

Twentieth-Century Fiction
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Lecture – 22
The Wasteland – Part 3

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You are a proper fool, I said.
Well, if Albert won't leave you alone, there it is, I said.
What you get married for if you don't want children?
HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME
Well, that Sunday Albert was home, they had a hot gammon.
And they asked me in to dinner, to get the beauty of it hot '—
HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME
HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME
Goonight Bill, Goonight Lou, Goonight May, Goonight, 170
Ta ta, Goonight, Goonight.
Good night, ladies, good night, sweet ladies, good night, good night.

III. The Fire Sermon

The river's tent is broken: the last fingers of leaf
Clutch and sink into the wet bank. The wind
Crosses the brown land, unheard. The nymphs are departed.
Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song.
The river bears no empty bottles, sandwich papers,
Silk handkerchiefs, cardboard boxes, cigarette ends
Or other testimony of summer nights. The nymphs are departed.
And their friends, the loitering heirs of city directors; 180
Departed, have left no addresses.

By the waters of Leman I sat down and wept ...
Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song,
Sweet Thames, run softly, for I speak not loud or long.
But at my back in a cold blast I hear
The rattle of the bones, and chuckle spread from ear to ear.
A rat crept softly through the vegetation



So, hello and welcome to this NPTEL course entitled Twentieth Century Fiction. We were looking at T S Eliot's poem the Waste Land and in this section, this lecture we will begin with the third section of the poem which is entitled The Fire Sermon. Now, it is also about human relationships like last time you saw how the section before this was entirely about the failing human relationships or failing human communication, the collapse and the crisis of communication and how that spills over into other forms of collapses and other forms of crisis, crisis in sexual relationships crisis in intimacy etcetera.

And also, how even human body and human relationships they get degenerated into waste and trash right. So, the production of waste and trash is something which we see as a recursive phenomenon in the Waste Land. The only thing that grows is rubbish. The only thing that grows is waste. The only thing that grows is deadness. So, the only production possible or the only possible production in this particular landscape is production of waste, the production of deadness etcetera.

So, the very first section we found how the image of the corpse planted inside the soil and how that is sort of growing into something beginning to sprout as that image itself was a carrier, was sort of conveyer of the fact that you know fertility over here is not about regeneration or reproduction does not necessary entail regeneration in Waste Land. So, and that's the whole title of the poem that is the biggest issue in this poem biggest theme in the poem the production and consumption of waste.

Now, the third section the Fire Sermon it continues with that production and consumption of waste in terms of how human relationships, sexual relationships they keep degenerating into things which are essentially mechanistic in quality essentially trash like in quality. And also take a look at the natural landscape over here. I mean this actually becomes the entire city the entire river, river Thames over here. It becomes a reservoir of rubbish, a reservoir of waste and trash and garbage right. So, garbage waste trash these things are mentioned over and over again etcetera.

So, you know if you take a look at the opening section the Fire Sermon and this should be on your screen where the speaker is saying the river's tent is broken the last fingers of leaf clutch and sink into the wet bank. The wind crosses the brown land unheard. The nymphs are departed sweet Thames run softly till I end my song the river bears no empty bottles, sandwich papers, silk handkerchiefs, cardboard boxes, cigarette ends or other testimony of summer nights. The nymphs are departed and the friends the loitering heirs of city directors departed have left no addresses.

Now, it is an excellent example of the combination of the mythic and the contemporary right. So, if you take a look at the markers over here. Empty bottle, sandwich paper, silk handkerchiefs, cardboard boxes, cigarette ends. These are contemporary markers of you know entertainment and leisure etcetera picnic human picnic, human entertainment, human leisure etcetera. So, all these activities all these markers are reflective of certain kinds of activities right. So, testimony of summer nights, human enjoyment.

Now, the city does not have any of these things anymore which is to say that there is no marker there is no residual marker of human fun, of human happiness left in this particular river everything has come to an end. The nymphs are departed. So, the nymphs of a river, the nymphs of a sea are traditionally mythical figures of entertainment mythical figures, the sirens who would sing songs, who would produce music from water

bodies you saw that figure, we saw it and in the ending of the Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock where there was an image of mermaid singing to the speaker. So, again the mermaids over there they represented that mythical figure the mythical music coming out of water bodies.

