Eventually, the boy is a victim of these images, not a conscious perpetrator. Joyce further proves this as the narrator upon arriving to the bazaar says:

I could not find any sixpenny entrance and, fearing that the bazaar would be closed, I passed in quickly through a turnstile, handling a shilling to a weary-looking man […] Before the curtain, over which the words *Café Chantant* were written in coloured lamps, two men were counting money on a salver. I listened to the fall of the coins. Remembering with difficulty why I had come … (Joyce, 1976, p. 45)

This scene perfectly showcases the debilitated state of Ireland and Arabia: the bazaar is guarded by a "weary-looking man"; the "Cafe Chantant" is a word imbued with magic and enchantment, yet guarded by a senile sentinel. The "Cafe Chantant" is a phrase that stands for the flamboyantly ornate, yet decrepit state of the East and West that are both victims to images of the Eastern enchantment. For the boy, the largely deserted bazaar is a disappointing contrast with the oriental spectacle of colour, commodities, and crowds which he had anticipated. The moment of disillusionment for the boy slowly begins to unravel; he hears a young saleslady talking and laughing with two young English gentlemen:

At the door of the stall a young lady was talking and laughing with two young gentlemen. I remarked their English accents and listened vaguely to their conversation.

—O, I never said such a thing!
—O, but you did!
—O, but I didn't!
—Didn't she say that?
—Yes, I heard her.
—O, there's a... fib!
__O … (Joyce, 1976, p.45)

Stopping by this passage, a reader might think that it is a casual vague conversation heard by the narrator; however, if we closely heed the first letters of each line, we can notice the onomatopoeic acrostic OOODYOO conveying the word "Adios". Attridge says that an onomatopoeia "literally means "word-making" and usually implies reliance on the imitative potential of the accepted lexicon" (Attridge, 1984, p.1120). Most notably, it "involves an unusually direct or unmediated link between language and its referent" (Attridge, 1984, p.1121). Bredin mentions that typical onomatopoeic words like "whizz, bang, splash, thump, will strike most English-speakers" as onomatopoeia" (Bredin, 1996, p.555). However, the hunt for onomatopeias can be beyond "the strict or narrow kind … alleged to occur whenever the sound of a word resembles (or "imitates") a sound that the word refers to" (Bredin, 1996, p.555). In fact, an onomatopoeia can also be a relationship between a word and what it "imitates, echoes, reflects, resembles, corresponds to, sounds like, expresses, reinforces, and has a natural or direct relation with" (Bredin, 1996, p.555). Bredin says that "sound does matter in language, and one constituent of our consciousness as language users is an awareness of the fit between sound and meaning. Onomatopoeia is one species of such a fit" (Bredin, 1996, p.566). He continues: "onomatopoeic words … describe things in a mimetic or enactive mode" (Bredin, 1996, p.566). Joyce's OODYOOO is a "relevant sound" that is "an object of consciousness, not in or by itself, but rather as sound onomatopoeically related to something else" (Bredin, 1996, p.557). Attridge adds that "although these [sounds] are not words and sentences, they mimic words and sentences-and it is this that permits us to pronounce them at all" (Attridge, 1984, p.1122). By this token, OODYOOO is pertinently relevant as a context and as a meaning. While studying some of Joyce's onomatopoeic writing in *Ulysses,* Attridge notes:

It is the easiest thing in the world to write a sentence with open, back vowels that evokes vast palls of darkness, or large, hollow, resounding vaults; or one with close, front vowels that depicts shrill insects or little, pinched, squeezed niches (word-processors, I

am told, can now be programmed to produce such patterns). And it is one of the most difficult things in the world to write a sentence that offers endlessly repeatable (and variable pleasures in its very turns of sound). (Attridge, 1984, pp. 11341135-)

In a similar vein, Roman Jakobson says:

The iconic force in language produces an ENACTMENT of the fictional reality through the form of the text. This brings realistic illusion to life in a new dimension: as readers we do not merely receive a report of the fictional world; we enter into it iconically, as a dramatic performance, through the experience of reading. (qt. in Attridge 1118)

