

Orientalism in James Joyce’s “Araby”

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Abstract

James Joyce’s “Araby” is essentially a teenage love story. Yet its texture, woven with the Orientalist metaphorical imageries, Eastern dictions—bazaar and Araby—and reference to the historical Araby bazaar, likens it to a latent Orientalist discourse. Orientalism divides the story into two parts. In one part, the Irish boy’s fascination to the Orient is reflected and the other part is the negation of those popular ideas. The first one refers to Irish Orientalism that in the nineteenth and twentieth century offered Irish people an alternative cultural identity different from English Colonialism. Yet this identification of the Orient with a romantic refuge at first and then contrastively with a place of degeneration, depravity and despair explains James Joyce’s ambivalence towards the matter of the Orient. Joyce, using the Orient as a tool to orient the boy to the reality of his existence in drab Dublin, teaches the young boy that escapist fascination to the Orient is a vain vision for an Irish. My article focuses on this dissolution of Irish Orientalism into the English-French Orientalism, a paradoxical representation of the Orient, and hopefully will revitalize the understanding of the story.

Keywords: Irish Orientalism, Joyce’s ambivalence to the Orient, Orientalism,

And Past and Future melted into the heart of the eventless Now.

–“My Death”, Sri Ananda Acharya

1. Introduction

James Joyce’s “Araby” is essentially a love story. Yet its texture, woven with the Orientalist metaphorical imageries, Eastern dictions—bazaar and Araby—and reference to the historical Araby bazaar, likens it to an Orientalist discourse. Looking back to the secret failed love affair the storyteller uses a language endowed with orientalist thought and ideas. Orientalism divides the story into two parts. In one part— from the meeting with Mangan’s sister to the moment the boy starts for the bazaar— the boy’s fascination to the Orient is reflected and the other part—from the boy’s journey to the bazaar to the end in anguish and anger— is the negation of those popular ideas. The first one refers to Irish Orientalism that in the nineteenth and twentieth century offered Irish people an alternative cultural identity different from English Colonialism. Yet this identification of the Orient with a romantic refuge at first and then contrastively with a place of degeneration, depravity and despair explains James Joyce’s ambivalence towards the matter of the Orient. Joyce, commencing with a gloomy setting and positing this double-vision in the heart of the story, brings the boy in the same zero point from where he has started. Thus drawing a full circle of captivity, the writer teaches the adolescent boy that escapist fascination to the Orient is a vain vision for an Irish and drab Dublin is his origin, present and future with which he will have to come to terms. This use of the orient as a tool to orient the boy to the reality of his life dissolves Irish Orientalism into the British-French Orientalism and my paper argues that this Orientalist aspect marks this short story as a latent Orientalist text.

