

Twentieth-Century Fiction
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Lecture - 20
The Wasteland - Part 1

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The Waste Land
BY T. S. ELIOT


FOR EZRA POUND
IL MIGLIOR FABBRO

I. The Burial of the Dead

April is the cruellest month, breeding
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
Memory and desire, stirring
Dull roots with spring rain.
Winter kept us warm, covering
Earth in forgetful snow, feeding
A little life with dried tubers.
Summer surprised us, coming over the Starnbergersee
With a shower of rain; we stopped in the colonnade,
And went on in sunlight, into the Hofgarten,
And drank coffee, and talked for an hour.
Bin gar keine Russin, stamm' aus Litauen, echt deutsch.
And when we were children, staying at the arch-duke's,
My cousin's, he took me out on a sled,
And I was frightened. He said, Marie,
Marie, hold on tight. And down we went.
In the mountains, there you feel free.
I read, much of the night, and go south in the winter.

What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,
You cannot say, or guess, for you know only
A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,
And the dry stone no sound of water. Only
There is shadow under this red rock,
(Come in under the shadow of this red rock),
And I will show you something different from either





So, hello and welcome to this NPTEL course entitled Twentieth Century Fiction. In this particular lecture, we will begin with T. S. Eliot's poem, The Waste Land, which is one of the most canonical texts of high modernism. So, in my previous lecture I just had a summary discussion on Eliot's early poetry, and I ended the lecture with the request for you to read up the poem Waste Land before you come to this particular lecture, and I am sure most of you have done it already.

Now, the reason why we come into Waste Land after the early poetry of Eliot you will find how some of the characteristics of the early poetry like The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock, Preludes - the two poems you have done. You find some of the stylistic elements get carried over into this particular poem as well. Now, the only difference between Waste Land and the early poetry of Eliot the I mean there are many differences, but the fundamental difference is in this particular poem Eliot is using what he himself had described as the mythic method which is term that he used to describe James Joyce's Ulysses which is another text which we will do in due course.

Now, what the mythic method means is that it you know Eliot uses lots of ancient myths, European myths, non-European myths, in terms of localizing them in the current context in the contemporary context. So, he uses myths of Tiresias, he uses myths of Lazarus, he uses myths of you know different other European origin. And he also alludes to a non-European you know myths and religious figures as well. A non-European allusions non-European references for instance the whole poem ends with reference to shanti shanti shanti which is obviously, the end of you know it features in Bhagavad Gita which is something Eliot was very interested in as a reader.

Now, what that does, as it breaks *Waste Land* into a very interesting collage of quotations. It is sort of taking in different things from different cultural contexts, he is quoting, straight quoting certain passages from certain canonical books. So, there are references to Edmund Spenser, there references to you know Baudelaire of course - French symbolist poetry, it's a large part that informs Eliot's poetry quite heavily, it informs Dante's *Inferno* and Dante's *Divine Comedy* in general. So, it is a whole series of references in the *Waste Land* which in which can be found. And there is a different research altogether I mean we can actually have an entire research looking at the references in *Waste Land* I mean where the references coming from.

So, it is quite encyclopedic, in its quality, it brings in a huge and enormous range of references from Christianity, from anthropology, from non-Christian religions as Hinduism as along with allusion to different literary texts of different cultural and political times, all of which come together to create this very marvelous and astonishing collage that Eliot is presenting in the *Waste Land*.

And now this particular poem is dedicated to Ezra Pound *il miglior fabbro*. So, the superior poet. Pound was someone who is instrumental in editing the *Waste Land*. And what we see now is a very heavily edited version, and the original poem was much longer and Pound, cut off huge chunks from the poem in terms of making it more lean. But what you find at the end of *Waste Land* interestingly is a note of references, series of references, certain things that Eliot had quoted, some of the references are apocryphal, some of the references are academic.

