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EXHIBITIONARY FORMS IN IRELAND:  
JAMES JOYCE'S EXHIBITS OF IRISH MODERNITY

I. EXHIBITIONARY FORMS IN IRELAND: A SURVEY 1851-1907

The forces operating behind all exhibitionary forms in Europe in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have always been considered in the light of the power-relationships that determined the historical, economic and political fate of colonizing and colonial countries. Given the sophisticated array of exposition studies which have cropped up over the past three decades, it may seem a truism to point out that “the exhibits of colonies and dependent peoples at international exhibitions reflected attitudes and policies of the colonizing powers”;<sup>1</sup> still, it is an appropriate truism to start with in the case of a study which considers the relevance, or better the cultural resonances, especially in literature, that the expository forms had in Ireland, the first English colony – the first colony to decolonize in the British Empire, and ultimately, the one and only extant partitioned nation in contemporary Europe. If, according to Declan Kiberd in his influential theorization in *Inventing Ireland*, the very anti-colonial, “modern” and national identity of Ireland partly resulted from a creative “invention” of its greatest writers and intellectuals of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the notion of tradition-invention deserves to be mentioned among these preliminary reflections. As Burton Benedict observes,

Two sorts of tradition-inventing went on at colonial exhibitions. One was promulgated by the colonial powers and attempted to depict the peoples and cultures of Empire as though they were part of a single whole; the metaphor of family was often used with the colonial power described as ‘mother’. [...] a second exercise in tradition-inventing which may have been less conscious and which operated to a large extent in opposition to the first [...] was the invention of

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1 B. Benedict, “International Exhibitions and National Identity”, *Anthropology Today*, 7, 3 (June 1991): 5-9, 7.

separate traditions to each colony or dependent group which promoted their own national and ethnic identities.<sup>2</sup>

Although exhibitions in Ireland were never considered as “colonial”, the earliest associations with the imperial pageant of the Great Exhibition of 1851, the Irish exhibits had been encompassed within the British context while retaining a specificity of sorts, thus testifying to the notoriously disputed colonial status of Ireland. As Louise Purbrick underlines, Irish objects, of which there were around three hundred, were collocated in the British section of the Great Exhibition and did not form a separate collection. Ireland was considered “part of an Empire” and called a “province” of it; “it was also often claimed as a ‘sister isle’, ‘sister land’, ‘sister kingdom’, sometimes given the romantic titles ‘Erin’, ‘emerald isle’ or ‘Green Isle’, and, occasionally, identified as a nation”.<sup>3</sup> It was, in other words, both assimilated and distanced in the politics of display of the first grand parade of all nations of the Great Exhibition.

Purbrick notes that “naming Ireland [...] was not necessarily an assertion of personality but of regional difference”, and that it “had no place in the Great Exhibition’s hierarchies of nations, at least from the “official” or organizers’ perspectives”.<sup>4</sup> This was a strategy which partially obfuscated the actual colonial history of the country, and which aimed at presenting it as involved in an industrializing (i.e. modernizing) process. The political significance of this emphasis on Ireland as a developing country – and its ensuing contradictions – pointed to the necessity for further industrial development as a justification of English imperial rule, and would resurface in all the literary utterances on exhibitionary forms which took place in the following decades. Along with the two general defining categories of “national” and “industrial”, Purbrick states that two different ideas of the state of the Irish nation emerged from the Great Exhibition: nationhood was based and represented by the modernization of industry and was a goal of the future or had existed in the past when rural Ireland had been productive.<sup>5</sup>

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2 Benedict, “International Exhibitions”, 8.

3 L. Purbrick, “Defining Nation: Ireland and the Great Exhibition of 1851”, *Britain, the Empire and the World at the Great Exhibition of 1851*, eds. J. Auerbach and P. Hoffenberg (London: Ashgate, 2008), 47-76, 52, 53.

4 Purbrick, “Defining Nation”, 58, 57.

5 Purbrick, “Defining Nation”, 75. Some of the most famous Irish artifacts were also displayed, and would be in subsequent major exhibitions, such as the the early eighth-century Tara Brooch, discovered only in 1850, along with some Celtic Revival jewelry. Purbrick also remarks how, despite the chronological contiguity, the Great Exhibition made no mention of the Great Famine.

Exhibitions in Ireland would, from then on, look back primarily to the English model and subsequently to the French and American versions, and engage with the exhibitionary system in order to signal emancipation from the inferior status as a “sister kingdom”/internal colony, and promote economic advancement and the construction of a defined national identity. A contemporary report on the 1853 Industrial Exhibition offers an interesting consideration of some of the political and ideological implications that are invariably attached to the development of the exhibitionary phenomena in the Irish colonial context:

the 12th of May 1853 was a great day for Ireland; for on that day the triumphant experiment of 1851 was repeated in the centre of our beautiful metropolis. On the influence of such an experiment on the welfare of England's sister kingdom there can be little doubt; for, though the Exhibition of 1853 is on a much smaller scale than that of 1851, it is in many respects an advance of it.<sup>6</sup>

Under British colonial rule, Ireland had been the site of several general exhibitions in the course of the nineteenth century, mostly organized by the Royal Dublin Society, all mainly devoted to manufacturing, raw materials and artifacts of Irish origin. By the early 1880s, though, “these exhibits took a decidedly partisan turn” and a nationalistic outlook gained growing consensus, as attested by the Cork Exhibition of 1902, which featured an “increased awareness of Celtic heritage”,<sup>7</sup> and combined an emphasis on the industrial development of Ireland along with its distinctive arts, crafts and manufacturing traditions. These two domains were in fact invested with a clear political significance by the changing cultural climate of the Irish *fin de siècle*, particularly since 1893, with the foundation of the Gaelic League by Eoin Mc Neill and Douglas Hyde, which aimed to revive the use of the Irish language, to valorise the Celtic heritage at large and to de-Anglicize the country by pursuing an anti-colonial, decolonising agenda. Ireland's attitude toward the cultural discourses of modernity between 1880 and 1939 was to be – to say the least – controversial. As John Wilson Foster recalled, the Celtic Revival and High Modernism basically shared the same chronological span: 1880-1925:<sup>8</sup> while on the one hand the Celtic Revival dictated the cultural agenda of nationalist Ireland with a distinctly anti-modern bias, on the other it also showed a great interest in some tropes such as

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<sup>6</sup> Anon. “The Irish Industrial Exhibition”, *The Illustrated Magazine of Art*, vol. 2 (1853): 135-144, 135. The 1853 Great Industrial Exhibition, in fact, attracted 1 million visitors but made a relevant loss. See A. Edwards, *The Role of International Exhibitions in Britain 1950-1910* (New York: Cambria Press, 2010), 19.

<sup>7</sup> P. J. Fanning, “Research Note: The Irish International Exhibition of 1907 – Ireland's World Fair”, *Bridgewater Review*, 26, 1, article 10: 24-27, 24.

<sup>8</sup> J. W. Foster, *Colonial Consequences: Essays in Irish Literature and Culture* (Dublin: Lilliput Press 1990), 44.

myths, the mythical past and primitivism which were also cultivated by high modernism. The two poles are, therefore, not diametrically opposed, as conventional literary history has long contended, despite the convinced localism and nationalism of the revivalists. It comes as no surprise, then, that a greater and “international” new Irish Exhibition that looked to English, French and American models would arouse suspicion among the prevalently nationalist elite, at a time when – only a month before the official opening – the Cumann na nGaedheal political association founded by Arthur Griffith became the Sinn Fein League, and a year later the Sinn Finn party, which would pursue the cause of Irish independence.

From the outset, with the earliest steps taken in 1903 on behalf of the movement for the revival of national industries, the organization of the Dublin 1907 Exhibition was supported by the Anglo-Irish elites of MPs, peers, the landed gentry and members of the judiciary, clergy, landowners and professional figures. Among them were the Earl of Pembroke, who offered the land for the chosen site at Ballsbridge, the President, the Marquis of Ormonde, the patron, the Lord Lieutenant, the Earl of Aberdeen and his wife, the Countess of Aberdeen,<sup>9</sup> and, notably, the “Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee” which run the show, the rich entrepreneur William Martin Murphy, owner of the *Irish Daily Independent*, a Catholic newspaper popular among the middle classes, and a major shareholder in the Dublin United Tramways Corporation.<sup>10</sup>

The political boycott of the Exhibition was, in fact, openly proclaimed and championed by the main nationalist forces operating at the time, as is persuasively attested to by a poster representing Ireland as a dispirited woman holding a Celtic harp and opening her arms as in dismay, at whose feet lie three men, one wearing a fez, all grabbing for or holding parcels of goods, among which one or two are wrapped in paper displaying the Union Jack.

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9 Who had also been responsible for the Irish industrial exhibits at the Chicago Fair of 1893.

10 This important tycoon figure embodies the crucial link between expositions and the transportation system, and his name occurs at the beginning of the twelfth chapter (“Cyclops”) of *Ulysses*, which is dominated by the semantic of “gigantism” and expresses Joyce’s harsh critique of the excess of Irish nationalism. Murphy’s occurrence in the text has been defined as a “spectral presence in *Ulysses*”, and a target of Joyce’s critique as an “Imperial abstraction”. S. Kaufmann, “‘That Bantry Jobber’: William Martin Murphy and the Critique of Progress and Productivity in *Ulysses*”, *Joyce, Benjamin and Magical Urbanism*, eds. M. Boscagli and E. Duffy (European Joyce Studies Series) (Amsterdam-New York: Rodopi, 2011), 210-223, 211.