Likewise, OOODYOO is the dramatic enactment and the imitative sound of 'Adios'. It refers to the Spanish word for farewell and has Latin roots. It also stands for "Adieu," the French for so long. The placement of these vowels is not a mere coincidence in Joycean literature. Joyce is a very intentional writer; he is notoriously known as an obsessive perfectionist. In his literature "no single word entered his sentences without much deliberation" (Kaplan, 2002, p.175), and "he would go to considerable lengths to ensure that he was satisfied with the final result" (Kaplan, 2002, p.175). Biographies also insisted on how determined he was to keep his stories exactly as he wrote them, as he "refused to alter or omit a word" (Bulson, 2006, p.13). Spinks comments on "the life-long difficulty he was to experience retaining control over his work and setting it before his readers in its unexpurgated form" (Spinks, 2009, p.48). All this is a proof that OOODYOO is premeditated in the context of 'Araby'.

Moreover, the musicality of OOODYOO resonates with Joyce's writing style of "low visibility" and his auditory imagination rather than visual (Levin, 1960, p.11). For Joyce, "music emerges as a primary tool in his interrogation of traditional ways of reading and making meaning" (McCourt, 2009, pp.282283-). Joyce also played the guitar like an Italian Giacomo, and his only poetry collection, which he named "Chamber Music", is another proof of his musical ear. McCourt confirms that Joyce's experience in music and his "impulse toward musical expression shaped his work" (McCourt, 2009, p.283). Levin also asserts that Joyce's works are "most directly concerned with the hearing ear" (Levin, 1960, p.11); and "almost unique among modern prose-writers in this respect," Joyce "must be read aloud to be fully appreciated" (Levin, 1960, p.11).

McCourt further indicates that "there is a musicality reflected in the tonal and rhythmic qualities of Joyce's language, in his sound as opposed to his sense" (McCourt, 2009, p.280). Even Joyce had a personal conviction that "a literary work of art is a thing to be performed and a demonstration of skill" (McCourt, 2009, p.280). In a serendipitous observation, Bredin takes Joyce as an example of his musical stylistic experimentation in writing as he indicates: "Joyce tells us that Leopold Bloom enjoyed ;liver slices fried with crustcrumbs'. An ordinary writer would have had them fried 'in breadcrumbs' but Joyce … found the right words" (Bredin, 1996, p.566). It is then "readily apparent to any reader that a musical sensibility lies behind the poetry, drama and fiction of James Joyce" (McCourt, 2009, p.275). All this is proof that the placement of "OOODYOO" is calculated in a mathematical and scrupulously mean style.

The question remains, how does the acrostic serve the argument of Joyce's vehement opposition to colonization, and his non-orientalist attitude? In fact, Joyce's wordplay and linguistic acrobatics are an act of resistance. By juggling the letters of the English language to produce sounds, he is reasserting his freedom as a colonized Irish subject. Attridge says that "Joyce's dexterity in handling the sounds and patterns of English is evident" (Attridge, 1984, p.1120), as well as his "customary linguistic agility and ingenuity" (Attridge, 1984, p.1120). By fiddling on "the aural qualities of language" (Attridge, 1984, p.1119), its euphonic "sonorities" (Attridge, 1984, p.1125) and referents, he partially restores his voice as an independent individual in the world. For "no matter how brilliant Joyce's use of English, it would always run the risk of being seen as his way of serving his colonial master" (McCourt, 2009, p.105). Moreover, the OOODYOO is also Joyce's headstrong "nonserviam" to his English colonizers. He is writing it beyond the rules and laws of the semantics of English language. The play on words is, after all, an act of resistance. It is musical, Latin, and hidden. It is mischievous and slightly derisive. Through his narrator, Joyce is saying to the Empire: Adios, all your extravagance and majesty are just a fib. This is translated in real life too: Joyce emigrated from Dublin to Trieste and to Paris, but never to London. Joyce's play on words and sounds thus liberates him from the nets of language flung upon his soul as a Dubliner in the world who has been dispossessed of a coherent and independent cultural identity.