So, in a way that is a very interesting way to muscle up the poem, and we can talk about the politics of representation in *Waste Land*, how this entire poem can read as very, very

hysterical you know statement of the collapse of European civilization, and the final series of quotations, or final series of references in the end, is just an effort to academize it, to make it more academic, to make it more scholarly. So, you know it is very interesting thing to have references at the end of the poem, which is something Eliot you know did, and obviously, this poem fetched him a lot of fame, and lot of money, but this is also a poem which is quite possibly the most personal thing Eliot wrote at that point of time *The Waste Land*.

Now, in a nutshell, *The Waste Land* is about the collapse of European civilization, it is *The Waste Land*, it is very dystopian, it's everything is coming to an end, spirituality, religion, the very fundamental sustenance the western civilization had provided human beings is coming to an end now. And obviously, the location of the poem is important temporally speaking, it is right after the First World War 1922 was the date of publication of this poem, which is like you know 4 years after the World War ended, 3 years actually that the World War ended.

And the entire memory the trauma of the war is still very much there in this particular poem. It just comes up with some very superficial references, there is a there is a dialogue between two sort of quote unquote working class women, who were talking about their husbands coming back from the war. And the husbands are obviously bruised wounded soldiers. And it's the only time that the war is actually mentioned in the poem, but the reference to war is very tangentially and very, very complexly done, this is a very complex form of representation that it is being presented over here in *The Waste Land*.

Now, the war is a very spectral presence in most Modernist works for instance. If you take a look at *Mrs. Dalloway*, which is entirely about the war, you know it is a text which we will do in due course by Virginia Woolf, which is essentially about a PTSD victim, a person, a soldier coming back from the war and finding it difficult to acclimatize or reintegrate in a civilian space all right, the civilian space of you know a post-war metropolis. And now even there the war is not really directly mentioned, there is a very oblique references to war which actually make it more sinister, which make it more spectral in quality, more chilling in quality.

So, there is no graphic representation of the war, there is no graphic description of the war as such, but even the way it is obliquely mentioned the oblique references to war

actually make it more chilling, make it more clinical, in terms of being a spectral presence ok. So, that is something which we find even in Eliot's early poetries especially in *The Waste Land*, where you know those references come up in a very creepy and sinister way which is sort of subtly presented in a very subterranean sense, subliminal sense, never really foregrounded.

But just because of that is something which we can never get you know rid of is always there staring at you from some spectral position ok, so that is something which we will be interested in and that is something which we will pay some attention to as we move on in this poem.

Now, for practical purposes because we are dealing with this poem in details, we will be focusing on certain issues more heavily than the other issues. And that focus is important for the purposes of examination, for purposes of this particular course on modernist fiction. And one of the very, very key things that we will spend some time on is the representation of politics right. So, how is, how are emotions represented, how is trauma represented for instance, how is consciousness represented. Right, so these are things these are issues which we have seen right from Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and which is essentially one of the first modernist works in fiction.

So, I will start with *Heart of Darkness* when we look at Western European modernism. Now, that degree of horror and the inability to narrate the horror, to narrate the trauma is something which you find in *Waste Land* as well, there is a lot of it is a very traumatophilic city. It is a city which consumes trauma all the time, and that is something which we see in *Mrs. Dalloway*, trauma becomes a norm. So, the entire idea of staying in shock, staying in shudder, constant shudder, that becomes a norm in *Waste Land*, and that norm is something which is dramatized ok.

Now, the very first section which is entitled *The Burial of the Dead*, you know this is obviously about huge populations of dead people, and how they are buried. Now, obviously, this has a Christian allusion, *The Burial of the Dead*, it has Dantesque allusions, and the references of Dante throughout the poem, but more topically this is also an allusion to the dead soldiers of the First World War, who came in right.

And like I said the war is never really mentioned except in one particular passage, but throughout the poem we know that given the historical timing in which it was produced

this particular poem, it is very much a war poem, it is very much poem about the war from the war, post war, it is about a post war metropolis and these coping mechanisms and the failure in such coping mechanisms rather how does the metropolis cope, and how does it actually fail to cope, and this failure to cope becomes very important human condition in this particular poem.