**When in DUBLIN Don't go to the EXHIBITION.**



**The Anti-national Exhibition** being held this year in **DUBLIN**  
**SHOULD BE BOYCOTTED BY THE IRISH PEOPLE.**

It has been condemned by the  
 GENERAL COUNCIL OF CO. COUNCILS.  
 THE GAELIC LEAGUE.  
 THE SINN FEIN LEAGUE.  
 THE UNITED IRISH LEAGUE.  
 THE NATIONAL COUNCIL.  
 THE IRISH ORGANISATIONS IN  
 AMERICA AND GREAT BRITAIN.  
 THE IRISH INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATIONS.

It is designed to crush **Irish Industries** and advertise **Foreign Manufactures.**

It is a foreign show, built by foreigners, in the interest of foreigners.  
 There is not anything Irish about it, and  
**IRELAND DOES NOT WANT IT.**

**ALL IRISH PEOPLE** should show their disapproval of it by . . . **STAYING AWAY.**

*When in Dublin don't go to the Exhibition: The Anti-nation Exhibition being held this Year in Dublin should be boycotted by the Irish People.* N.p.: n.p., 1907. Reproduced courtesy of the National Library of Ireland.

Most of the negative publicity was reported in the weekly publication *The Leader*, directed by the London-based Irish Journalist and advocate of protectionism and so-called “Irish Irelandism” D. P. Moran, who considered the Exhibition a travesty<sup>11</sup> and condemned the whole enterprise. The promotion of the event was nonetheless quite persuasive, and the newspapers and guidebooks of the time were invariably reporting and advertising all means of transport to Dublin. Amusements and entertainments were among the chief attractions, as was customary in the exhibition network: among them regimental and other bands, concerts, a water-chute and a helter-skelter, and, most notably, the real highlight represented by the Somali village. The Exhibition largely followed in the footsteps of its most celebrated antecedents, not only the 1851 Great Exhibition but the Chicago Columbian Exposition of 1893 and the 1900 Exposition Universelle of Paris, insofar as the complex was erected especially for the event, and along the lines of the White City of Chicago, another “Great White City”.<sup>12</sup> The building was massive and

<sup>11</sup> Fanning, “Research Note”, 26.

<sup>12</sup> So called by Stoker in the title of his article. Interestingly, the architectural plan of the Herbert Park premises of the Dublin Exhibition recalled that of the 1902 Turin Exposition, with a ground plan formed by a set of galleries and pavilions gathered around a central rotunda. See W. Hughes, “Introducing Patrick to

imposing, all white with a central dome dominating the city and a Central Palace with an octagonal court “of Florentine character” from which four radial wings extended in the form of the Cross of St. Andrew. The complex included a Palace of Mechanical Arts and a Palace of Fine Arts, a Colonial Avenue and an important ‘Tuberculosis Exhibition’ which was included in the Home Industries section during the last month. Patronised by the Countess of Aberdeen, it consisted of 21 lectures – later published in a volume – on the aspects of the disease which was rampant in Ireland at the time.

Like most exhibition buildings, the Herbert Park complex was destined to enjoy an ephemeral splendour: after the closing, the buildings were dismantled and the materials disposed of and smaller units were sold and relocated while the main area was later reconverted with the reinstatement of Herbert Park in 1911. Even though it never acquired the status of a major event in the course of Irish social history, all things considered, the Dublin Exhibition proved very successful. Contemporary and later historical reports do not entirely coincide, but it is worth quoting this recapitulation in a publication of the Royal Dublin Society which celebrated the centenary of the Exhibition a hundred years later:

The exhibition showed what could be accomplished in Ireland. The economy and business of the country thrived as a result and the spirit of the country was lifted. So many visitors came to the exhibition that a new tourist industry began to take shape. The main promoter, William Martin Murphy and his Dublin United Tramway Company benefited from the requirement for transport to and from the exhibition. Even the nationalist opposition which had been evident before the exhibition opened realised that the Irish International Exhibition of 1907 had been an unqualified success.<sup>13</sup>

On the whole, the Exhibition had a far more extensively commercial character than all previous Irish Exhibitions, and this is a central element from which to depart in considering its cultural contextualization. Significantly, Thomas Richards, author of one of the major critical works on English commodity culture, places the Irish Exhibition in the advertising-ruled phase of expositions, as an instance of a failed attempt at informing the nation with the utopia of commodification:

In 1851 advertisers had not been invited to participate to the Great Exhibition. By 1914 advertisers and their entrepreneurial allies organized most of the commercial

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his New Self: Bram Stoker and the 1907 Dublin Exhibition”, *Irish Studies Review*, 5, 19 (1997): 9-14, 11. In his article, later to be discussed, Bram Stoker depicts the beauty of the site as evocative of Italy or the Orient.

13 Royal Dublin Society, “Centenary of Irish International Exhibition 1907”, last accessed 1 June 2014, [http://bdshistory.org/final\\_exhibition\\_panels.pdf](http://bdshistory.org/final_exhibition_panels.pdf).

exhibitions held in Great Britain, including the only moderately successful Dublin Exhibition of 1907, which had failed to convince Dubliners that their city was in the process of becoming an utopia stocked with manufactured objects. The business of advertising had become the business of presenting and re-presenting commodity culture to the English, and, increasingly, to the Irish and the Indians and the South Africans. Its influence was felt in every sphere of life.<sup>14</sup>

Richards' reference to this partial failure with regard to the (utopian) ideological rhetoric operating through the exhibition brings me to the introduction of what is by far the most interesting and exhaustive textual coverage of the event written by a literary personality of the time, Bram Stoker, an article which the Irish writer wrote for the "Irish Number" of the periodical *The World's Work (An Illustrated periodical of National Efficiency and Social Progress)*, which had an English and North-American readership. Resident in London since 1878 and working as acting and business manager to Henry Irving and the Lyceum Theatre, Stoker had already written *The Snake's Pass* in 1880 and *Dracula* in 1897 and had been writing for the *Irish Daily* and periodical press and, later, for publications outside Ireland, as "a frequent and experienced participant in the discourses that mobilise and support journalism, publicity and transport". Discourses which William Hughes rightly defines as "both transnational and infra-national [...] in that they operate *between* the different identities which make up the United Kingdom but always within the assumption of the unity symbolised in that national concept".<sup>15</sup> Stoker's apparently effaced Irishness and his ambivalent cultural and political allegiance to Irish cultural identity has been the object of much recent scholarly interest, and the interesting coinage of a "metrocolonial" subject put forward by Joseph Valente<sup>16</sup> aptly encapsulates the same tensions, contradictions and competitive allegiances which can be traced in reflections on Ireland and the so-called "exhibitionary order", in Timothy Mitchell's definition.<sup>17</sup> Stoker's commissioned article is important insofar as it articulates a presentation of the forthcoming Irish Exhibition in terms of a cultural critique of

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14 T. Richards, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle 1851-1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 249.

15 Hughes, "Introducing Patrick", 9.

16 "Ireland ceased to be a distinct if colonized geo-political entity and assumed the unique and contradictory position of a domestic or 'metropolitan' colony, at once a prized if troublesome colonial possession and a despised but active constituent of the greatest metropole on earth, the United Kingdom. From that point until the founding of the Free State in 1922, the Irish people found themselves at once agent and object, participant-victims, of Britain's far-flung imperial mission – in short, a 'metrocolonial' people". J. Valente, "'Double Born': Bram Stoker and the Metrocolonial Gothic", *Modern Fiction Studies*, 46, 3 (2000): 632-645, 632.

17 T. Mitchell, "The World as Exhibition", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 31, 2 (April 1989): 217-236.

contemporary Ireland which effectively captures the rhetoric of the exhibitionary system and locates it in the Irish reality. Pivotal in the report is the contrast between the Ireland of the past and the new Ireland that was to be announced by the Exposition: the article is entitled “The Great White Fair in Dublin” and subtitled “How there has arisen on the site of the old Donnybrook Fair a great Exhibition as typical of the new Ireland as the former festival was of the Ireland of the past”. As an opportunity for a “full expression of Irish pride in an object so worthy to evoke it”,<sup>18</sup> Stoker declares the inevitable controversies attached to these achievements to be irrelevant and identifies the two semantic constituents of national pride and the objectual dimension of the exhibition from the start – the exhibition of objects being itself *the encompassing displaying and displayed object*. The contrast between the Ireland of yesterday and the Ireland of today is metonymically represented by the location of the exhibition, in the past the site of the Donnybrook Fair, dating from the fourteenth century, which “in time degenerated into a place of such rowdiness that its very name became a synonym for misconduct”,<sup>19</sup> thus epitomising the association between fairs, exposition leisure and sexual promiscuity that will be later discussed with reference to Joyce’s “Araby” and *Ulysses*, and the identification of rural, provincial Ireland with the English stereotypes of the stage Irishman.

The rhetorical strategy of Stoker’s text – only ostensibly a reportage, though in fact a far more complex reading of the event – abounds in significant metonymies and metaphors: firstly through the identification of the subaltern, uncivilised Ireland of the past with the execrable reputation of a popular form such as the Donnybrook Fair, then with the evocation of the Dublin Exhibition as “*The Great white city* which has arisen as by magic in Herbert Park” that is “in itself a revelation to British eyes”,<sup>20</sup> and, most notably, through the conventional identification of Ireland as “Patrick” (Paddy, the stock character of the inferior, uncouth, naïve and ignorant colonial Irish subject). Thus, Stoker’s championing of the Exhibition as the epitome of the new spirit and the “wonderful things” that are “being done to start the island upon a new career of industrial progress, aside and beyond affairs political”<sup>21</sup> places its main and most relevant significance on the level of the ideological construction of a renewed national image, though one firmly located within the geographical bounds of the Empire.