2. Irish Orientalism

Irish Orientalism is an intellectual effort on the part of the Irish cultural nationalists to find a connection between the Celts and the Orientals predating the English imperialism in Ireland. It started in 1890 and continued till 1916 during the Celtic Revival looking 'to the East for the highest source of identity and the very origins of the Irish language, alphabet, and people' (Ehrlich,1998,p.309). Though later on this lost academic credibility, at that turn of the century Irish Orientalists such as John O'Donovan, Samuel Ferguson, Dicuil, Thomas Moore, W.B.Yeats, Douglas Hyde, J.M.Synge, Lady Gregory, James Cousins, James Joyce etc. constructed a link of the Celts to the Scythians variously 'looking to central Asia, Phoenicia, Egypt, or Persia for the roots of their culture'(Bongiovanni,2007, p.29).According to them, these Scythians, an affluent nomadic tribe, migrated from the region of the Caspian Sea following the route through Persia, Africa and Spain or 'the ancient Milesians [...] made the epic voyage from Phoenicia via Scythia and Spain'(Ehrlich,1998,p.320-321) and established a colony in Ireland. Irish populace is their descendents and the bearer of a strong and unique cultural identity with a language, culture, and religion different from the English. They claimed thus that Irish language had a lot of similarities with Phoenician and dissimilarities with English. James Joyce in his lecture in Trieste, citing Charles Vallancey, told that the language of the Irish peasants was the same as the language of the Phoenicians. Like the Phoenician language, it has "an alphabet of special characters and a history almost three thousand years old" and Eiran, an old name for Ireland, have been derived from the name Iran as a spelling variation (qut. Ibid., 322). Moreover, these Phoenicians were gentle, generous and tolerant in the matter of religion. Many forms of ancient Irish worships were actually a fusion of their creed and the existing creeds of the Celts such as druidism and worshipping of the sun and moon in groves of oak trees building their temple in the open place, and the mysterious round towers found in Ireland resembled the Zoroastrian fire-temples of ancient Persia. (Sholss,1998, p.268).Besides, Joyce pinpointed the contribution of Scotus Erigena, an Irish philosopher, in introducing Oriental philosophy in Europe through his translation of Eastern texts (Bongiovanni, 2007, p. 30). Thus Irish Orientalists fabricated an affluent civilization in Ireland that existed long before the golden period of Greek civilization and the emergence of the English colonial power. Actually such revivalist activities were a historical necessity for the Irish in the turn of the century. As a European country appropriated in the British subjectivity Ireland was in a paradoxical relationship with England. It suffered tremendously from the twelve to the twentieth century in the hand of the English monarch and the Church as the first British colony. In spite of being a white race, Edmund Spencer proposed their extermination as they were barbarian Scythians in his *View of the Present State of Ireland* (Said, 1994, p.268).In the nineteenth century the attack on Irish language came. It was pushed behind as the mother tongue of the backward peasantry and replaced by English as 'the first language' and 'the language of social elevation' (Blades, 1991, p.16). Because of this deformation of the Irish identity, in the nineteenth century Ireland was 'an incoherent, shattered and bitter land' having 'neither a literature nor a coherent cultural identity. Sullen hostilities divided the social classes, the political parties, and the social creeds' (Flanagan, 1975, p.44-45).Consequently Ireland desired a coherent cultural identity with political freedom from the cruel grip of the English colonial policies that came from this neo-Celtic drive of the cultural nationalists. The myth of golden oriental civilization with its 'exotic' and 'satisfying' 'fable of origin' (Shloss, 1998, p.267) appealed to them to the way of patriotism and nationalism. The Revivalist circle revived the Celtic past through theosophy and literary practices both in English and Irish. So Irish Orientalism was an 'anti-imperialist strategy' and a reminder of 'the displacements of culture' (Ibid, p.267) to the Irish.

3. Orientalism

Orientalism is 'that semi-mythical construct' (qut. Shands, 2008, p.5) of the East by the West which has been originated in the late eighteenth century. As it provides the West a 'superior ontological status' (Said, 2001, p.226) as the White men, it conceives the 'divine and civilizational mandate' (Kaul, 2009, p.7) 'to

manage –and produce—the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically and imaginatively’ (emphasis added) (Said, 2001, p. 3). From the very first, the term ‘Orient’ was associated with magic. It is considered ‘a fascinating realm of the exotic, the mystical and the seductive’ (Barry, 2002, p. 193) and a place ‘of emptiness, loss and disaster’ (Said, 2001, p. 56). In the one hand, it is pictured as a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences’ (Said, 2001, p. 1) which offers ‘a form of release,’ and ‘a place of original opportunity,’ (Said, 2001, p. 166-167). On the other hand, the East is ‘defeated and distant’ silent and lamenting ‘in the person of the aged Persian Queen, Xerxes’ mother’ (Said, 2001, p. 57) because of the lost glory once it had. The Orientals thus are lazy, irrational, lustful, sensuous, cruel, childlike, customary and passive, whereas “the European is rational, virtuous, mature, ‘normal’” (Said, 2001, p. 40). For hundreds of years the West has been plotting Oriental history, character and destiny ‘to be repeated, echoed, and reechoed uncritically’ with its ‘exotic spatial configuration,’ ‘hopelessly strange languages,’ ‘perverse morality,’ ‘inhuman beauty,’ and sexual impropriety (Said, 2001, p. 116). But the most attractive feature of Orientalism is that in this contrary sketch of the Orient whatever positive the European underscores is also ‘a type of subjugation’ because here also they are using oriental history and traits ‘to serve their own interests’ (Bongiovanni, 2007, p.26). Thus, ‘as a cultural apparatus’ Orientalism forms ‘a system of truths’ (Said, 2001, p. 204) and emphasizes Kipling’s utterance: “oH! East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet” (qut. Shands, 2008, p.6).

4. Flow of Discussion

As I argue that “Araby” contains the double-vision of Joyce to the orient which ultimately dissolves into one coherent traditional notion about it, my next attempt will be to prove this from the text in the light of the foregoing discussion on the Irish Orientalism and Edward Said’s Orientalism. To do so, I will, firstly, explain the gloomy setting of the story; secondly, trace the elements of Irish and English-French Orientalism in the body of the text; thirdly, highlight on the double-vision of Joyce about the Orient and lastly, solving the riddle of the naïve or mature narrator, draw the conclusion.