So, let us take a look at the opening section of the Waste Land from the first section which is entitled the Burial of the Dead. So, and this should be on your screen, and that is how the poem opens. April is the cruelest month, breeding lilacs out of the dead land, mixing memory and desire stirring dull roots with spring rain, winter kept us warm, covering Earth in forgetful snow, feeding a little life with dried tubers. Summer surprised us, coming over the Starnbergersee, where a shower of rain, we stopped in the colonnade and went on in sunlight into the Hofgarten, and drank coffee, and talked for an hour. Bin gar keine Russin, stamm, aus Litauen, echt deutsch.

And when we were children, staying at the arch-duke's, my cousin's, he took me out on a sled, and I was frightened. He said Marie, Marie hold on tight. And down we went in the mountains, there you feel free. I read much of the night and go south in the winter. Now, you find that, there is a very interesting narrative, the series of narrative leaps in the very opening section. So, there is this unnamed speaker, who is presented, who presents this particular section, and is presumably focalized through that speaker's eye. And we can presume the speaker is a woman called Marie, and then she is narrating some experience which happened to him, happened to her when she was a child.

And you find that this particular experience is actually quite dark, it could be an experience of sexual exploitation, it could be an experience of sexual violence which is never really spelt out, but you know there is a series of very, very coded, covert communication which are being represented, which are being conveyed to us, you know which may mean some very dark and sinister things.

Now, the very opening of April being the cruelest month right, it is something which breeze lilacs over the dead land, and that image of lilacs coming out of the dead land becomes interesting, because the land is dead. So, entire landscape becomes one of deadness, becomes one of complete stillness and infertility. However, you know from this infertile dead land, we have lilacs coming out. So, it is almost like a you know cactus

like quality, there is almost like a cancer like quality about this kind of regeneration, it is not really a regeneration in the spiritual sense, it is something which has been produced out of a dead land out of a dead tumor existence, a tumorous existence which actually makes this actually quite sinister and clinical in quality. These lilacs coming out of dead land.

Now, immediately after this, you find there is a series of opposites which are mixed together mixing memory and desire stirring dull roots with spring rain. So, memory and desire, dull roots and spring rain, so these are apparent contradictions and these have come together, these come together to create a very ambivalent situation, a very ambivalent attitude which is being described over here. And then that ambivalence continues when the speaker says winter kept us warm, covering earth and the forgetful snow.

So, we begin to realize that the warm over here does not necessarily mean the warmth in weather conditions. So, warm can also been, also be used to mean an existential warmth or lack of coldness, the lack of deadness, why because the earth in winter is covered in forgetful snow.

So, snow breeds oblivion, snow breeds amnesia to a certain extent. And that we can say we can hazard a guess that given that this is a post war poem, this snow that comes it fills in and covers all the graveyards, it covers all the dead soldiers and dead people's you know graves. So, we do not quite see them when everything gets snow filled and everything gets snow covered, then what happens is you know that produces that generates amnesia, that generates oblivion in a very you know natural material way.

And that material production of oblivion through snow becomes important, because again what we see here there is something which we have already seen in Preludes, and that is how material markers and abstract affect they come together to produce very complex cognitive conditions which is something which we saw even in Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness ok.

And now we cut into a very German setting which is described to us. Now, what is important for us to understand that when we have Germans or Russians coming together, it is actually European condition which has been described over here in great details.


Summer surprised us, coming over the Starnbergersee you know and went on, in sunlight, with the shower of a rain we stopped in the colonnade and went on in sunlight, into the Hofgarten, and drank coffee and talked for an hour. And then there is a reference to whether we can speak Russian or whether we are German. And when we are children staying at the arch dukes. So, again there is a reference of the arch dukes, it is about very European wealthy white European privilege which is being pointed at.