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18 B. Stoker, “The Great White Fair in Dublin”, *The World’s Work*, May 1907. Available on Bramstokerestate.com, last accessed 1 June 2014, <http://www.bramstokerestate.com/The-Great-White-Fair-in-Dublin-Bram-Stoker2.html>, 571.

19 Stoker, “The Great White Fair”, 574.

20 The title, though, bears the word “Fair”, effaced in the first sentence quoted above (italics mine).

21 Stoker, “The Great White Fair”, 571.



Introducing Pat to himself

But there are other purposes to which it will serve – for instance, it will introduce Patrick to his new self. If the value to a country of an International Exhibition is to be measured by the educational facilities thus afforded to its people, there is probably no section of the British dominion which could take from it so much benefit as Ireland can.<sup>22</sup>

Ireland's "isolation, emphasised by the neglect of many centuries" had lead, in Stoker's opinion, "to create for its inhabitants a personal ignorance both of itself and of the outside world", that would be counteracted by the ecumenical spreading of knowledge inherent to the exhibitionary feat. The innovative character of the Dublin Exhibition lies, in Stoker's eyes, as much in its architectural avant-gardism as in its aesthetics: significantly, he identifies the predominant inspiring style of the complex as the Italian *Renaissance* (the Palace of the fine Arts being "a building in the chaste severity of Florentine style") and emphasizes how, with its central building surrounded by wings and pavilions, it marks a considerable advancement in respect of the by then outmoded (he seems to imply) single building template of the Crystal Palace, and in keeping with the "massive palaces of seemingly white marble which are built almost in a night and as speedily taken away"<sup>23</sup> which recall the (unnamed) Chicago White City. In his perceptive analysis, Hughes underlines how Stoker's anticipation of the Dublin Exhibition

may equally be seen to draw the whole concept of international exhibitions away from the Crystal Palace and into a twentieth-century discourse which stresses the expanding economies of the greater world over and above the self-satisfied insularity of the British presence in the exhibitionary arena.<sup>24</sup>

In other words, Stoker explicitly regards the "British builder" as rather behind in the attempt to keep pace with the evolution of the expository architecture of other cities, "coded implications with which the text has to reckon", and he valorises the cosmopolitan innovativeness of the Irish enterprise, which strongly recalled the 1902 Turin Exposition with its galleries and pavilions collected around a central rotunda designed by Raimondo D'Aronco.<sup>25</sup> Italy had been explicitly evoked in one of the opening descriptive paragraphs of Stoker's article, in significant tandem with the Orient, as if to highlight the artificial – yet natural-looking – otherness of the environment.<sup>26</sup> The move away from a retrograde,

22 Stoker, "The Great White Fair", 571.

23 Stoker, "The Great White Fair", 571.

24 Hughes, "Introducing Patrick", 10.

25 Hughes, "Introducing Patrick", 11.

26 "Given a clear sky of Irish blue and a soft summer sun, one could well imagine oneself in the heart of Italy, or even in the still more luminous atmosphere of the Orient". Stoker, "The Great White Fair", 570.

isolated past removed from what was going on in the world at large achieved by and metonymically announced by the 1907 Exhibition, is then so significant, in Stoker's rhetoric, as to project Ireland onto the stage of international modernity, even while acknowledging its peripheral condition, and at a time when the cultural elite of the country was proclaiming a return to the Celtic heritage, and Irish modernization was ambivalently regarded as inextricably linked to the imperial British agenda.

More will be said of this crucial nexus of peripherality, modernity and versions of Irish Orientalism with regard to Joyce and in connection with other Irish exhibitionary forms. It is worth pointing out, however, that at the heart of the Revivalist vision there lay a conception of atavism and a return to the Celtic past which was intrinsically tied up with the idea of the future of Ireland, and hence, paradoxically, parallel to the concerns of the Protestant or Anglo-Irish establishment and ultimately, part of the history of Irish modernism. Thus, as Nicholas Daly observes in his *Modernism, Romance and the Fin de Siècle*, it was plausible that "If Stoker and *The World's Work* wished to read the Exhibition as a pageant of Irish modernization, others found in it the vestiges of a very different Ireland".<sup>27</sup> The playwright John Millington Synge, one of the most important personalities of the Revival, who would see his *Playboy of the Western World* alternately acclaimed and condemned in a *succès de scandale* earlier that year at its debut at the Abbey Theatre, visited the Exhibition and went to see its major sideshow attraction, the Somali village, where Africans had been "imported" from British Somaliland in their native dress and patronizingly described by the *Irish Times* as "good humoured, dark but not uncomely" (9 May 1907).

Monday May 13th/07

Today I went to see Mrs Payne after dinner but found the house locked up so I went to the Exhibition for a while. I didn't enjoy it very much as I was lonesome again but there are good things in it. The Somali village especially is curious. A bit of the war-song the niggers were singing was exactly like some of the keens on Aran.<sup>28</sup>

Synge sees in the African war-chant a formal – and cultural – resemblance with the traditional wailing that took place at funerals on the Aran Islands, which he had visited and written about in an essay that same year. *The Aran Islands* has been considered by some as a manifesto of the primitivist strain of the Celtic Revival, and an important repository of ethnographic imagery of 'primitive' Ireland as embodied by

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27 N. Daly, *Modernism, Romance and the Fin de Siècle: Popular Fiction and British Culture 1880-1914* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 125.

28 A. Saddlemyer, *Letters to Molly: John Millington Synge to Mary O'Neill* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), 132.

the Aran islanders, whom Synge had come to know well during his repeated sojourns there in 1898.

Notwithstanding its brevity and its textual status as a mere epistolary reference, this comment on the ethnologic sideshow of the Somali Village in the Dublin Exhibition suggests that Synge was not aware of what really lay behind it; in other words he did not see it as part of a conventional exhibitory network that was made up of itinerant ethnic shows that were immensely popular all over Europe and in America. Nor does his use of the word “niggers”, a term which, at the time, was not considered politically incorrect, indicate a specific sensibility in racial concerns. To put it another way, Synge takes the Somalis’ anthropologic and ethnologic authenticity at its face value, and does not consider their reified condition as yet another (human) exhibit, but, rather, as an extra-European primitiveness, “a common primitive spirit”.<sup>29</sup> An imagined propensity that can also be detected in the theory of the Phoenician origins of the Irish people, mainly ascribed to Charles Vallancey, which was well known and supported by Joyce. This misconception of the (exhibited) primitive or ethnic ‘other’ as an authentic specimen of otherness and atavism is thus indicative of the substantial indifference of Synge – an important figure in the Revival – to the overall apparatus of the Exhibition as a pageant of the advancement of Irish modernity and as a major communicative enterprise, and explains why such a minor textual pronouncement on it has been valorised by Daly for his discussion of Synge’s interest in the relations between the worker in the primitive economy and the artist and in what he rather too suggestively defines as “imagining the survival of a rich seam of pre-modernity, a piece of darkest Africa in Ireland”.<sup>30</sup>

Overall, then, Stoker and Synge’s accounts of the 1907 event, different as they were, both highlighted its spectacular, aesthetic and hence cultural impact and significance, and endorsed its proposed anthropological models, while they did not seem concerned with the phantasmagoria of commodities and progress, the visible display of the products and emblems of the capitalistic catching up of Ireland with the already industrialized English and world-scene, which will soon be discussed. It is worth noting, rather, how the presence of reconstructed ethnic villages was a common practice in the exhibitionary network which had seen Ireland itself, along other (more) advanced European nations such as Austria and Germany, in particular, ‘on display’ at some major International Exhibitions such as the Chicago Columbian Exposition of 1893 and Saint Louis one of 1904. Evidently, the presentation of these ethnic reconstructions of a rural,

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<sup>29</sup> Daly, *Modernism*, 126.

<sup>30</sup> Daly, *Modernism*, 128-135; 126. Synge’s letter, edited in Ann Saddlemeier’s volume, is also referred to, though without bibliographical specifications, by S. Rains in her *Commodity Culture and Social Class in Dublin 1850-1916* (Dublin-Portland: Irish Academic Press, 2010), who points to his lack of critical distance in being fascinated by the Somalis.

‘simple’, Celtic Ireland was ideologically anachronistic with respect to the reality of the developing country, and it should be framed as in keeping with the wider canvas of the “exhibitionary order” (Mitchell) as sketched by Paul Greenhalgh:

Ireland had to be different, as did Scotland, in order for the English to be able to differentiate themselves and rule. The core-periphery phenomenon can be applied to the whole empire, and can be found throughout the exhibitions in the tendency to emphasize rurality, backwardness and nature when discussing subject nations, and the city industry and culture when discussing the imperial ones. Power was achieved and maintained through industrial technology, and it was through demonstration of it that core countries maintained their hold. To juxtapose a Machine hall with a native village was to provide the clearest possible illustration of power relations in the world.<sup>31</sup>

As Greenhalgh specifically points out,

By showing Ireland and Scotland as nations of hand-loom weavers and Gaelic singers, organisers at the exhibitions were relating to them as periphery nations, as part of the empire. A time-worn attitude toward the Celtic races facilitated this, an attitude which has had its derogatory nature obscured by a quasi romanticism,<sup>32</sup>

according to which the literary stereotype of the stage Irishman would be the most benevolent articulation in a system of structural opposition and mutual defining functions between the colonial power and the (internal) colony that has been widely investigated over the past decades by postcolonial critics such as S. Deane, D. Kiberd, D. Lloyd.