Moreover, for an acrostic to be valid and relevant, it has to powerfully reinforce the theme, it has to have a "textual correlative" (Vaughn, 1982, p.6), and should have a "direct literary and thematic consequence in its context" (Mitchell, 2020, p.170). At a very critical moment in the story, while the narrator is probing the bazaar's goods, and while oscillating between his infantile romanticism and his disillusioned frustrated self, he hears that vague conversation. Hidden in its lines is the onomatopoeic acrostic "OODYOOO," as it echoes the "farewell" earlier to the narrator's steed, while his uncle teased him for being late. The acrostic can be interpreted as a reference to the "Farewell" of the Arab steed. Britain stole Ireland's and Arabia's steed. The steed here is a metaphor for power and agency, as both worlds become victims to hegemonic power. The onomatopoeic adieu is also a farewell to the fantasy of freedom and liberation which the steed represents. It is thematically linked to the concept of time, that it is too late, and that Ireland has already been sold to the British colonizer in a cheap bazaar like an Arab steed. Most notably, the OOODYOO is a goodbye to the illusions and fantasies that shackle the boy's imagination away from his reality; it is an awakening. All this is proof that the OOODYOO is not a coincidence, rather a deliberate confirmation of contextual relevance.

Attridge gives the example of an onomatopoeia echoing Joyce's theme in *Ulysses*. He says:

These enigmatic scraps, like all the items in the list, convey very little in terms of the fictional setting, and can only be interpreted retrospectively; appearing when they do they highlight the dependence of linguistic formations -onomatopoeic and otherwise -on their immediate context. Thus our "hearing" of the tram in the final passage of "Sirens" depends entirely on a clue not given in the prelude: the word "Tram" itself, without which we could make no sense at all of the onomatopoeic sequence. (Attridge, 1984, p.1125)

Similarly, the word "Farewell" asserts the onomatopoeic acrostic and Joyce's wordplay on the theme of goodbye, loss, and disillusion. Joyce's embedded Latin goodbye only reasserts his conscious awakening to this reality. This goodbye is a farewell to the boy's romantic idealistic illusions and escapism. It is a knell that awakens him and brings him back to reality, away from Irish Orientalism. The farewell is eventually addressed to Arabia as well: its reality is also a "fib," constructed and oppressed by hegemonic powers, and exploited for

economic profits and foreign bazaars. The echoing sound is reiterating "Farewell Orient! Farewell Arab steed! Farewell Ireland! you 'weary-looking man', you are just 'a fib!'" The boy's idealistic emotional escapade in the form of romantic infatuation or Irish Orientalism is, like the reality of Ireland or the Araby bazaar, a "fib". This moment in 'Araby' represents a direct comparison between the Orient and Ireland. They are both exploited and deceived by the West (the English gentlemen). They are both part of a past that has long been dead and gone. They are mere farewells. The word "fib," by which the salesgirl's accuses the English gentlemen for lying has also symbolic reference to, as Egan says, "the various lies and deceptions practiced against Ireland herself" by the British Empire (Egan, 2011, p.193). Clearly, Joyce's onomatopoeic acrostic and wordplay reinforce his stance as a fierce opponent of colonization and Ireland's or Arabia's victimization, and this further proves his non-Orientalist attitude.

Moreover, Attridge discusses that an onomatopoeia is not purely an aural device, but can also be visual (Attridge, 1984, p.1124). For instance, the repetition of the empty O can stand for the visual representation of the emptiness of the bazaar itself. It is an echo of its vacant space that represents Ireland. It is also a vicious circle and a dead end, mirroring the story's cul-de-sac as it starts with the blindness of the boy, and ends with his eyes burning. It stands for the shackled reality of the Dubliners, and their psychological learned helplessness or inability to escape. The O echoes the theme of spiritual paralysis and "the subjection of a life to an endless cycle of repetitive gestures" (Spinks, 2009, p.54). Indeed, Attridge notes that reading Joyce is about scanning for "sequences of letters that go beyond the normal configurations of written English, and the visual patterns contribute to the mimetic impressions received by the reader" (Attridge, 1984, p.1125). He adds that the "graphic shapes … protrude above and below the lines" (Attridge, 1984, p.1125). The repetition of the empty O as a visual and aural medium appears to be a bottomless pit of despair. Its function in the context of Joyce's narrative is a reminder of the entrapment in cultural idealism of romance and eroticization of the East, and a helpless incarceration by the British master.