But immediately after that we have this very interesting image, a very interesting implication a very interesting hint, an insinuation of sexual exploitation or sexual fall perhaps. My cousins, he took me out on a sled and I was frightened, and he says Marie, Marie hold on tight and down we went. So, again the whole idea of going out with a cousin on a sled and holding onto him tight, and I was frightened, and I was frightened, he said Marie, Marie hold on tight and down we went.

So, again this whole downward you know I mean downward plummet, downward fall is something which can also be seen as a fall, as the sexual fall or moral fall, as something which happened many years ago for the speaker when she was a child. And this whole idea of going out with a cousin and then falling in the mountains is very interestingly depicted it's very covert as you can see.

In the mountains, and down we went, in the mountains, there you feel free I read much at the night and go south in the winter right. So, again the whole idea of reading at night and going south in the winter very European bourgeois privileged activities, right. So, the demography over here in this particular section is a very white privileged demography. So, people who can read for leisure, people who can go to south for leisure when things go with cold and freezing, they can go south for warmer conditions ok.

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What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,
You cannot say, or guess, for you know only
A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,
And the dry stone no sound of water. Only
There is shadow under this red rock,
(Come in under the shadow of this red rock),
And I will show you something different from either
Your shadow at morning striding behind you
Or your shadow at evening rising to meet you;
I will show you fear in a handful of dust.

*Frisch weht der Wind
Der Heimat zu
Mein Irisch Kind,
Wo weilest du?*

"You gave me hyacinths first a year ago;
"They called me the hyacinth girl."
—Yet when we came back, late, from the Hyacinth garden,
My voice was like the first of stars, clear and quick as a star,

Now, immediately after that, we have the image of again deadness growing right. And this image is something which keeps coming up in the Waste Land that is like a production of death right. So, growth in Waste Land or fertility in Waste Land is not really about regeneration, it is not really about something which grows after death right. So, it is not really a posthumous, not really a post death phenomenon.

Well, what happens over here is actually more complex, and more sinister, and more dark it is actually quite dark in a sense that we see the production of deadness, it is deadness as an activity is happening over here. So, you know branches are growing out of rubbish, so you know things are growing out of dead lands, lilacs are growing out of dead lands. So, again that those things actually become markers not of regeneration, but of posthumous reproduction which very much carry on, and retain the image of dead, retain the affect of dead, the entire emotion and entire experience of dead is being retained even in these cycles of birth which are happening after death ok.

So, this image of roots and branches growing out of stony rubbish becomes very important, and that that brings us to another very important issue in the Waste Land. Among other things this particular poem is also about the production of trash, the production of waste in European metropolis, and that is something which we find it's very dialogic, and very interestingly it opens up to different kinds of interpretations

especially in modern studies of the environment, modern studies of the ecosphere and also about urban waste right.

So, Waste Land this particular poem is among other things a poem about the production, excuse me, and consumption of waste right. And this production and consumption of waste is something which you find is a recursive marker of the metropolis. We have already seen this in the Preludes. If you remember the whole idea of the evening news papers, and you know the coffee cups, coffee mugs, and coffee paper cups, you know rustling in the in the road along with the dead leaves which very much become the part of metropolis, they all come together to create a sense of waste, they create a sense of trash which is something which you find here as well in the Waste Land.

So, the speaker goes on to say you know this is what you know is being said, what are the roots of that clutch, what branches grow out of this stony rubbish, son of man, you cannot say, or guess, for you know only A heap of broken images, where the sun beats. And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief, And the dry stone no sound of water. Only there is shadow under this red rock. Come in under the shadow of this read rock. And I will show you something different from either your shadow at morning striding behind you or your shadow in the evening rising to meet you; I will show your fear in a handful of dust right.

So, again look at the way in which the different abstract macro markers are sort of brought together with very micro material markers. And the final image is something which I just want to spend some time on and that is the whole idea of showing you fear in a handful of dust. So, handful of dust is something which we can contain as tangible, is something we can touch, it is a very tactile experience to collect a handful of dust and to feel it.