## II. THE IRISH BAZAARS, JAMES JOYCE AND THE “EXHIBITIONARY COMPLEX”: “ARABY”, “MIRUS”, *DUBLINERS* AND *ULYSSES*

The exhibitionary forms in Ireland had not been limited to manufacturing, industrial, national and international expositions, but included the highly popular ‘minor’ version of the bazaar which, unlike the original Oriental model were often large, structured and thematically connoted events, mostly organized for philanthropic purposes which underscored their commercial character. As Paul Tenkotte remarks,

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31 P. Greenhalgh, *Ephemeral Vistas: The Expositions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and World's Fairs, 1851-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), 107.

32 Greenhalgh, *Ephemeral Vistas*, 108.

Such [...] bazaars and fairs [...], which focused on singular cultural themes, seemed to proliferate in the late-nineteenth century. They were, in reality, ‘miniature international exhibitions’ – their scope, of course, restricted by space, finances and purpose. Nevertheless, they evidenced the growing interest in cultural diversity, as well as the identification of culture with place.<sup>33</sup>

More specifically, the Irish bazaars enjoyed their widest popularity and largest press coverage during the 1890s; as Stephanie Rains points out, they were “an important part of the social history of Dublin [...] striking examples of an Irish popular culture during the 1890s which was already part of a modernized, international sphere of commodified leisure”.<sup>34</sup> The relevance of these events and their inclusion in the wider exhibitionary system was promptly acknowledged by the contemporary press on the occasion of the hugely popular Araby Bazaar in 1894. *The Irish Times* commented as follows on the entertaining and multifarious assemblage that the original Oriental Bazaar had become, and on the radically different significance that the word ‘bazaar’ had assumed:

Recent development shows an inclination to depart from the word, and choose some specific name, like ‘Araby’ for instance, to comprehend, not a bazaar only, but a whole group of specific entertainments, massed together for the once in one large area. Nowhere in the United Kingdom has this been more plainly seen than here in Dublin [...]. A marked feature of the modern development of bazaars is the gigantic outlay which their inception and carrying out needs [...]. To be brief, the bazaar appeals to primary instincts – it is exciting, it is varied, it is cheap. *Long live the bazaar* (*The Irish Times*, 14 May 1904, 5).<sup>35</sup>

Being the largest of their kind in the United Kingdom, the annual Irish bazaars were mainly fund-raising events for the Dublin hospitals, which saw the consistent presence of women volunteers from the upper middle-class. They were also enriched by special attractions, much like an International Exhibition, and appealed to the population as areas of entertainment and “Magnificent representation(s)”,<sup>36</sup> devoted to cultural rather than merchandising ventures. It is precisely the memory and background of the Araby “splendid bazaar” of 1894 that James Joyce turned into the stuff of the third short story of

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33 P. A. Tenkotte, “Kaleidoscopes of the World: International Exhibitions and the Concept of Culture-Place, 1851-1915”, *American Studies*, 28, 1 (Spring 1987): 5-29, 13.

34 S. Rains, “Joyce’s ‘Araby’ and the Historical Araby Bazaar, 1894”, *Dublin James Joyce Journal*, I (2008): 17-29, 18.

35 This important excerpt was originally quoted by Heyward Ehrlich in his 1998 seminal study on the historical background of Joyce’s “Araby”, then by Stephanie Rains in her article.

36 Thus the official catalog: “Araby 1894 / Magnificent Representation / of / an Oriental City / Cairo Donkeys & Donkey Boys / an Arab Encampment [...] ‘The Alhambra’ an Orchestra of 50 Performers”, etc.

*Dubliners*, creatively adapting – and distorting – both personal memories and historical and cultural contexts. Long considered an early dramatization of the young artist’s solitude and vocational call, the story shows a remarkable and thought-provoking alteration of the actual circumstances, and of the social knowledge that contemporary Dublin readers would still share of the original Araby bazaar when *Dubliners* was published in 1914.

The Araby bazaar was a one-week “Grand Oriental Fête” which ran from May 14<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>, 1894, in the Dublin suburb of Ballsbridge, and it was intended to raise funds to reduce the debt of the Dublin Jervis Hospital. It was attended by a total of between approximately 92,000 and 100,000 visitors – about one third of the Dublin population – and it employed 1,760 workers. It was officially inaugurated by the Earl of Aberdeen, in the tradition of official events of major popular impact. Not only was it structured as an Orientalist theme-park, as we would nowadays call such a diverse and rich assemblage, but it “also made a show of scientific and technological progress [...]”<sup>37</sup> in the displays that featured recent inventions such as the telephone concerts from Belfast, the electric search-light display and the use of electric lanterns at night [...].<sup>38</sup> The official catalog also featured: “Magnificent Representation / of / an Oriental City/ Cairo Donkeys & Donkey Boys / an Arab Encampment [...] ‘The Alhambra’ / an Orchestra of 50 Performers” and, significantly, a firework display “by Brock of the Crystal Palace, London”, etc. All in all, according to Heyward Ehrlich, it was “a theatrical microcosm in the tradition of the nineteenth century panoramas and dioramas”.<sup>39</sup>

Written at the end of 1905, when Joyce had already left Ireland and had settled in Trieste, “Araby” is the third story of *Dubliners*, the one concluding the ‘childhood’ section and the first to sketch a sort of juvenile portrait of the artist to be, and it presents quite a different picture of the historical referent. The young protagonist, a schoolboy of presumably twelve (Joyce’s own age at the time he visited the actual show in Dublin)<sup>40</sup> is living with his aunt and uncle in a house in North Dublin, and is secretly infatuated with an unnamed girl called “Mangan’s sister” in whose presence he feels shy and awkward. When she tells him she cannot visit “Araby” on account of having to go on a school retreat, the boy promises to go and bring her a keepsake from the bazaar. From then on his mind is fixed on images of the girl and he is prey to a state of nervous anticipation

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37 Which was satirised in both “Circe” and “Ithaca”. In addition, other pseudo-scientific attractions were imported, allegedly from Paris and Chicago, such as the Eiffel search-light tower, mentioned in the official catalog.

38 H. Ehrlich, “‘Araby’ in Context: The ‘Splendid Bazaar’, Irish Orientalism, and James Clarence Mangan”, *James Joyce Quarterly*, 35, 2-3 (Winter-Spring 1998): 309-331, 316.

39 Ehrlich, “‘Araby’ in Context”, 314.

40 Both Richard Ellmann – *James Joyce* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), 1982 – and Peter Costello – *James Joyce: The Years of Growth 1882-1915* (London: Kyle Cathie Limited, 1992), 129 –, in their biographies report Joyce’s attendance of the bazaar.

of the coming Saturday when he will finally be able to get to Araby. But his uncle, who was to give him the money for the train ticket and admission fee, doesn't get home until 9 pm, after loitering and drinking all day despite having been given due notice, and the boy reaches the bazaar at 10 pm, shortly before closing time. In the – by then – dingy atmosphere of the place, he approaches one last open stall, selling only “porcelain vases and china tea-sets”<sup>41</sup> where the young lady treats him dismissively, as she is more keen on flirting with “two young gentlemen” with “English accents”. Unable to buy the promised keepsake for the girl, he leaves as the lights go down, seeing himself “as a creature driven and derided by vanity”, his eyes burning “with anguish and anger”.<sup>42</sup>

The discrepancies between the historical referent and Joyce's rendition of the bazaar are numerous and significant: to begin with, the event was not a one-day show, as the story suggests, but was run on a weekly basis, with Friday night as its culminating moment, attended by thousands of visitors rather than a few people. The transportation system was organized to support the crowds heading for Ballsbridge, and a visitor would hardly find himself “alone in a bare carriage”.<sup>43</sup> The size, variety and splendour of the venue was obviously quite unlike the small, badly lit and shabby place the boy eventually finds. The magnificence of the show is somehow foreshadowed by the expectations of Mangan's sister (“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”),<sup>44</sup> and by the boy's imaginative musings on its resonant Orientalist charm:

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. I asked for leave to go to the bazaar on Saturday night. My aunt was surprised and hoped it was not some Freemason affair.<sup>45</sup>

41 J. Joyce, *Dubliners*, ed. J. Johnston (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 23.

42 Joyce, *Dubliners*, 23, 24. The closing lines recall the boy and narrator's first self-portrait as the recipient of a vocational call: “Her image accompanied me even in places the most hostile to romance. 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” (20). The concluding scene sees the boy empty-handed and the quest for the Holy Grail represented by the chalice is reduced to the banality of two pennies knocking against the sixpence in his pocket as the only material vestige of his thwarted experience of discovery and romance.

43 Joyce, *Dubliners*, 23.

44 Joyce, *Dubliners*, 21.

45 Joyce, *Dubliners*, 21. The allusion regards the bazaar organized by the Freemasons of Ireland in 1882 in aid of the Masonic Female Orphans School, which provoked the indictment of the Archbishop of Dublin. See Johnston, Notes to *Dubliners*, 208-209; also Rains, “Joyce's ‘Araby’”, 19.

The orientalist theme is also conjured up by the girl's surname which is an allusion to the Irish poet James Clarence Mangan in whose tragic, isolated life and work Joyce had identified an alternative version of Orientalism of nationalist impetus which suited his mythopoetical ambitions. Mangan had in fact been the subject of an undergraduate essay written by Joyce in 1902 and of a later lecture delivered in Trieste at the Università popolare in 1907.