Undoubtedly, Joyce's wordplay hints at "the peculiar density and inexhaustibility of which language, as a material medium, is capable in its literary manifestations" (Attridge,

1984, p.1135). Joyce's hidden onomatopoeic acrostic is a rhetorical and "a literary device which can generate a variety of pleasures, all of them focused on language itself, and on its capacity to elude and exceed any rules we might construct for it" (Attridge, 1984, p.1135). By this token, it adds to the argument of Joyce's vehement refusal of British colonization or its cultural trends, including Orientalism, and his experimental mirroring of the desperate existential state of the Irish.

Also, in reality, the volunteers at the Araby Bazaar were Irish (Rains, 2008, p.21). In Joyce's 'Araby', the bazaar-girls and their customers whose conversation the narrator overhears are described as having 'English accents' (Joyce, 1976, p.45). This is another example of Joyce's creative adaptation of the real bazaar to show Ireland's oppression by the English, or the Irish people's blind and impeccable mimicry of their ruthless colonizers. The salesgirl is mimicking the gentlemen's English accents as a sort of cultural identification with power. The real Araby bazaar in Ireland was sponsored by the English Empire (Harrington, 2007, p.62). The salesgirl at the bazaar who is selling her wares and imitating the English accents is Ireland, Eireen, or Dark Rosaleen. By this token, the bazaar too becomes "a tool of colonial power" (Bongiovanni, 2007, p.46). It is a political medium to disillusion the Irish away from seeking real national liberation.

In addition, the boy can only remember his purpose of coming to the bazaar once he sees "porcelain vases and flowered teasets," arguably, the "most Oriental of colonial signifiers" (Sen, 2008, p.64). The saleswoman at the bazaar "in her silly, vulgar flirtation with the two gentlemen at her stall" becomes "the Whore of Babylon, who shows the boy her English "wares", and also presents the image of a sordid contemporary Ireland" (Egan, 2011, p.191). Araby's protagonist becomes utterly disillusioned when the bazaar with all its sexual vigor and opulent fantasies of the East is eventually a desolate empty place with a cheap English girl as its Arabian princess. Thus, Joyce was keen on portraying the promise of Eastern enchantment and escapism as marketed by the English Empire and by delusional Irish people as a fib. In a morose atmosphere, the narrator arrives at the bazaar only to encounter flowered teacups and English accents, not the freedom of the enchanting East. This is another national awareness that is conveyed by Joyce in the narrative.

Thereafter, the narrator in "Araby" continues:

Observing me the young lady came over and asked me did I wish to buy anything …. I looked humbly at the great jars that stood like eastern guards at either side of the dark entrance to the stall and murmured:

—No, thank you. (Joyce, 1976, p.45)

Joyce's young narrator is not reaching 'demystification' or 'disillusionment' about the 'great Orient' by humbly relinquishing his interest in the Arabian goods. It is not a disillusionment a la Orientalism. Said says that: "there is often a quality of disappointment, disenchantment, or demystification to be found in their Oriental writings" (Said, 1979, p.181). It's a result of a "subjective consciousness expressing an almost cosmic disenchantment" by the Orient (Said, 1979, p.243). However, what appears to be a classical motif of disillusionment is in fact a final existential epiphany for the boy, and for Ireland. The "great jars that stood like eastern guards" become symbolic reminders of the oppressive imperial rule imposed upon both Ireland and the East. The goods and the bazaar stand for the whole of the Orient and of Ireland in their marketed image: cultures, traditions, arts, past and present, and their respective "sold" state. Joyce continues as he closely approaches his shattering epiphany

…. I lingered before her stall […] to make my interest in her wares seem the more real. Then I turned away slowly and walked down the middle of the bazaar. I allowed the two pennies to fall against the sixpence in my pocket. (Joyce, 1976, p.45)

[...]