However, what the speaker says over here is interesting because you know what is being told to is really is that the entire idea of fear, the entire experience of fear can be contained and visualized and shown and represented in a handful of dust right. So, dust becomes very important. Again, this is metaphor of waste; this is a metaphor of post death a phenomenon which carries on the legacy – the experience of death right. So, there is no regeneration there is no redemption available post death, it is entirely about a continuation of the deadness of existence, whether it is in a natural landscape or the

urban landscape or the existential landscape. They all carry on and retain the image and experience of death right, so that is something which is a recursive marker.



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Or your shadow at evening rising to meet you;
I will show you fear in a handful of dust.
*Frisch weht der Wind
Der Heimat zu
Mein Irisch Kind,
Wo weilest du?*

"You gave me hyacinths first a year ago;
"They called me the hyacinth girl."
—Yet when we came back, late, from the Hyacinth garden,
Your arms full, and your hair wet, I could not
Speak, and my eyes failed, I was neither
Living nor dead, and I knew nothing,
Looking into the heart of light, the silence.
Oed' und leer das Meer.

Madame Sosostris, famous clairvoyante,
Had a bad cold, nevertheless
Is known to be the wisest woman in Europe,
With a wicked pack of cards. Here, said she,
Is your card, the drowned Phoenician Sailor,
(Those are pearls that were his eyes. Look!)
Here is Belladonna, the Lady of the Rocks,
The lady of situations.
Here is the man with three staves, and here the Wheel,
And here is the one-eyed merchant, and this card,
Which is blank, is something he carries on his back,
Which I am forbidden to see. I do not find
The Hanged Man. Fear death by water.
I see crowds of people, walking round in a ring.
Thank you. If you see dear Mrs. Equitone,
Tell her I bring the horoscope myself:
One must be so careful these days.

Unreal City,
Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
I had not thought death had undone so many.



Now, the next section over here, where this reference to the hyacinth girl, you gave me hyacinths first a year ago; They called me the hyacinth girl, it is a reference from hamlet as some of you would know this is Ophelia in hamlet, whose, who becomes a image of the drowning woman and the Ophelia obviously, the sinking woman the drowning woman. And if you remember the end of The Love Song of J Alfred Prufrock too had a sinking image a drowning image till human voices wake us and we drown right. So, the whole idea of drowning in time, the whole idea of drowning in existence is something which is an activity which keeps coming up in Eliot's early poetry. And drowning of course, over here becomes an agencyless activity, you lose your motor agency you lose your limb movement you lose your motor memory you just sink in a particular fluid, and that becomes a part of the drowning experience.

Your arms full, and your hair wet, I could not speak, and my eyes failed, I could not you know I was neither living nor dead, and I knew nothing looking at the heart of light, the silence right. Now, there is a quotation again from German. Now, before that just take a look at the whole idea of living between you know existence and nonexistence, it is a very liminal location between life and death this very limbo state, and again that reminds us of Dante in different circles of heaven and hell that are there in Dante's divine

comedy that is something that Eliot is constantly referring to over here right. So, the point is the whole idea of being stuck between life and death unable to move between life and death is something which we see in this particular poem.

And that limbo state that liminality, is not really a productive liminality it's a claustrophobic liminality, it's a position, it's a condition where the human beings cannot move, there is no movement available, there is no motor movement available right and that something which we find in Eliot's early poetry as well. This lack of this, this inertia this lack of mobility, there is lack of agency which consumes you in the level of motor movement, it consumes you at the level of the body right, you see, your body cannot move your limbs cannot move right.

So, that becomes a very a very metabolic condition, it becomes a very embodied condition right. So, it captures you it arrests your movement of the body ok, and that that being arrested it obviously, becomes part of the stagnation, part of the spiritual stagnation which is entirely what the Waste Land is about ok.