A crucial aspect of these exhibitionary forms emerges from these considerations and is worth dwelling on: as previously mentioned, bazaars seemed to incorporate their profitable commercial activities within the framework of the magnificent entertainment. While, according to Ehrlich, "in his writings Joyce almost always uses bazaars to mean a place of entertainment rather than a market",<sup>46</sup> it is quite evident that the misrepresentation of the gaudy diversity and splendour of the original model into the unexpectedly sombre, squalid and small fair of the short story hinges precisely on the bitter disappointment the boy experiences when he realizes that the precious, unique keepsake he wished to buy for his sweetheart – a metonymic token of the enchanted pageant of Oriental otherness – is ultimately reduced to cheap "porcelain vases and flowered tea-sets".<sup>47</sup>

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.

I could not find any sixpenny entrance and, fearing that the bazaar would be closed, I passed in quickly through a turnstile, handing a shilling to a weary-looking man. I found myself in a big hall girdled at half its height by a gallery. Nearly all the stalls were closed and the greater part of the hall was in darkness. I recognised a silence like that which pervades a church after a service. I walked into the centre of the bazaar timidly. A few people were gathered about the stalls which were still open. Before a curtain, over which the words *Cafe Chantant* were written in coloured lamps, two men were counting money on a salver. I listened to the fall of the coins.<sup>48</sup>

The "fall" of the coins, an overt image of materialism and commodification of spiritual values echoes the equally overt explicit symbolism of the apple tree standing in the yard where the boy used to play. The frustrated promise of the imaginary journey to the phantasmagoria of a multifariously displayed Orient is thus projected onto both the entertaining dimension and the commercial lure of the bazaar, conflating the two into

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<sup>46</sup> Ehrlich, "Araby' in context", 315.

<sup>47</sup> Joyce, *Dubliners*, 25.

<sup>48</sup> Joyce, *Dubliners*, 21.



a negative articulation of the imperial subtext. In the same way, the emblematic British commodity of the cheap porcelain ornaments and tea sets, representative of Victorian bourgeois complacency, and “obvious emblems of British colonialism”,<sup>49</sup> destined, as they are, to replace the exotic and unique handcrafts of the international, Oriental fair, functions as an effective objective correlative of the disappointing mystification of the Orient. The imperialist subtext is signaled by the gentlemen with English accents<sup>50</sup> flirting with the woman at the stall, and by the boy’s awareness of his useless pretended interest in the tawdry items of the stall:

I lingered before her stall, though I knew my stay was useless, 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. 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.<sup>51</sup>

The Irish bazaar, though, does not feature only in the “Araby” of *Dubliners* but reappears through a sort of dual reworking in *Ulysses*. The “incompletion”<sup>52</sup> of Joyce’s reductionist rendition of the Araby Bazaar is revisited through the appearance, in many episodes of the book, of the later and much smaller Mirus bazaar, which was transposed by Joyce from the actual dates of 31<sup>st</sup> May - 4<sup>th</sup> June 1904 to June 6<sup>th</sup>. A far less significant event, compared to the earlier “Grand Oriental Fête”, the Mirus bazaar had no specific cultural theme – its Latin name vaguely alluded to the marvels of the “scopic” vision that was conveyed by the Great Exhibition of 1851 – but was in fact more by way of being “a leisurely middle class day out”,<sup>53</sup> where people could shop and enjoy the conventional props of funfairs, including those firework displays, which Joyce was to use so ironically in the sexual imagery in “Nausicaa”. According to the *Irish Times*, the Mirus Bazaar was significantly less successful than the Araby antecedent, also on account of the difficulty in imagining new and original forms

49 Ehrlich, “Araby’ in context”, 319.

50 S. Rains points to the fact that the women volunteers at Araby would be from the upper classes: Joyce thus seems to transpose the English accent from the woman to her male interlocutors, as if to emphasize the boy’s sense of social inferiority (Rains, “Joyce’s ‘Araby’”, 21), or rather, to evoke the idea of a masculine, aggressive British presence.

51 Joyce, *Dubliners*, 24.

52 K. Mullin, “‘Something in the name of Araby’: James Joyce and the Irish bazaar”, *Dublin James Joyce Journal*, 4 (2011): 31-50, 39.

53 Rains, *Commodity Culture*, 183.

of entertainment,<sup>54</sup> as if to confirm – *in parvo* – that “exhibitionary fatigue”<sup>55</sup> which spread all over Europe during the *fin de siècle* years. This partial failure makes the 1904 bazaar, which Joyce had actually visited and certainly been familiar with, a closer and more plausible model than the disappointing one-day fair depicted in “Araby”, while at the same time it functions as a connecting thread with that wider exhibitionary semantics that is so central to *Ulysses*.

Of the many textual appearances of the Mirus bazaar, it is worth remembering two main (related) aspects: the orientalist fantasies and commodified simulacra and the fireworks as a synecdoche of the ephemeral social excitement produced by the event. The bazaar in *Ulysses*, as a background, recurrent space of leisure and encounter, has an overtly erotic connotation, and associates the social excitement of the organized funfair with the sexual longings and tensions that pervade the narrative: the most eloquent clue to such a reading is offered by the descriptive note in “Circe”, where the “Mirus bazaar fireworks go up from all sides with phallopypotechnic designs”.<sup>56</sup> While in *Dubliners* bazaar Orientalism is negatively connoted, and thoroughly disappointing because it does not display authentic Oriental objects, its counterpart in *Ulysses* is creatively transformed and stylized into a phantasmagorical fantasy of self-gratification, especially in the surreal and oneiric inventiveness of “Circe”. Katherine Mullin connects this significant transition in Joyce’s use of the bazaar as a cultural signifier to the “intertextual resonances of Irish Orientalism that accompany both texts.”<sup>57</sup> while in “Araby” the young boy is unaware of Mangan’s role in forging a potentially emancipating and political vision of the (Irish) Orient, in “Circe” the Orientalist literary referent is Thomas Moore’s oriental poem *Lalla Rookh*, which originated a genre of popular Irish poetry and music known as the “songs of Araby”, already an object of Joyce’s parody and criticism.<sup>58</sup> I would also argue that what Mullin convincingly summarizes as “Joyce’s own creative journey from serious cultural critique in *Dubliners* to jocose celebration of the bazaar’s kitsch aesthetics in *Ulysses*”,<sup>59</sup> should be framed within Joyce’s increased concern with and *mise en scène* of that culture of consumption and commodification of which bazaars were part as exhibitionary forms, also through their commercialising images and items of a mass-produced, ‘domesticated’ exotic otherness. A culture of which Joyce was an informed

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54 Cited in Mullin, “Something”, 41.

55 A. C. T. Geppert, *Fleeting Cities: Imperial Expositions in Fin-de Siècle Europe* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire-New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2010).

56 J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, The Gabler Edition (New York: Vintage, Random House, 1993), 15; 1494-1495.

57 Mullin, “Something”, 45.

58 Ehrlich, “‘Araby’ in context”, 322.

59 Mullin, “Something”, 45.

and fascinated interpreter, by the time he finished writing *Ulysses*, and in which he would project the bazaar as a cultural signifier.<sup>60</sup>

As Rains points out, the ultimate significance of the bazaar should be examined in relation to Irish bourgeois modernity: the historical Araby bazaar exerted

a widespread cultural appeal that was, primarily, connected to the bazaars' self-conscious connections to late nineteenth-century modernity and commodity culture. The oriental and exotic themes of the bazaar decorations, goods, and costumes, as well as the clear emphasis upon spectacle, luxury, and public display, act as indicators of an urban middle class in Ireland which felt itself to be part of a broader late-nineteenth-century culture. This broader culture included, of course, consumption and commodification, and it is clear from the evidence of the bazaars alone that Dublin's population was deeply immersed in it.<sup>61</sup>

That Oriental imagery and the Orientalist discourse are central to the cultural, political construction and imagery of *Ulysses*, is too vast and debated a critical subject to be adequately included in the present study, but it is worth mentioning that the kind of oriental/ist fantasies and the myth of the Orient present in Joyce's fiction were in fact 'public' fantasies, often centered on iconic objects (the camel, costumes, slippers, etc.) derived from orientalist European literature but also "displayed in stage adaptations such as the pantomime versions of 'Turko the Terrible' and expositions such as the bazaar in 'Araby'".<sup>62</sup>

Bloom's ongoing fantasies of the Orient have a distinctively eroticised and exotic flavor (as in the ubiquitous Orientalism in Victorian culture) and are mostly mediated and circulated by popular culture, and marked by a "a fascination with commercialized simulacra of 'Oriental otherness'".<sup>63</sup> The oriental theme of the historical Araby bazaar embraced, as already mentioned, quite a variety of geographical and iconic associations in its replica of an Oriental city, and it is significant that these should feature, among other things, images of Moorish and Spanish exoticism – such as the Algesira Stall,

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60 Lynne Bongiovanni points to a direct link between the 1851 archetype and the later Irish minor forms in the political role played by commodities: "As the Great Exhibition reinforced the commodity culture that supported English imperialism, the Oriental bazaars captivating Dublin near the turn of the century promoted an objectification of the Orient that encouraged colonial expansion". L. Bongiovanni, "'Turbaned Faces Going By': James Joyce and Irish Orientalism", *Ariel: A Review of International English Literature*, 35 (October 2007): 35, last accessed 1 June 2014, <http://empirestudies.com/2011/09/05/james-joyce/>.