5. The Gloomy Setting

In the exposition of the story we find a dreary description of the boy’s homestead and his lifestyle. James Joyce uses a string of negative words—blind, quiet, uninhabited, detached, back, musty, useless, wild, feeble, silent, dark— to describe his surrounding (*Dubliners* 29-30). In this world, houses are ‘brown,’ ‘sombre’ indifferent and taciturn, streets are mostly silent, lanes are ‘blind’, ‘muddy’ and ‘dark’, and gardens are ‘dark dripping’ with bad smell from the ash pits. Here also the leaves of the book –symbol of intellect—are yellow, bicycle pump –vitality of life—is rusty, priest—symbol of religion—is dead. Musty air of the back drawing room pervades the whole house and garden is wild and sterile with only one apple tree and some bushes. The nature of this area is grave and gloomy with dusky twilight, with ever-changing violet colour sky and stinging cold air. This is the common picture of Dublin portrayed by Joyce in *Dubliners*. In his letter to Curran Joyce wrote: ‘I am writing a series of epicleti—ten –for a paper.....I call the series *Dubliners* to betray the soul of that hemiplegia or paralysis which many consider a city’ (Beja, 1994, p. 35). He further asserts that he was writing ‘the moral history’ of Ireland and he chooses Dublin as ‘the centre of paralysis’ (ibid: 38). His fear of paralysis comes out at the very first page of *Dubliners* when in “The Sisters” he tells, ‘I said softly to myself the word paralysis. It has always sounded strangely in my ears, [...]. But now it sounded to me like the name of some maleficent and sinful being’ (7). Florence L. Walzl (1961, p.221), finding out ‘a pathological unity’ among the *Dubliners* (1956) story relates that when Joyce started writing these stories he was a medical student. Fascinated with diagnosis and embittered by the restricted life of Ireland, he diagnosed its psychological disease as hemiplegia, that is, a partial, unilateral paralysis. Actually in this picture Dublin resembles a Third world city, defeated and degenerate, and a city of bleakness, distress and depression where “the ‘bond of spiritual community’ was absent; the spiritual odor of corruption hangs over; politics was a hopeless dumb show; religion was simply a net to

trap the spirit of those born in Ireland...”(Corrington, 1969,p. 14). This prosaic setting threatens the boy’s smooth growth with an optimistic view to life. The boy is trapped in this ‘buckled harness’ (D 30), that is, a country with imperial yoke, along with his generation. Their echoed shouts during playtime in that blind atmosphere are their attempt to remain animate in spite of the threat of the grave over-bearing authority symbolized by his uncle’s coming home. Thus the beginning of story shows that life is stagnant and comatose totally in Dublin.

6. Traces of Irish Orientalism in “Araby”

6.1. Textual Reference

In this inert world suddenly a flash of light falls. That ray of love in no time changes everything in and around the boy. With Mangan’s sister coming out of home, the boy leaves his decayed and shackled world and steps into the world of romance. The narrator says: “We left our shadow and walked up to Mangan’s steps resignedly. She was waiting for us, her figure defined by the light from the half-opened door. [...] I stood by the railings looking at her” (D 30). Then the boy’s secret and tireless persuasion of love is commenced. He takes snaps of her beauty—‘dress swung as she moved here body’; ‘the soft rope of her hair’ tossing; ‘the white curve of her neck’; ‘the hand upon the railing’; ‘the white border of a petticoat’ (30). He keeps ‘her brown figure always in my eye’ and ‘the brown-clad figure’ (30, 33) always in his heart in all serious issues—shopping, study and classroom activities. He imagines—‘I bore my chalice safely through a throng of foes’—and places her in the altar of worship uttering her names ‘in strange prayers and praises’ (31). His ‘confused adoration’—which he himself does not realize—reaches its peak when we find him in the unused room in the back trembling “murmuring: ‘O love! O love!’ many times” (30). Then the strangely adorned beloved speaks to the boy. She, preparing for the Retreat reluctantly, proposes him to go to the bazaar, Araby: She asked me was I going to Araby. I forgot whether I answered yes or no. It would be a splendid bazaar; she said she would love to go.’ [...] ‘It’s well for you,’ she said. (32) He feels honoured and flattered for she meant he is more suitable to go. This makes the boy wholly spell-bound and he proposes to bring a gift for her from the bazaar. He feels: ‘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’ (32).