And now you find the whole idea of the Clairvoyante, someone who can use tarot cards for instance, and take a look at the future. And again, this whole idea of someone looking at the future someone who knows the time, someone who can sort of sit back and tell you what is going to happen to you and may not speak, and may not actually tell you despite knowing what is going to happen to you. So, you find that such figures have appeared even in the Heart of Darkness, by Joseph Conrad, so for instance if you remember the novel before Kurtz goes out you know before Kurtz goes to the you know the Belgian office.

He sees not Kurtz, Marlow he sees three women knitting wool and they too have a prophetic presence in that particular scene to seem to know what is about to befall Marlow, they seem to know what is about to happen to him, but they would not deign to speak right.

Now, Madame Sosostris over here becomes an important figure because you know she is a clairvoyante, she is someone who plays at tarot cards and tell you about the future, and that is what he what she is about to say. Madame Sosostris, famous clairvoyante, had a bad cold, nevertheless is known to be the wisest woman in Europe. So, again look at the idea of the cold about cold is an image of congestion right. So, congestion, stagnation

something which interrupts your movement, interrupts your free movement, right, and that lack of free movement which happens due to congestion, which happens due to production of waste, is something which we find coming back again and again in Eliot's early poetry especially here in the Waste Land.

And she is known to be the wisest woman in Europe, with a wicked pack of cards. Here, she, said she, is your card, the drowned Phoenician sailor. Those are pearls that were his eyes. Look, here is Belladonna, the Lady of the Rocks, the lady of situations. Here is a man with three staves and here the Wheel, and here the one-eyed merchant, and this card, which is blank, is something he carries on his back, which I am forbidden to say.


I do not find The Hanged Man. Fear death by water. I see crowds of people walking round in a ring. Thank you. If you see this Dear Mrs. Equitone, tell her I bring the horoscope myself; one must be so careful these days. Now, this sort of a gypsy presence in the Waste Land is important, because Madame Sosostris is obviously, you know someone who is getting more and more prominence in this particular cultural setting. And then the reference to different sets of things, you know pearls that were his eyes so references to you know all kinds of literary texts, the references to Spenser, the references to you know Shakespeare, the references to the Wheel of fortune.

But what is important for us is over here to find the different kinds of cards which are being mentioned, the Hanged Man card, which is immediately followed by the warning against water, fear death by water, fear drowning right. So, again the whole image of drowning in a certain kind of experience, the whole image of drowning and being bogged down by water is something which comes up in this particular poem.


And then the reference to the crowds of people walking round in a ring right, so the crowds to be walking in a ring indicates no forward movement indicates, no mobility in the in a proper sense of the term, it actually indicates stagnation. There is there is a massive crowd of people, but all they do is walk around in a ring there is no forward movement, there is no mobility as such. And of course, the references of Mrs. Equitone which is very allegorical and symbolic term, a symbolic name, and then the speaker is said to convey to Mrs. Equitone that you know Mrs. Sosostris Madame Sosostris would bring the horoscope himself herself right. So, one must be so careful these days.

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Unreal City,
Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
I had not thought death had undone so many.
Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled,



And each man fixed his eyes before his feet,
Flowed up the hill and down King William Street,
To where Saint Mary Woolnoth kept the hours
With a dead sound on the final stroke of nine.
There I saw one I knew, and stopped him, crying: 'Stetson!
'You who were with me in the ships at Mylae!
'That corpse you planted last year in your garden,
'Has it begun to sprout? Will it bloom this year?
'Or has the sudden frost disturbed its bed?
'Oh keep the Dog far hence, that's friend to men,
'Or with his nails he'll dig it up again!
'You! hypocrite lecteur!—mon semblable,—mon frère!



Now, and the last section of this particular opening is you have an image of a very cinematic image of an unreal city. So, again it is a long shot of an unreal city which is being consumed by fog right. So, fog becomes important again, a symbol of stagnation, a symbol of lack of movement, a symbol of lack of clarity that becomes something of an opacity which is consuming the metropolis, everything is opaque, every person is opaque there is no transparency available.