Now, the nymphs are departed. Now look at the way in which the nymphs are recontextualized in this modern setting. So who are the nymphs? The nymphs are departed and the friends their loitering heirs of city directors. So, the city directors are the London directors, the directors of big companies in the city and the heirs of those companies, the heirs of those directors, the children may be the sons and the daughters the nymphs are the friends of those people. So, again there is a very negative connotation about nymphs over here. So, these may be people these may be women who are mistresses of certain kind of people privileged people and they have departed right.

So, the river Thames becomes a body of degeneration over here, body of garbage, a body of trash, body of waste over here and waste of course, is not just a physical phenomenon in the Waste Land. A waste also becomes an affective phenomenon *a f f e c t i v e* affective. Affective phenomenon, it is a mood. It is a certain kind of sentiment. The sentiment of waste, the sentiment of rubbish that becomes the primary sentiment, the primary affect in this particular poem.

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Dragging its slimy belly on the bank
While I was fishing in the dull canal
On a winter evening round behind the gashouse190
Musing upon the king my brother's wreck
And on the king my father's death before him.
White bodies naked on the low damp ground
And bones cast in a little low dry garret,
Rattled by the rat's foot only, year to year.
But at my back from time to time I hear
The sound of horns and motors, which shall bring
Sweeney to Mrs. Porter in the spring.
O the moon shone bright on Mrs. Porter
And on her daughter200
They wash their feet in soda water
Et O ces voix d'enfants, chantant dans la coupole!

Twit twit twit
Jug jug jug jug jug jug
So rudely forc'd.
Tereu

Unreal City
Under the brown fog of a winter noon
Mr. Eugenides, the Smyrna merchant
Unshaven, with a pocket full of currants210
C.i.f. London: documents at sight,
Asked me in demotic French
To luncheon at the Cannon Street Hotel
Followed by a weekend at the Metropole.

At the violet hour, when the eyes and back
Turn upward from the desk, when the human engine waits
Like a taxi throbbing waiting,



Now, if you just go back and keep reading the section there is reference again made to Philomel. And if you remember philomel was mentioned in the previous section where again you know the whole idea of Philomel being a voiceless woman. A woman whose body has been brutalized sexually and you know she becomes the figure of someone who has been victimized and brutalized and rendered agency-less right. So, the agency-less-ness of the female figure is something which is represented by the mythical character of Philomel right.

So, she represents sexual violence. She represents the you know voice-less-ness etcetera and she becomes a very potent figure in this particular poem as well because she represents the condition of modernity, the condition of the women in modernity more and more specifically. And we find in this particular section there is an image of a woman, there is a figure of a woman a character of a woman who again is very voiceless and whose body again is brutalized and sexually attacked by a male by a predatory male who just comes and attacks her and you know causes violence to her sexually and then departs immediately after.

So, the reference to Philomel and Tereus Tereus. Sorry, the king who violated her is mentioned over here twit twit twit jug jug jug jug jug. So, rudely forced Tereus right. So, Philomel was converted into a bird, so these sounds are onomatopoeic descriptions of bird sounds. So, this is only this is the only thing that she can speak, she can say, she can communicate through bird sounds which are obviously un-understandable. No one can understand what she is saying and again this becomes a very important theme in Waste Land.

The un-understandability. So, no one can understand what is being said. So, what you say, what you articulate is never understood and this un-understood condition or the un-understandability in human voices over here becomes a very important theme in the Waste Land and very quickly we will find that soon after this you will find the image of Tiresias who will come in. Now, Tiresias is a classical prophet figure. Now Tiresias is an androgynous figure. He has male as well as female features right. So, his body becomes a combination of both features and then he is essentially the blind prophet. So, he is blind and also the other thing about Tiresias is nothing that he will say will be believed. So, he is a prophet, but he is not a powerful prophet. He is someone who can see through situations. He is someone who can has an intuition and knowledge of things what will

come now, what will come after, but he will never be able to make himself understood and that is a very important phenomenon over here ok.