6.2. Theoretical Analysis

In this falling-in-love episode Irish idea about the Orient during the Celtic Revival is reflected to a considerable extent. This is sketched as an exotic, magical, mysterious and romantically sensuous region to which one can escape. Suzette Henke (1986,p.308) asserts in her “James Joyce East and Middle East: Literary Resonances of Judaism, Egyptology, and Indian Myth”: “In *Dubliners*, the Orient functions largely as an image of alterity—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”. Bongiovanni (2007, p. 31-37) in her “‘Turbaned faces going by’: James Joyce and Irish Orientalism” also notifies James Joyce’s genuine fascination to the images of the Orient, saying that it often serves as escapist fantasies for his characters. Actually, as a diversionary fantasy, it was difficult for the Irish to resist the temptation of Orientalism. To Joycean characters Orientalist philosophies are a solace and a refuge due to its myth of Irish genealogy which provided Ireland a history very much different from the overbearing colonial history given by England. They find a glimpse of freedom from its stagnant socio-political condition through the romanticized images of the Orient. That is why *Dubliners* is abounding in the popular images of Arabia. In “Araby” the same atmosphere is evoked thus:

6.2.1. The Diction Araby

The word—Araby —plays a central role in creating this ‘phantasmal projection’ (Henke, 1986, p.308) about the Orient. Since Napoleon’s triumph over Egypt, the word Araby was the reservoir of the romantic view of the East throughout the nineteenth century. Because of the account of the riches, wealth and luxury

of the East in the writings of the western writers, it became a place where dream can come true. Suvir Kaul(2009,p.7-12) says that wherever the travelers went they provided a complex world picture cataloguing the landscapes, peoples, goods, produces, flora, fauna, fruits, flowers, minerals, metals etc. in their travelogues. Specifically the images of Araby are available in English literature as ‘Araby the Blest’ (B-4,159) by John Milton in *Paradise Lost*, fragrant Araby in ‘All Arabia breaths from yonder box’ (133) by Alexander Pope in *The Rape of the Lock*, ‘Arab’s gay Haram’ by Thomas Moore in *Lalla Rookh*, and phoenix as the bird of Araby in writing of John Skeleton (Ehrlich, 1998, p. 320).

6.2.2. The Araby Bazaar

Besides, the visiting ‘splendid’ (D 32) Orientalist bazaars were the realistic projection of the romanticized ideas about the Orient. Bongiovanni (2007, p. 34) asserts that the travelling bazaars used to appear in Dublin several times in a year in different names. Due to these the Irish became fond of Oriental entertainments and thus became familiar with Orientalism. The fair Araby is such a bazaar ran from May 14 to 19, 1894 in Dublin in aid of Jervis Street Hospital. It was a charity bazaar called officially the ‘Grand Oriental Fête.’ The entrepreneurs were Englishmen and most of the entertainments and amusements were designed and arranged in England. The fair was given the vista of a genuine Oriental city like Algeria or Granada. The volunteers, workers and salesmen dressed themselves as Arabian, Ottoman, Egyptian, Moorish, Spanish, Gypsy, Mediterranean, Deccan, Hindu and Japanese to be matched with the exotic motif. Among the exciting and thrilling entertainments in different Halls there were eastern magic from Egyptian hall of Mystery with “Marvelous Séance Mystique” by James Stuart; An Arab Encampment; a tableau vivant having a scene named “Britain and her Colonies” in “Empire” theater; the Hindu Serpent Charmer with her Boa Constrictors and Pythons; Skirt and Serpentine dancing; exhibition of many types of exotic animals etc. There was also use of foreign language among the attendants in the Arab Encampment as if all the oriental languages were same and the Cairo Donkeys and Donkey Boys had Orientals as attendances (Ehrlich, 1998, p. 310- 319).Moreover, the theme song “I’ll sing thee songs of Araby,” adapted from Thomas Moore’s *Lalla Rookh: an Oriental Romance* by William Gorman Wills and tuned with music by Frederick Clay, matches with the exotic and sensuous East.

6.2.3. Romantic Racism

Moreover, the Orient appears in this part with the romanticized yellowish-brown skin-colour of the beloved. She is brown whenever the boy thinks of her as the characters of *Ulysses* who think of often ‘black and brown and yellow men’ (Joyce, 1922, p. 223). This is usually the skin-colour of the people of Arabia and of the Orientals as Edward Said (2001, p.119) quoted: [...] the Asiatic is ‘yellow, melancholy, rigid,’ ‘the African is ‘black, phlegmatic, and lax’. Aravind Adiga (2008, p.5-6) also in his *The White Tiger* particularizes the West and East in this way: ‘...the future of the world lies with the yellow man and the brown man now that our erstwhile master, the white-skinned man, has wasted himself...’.This creates in the boy a longing for a romantic lady who is very much different from him.