61 Rains, "Joyce's 'Araby'", 22.

62 B. Kershner, "Ulysses and the Orient", *James Joyce Quarterly*, 35, 2-3 (Winter-Spring 1998): 273-296, 273.

63 Mullin, "Something", 31

run by the Galway sub-committee.<sup>64</sup> This made explicit the Irish-Spanish-Moorish connection that had long been present in Ireland,<sup>65</sup> and that Joyce had foregrounded by creating Molly Bloom, of Jewish-English origins, born and brought up in Gibraltar, as inspired by Galway-born, dark featured Nora Barnacle, his lifelong companion. In its heterogeneous oriental theming, then, the historical Araby is thus an important matrix for further creative reimaginings in *Ulysses*, most specifically as regards the gaudy and exotic costumes worn by women volunteers, which “along with the architectural designs of the stalls, were the principal vehicles of the bazaar’s central theme”.<sup>66</sup> The image of the oriental costume appears as early as the fourth episode, “Calypso”, when Bloom makes his appearance for the first time, and his fantasies introduce the oriental theme that recurs throughout the novel precisely through the picture of an oriental bazaar, overflowing with stereotypes:

Turbaned faces going by. Dark caves of carpet shops, big man, Turko the terrible, seated crosslegged smoking a coiled pipe. Cries of sellers in the streets. Drink water scented with fennel, sherbet. Wander along all day. Might meet a robber or two. Well, meet him. Getting on to sundown.<sup>67</sup>

Bloom, though, is well aware of the (pseudo-) cultural source of this circulating iconography: “Probably not a bit like it really. Kind of stuff you read: in the track of the sun. Sunburst on the titlepage. He smiled, pleasing himself”.<sup>68</sup>

Yet in *Ulysses*, this playful, largely fabricated, kitsch oriental/ist repertoire is, nonetheless, underscored by a sense of the Orient as an imaginary, escapist outlet for many of the tensions that racked Dublin and Irish society at the turn of the century. At the risk of oversimplifying Joyce’s faceted and ambivalent brand of Irish Orientalism, this could be said to inevitably share in the pervasive European mind-set about the Orient while imbuing it with a potentially liberating and inspirational flavor for the Irish people in their aspirations to become emancipated from British imperial rule. A parodic enactment of this orientalism also emerges in the master-slave relationship motif developed in “Circe”, where costume dressing and the reversal of gender roles that

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64 Rains “Joyce’s ‘Araby’”, 19; Ehrlich, “‘Araby’ in context”, 317.

65 Ehrlich cites the official catalog and *The Irish Times* referring to the reconstructed city as a “city like Algeria or Granada”. Ehrlich, “‘Araby’ in context”, 316.

66 Rains, “Joyce’s ‘Araby’”, 20.

67 Joyce, *Ulysses*, 4; 88-92.

68 Joyce, *Ulysses*, 4; 99-100.



*The Official Catalogue of Araby, Grand Oriental Fête at Ball's Bridge, Dublin, in aid of Jervis Street Hospital, May 14<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>, 1894* (Dublin: Brown & Nolan, 1894). Reproduced courtesy of the National Library of Ireland.

culminates in Bloom's transformation into "Bello" is announced by Molly's apparition as odalisque:

(He looks up. Beside her mirage of datepalms a handsome woman in Turkish costume stands before him. Opulent curves fill out her scarlet trousers and jacket slashed with gold. A wide yellow cummerbund girdles her. A white yashmak violet in the night, covers her face, leaving free only her lace dark eyes and raven hair.)<sup>69</sup>

Molly's attire is in keeping with the traditional iconography of the irresistible odalisque, but it is interesting to remark how the detail of the camel-puppet she scolds directly recalls the poster of the Araby bazaar, where the original animal displayed at the bazaar was not live but stuffed, an emblem of the ersatz stylization of the grand Oriental pageant:

<sup>69</sup> Joyce, *Ulysses*, 15; 297-302.

([...] A coin gleams on her forehead. On her feet are jewelled toerings. Her ankles are linked by a slender fetter chain. Beside her a camel, hooded with a turreting turban, waits. A silk ladder of innumerable rungs climbs to his bobbing howdah. He ambles near with disgruntled hindquarters. Fiercely she slaps his haunch, her goldcurb wristbangles angriling, scolding him in Moorish.)<sup>70</sup>

Another occurrence of the sexualised oriental pageant that was advertised in the Dublin press and that re-emerges in “Circe” consists in the “beautiful houris” listed in the *Irish Times* presentation of the Araby bazaar, when Bloom, at the brothel, requires further attentions from the prostitute Zoe with “more houri, more”.<sup>71</sup> A further possible textual infiltration of the historical referent lies in Bella Cohen’s name: the whoremistress who runs the brothel in Nighttown where the whole episode is set, might be reminiscent of Mrs Cohen “gipsy queen, attired in white velvet decorated with Arabian figures in red”.<sup>72</sup>

“Circe” also features the Mirus bazaar, as providing entertainment for one of the minor female characters, Kitty Rickett (“O, they played that on the hobbyhorses at the Mirus bazaar!”),<sup>73</sup> while the first textual occurrence of Mirus is in “Calypso”, when Bloom recalls that Molly first met her current lover, Blazes Boylan, at an earlier fundraising event which would anticipate the bazaar; then in the eighth chapter, “Lestrygonians”, Bloom, out of the National Library, sees a poster advertising the event, which thus enters the narrative through its public promotional announcement:<sup>74</sup>

Hello, placard. Mirus bazaar. His excellency the lord lieutenant. Sixteenth today it is. In aid of funds for Mercer’s hospital. The Messiah was first given for that. Yes Handel. What about going out there. Ballsbridge. Drop in on Keyes. No use sticking to him like a leech. Wear out my welcome. Sure to know someone on the gate.<sup>75</sup>

In addition, Bloom’s utopian fantasy of a multicultural and multi-religious Ireland, the New Bloomusalem, “a colossal edifice, with crystal roof, built in the shape of a huge

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70 Joyce, *Ulysses*, 15; 312-317.

71 Joyce, *Ulysses*, 15; 1989.

72 *The Irish Times*, 19 may 1894; also in Mullin, “Something”, 43.

73 Joyce, *Ulysses*, 15; 4109.

74 Further references to the commercialization of bazaars tickets appear in “Cyclops” (12; 776-777), where it actually refers to a foreign lottery Bloom has been illegally trying to sell (“Selling bazaar tickets or what do you call it royal Hungarian privileged lottery”), and in “Ithaca” where an old ticket appears in Bloom’s drawer (“a bazaar ticket, no 2004, of St. Kevin Charity Fair, price 6d, 100 prizes” (17; 1790-1791).

75 Joyce, *Ulysses*, 8; 1162-1167.

pork kidney, containing forty thousand rooms”<sup>76</sup> is itself a clear parody of the Crystal Palace as imperial symbol.

The tenth episode, “Wandering Rocks”, the most significant experimentalist textualization of the city in *Ulysses*, follows the movements of most of the characters of the novel through nineteen discrete vignettes against the background of the journeys of the two representatives of the ecclesiastical and civil authority, Father Conmee, rector of Clongowes college (attended by Stephen Dedalus) and the Earl of Dudley, the Viceroy of Ireland, “on his way to inaugurate the Mirus bazaar”<sup>77</sup> respectively. Don Gifford maintains that the cavalcade is a fiction, a spatial trajectory which does not correspond to Dudley’s actual hasty arrival from South Dublin;<sup>78</sup> however, it could be surmised that Joyce had received further inspiration in devising the vice-regal cavalcade from information he might have learned about the Vice-regal Party, featuring the Lord Lieutenant the Earl of Aberdeen and the Countess of Aberdeen who inaugurated the Irish international Exhibition on May 4<sup>th</sup> 1907, and from the subsequent state visit of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra, on July 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, all of which he could have learned from the Irish press or from friends and relatives’ letters. In fact, Joyce had been aware of the relevance of the Dublin International Exhibition, as is attested to by the fact that, in an attempt to arrange a visit to Ireland, he offered to report the Exhibition for the *Corriere della Sera*, the Italian newspaper published in Milan, but his proposal was turned down.<sup>79</sup>

On the whole, if bazaars in Joyce’s fiction evoke an important association between entertainment, sexuality and, more generally, eroticism in all its frustration or degradation, this association is significant of a general attention to the symbolic potential of the expository spaces and their transformations, which had already emerged in relation to the archetype of the Great Exhibition, the Crystal Palace. Dismantled and reassembled in Sydenham, where it became a huge area of entertainment devoid of its original educational purpose, it had been the setting of a crucial chapter in an 1889 novel by George Gissing, *The Nether World*, where the two protagonists witness the collapse of their love relationship.<sup>80</sup> In Joyce’s fiction, this thematic cluster proceeds from the frustration and disillusionment of “Araby”, with the inability on the part of the boy to find an appro-

76 Joyce, *Ulysses*, 15; 1548-1549.

77 Joyce, *Ulysses*, 10; 1268-1269.

78 D. Gifford, with R. Seidman, *Ulysses Annotated: Notes for James Joyce’s Ulysses*, revised and expanded edition (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 187.