So, the fog in this particular scene becomes a very symbolic presence, a very symbolic condition, and obviously, it acts as a spectrality of the setting everything becomes more spectral in a foggy condition, everything becomes more almost supernatural, quasi supernatural at least in a foggy condition.

But the point that we should spend some time with at the beginning is the whole idea of unreal city, it is not really a real city right. So, it is something which is unreal, it is something which is experienced even as an unreal city. We cannot connect to it at the human level in a real sense. There is no cognitive connect, there is always a cognitive dissonance which has been produced over here and that cognitive dissonance is important for us to unpack.

Because if you take look at the image following after that and following right after that you know scene of unreal city under the brown fog of a winter dawn. So, the winter dawn is producing a brown fog, and everything looks very unreal and spectral in that

kind of a setting you know it is almost like hallucinatory, you know it is like hallucination in the morning. And you cannot see through the hallucination, everything is hallucinatory and that impairs your sight you know your sense of sight your sense of looking your sense of understanding cognitive understanding gets more and more interrupted with that translucence, with that fog that has been created by the winter dawn.


And then of course, the London Bridge has been referred to a crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many, I had not thought death had undone so many. And this is an important image, because it is also a reminder of this very Dantesque crowd of death people waiting to get into heaven or hell, waiting in the ring – the limbo ring to move into this destined space in the end. So, these are people who are not really fully dead, not really free, despite being dead right.

And look at the way in which how Eliot uses a Dante reference of this limbo people, people moving people waiting to move to the dead land you know somewhere stuck between life and death, that mythical image is being used over here, and topicalized, and contextualized, and recontextualized and this is what I mean by the mythic method used by Eliot over here. So, that Dante image of people who are not fully dead, but you know waiting to be dead waiting to go on to the Nether land or the dead land the underworld right. And liminally waiting there that image is used over here to talk about the Londoners, because these are Londoners these are survivors and mourners, so that they are not really dead physically, but they are dead existentially. So, they are waiting to die.

So, we have this entire city of mourners and survivors who are just waiting to die. No one is looking forward to living a full life; everyone is waiting to die and that that informs that invests a liminality and a stagnation in this particular demography. So, the demography in this particular section is about Londoners waiting to die. So, the only thing they looking forward to is death and so in the whole idea of being undone by death becomes important, because physically metabolically these people are living, they are existing. But they have been undone by dead, there has been such a massive consumption of death such a massive consumption, consumption of trauma that they have been deadened and numbed.

And this numbness becomes a very important metropolitan affect right. It is just an entire metropolis becomes a product production of numbness right that is something which you find even in Mrs. Dalloway by Virginia Woolf. Numbness becomes a chief cognitive and existential condition that characterizes and connects all the people, all the mourners and survivors in the metropolis ok. Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled. So, again this is a sense of despair and sighs are being exhaled which are short and infrequent. And each man fix his eyes before his feet. Flowed up the hill and down King William Street, to where Saint Mary Woolnoth kept the hours with a dead sound on the final stroke of nine.


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And each man fixed his eyes before his feet,
 Flowed up the hill and down King William Street,
 To where Saint Mary Woolnoth kept the hours
 With a dead sound on the final stroke of nine.
 There I saw one I knew, and stopped him, crying: "Stetson!
 "You who were with me in the ships at Mylae!
 "That corpse you planted last year in your garden,
 "Has it begun to sprout? Will it bloom this year?
 "Or has the sudden frost disturbed its bed?
 "Oh keep the Dog far hence, that's friend to men,
 "Or with his nails he'll dig it up again!
 "You! hypocrite lecteur!—mon semblable,—mon frère!"

II. A Game of Chess

The Chair she sat in, like a burnished throne,
 Glowed on the marble, where the glass
 Held up by standards wrought with fruited vines
 From which a golden Cupidon peeped out
 (Another hid his eyes behind his wino)



So, each man is looking at his feet and walking down the King William Street, where the Saint Mary Woolnoth you know has a dead sound on the final stroke of nine. So, church bell which is ringing, but it sounds like death knell right. So, every church bell sounds like a death knell over here, everything is a reminder of the imminent death right. So, every person's living over here, they are not really living that is existing and waiting to die.