I heard a voice call from one end of the gallery that the light was out. The upper part of the hall was now completely dark. Gazing up into the darkness I saw myself as a creature driven and derided by vanity; and my eyes burned with anguish and anger. (Joyce,1976, pp.4546-)

His final attitude appears to be a disillusionment in the Orientalism heritage, but his narrator's final demystification speaks of his personal disillusionment by the reality of his country and the world. The ending of 'Araby' is a Joycean epiphany, not an Orientalist disillusionment. The boy perceives that his idealized vision of Araby is baffled along with his idealised vision of Mangan's sister and of love. Realising that his thoughts of the girl and Araby are nothing but dreams, the boy stands alone in the dark with his shattered hopes. In this sense, the scene of total darkness completes the epiphany: his experience at "Araby" shatters his Romantic imagination and his idealism. This is an archetypal

Joycean epiphany, one of those often small but radical moments, after which life is never quite the same again. In a similar attitude, Hugh Kenner, Joyce's classical critic, describes Araby as "an echoing and empty humiliation" (Kenner, 1955). While the boy was blind at the beginning, at the end he sees. The "blind" inexperienced narrator becomes conscious of the devastated state of Ireland under the domination of British rule. After his innocent escapism into idealized private fantasies of the Orient, he sees his petty derisive state ("a creature driven and derided by vanity"). He comes to terms with his place in the world ("completely dark"). His eyes that are now like fire, could finally consciously see ("my eyes burned with anguish and dread"). His final sentiment of anguish and frustration is "a realization of his own naivete" (Harrington, 2007, p.64). Joyce's narrator becomes "acutely aware of how the Irish were cast as Other in British society" (Shaffer, 1997, p.220). Joyce's narrator "ultimately descending from the sublimity of his literary voyagings to what seems a final moral and emotional perception of his vanity and pain" (Ehrlich, 1998, p.327). In a final attitude, Joyce indirectly criticizes the way the colonizer has made the "splendid" bazaar (Ireland and Arabia) such a dull and depressing land.

Stylistically, the reader can detect how the story begins with light, and then progressively ends in darkness. The cluster of adjectives progressively goes in the following consecutive order: "dusk/ somber/violet/ feeble lanterns/ the dark/ dark/ shadow/ shadow/ shadow/ morning/ brown/ morning after morning/ flaring / dark/ lighted/ silver bracelet/ The light/ lit up/ lit up/ the dark/ brown-clad/ lamplight/ fire/ twinkling / darkness/ coloured lamps/ light was out/completely dark /into the darkness". The reader could see how the short story proceeds from feeble lightness and somberness (the story's beginning in the muddy streets of Dublin) to a flaring brightness morning after morning (meeting the brown-clad figure) to a complete darkness (the epiphany at the bazaar). The story begins in darkness and ends in darkness, drawing a vicious circle with no possibility of escape: "the recurrent situation is entrapment" (Levin, 1960, p.5). Darkness is the decline of Gaelic Eireen and Dark Rosaleen, and the Eastern glory. It is perhaps the Occidental "OOODYOO" and "farewell" to both Ireland and the East as their lands and people continue to be exploited by the British hegemony.

Indeed, in 'Araby,' Joyce is finally attempting to show that as long as the Irish are occupied with the hypnotizing images of the East, they persist on participating in an endless colonial discourse that only magnifies the power of the Empire that oppresses them. As alluring this escapism into the Orient could be, they divert the Irish from realizing the reality of their oppression by the empire and shackles them from attempting to seek social and economic reforms that give them their real liberation. Ehrlich proposes that, "in denying the 'splendid bazaar,' Joyce showed both the glories and perils of attempting to recreate Arabian nights images in the solitary mind (qtd. in Harrington, 2007, p.65). Eventually, Joyce is warning his Irish people to become aware of their own role in perpetuating their victimization by the British, and their lack of self-awareness. "Araby" is mainly an awakening to stop "the complicity with which the Irish contribute to their own colonial condition" (Bulson, 2006, p.43) and self-oppression. Ironically, this same desired awakening and psychological liberation will arguably stop them from objectifying, marginalizing, or appropriating the East in stereotypical Western Orientalist discourses.