79 Ellmann, *James Joyce*, 270.

80 J. Auerbach, *The Great Exhibition of 1851: A Nation on Display* (Yale: Yale University Press, 1999), 207-208. Joyce had been reading Gissing in 1906, actually to his dislike, but Ellman does not mention this particular novel. Ellmann, *James Joyce*, 242.

priate keepsake for his sweetheart and his discomfort in the face of the young woman's flirting with the Englishmen, to *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, where the disreputable name of bazaars is alluded to in the description of Stephen as a model youth: "He doesn't smoke and he doesn't go to bazaars and he doesn't flirt".<sup>81</sup> But it is in the conflation of leisure, commodification and sexuality in "Nausicaa", the thirteenth chapter of *Ulysses*, that such a connection finds its most complete articulation, as the indirect, visual erotic dalliance between Bloom and the young, uneducated Gerty MacDowell takes place on Sandymount shore (the by then sexualized late Victorian space of leisure), and reaches its climax with Bloom's masturbation and Gerty's ecstatic exposure of her body, at the moment when the fireworks of the Mirus bazaar explode in the air.

[...] she leaned back and the garters were blue to match on account of the transparent and they all saw it and shouted to look, look there it was and she leaned back ever so far to see the fireworks and something queer was flying about through the air, a soft thing to and fro, dark. And she saw a long Roman candle going up over the trees up, up, and, in the tense hush, they were all breathless with excitement as it went higher and higher and she had to lean back more and more to look up after it, high, high, almost out of sight, and her face was suffused with a divine, an entrancing blush from straining back and he could see her other things too, nainsook knickers, the fabric that caresses the skin, better than those other pettiwidth, the green, four and eleven, on account of being white and she let him and she saw that he saw and then it went so high it went out of sight a moment and she was trembling in every limb from being bent so far back he had a full view high up above her knee no-one ever not even on the swing or wading and she wasn't ashamed and he wasn't either to look in that immodest way like that because he couldn't resist the sight of the wondrous revealment half offered like those skirt-dancers behaving so immodest before gentlemen looking and he kept on looking, looking. [...] And then a rocket sprang and bang shot blind and O! then the Roman candle burst and it was like a sigh of O! and everyone cried O! O! in raptures and it gushed out of it a stream of rain gold hair threads and they shed and ah! they were all greeny dewy stars falling with golden, O so lively! O so soft, sweet, soft!<sup>82</sup>

In the nuanced, complexly voyeuristic and vicarious nature of the relationship between Bloom and Gerty, this section of the episode comes as a fulfilment of Gerty's narcissistic fantasies – satirically conveyed by the internally focalized narrative through the mawkish, conventional language of cheap popular novelettes and women's magazines, which Gerty has uncritically absorbed. Gerty in fact has been introduced to the reader

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81 J. Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, ed. J. Johnston (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 76.

82 Joyce, *Ulysses*, 13; 715-733, 736-740.



at the beginning of the chapter through an internal focalization which represents, as Thomas Richards proclaimed, “the first text in literary or cultural history to register in great detail the impact of advertising on consciousness”.<sup>83</sup>

But who was Gerty?

Gerty MacDowell who was seated near her companions, lost in thought, gazing far away into the distance, was in very truth as fair a specimen of winsome Irish girlhood as one could wish to see. She was pronounced beautiful by all who knew her though, as folks often said, she was more a Giltrap than a MacDowell. Her figure was slight and graceful, inclining even to fragility but those iron jelloids she had been taking of late had done her a world of good much better than the Widow Welch’s female pills and she was much better of those discharges she used to get and that tired feeling.<sup>84</sup>

Gerty was dressed simply but with the instinctive taste of a votary of Dame Fashion for she felt that there was just a might that he might be out. A neat blouse of electric blue, selftinted by dolly dyes (because it was expected in the *Lady’s Pictorial* that electric blue would be worn), with a smart vee opening down to the division and kerchief pocket (in which she always kept a piece of cottonwool scented with her favourite perfume because the handkerchief spoiled the sit) and a navy threequarter skirt cut to the stride showed off her slim graceful figure to perfection. She wore a coquettish little love of a hat of wideleaved nigger straw contrast trimmed with an underbrim of eggblue chenille and at the side a butterfly bow to tone. All Tuesday week afternoon she was hunting to match that chenille but at last she found what she wanted at Clery’s summer sales, the very it, slightly shopsoiled but you would never notice, seven fingers two and a penny. She did it up all by herself and what joy was hers when she tried it on then, smiling at the lovely reflection which the mirror gave back to her! And when she put it on the waterjug to keep the shape she knew that that would take the shine out of some people she knew. Her shoes were the newest thing in footwear (Edy Boardman prided herself that she was very petite but she never had a foot like Gerty MacDowell, a five, and never would ash, oak or elm) with patent toecaps and just one smart buckle at her higharched instep. Her wellturned ankle displayed its perfect proportions beneath her skirt and just the proper amount and no more of her shapely limbs encased in finespun hose with high spliced heels and wide garter tops.<sup>85</sup>

In her self-conscious identification of personality with the dictates of modern fashion and consumer culture, Gerty is patently unaware of the structures and social forces which determine her self-perception and mind-set. And, significantly, her narrative seems to

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83 Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 210.

84 Joyce, *Ulysses*, 13; 78-87.

85 Joyce, *Ulysses*, 13; 148-187.

hinge on a catalog-like enumeration of brand names and slogans, assimilated through advertising, which ignores syntax, and which recalls the intuition of advertisers who had “as early as the Great Exhibition, seen grammar as an impediment to establishing a bond between consumer and commodity”.<sup>86</sup> Gertie thinks of the objects which “fashion” herself – pairing them with physical features – as items enveloped by a “materialist spirituality”, which have seeped into language, and, in their turn, shape the world for her. Richards diagnoses in Gertie “a thoroughgoing psychological assimilation of the practices, methods, aims, and spirit of the commodity culture in its Irish form”.<sup>87</sup> Her role – introduced by the question “But who was Gertie?” – is also proleptic of the enumerative tour de force and descriptivism of “Ithaca”, and in keeping with Bloom’s ongoing sensory and verbal relationship with material objects and commodities. Thus, the (visual and erotic) exhibitionism at play in the episode is in fact revelatory of the growing spectacularization of advertising, which had seen the gendered body, especially the female body, become “the prevailing icon of commodity culture”.<sup>88</sup> And, what is more, it can be read as a private enactment of that dynamic of seeing and being seen (watching and being watched) that has characterized the development of technologies of vision in expository semantics. An enactment in which the Foucauldian functions of spectacle and surveillance seem to be parodically deflated. That this exhibitionist performance should take place against the background of the Sandymount strand reminds us of the pairing of young women’s bodies as sex objects with leisure areas that became a characteristic of Victorian seaside resorts which had turned into “Crystal Palaces for the libido”.<sup>89</sup>

If the “Nausicaa” episode is the most important Joycean representation of the impact of commodity culture and its related sphere of advertising on individual consciousness, it is by no means an isolated case, since the whole of *Ulysses* signals the centrality of commodities and objects in the modern city, and thrives on the complexity and the ambivalences of capitalist and consumer culture in the context of the “Hibernian metropolis” at the beginning of the twentieth century, offering a crucial literary inscription of the dominant forms of representation that sustained them.

In so doing, Joyce uses representational techniques, modes and allusions which are, to a large extent, related to exhibitionary semantics, and in the phantasmagoria of commodities which permeates the overall narrative fabric of the novel, two aspects in particular ring a distinctively “expository bell”: the dynamic of circulation applied to commodities and the enumerative and descriptive rhetoric of the catalog, which was

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86 Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 214.

87 Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 218.

88 Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 205.

89 Richards, *Commodity Culture*, 228.

also employed in department stores. Thus, the very conjuring of objects out of existence through the rhetorical and linguistic modes employed by the commodity culture of the time becomes a structuring principle and a focus of interest, against the background of Joyce's abiding concern with the rhetorical trope of *enumeratio*, clearly a staple of the encyclopedic model.<sup>90</sup> In the final, famous illustration to Henry Mayhew's 1851 comic novel (*The Adventures of Mr and Mrs Sandboys and Family, who came up to London to "enjoy themselves" and to see the Great Exhibition*), entitled "The Dispersion of the Works of All Nations from the Great Exhibition of 1851", a number of sprawling objects floats up toward the sky against the background of the Crystal Palace: this 'extroflexed', centrifugal outlet of the unlimited reproduction of all the material achievements of modern civilization originally contained in the Great Exhibition is one of the most fascinating and enduring icons that the event bequeathed to the cultural imagination. And this idea of the diffusive circulation of goods and commodities that impact on Bloom, himself an ad-man, an advertising canvasser, and all the other Dubliners is central to Joyce's representation and criticism of the political condition of Ireland as being – largely unconsciously – complicit with England's imperial politics, precisely through the consumption of its imported colonial goods and their related advertising. Conversely, middle-class commodity culture in twentieth-century Ireland was among those other aspects of the cultural and social life of the country which were involved in the process of defining Irish national identity.<sup>91</sup> Thus, much in the same way that Gertie Mc Dowell's "pure" Irish beauty is ultimately the effect of British advertised manufactured products,<sup>92</sup> the grand parade of imported edible goods that Gabriel Conroy contemplates at the dinner of "The Dead" is a visual ('scopic') assemblage that enumerates commodities of imperial provenance, symbols of affluence and abundance which bear the traces of their colonial origin through the allusive military imagery of the "rival ends", "sentries", "uniforms", "squad", "sashes":

A fat brown goose lay at one end of the table and at the other end, on a bed of creased paper strewn with sprigs of parsley, lay a great ham, stripped of its outer skin and peppered over with crust crumbs, a neat paper frill round its shin and beside this was a round of spiced beef. Between these rival ends ran parallel lines of

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<sup>90</sup> It is worth mentioning, in this regard, Umberto Eco's seminal *Le poetiche di Joyce* (Milan: Bompiani, 1982, English translation: *The Middle Ages of James Joyce: The Aesthetics of Chaosmos*, London: Hutchinson Radius, 1989), chapter I on early Joyce's indebtedness to medieval culture, and the recent *Vertigine della lista* (Milan: Bompiani, 2009, English translation: *The Infinity of Lists*, London: MacLehose, 2009).