6.2.4. What Happens to the Boy?

From the very beginning of his ‘confused adoration’ (D 30), the boy seems to be absorbed into rosy ideas about love. He, netted in the colonized and paralyzed Dublin, wants to change his ‘condition by escaping from Ireland eastward across the sea to another life in a different place. [...]’. ‘It is ‘that fabulous Arabia associated with the Phoenix, symbol of the renewal of life in the resurrection of the sun’ (Ghiselin, 1994, p.111-112) supplies the boy necessary heroism and chivalrous boldness as a lover. He, employing ‘an Oriental version of the Holy Grail Quest’ (Ito, 2008, p. 56), imagines him an *Arabian Nights* hero, who bears a cup, fill up with ambrosia, to the captivated heroine to save her from the grip of a genii or a monster. To do this he has to cross many perilous labyrinth and remote areas of unknown danger as he is now crossing the ‘bargaining women,’ ‘shrill litanies of shop boys’ and others bustling and jostling. Donald E. Morse (1978, p.128) comments: ‘His choice of metaphor is overstated but consistent with his penchant for

self-dramatization'. In such state when the boy comes to know about the bazaar Araby from the beloved, he is elevated more. He then 'clings to exotic notions of a carnival whose name evokes subliminal images of camels and caravans, sheiks and dark-skinned heroes. [...]' and 'fuses eastern mystery with the sacred legend of courtly love. All blend together in a contemporary Grail legend...' (Henke, 1986, p.308) very much like Bloom in *Ulysses* who after his visit to the Mirus bazaar imagines "the landscape of East as place replete with 'date palms' and 'camels' that pluck 'large mango fruit'" (Bongiovanni, 2007, p. 35). He does not ask the lady what Araby is. Moreover, he offers the girl to bring a gift from the bazaar. He becomes stuck up and introvert from that moment. With a metaphor Joyce describes the boy's situation: it is as if the syllables of Araby like mantra 'hymn' has thrown an Eastern enchantment over him and his soul grasps a heavenly happiness in an all encompassing hypnotizing silence and even when he reaches the bazaar the name appears to him 'magical' (*D* 32-33). Except that feeling of love, then, all 'serious works of life' seems to him a 'child's play, ugly monotonous child's play' (32-33) and his days of 'innumerable follies' (32) set in motion with his desire to annihilate the days in-between. From this discussion on the contemporaneous ideas, significance of word and bazaar Araby and metaphors, it is clear that Irish Orientalism is embedded in the story latently.

7. "Araby" and Orientalism, the project of Edward Said

7.1. Textual Reference

The boy, after a great difficulty getting money and permission from his uncle and ignoring all presentiments—the pitiless raw air, Mrs. Mercer's commercial purpose and the tea table talk, and uncle's forbidding tone and aunt's reminding that it is the night of 'Our Lord' (*D* 34)—starts for the bazaar. He gets on a train which sets off slowly in delay 'among ruinous houses and over the twinkling river' (35) towards the east with only one passenger and reaches 'an improvised wooden platform' (35) in front of the bazaar. The fair does not reflect the real noisy festival. It is held in a large building with a nameplate in big letters. It is about ten and the fair is closing. The man in the ticket counter is 'weary-looking'; most of the stalls are closed; 'the greater part of the hall was in darkness.' (35) It is silent like the church after the service. The sound of the counting of the coin is heard from the few opened stalls. The boy is now again timid like the past when he stopped his play seeing the uncle turning to the home. He lost his boldness of facing the master being idle in the classroom. He becomes disappointed and forgets the reason of his visit. This disappointment turns to despair when he encounters the salesgirl, in a stall of 'porcelain vases and flowered tea-sets' (35), altercation about something having sexual overtones with two Englishmen. The girl amusingly denies the responsibility of her utterance, pointing it as 'a fib' (36). The boy becomes upset and apprehends the danger of sexual corruption in an Irish lady with two English gentlemen: 'I remarked their English accents and listened vaguely to their conversation' [...] I looked humbly at the great jars that stood like eastern guards at either side of the dark entrance to the stall.' (35-36). He now knows his '...stay was useless' (36).