Finally, 'Araby' is not merely the coming to personal awareness of an Irish boy and his realization of his inferior subservient place in the world as, what Harrington describes, "a mixture of colonial subject and citizen in a foreign Empire in a medieval milieu" (Harrington, 2007, p. 59). 'Araby' is also the coming to national consciousness of Ireland. The Araby bazaar in Ireland is a ruse, or a decoy. By appropriating the colonized status of the East, Joyce offers a representation of his people's national predicament. The boy's gloomy eyes depict the sorrowful state of a country that is a victim of "a throng of foes" and put at the altar of materialistic foreign powers. Joyce uses this story to hold the Empire accountable for all its atrocities against his country. He gives his people a voice to show, in the words of Shaffer, "how difference," be it Eastern or Irish, "can be accepted or rejected as a means to empowerment" (Shaffer, 1997, p.223). The boy's final epiphany speaks of his recognition of his own vanity; the boy is a victim of his country's misconceived idealism and Orientalism.

Indeed, in Joyce's 'Araby', Ireland's "Otherness", as historically perceived by the West, becomes projected into the Eastern Other to mirror "feelings of powerlessness," "inferiority," "vulnerabilities," and "anxieties of subornidation" (Bongiovanni, 2007,

p.27). 'Araby' is a desperate ploy to ratify a coherent sense of identity and belonging for the boy narrator. Eventually, 'Araby' is a cultural creation sponsored by the British Empire in Dublin, Ireland; it is a colonial projection of an Orient with an Irish accent. Harrington says:

Perhaps in his manipulation of the factual occurrence of the bazaar, Joyce was actually showing that despite the glamour that the English sponsors of the bazaar wanted the Irish patrons to see, so that they would spend money and have a greater reverence for the magnanimity of the Empire, the promise of opulence for the Irish through the Empire is empty, and is self-serving, benefiting only the Empire itself (Harrington, 2007, p.66)

Conclusion

In sum, reading Joyce is a collective effort, one that will remain unrelenting for a very long time. Indeed, "reading a literary text is not a "natural" activity, a simple transference to the field of literature of the linguistic ability to read grammatical sentences; it is a learned skill, and it has … a future, which we cannot predict" (Attridge, 1984, p.1124). Such readings remain valid in a world where, in the words of Shaffer, "neither damaging stereotypes nor aggressive nationalism have disappeared" (Shaffer, 1997, p.223). It is true that Joyce uses the East as a ruse or a decoy to add a classical Oriental enchantment to his story in order to mirror Ireland's Romantic escapism and eventually, its similar oppressed state. 'Araby' ostensibly appears to feed the body of literature that complies with the Orientalist discourse, but this same discourse is capsized as the reality of its "fib" appears to be another Western construction and manipulation of the "Other". I have attempted in this paper to shed light on the strong latent orientalist discourse that Joyce invests in his 'Araby' to serve his national or even, international epiphanical message. The analysis of 'Araby' reveals that fictional walls or boundaries are built by hegemonic powers between two "strange" cultures, or between two worlds of "Otherness", when their rapprochement is direly needed as a form of crossing between two oppressed realities. Indeed, perhaps the first step that Joyce offers toward his Irish people's liberation is to ground them in the reality of their oppression, away from hackneyed revivalism and cultural escapism. By this token, 'Araby' is an invitation for two worlds of 'Otherness' to meet beyond their representations, their portrayed "strangeness" or projected

"Otherness" vis-a-vis the western colonizer. Fictional 'Otherness,' or "fibs," become mirrors for demarcated social, historical, political and cultural realities where communication and understanding are replaced with imperialistic oppression, exploitation, profit, power, and control. Joyce indirectly shows how both Arabia and Ireland are victims to an imperial oppression that exploits their goods, distorts their truth, entraps their reality, and further ebbs them away from seeking real national liberation. Joyce's 'Araby' appears to be an existential "OOODYOO" to all the escapist fantasies, colorful figments, and extravagant bazaars, that are the products of an empire that ruthlessly strives to exert more power over its subjects to keep them trapped and hollow like the big O.

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