Now, the final image in this particular section is interesting, it is an image from Baudelaire in the Flowers of Evil *Fleurs du mal*, but the image of one person recognizing another person, Stetson, you who were with me in the ships of Mylae. So, the ships of Mylae or the battle of Mylae is a mythical battle right, it was fought many it is like a

prehistoric battle. But look at the way in which the real war is being referred to through a mythic method and that becomes important that is what I mean by mythic method. It is a series of oblique references which are being used over here. And the oblique quality is interesting because that invests a degree of translucence in representation of politics. It is not completely clear what is being referred to. There is a reference to the real mythical battle or is it a reference to the closer war that has just happened right. So, you know both are equally present and hence ambivalence, ambivalent ambivalence becomes with a very big productive process. The entire poem becomes a production of ambivalence, you know speaking level of narrative and representation.

And this image is interesting, one person recognizing other person Stetson that corpse you planted in last year in your garden, has it begun to sprout? Will it bloom this year? Or has the sudden frost disturbed its bed? So, again look at the way in which the corpse has been referred the corpse which has been planted in a garden. So, corpse becomes a vegetation, not just that, it is beginning to sprout, it is beginning to grow. So, again the growth over here, the growth of deadness, the bloom over here is a bloom of deadness. It is not a really a regenerative bloom, it's a bloom of the continuation of deadness the continuation of despair the continuation of annihilation.

So, every growth, every production over here is a production of waste, and the production in waste ok, and that is a very important point that I wanted to sort of spend some time with, and hence is the Waste Land. The entire landscape is a landscape of waste, it is a wasted landscape, it is an exhausted landscape, it is a traumatized landscape; it is an enervated and liquidated landscape right.

So, even the dead body over here, even the corpse over here that becomes a sole signifier of production. So, you can see how the dead body, the waste body, the waste human body that becomes an image which will sprout and bloom this year or how the sudden frost disturbed his bed ok.

Oh keep the Dog far hence, that is friend to men, or with his nails he will dig it up again. So, the references to Renaissance theatre, the Spanish tragedy, etcetera. You hypocrite lecteur – mon semblable – mon frere right. So, again there is a reference to Baudelaire over here, it is my friend you know my identical person you hypocrite. So, you know this reference to a person, this reference to another person you recognize and addresses as a

friend, but then that address also becomes a reminder, a painful reminder of a loss, of mourning, and of course of deadness. So, this dead body image over here is important, and I want to pay some attention to it, because the dead body becomes a vehicle a symbol of growth over here that that obviously means the entire ontology, the entire quality of growth is disturbed in Waste Land, because the only growth available is through deadness, is with deadness, and hence it becomes a more and more consolidated Waste Land.

So, every production over here becomes a production in waste, a production with waste right, so and that becomes more, more consolidated as the Waste Land. So, the land becomes more waste, the fertility becomes wasted, the landscape becomes wasted, and of course, the mindscape becomes wasted. So, if you take a look at the demography again people who are sighing, sighs short and infrequent, who are exhaled. So, everything everyone is sighing, there's a sigh of despair, it's a despairing demography, where everyone is sighing, everyone is despairing, everyone is mourning, everyone is just counting the clock to die.

There is a series, there is a crowd of mourners and survivors who are similar to the image in Dante's divine comedy of people waiting to die, people waiting to be ported and shipped over to the Netherland. They are not completely dead, but they are not alive either, so that liminal condition is something which has been represented over here in a very painful series of painful images ok.

So, I will stop with this point today, we end it with the first section. And in the next section, we move on to the game of chess which has lots of Spenserian you know references of the fairy queen and Edmund Spenser, which we will unpack in some details in the next lecture.

Thank you for your attention.