7.2. Theoretical Analysis

And here Orientalism with its stereotypical face leaks out—the Orient is decayed and degenerate world with sexual extravaganza. It is not offering any mirth and fun, but isolation, corrosion and corruption found usually in the Eastern bazaar.

7.2.1. Focus on the term Bazaar

In this context we can focus on the meaning of the term Bazaar set in the western mind then. Gary R. Dyre (1991, p. 198-219) in his 'The "Vanity Fair" of Nineteenth-Century England: Commerce, Women, and the East in the Ladies' Bazaar' shows that the term—bazaar—stands for the East and women's sexual promiscuity, in spite of John Trotter's sincere attempt to associate Soho Square with the sanctity of English womanhood. With reference to the description and depiction of bazaars *Sketches by Boz* and Charlotte

Elizabeth's the July 1844 issue of *The Christian Lady's Magazine*, he uncovers the preconceptions of the English about the bazaar topos and its demonization of the East and working women. The new bazaars were considered an economic and cultural threat for British shopkeepers who personified it as a turbaned demon coming from Turkey. Thackeray in his *Notes of a Journey from Corn hill to Grand Cairo* depicts the bazaars of Near Eastern cities as a place of malignity and trickery. When Thackeray visits those bazaars he finds them 'essentially Oriental'—the East unveiled likening the bazaars sketched in *Arabian Nights*—and he feels that he has been there before. All bazaars including the charitable bazaars actually were a place where women became 'the real merchandise' that attracted gentlemen buyers and both created an immoral atmosphere. It was a means for young ladies to display themselves and to promote the way for *Innocent Adultery* (?). Gustav Flaubert (Said, 2001, p. 103) in his *Description de L'Egypt* sketches some fragmented pictures of the Cairo bazaar as typical of all eastern bazaar which is full of sexual depravity, vulgarity and crude jests. The Dublin bazaars had the same reputation for sexual wickedness. James Joyce shares this general consent in "Araby". We see the parents of Mangan are sending their daughter to a Retreat to save her from its bad influence and when the boy asked for leave to go to Araby his 'aunt was surprised and hoped it was not some Freemason affair' (D 32). Thus the aunt presents a common anxiety of the elders that the Araby is an exotic fair, an Oriental sensuality, a non-Christian phenomenon, and an unholy place attended by unfaithful. So the boy should not visit it. Later on the same idea resonates in his *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* where Stephen Dedalus is sketched as an exemplary youth who avoids three immoral acts—smoking, flirting and visiting the bazaars.

7.2.2. The Subsequent Revelation and Reaction of the Boy

As the boy shares the common fondness to the Orient as a romantic region, he also shares such tensions over bazaar topos. Fusing both ideas, thus, into a coherent imaginative structure, that comes as a metaphor in the text, the boy metamorphosed the scene into a crude sketch—the stall to a glittering Haram, the shop girl to Kuckuk Hanem, the male partners to the clients and the great huge jars to eastern guards standing on the both sides of the dark entrance to the palace. The sexually beleaguered lady is busy with her partners guardedly. Thus "Araby, which promised 'dreams of delight,' turns out not to resemble a Persian palace where a knight might select trophies worthy of sending to his lady, but a place of business where two foreigners, Englishmen, flirt with a salesgirl" (Morse, E, Donald, 1978, p. 130). Besides, the boy interchanges the salesgirl with Mangan's sister. Gary R. Dyre (1991, p. 26, 27) says fittingly that the boy, who 'associates the girl with the romance of the bazaar and the sacredness of the church,' paradoxically 'seems to believe that the young woman at the bazaar reflects badly on Mangan's sister', 'exchanging one distorted image of the female body for another—the "virgin" for the "whore" [...]' (Conboy, 1991, p. 409). As it works as an epiphany to enlighten his inner mind about the truth of life, the boy rejects the offer of the shop girl 'did I wish to buy anything' that is, the call to sensuous pleasure, saying simply, 'No, thank you' (D 36). He has nothing to purchase for his beloved. Beloved herself is fake, shallow, untrue and mocking. The imaginative world is corrupted with commercialism, materialism and sexual impropriety. This epiphanic realization—the 'instantaneous intensities'—where 'a character comes to realize a truth of his circumstances and the paralyzing limitations of them' (Blades, 1991, p. 155-156) and 'every revelation partook more of significant darkness than of explanatory light' (qut. Friedrich, 1965, p. 422-23)—creates combustion in his heart and his eyes become tearful with anguish and anger. Anguished and angry he is because he was led to the wrong path, a path of self-delusion and self-mockery by his vanity—feelings of self -glorification and self-magnification. John Russell (1966, p.) in his "From Style to Meaning in 'Araby'" identifies 'vanity' as the pivot word in this last line and comments:

[...] the whole weight of 'Araby' has now been hung on it. Again with precise interaction, the first and then the second of the alliterative pairs connect across the key word: namely, the state of being 'driven' causes 'anguish,' the state of being

‘derided’ causes ‘anger.’ The double state, of course, a complex one, ought to pull the reader two ways at once—sympathetically toward the boy who is driven and anguished, yet away from the boy who merits derision for having been fatuous and superior. (171)

This is the consequence waiting for the boy who is appropriately oriented to life through this. He realizes that the Orient can never be a superlative region to take refuge but a place of callow romanticism, dreary despair and sexual indecency.

8. Ambivalence of James Joyce to Irish Orientalism

In his literary career James Joyce possessed an ambivalent attitude towards the Orient. Like Yeats, he could not adapt with the current wave of his time uncritically. For this reason, he wrote ‘both within and against the moment of the Celtic revival’ (Ehrlich, 1998, p. 309). Actually Joyce came in touch with Irish Orientalism through theosophical programs of the Lady Gregory circle. His fascination for the Orient grew in Trieste, an Austro-Hungarian port located on the border between Western and Eastern Europe (Ito, 2008, p.54). In 1901 he found out the energies of modern European art that encouraged him to free himself from ‘the dark, bitter bog of the past.’ Considering nationalism and Church as the two powerful enemies of art, he turned to harsh moral and realistic Ibsenite drama. He understood that ‘Ireland was his fate, a condition of his being with which he could come to terms only through rebellion.’ Because of this he felt all the time like a prisoner struggling against the tangled chain of memory and feeling. Peasant Ireland was the dark soil of his past, offering to him neither light nor liberation, and its emblem is not sea bird or hawk but bat, blindly circling cabin and bogside (Flanagan, 1975, p. 56-62). Though he delivered two lectures on Ireland and its relation to the classical civilizations—one in 1902 and another in 1907, Joyce could not adapt to the call and recall of the revivalists and bitterly quarreled with them. He liked the early poetry of Yeats because of their inherited rebellious tone and disliked the celebration of folk and primitive Ireland in the later. Seamus Deane (1992) in his introduction to *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* offers a significant analysis of Joycean view to his contemporary Ireland. He tells:

Joyce was unforgiving in his analysis of the Irish version of degeneration. [...] the morbidity of his community’s condition was [...]the consequence of[...] its adherence to deforming systems of belief and modes of behavior that kept Irish in bondage. It was fear of freedom, [...] that would always be in excess of conventions which attempted to organize it into stereotyped patterns that wounded the Irish spirit.[...] the conventional systems by which the Irish lived were borrowed, from both London and Rome; even their revival was a fake, both because it found its ratification in a misty and suspect past rather in the present and because it reproduced—in its valorization of manliness, sexual purity, the glory of defeat, the imaginative destiny of the Celt or Gael, the spiritual and religious character of the race—the very features of its colonial-Catholic

oppression that it was trying to erase. (IX)

It makes clear that Joyce had any reliance neither on the excavated history of the Oriental lineage nor on the parasitical conventions of the country. Oriental fantasies, he assessed, 'threaten to distract the Irish from the reality of their own position in empire and dissuade them from enacting the social and economic changes [...] (Bongiovanni,2007, p. 46).So to him Irish Orientalism was 'a way of staging the cultural dislocations of Empire' that enabled him to go beyond his boundaries. Recognizing the Oriental form of colonization in Ireland as a moment of historical importance, he asserted that Irish struggle to have an independent identity was the struggle of an old nation with a glorious past and strong cultural identity. Contrarily he was aware that that past disappeared irretrievably and dreaming of that could not be fruitful for the Irish. They had to have 'a more politically astute wakefulness' (Shloss, 1998, p. 267-270). For this reason amalgamation of conflicting attitude to the Orient is the feature of Joyce's writing. Bongiovanni (2007) in her "James Joyce and Irish Orientalism" tells:

The representations of the Orient in Joyce's fiction do little to reconcile his educated sophistication with his endorsement of the widely discredited theories of Celticism that located Irish language and culture in the Orient. In fact, Joyce's depiction of the Orient appears even more conflicted, as he seems at times aware of his country's, and his own, objectification of Eastern culture, but at other times blatantly reproduces racial stereotypes of the Oriental other.[...]. In *Ulysses* Just moments after his reverie about the almost magical land of "silvered powdered olive trees", Bloom's mood suddenly changes, and he is gripped by the impression of a dead sea in a dead land" that bears no fruit at all, "the grey sunken cunt of the world". (31-33)

Not only this, Joyce, like Oliver St. John Gogarty and Samuel Beckett, 'lampooned misty images of the Celts and the Orient, dismissing them as romance and indulgence fancy' (qut.Ito,2008,p.56).