So, you know we have different figures crisscrossing each other mythical figures, contemporary figures, topical figures, historical figures. They all come in together to create a sense of degeneration an affective degeneration which is what this poem is all about. Again, we cut back into the image of an unreal city, a cinematic image, a panoramic cinema shot of London unreal city under the brown fog of a winter noon. So, again the brown fog setting and slowly, it's like a slow-motion camera I was looking at the city, a panoramic city and the fog becomes obviously, a very symbolic presence in the city. It becomes an image of spectrality. It carries an image of claustrophobia. It carries an image of non-clarity etcetera.

So, non-clarity, spectrality, claustrophobia are all represented in this image of the fog setting in, or the experience of seeing the fog setting in slowly in an unreal city. So, an unreality of London is obviously part of the human disconnect that inhabitants have over here. No one can connect to anyone else over here. Every connection is superficial. Every connection is mechanistic. Every connection is degenerative in quality right and that is something which the Waste Land keeps harping on over and over again.

Mister Eugenides Smyrnan Merchant unshaven with a pocketful of currants C F London documents of sight asked me in demotic French to luncheon at the Cannon street hotel followed by a weekend at the Metropole. So, again if you take a look at these images a lunch at the cannon street hotel followed by a weekend at the Metropole. So, the merchant coming and asking someone out for a lunch and a followed by weekend. So obviously, these are indicative of very degenerative sexual activities about human relationships which are very clandestine in quality very secretive in quality and obviously, very negative in quality the way it is represented. So, quick lunch at a Seedy hotel followed by a weekend at the Metropole which is obviously, about having illicit sex and that is something which keeps coming up again and again in the Waste Land.

So, unshaven a pocketful of currants. Again markers of degeneration markers of unhealthiness.

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Unshaven, with a pocket full of currants²¹⁰
C.I.F. London; documents at sight,
Asked me in demotic French
To luncheon at the Cannon Street Hotel
Followed by a weekend at the Metropole.

At the violet hour, when the eyes and back
Turn upward from the desk; when the human engine waits
Like a taxi throbbing waiting,
I Tiresias, though blind, throbbing between two lives,
Old man with wrinkled female breasts, can see
At the violet hour, the evening hour that strives²²⁰
Homeward, and brings the sailor home from sea,
The typist home at teatime, clears her breakfast, lights
Her stove, and lays out food in tins.
Out of the window perilously spread
Her drying combinations touched by the sun's last rays,
On the divan are piled (at night her bed)
Stockings, slippers, camisoles, and stays.
I Tiresias, old man with wrinkled dugs
Perceived the scene, and foretold the rest:—
I too awaited the expected guest.²³⁰
He, the young man carbuncular, arrives,
A small house agent's clerk, with one bold stare,
One of the low on whom assurance sits
As a silk hat on a Bradford millionaire.
The time is now propitious, as he guesses,
The meal is ended, she is bored and tired,
Endeavours to engage her in caresses
Which still are unreproved, if undesired.
Flushed and decided, he assaults at once;
Exploring hands encounter no defence;²⁴⁰
His vanity requires no response.



So, this is entirely about unhealthiness. There is no health or harmony in the human relationships in the Waste Land and that spills over into spiritual, sexual, communicative relationships as well. And then we have this whole idea of Tiresias coming in as a mythical figure a mythical prophet and again look at the way in which the mythical figure and the machinic figure are combined together. So the mythical and the machinic combine together and to create a very interesting entanglement of confusion and degeneration in the Waste Land.

And I have an article I have a published article on this which I am happy to upload in the portal which is entirely about how the humans are mechanized and how the machines are humanized in the Waste Land and how that combination, how that transition of humans into machines mythical figures into mechanistic figures. How that actually underlines the degenerative quality of human relationships in the Waste Land which is what this poem is all about ok.

So, at the violet hour when the eyes are eyes and back turn upward from the desk. So, again the eyes nad the back are turning upward from the desk at the violet hour the twilight hour though it is coming to an end. That is the only time when the eyes leave the desk when the back leaves the desk which is to say for the entirety of the day the eyes and the back are stuck to the desk in a very mechanistic kind of existence. So, it is not really a productive existence. You are working, but not being productive because you

know the work that you do is alienating you further from any existential meaningful understanding of life right. So, this is a classic example of alienation followed by reification, commodification. The human body is converted to commodity and that commodification the process of commodification is generating the sense of alienation a loneliness. So, this is example of metropolitan alienation. In a city you feel most alienated. In a city it feels you feel most alienated inside a crowd. So, the entire idea of the unreal city surrounded by a full of crowds of people who are fogs over them that becomes example of alienation that becomes a very graphic you know representation of alienation in a metropolis.