<sup>91</sup> Rains, *Commodity Culture*, 198.

<sup>92</sup> M. Boscagli, "Spectacle Reconsidered: Joycean Synaesthetics and the Dialectics of the Mutoscope", *Joyce, Benjamin and Magical Urbanism*, eds. M. Boscagli and E. Duffy (European Joyce Studies Series) (Amsterdam-New York: Rodopi, 2011), 132-149, 140.

side-dishes: two little minsters of jelly, red and yellow; a shallow dish full of blocks of blancmange and red jam, a large green leaf-shaped dish with a stalk-shaped handle, on which lay bunches of purple raisins and peeled almonds, a companion dish on which lay a solid rectangle of Smyrna figs, a dish of custard topped with grated nutmeg, a small bowl full of chocolates and sweets wrapped in gold and silver papers and a glass vase in which stood some tall celery stalks. In the centre of the table there stood, as sentries to a fruit-stand which upheld a pyramid of oranges and American apples, two squat old-fashioned decanters of cut glass, one containing port and the other dark sherry. On the closed square piano a pudding in a huge yellow dish lay in waiting and behind it were three squads of bottles of stout and ale and minerals, drawn up according to the colours of their uniforms, the first two black, with brown and red labels, the third and smallest squad white, with transverse green sashes.<sup>93</sup>

By appreciating and consuming the material gratification and hospitality symbolized by the decked table, unaware of their economic and political implications, Gabriel Conroy's self-congratulatory, complacent attitude is further revealed as indicative of Irish urban middle-class lack of critical and political conscience.

Furthermore, the seductive power of goods and commodities, the Benjaminesque fetishism of the commodity is nuanced and filtered through Joyce's typical irony when one considers that Bloom the consumer and ad-man ultimately buys very little in the whole novel: although he is steeped in a visual and verbal contemplation of the object-world, in *Ulysses* he actually only purchases some cheap food (though imported, but not colonial, burgundy and gorgonzola sandwich) and a soap, and the talismanic fetish he carries in his pocket is a potato eventually fused into a "potatosoap" in "Circe". He sensuously contemplates the windows of the most elegant department store in Dublin, but can only let himself be carried away by the sexual, orientalist fantasies these objects trigger off:

He passed, dallying, the windows of Brown Thomas, silk mercers. Cascades of ribbons. Flimsy China silks. A tilted urn poured from its mouth a flood of bloodhued poplin: lustrous blood. The huguenots brought that here. La causa è santa! Tara tara. Great chorus that. Tara. Must be washed in rainwater. Meyerbeer. Tara: bom bom bom.  
Pincushions. I'm a long time threatening to buy one. Stick them all over the place. Needles in window curtains.  
[...] Gleaming silks, petticoats on slim brass rails, rays of flat silk stockings.  
Useless to go back. Had to be. Tell me all.

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93 Joyce, *Dubliners*, 154-155.

High voices. Sunwarm silk. Jingling harnesses. All for a woman, home and houses, silk webs, silver, rich fruits, spicy from Jaffa. Agendath Netaim. Wealth of the world. A warm human plumpness settled down on his brain. His brain yielded. Perfume of embraces all him assailed. With hungered flesh obscurely, he mutely craved to adore.<sup>94</sup>

The impossibility of actual purchase and consumption in the context of the fetishization of commodities, thus, indirectly recalls the model of the Great Exhibition, where the spectacle of all the assembled commodities would capture the visitors' interest and imagination, but would not be accessed by purchase.

To conclude, then, even a cursory overview of the structural features of *Ulysses* confirms Joyce's interest in that network of heritage institutions that shaped the ideas of the nation and of citizenship which Tony Bennett conceptualised under the heading of "exhibitionary complex",<sup>95</sup> comprised by "Institutions, [...] not of confinement but of exhibition, forming a complex of disciplinary and power relations". As evidence of that "ambition towards a specular dominance over a totality", international exhibitions played a major role in the development of the exhibitionary complex, and "sought to make the whole world, past and present, metonymically available in the assemblages of objects and peoples they brought together";<sup>96</sup> and such a metonymic grand assemblage of people, nations, cultures, objects, is a structural and defining character of *Ulysses*. Indeed, Joyce's work appears to be specifically concerned with those aspects of the development of the exhibitionary complex which are "the tendency for society itself – in its constituent parts and as a whole – to be rendered as a spectacle. This was particularly clear", Bennett reminds, "in attempts to render the city visible, and hence knowable, as a totality", even through the public inspection of its non-public sites, in view of "an imaginary dominance over the city, an illusory rather than substantive controlling vision".<sup>97</sup> An aspiration which – finding an artistic equal in the narrative medium – makes one think of the kathabasis of "Hades" where Bloom follows Paddy Dignam's funeral procession and plunges into an imaginary visitation of the very material world of the dead, or of the visit to the maternity ward at the hospital in "Oxen of the Sun". The fourteenth chapter is also, to some extent, itself an unparalleled linguistic and stylistic

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<sup>94</sup> Joyce, *Ulysses*, 8; 620-639.

<sup>95</sup> "The institutions comprising 'the exhibitionary complex' [...] were involved in the transfer of objects and bodies from the enclosed and private domains in which they had previously been displayed (but to a restricted public) into progressively more open and public arenas where, through the representations to which they were subjected, they formed vehicles for inscribing and broadcasting the messages of power (but of a different type) throughout society". T. Bennett, "The Exhibitionary Complex", *The Birth of the Museum* (London: Routledge, 1995), 60-61.

<sup>96</sup> Bennett, "Exhibitionary Complex", 79.

<sup>97</sup> Bennett, "Exhibitionary Complex", 65-66.

exhibition where Joyce literally constructs a museum of the English language through a chain of seamless parodies and pastiche of English prose, from Anglo-Saxon to the twentieth-century styles, divided into nine parts which bear references to earlier parts of the book and which also allude to the nine months gestation of the foetus. And this unparalleled, obscure tour de force which parodies an encyclopedia of literary and scientific knowledge is in fact a celebration of the great Irish writer's revenge on the supremacy of the colonizer's language and culture.

As an essential institution that features in the exhibitionary complex, the museum also appears as a physical location and important representational space in the eighth episode, "Lestrygonians", where Bloom seeks psychological shelter and inspects the plaster casts of naked figures in the entrance rotunda of the Dublin Museum, "then officially known as the Museum of Science and Art".<sup>98</sup> In the following "Scylla and Charybdis", the setting switches to yet another institutional space of disciplined knowledge, that of the National Library, where Stephen Dedalus expounds his brilliant theory about Shakespeare.

Ultimately, then, as the unsurpassed modernist summa of the complexity of the modern city, together with Benjamin's *Arcades Project*, Joyce's *Ulysses* can also testify to the progressive conceptualization of the 'city as exhibition' itself, which has characterized the evolution of expository semantics in Europe. In *Ulysses* the "Hibernian metropolis" of Dublin is on perpetual display: watched, objectified, turned into a spectacle, peopled by a crowd, it is rendered itself a spectacle of sorts through Bloom's flaneurish gaze, and through the orchestration of the "the arranger" (the impersonal omniscient narrative voice which alternates with the internal focalization and interior monologues).

If the "popular metaphor" of "the exhibition as a vast picture-book of encyclopaedic scope"<sup>99</sup> is, to date, among the most abiding and persuasive in the collective imagination, Joyce's famous definition of *Ulysses* as "a kind of encyclopaedia"<sup>100</sup> should not be overlooked as a substantial connection to the comprehensive scope of the exhibitionary enterprise.<sup>101</sup> That Joyce's own encyclopaedia should be based on cultural hybridization and on the intentional undermining of a unitary cultural identity, and that it should thus avoid both the full endorsement of Irish nationalism and the acceptance of English imperialism aligns it rather with a later, less self-celebratory phase of the expository syntax.

Joyce's familiarity with and interest in exhibitionary semantics as a whole has, thus far,

98 F. Cullen, *Ireland on Show: Art, Union, and Nationhood* (London: Ashgate, 2012), 42.

99 Geppert, *Fleeting Cities*, 238.

100 *James Joyce, Selected Letters*, ed. R. Ellmann (London: Faber & Faber, 1975), 271.

101 E. Duffy and M. Boscagli state a shared critical opinion in pairing Joyce to Benjamin in this respect: "Only Benjamin's *Arcades Project*, however, can claim to match Joyce's *Ulysses* in its *encyclopedic breath and panoramic scope*". "Introduction", *Joyce, Benjamin and Magical Urbanism*, 9-10, italics mine.

only indirectly been considered by some of his numerous and ever-proliferating critical acolytes, yet it has probably not been adequately investigated beyond the bazaar and the commodities/advertising connections, so that further arcades and sections may still remain to be explored. As mentioned, Joyce ostensibly never attended an international Exhibition, and missed the Dublin one of 1907; even so, his unique picture-book is definitely among the most enduring and totalizing expressions of the early twentieth-century modern object-world.