I think 'Araby' is the prologue of setting Joycean paradoxical thoughts about the Orient that he puts in his later writings. Here he at first draws on the trendy whimsical fascination to the Orient and immediately eliminates that fantasy as false. He does not like to indulgent a young, inexperienced and gullible youth in an untrue dream. As he sets out to attack the blind and backward celebration of the Oriental lineage of his contemporary and to orient the boy to a real-life situation, Joyce makes the boy grasp that his dead and unsure past is a temporary sedative, but not a permanent solution. The boy has no liberation from the dark dreary surrounding that he thought he had left when he met Mangan's sister. Actually he left nothing. He has returned to same point moving circularly and actually he did not move at all, but fixed and immobile in this 'rancorous, squalid, and repressive world of Dublin and Ireland' (Flanagan, 1975, p. 58).And we see, this realization pulls the boy into the abyss of hopelessness and despair. He feels trapped as an 'outcast from life's feast' (Blades, 1991, p. 20).This despair is actually an expression of Joyce's own fear of entrapment in a stagnant life. John Blades (1991, p.20) relates: Joyce admitted that 'they [characters in Dubliners] represent different aspects of himself as he might have become had he remained in Dublin'. So the boy is his 'nicely polished looking-glass' (Beja, 1994, p. 40) where he reflects his own anguish.

From the whole discussion we can tell that Joyce's play with the double-vision leading to the total rejection of the Orient proves that knowledge about the Orient is 'idée reçues' (Said, 2001, p. 94) and 'collective

day-dream' (qut. Said, 2001, p. 52) of the British. The Orient in one way or other continually is Orientalized in the hand of the Europeans as an instrument to serve their own purpose. The Europeans according to their necessity form, reform and deform the fabulous ideas about the Orient. Irish idealist view thus merges into the coherent European consciousness about the Orient and for this reason, "Araby" becomes a latent Orientalist discourse.

9. A further Answerable Question

Whether "Araby" with a naïve narrator can bear such weighty scholarship can be a question at this juncture. I want to assert that the event is naïve but not the first-person narrator. The story is a piece of reminiscence, not of the teenager, but of a grown up man—'a more mature version of the young protagonist' (Ehrlich 309). He can now reminiscence his clandestine first love 'from a position of maturity and distance' (Mandel 53). What was once his life and death is something silly now to which he can look with a versatile laughter. Donald E. Morse (1978) also in his "Sing Three songs of Araby": Themes and Allusions in James Joyce's "Araby" comments on the mature narrator thus:

Many of the excesses committed in the name of Love appear later quite ridiculous, yet with what great earnestness they were originally carried out! The dawn of adolescence found most of us supremely confident of our rightful place at the centre of the universe [...]. Later stepping back to "see ourselves as others see us," we discovered that our emotional as well as physical universe was no longer Ptolemaic but Copernican [...]. (125)

For this reason, the adult narrator, an apathetic psyche, imposes 'form on experience' (Mandel 54) that conveys us the information of his familiarity to the Orientalist knowledge. For a naïve narrator to employ such high metaphors and ideas is quite impossible. When the boy becomes the man of the world and knowledge, he narrates his first infatuation with a language full of ideas about the Orient.

10. Conclusion

Thus, "Araby" deals with the ambivalent attitude towards the Orient and hence becomes a tool for Joyce to initiate the boy to the history and reality of his existence. And that marks this story as a latent Orientalist discourse.

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Notes

1. All the quotations from the text “Araby” are taken from chapter 3 of Joyce, James. *Dubliners*. London: Penguin Books Limited, 1956.
2. The poem of the beginning has been taken from “My Death” by Sri Ananda Acharya, published in *Indian Poetry in English*, Ed. Makarand Paranjape. Madras: Macmillan India Limited, 1993. These lines bear a subjective emotion of the poet about his own death. But I am paralleling this with the total situation of the boy in “Araby”. He, with a rosy idea about the golden past linked to the Orient, wants to shape his future bringing a gift for his beloved. Nevertheless, all melt into a prosaic, pathetic and eventless present at the end of the story.



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