So, at the violet hour when the eyes and back turn upward from the desk, when the human engine waits like a taxi throbbing waiting. So, again look at the way in which the human engine, the human body is considered a classified, is described as an engine like a taxi throbbing and waiting. So, a taxi waiting for to pick up people it is like a throbbing machine; it is something which is waiting it is not really moving, it is pulsating and it is throbbing and a human body is described as a similar kind of machine. So, again look at the way in which the human body the organic body is described as a mechanistic thing as a machinic thing as a machinic entity. So, this is what I mean when I just said that the humans are machinized or mechanized in a Waste Land. The machines are humanized in a Waste Land. So, there is an example of dehumanization.

I, Tiresias though blind throbbing between two lives old man with wrinkled female breasts can see at the violet hour the evening hour that strives homeward and brings the sailor home from sea. So, again the figure of Tiresias comes in and if you take a look at the scholarship in Waste Land we find that Elliott had mentioned that Tiresias is a seeing eye in the poem. So, he is the one he is one he is a presence he is a figure through which the entire activities of Waste Land are focalized. In an example and the meaning of focalization so focalization is a camera term a visual term through which for instance the story unfolds through a certain consciousness through a certain person's eyes. The story is told to you through a certain person's eyes and that process of mediating the story through a certain person's eyes is called focalization. You are focusing on a particular person and the entire event the entire activity, all the images unfolding from that position or perspective from that perspective or position. So, that is example of focalization.

So, Tiresias is a focalized figure over here. Whatever happens to Waste Land this particular poem, whatever images are generated and visualized and represented take place through the focus of Tiresias. Now, obviously there is an irony over here because Tiresias as we know physically is a blind prophet. So, we have a very interesting entanglement over here, between blindness and insight. So, because he is a prophet he has insight, he has a special privileged understanding of knowledge, a privileged glimpse, a privileged intuition and privileged insight and a knowledge in life, but also because he is blind he is physically unable to see us right. So, this is the price he has to pay for insight blindness.

So, blindness is a price he has to pay for insight and of course, he is an androgynous figure which is to say he is his male as well as female. So he is always throbbing between two lives. And again, look at the way in which the mythical figure throbbing between two lives is compared to a taxi throbbing and waiting. So, something really banal something very mundane something very you know topical it is being compared to something very mythical and mystical.

So, this combination of the mundane and the mystical, the mundane and the mythical is something which happens throughout the Waste Land which makes the poem very sort of mythic in quality. It is also very contemporary in quality. So, Tiresias speaks on a first-person voice over here and he says I Tiresias though blind I can see the violet hour the twilight hour when a evening when the sailor comes home from sea. So, what do I see now I see the typist coming at tea time.

So, again we cut back into London we cut back in the present time present contemporary London where the typist comes back home after a hard day's work. The typist home at teatime clears her breakfast lights her stove and lays out food in tins. So, again look at the markers very important. So, the typist comes home at teatime and it is the only time that she can clear her breakfast which is to say that she had left home immediately after breakfast and she departed home and she had been outside all the day and now she has the time finally, to clear her breakfast.

Now, what is she having she is having food in tins. So, tin food not homemade food, not organic food, not something that she has homegrown or homemade and healthy. So, tin food essentially and symbolically represents unhealthy food. Something that is fast and

consumed almost contaminated and perhaps toxic in quality something which is preserved artificially right. And this artificial preservation of food is something which is being hinted at over here in this tin food that she is having.

Out of the window perilously spread her drying combinations touched by the sun's last rays. So, the dying sun is touching her combinations you know, the dresses outside. On the divan are piled at night her bed stockings, slippers, camisoles and stays. I Tiresias old man with wrinkled dugs perceived the scene and foretold the rest. So, I can perceive the scene with my wrinkled breasts with my blindness and because I am a prophet I can foretell, I can prophesize what is going to happen and yet I am an impotent prophet because I cannot articulate, no one was going to believe me and I cannot see anything for physical reality right.

I too awaited the expected guests. So, we have a guest coming in and again this will be an example of a very unhealthy and degenerative sexual relationship. Something which is being hinted at even before at this example of this Mister Eugenides coming in and asking a human figure presumably the speaker to have lunch with him at the Cannon street hotel a every Seedy hotel and then disappear for a weekend at the Metropole to have amorous activities which are clandestine in quality right not healthy or life giving and quality ok.

So, the expected guest is coming and we are about to see again an example of a very decadent sexual activity a very decadent sexual scene. He, the young carbuncular, young man Carbuncular arrived. So, Carbuncular he has got a lot of carbuncles which is to say he has got a skin problem he has got a situation and a skin which is unhealthy in quality. It can come from indigestion. It can come out of a loss of appetite.

It can emerge out all kinds of different things where it is a symptom of unhealthiness, this is a symptom of degeneration this carbuncular condition of the young man. Here the young man Carbuncular arrives a small house agent's clerk who is he? He is a house agent's clerks. So, we have a typist, we have a clerk and they represent the modernity over here. They represent the modern man and the modern female in this Metropolis right.

So, the female is a clerk the female is a typist, sorry. And the man is a clerk and they come together to have some very quick sex essentially afterward she will disappear. A

small house agent's clerk with one bold stare one of the law on whom assurance sits as a silk hat on a Bradford millionaire. So, he is someone who carries the legal voice of insurance assurance etcetera. So he is a clerk. The time has now prepared us and as he guesses the meal is ended. She is bored and tired endeavours to engage her in caresses which are still, which still are unproved, unproved if undesired flushed and undecided flush and decided. He assaults at once exploring hands encounter no defense his vanity requires no response.

So, again look at the passive performance of sex over here. So, he assaults her, the word assault is important. It makes example of sexual violence and we come back to the image of Philomel over here. The woman the archetypal female figure who was violated by the man by the powerful man by the privileged man and she is helpless against this male sexual violence, this predatory male sexual violence which is something which was replayed in modern times in the image of the typist whose body is being attacked by the clerk.

And it is actually a very decadent and sad scene where the entire activity of sex has been described as a very mechanistic thing without any consent you know and this is just an attack and it is undesired and it just goes on as a passive thing which is a very dark reflection of modernity a very dark reflection of modern human relationships, modern human intimacy. Where there is a complete crisis in communication, there is no reciprocity, there is no dialogic equality and just an assault on a female body a very quick assault, a very quick gratification after which he leaves right and that is how the entire scene is played out over here.

His vanity requires no response. So, my published article in *Waste Land* has a title exploring hands encounter no defense. If you Google me up and you write this line exploring hands encounter no defense it will show up it was published in a journal called *Peer English* which is brought up by Leicester University UK. I am happy to upload it in that portal if you wish to read it which gives a very which deals with this particular scene essentially and it talks about how human relationships or how human sexual relationships degenerate in *Waste Land* to the extent everything becomes a machinic engagement. It is like a typewriter and a pen coming together.

So, the typist is essentially the typewriter and the clerk over here is just someone who is carrying out a very quick assault on the female body and after which she leaves.

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14 | OpenTopic | The Waste Land



And makes a welcome of indifference.
(And I Tiresias have foresuffered all
Enacted on this same divan or bed:
I who have sat by Thebes below the wall
And walked among the lowest of the dead.)
Bestows one final patronising kiss,
And gropes his way, finding the stairs unlit ...

She turns and looks a moment in the glass,
Hardly aware of her departed lover;250
Her brain allows one half-formed thought to pass:
"Well now that's done; and I'm glad it's over,"
When lovely woman stoops to folly and
Paces about her room again, alone,
She smooths her hair with automatic hand,
And puts a record on the gramophone.

"This music crept by me upon the waters"
And along the Strand, up Queen Victoria Street,
O City city, I can sometimes hear
Beside a public bar in Lower Thames Street,260
The pleasant whining of a mandoline
And a clatter and a chatter from within
Where fishmen lounge at noon: where the walls
Of Magnus Martyr hold
Inexplicable splendour of Ionian white and gold.

The river sweats
Oil and tar
The barges drift



And I Tiresias have foresuffered all enacted on this same divan or bed. I who have sat by Thebes below the wall and walked among the lowest of the dead bestows one final patronising kiss and gropes his way finding the stairs unlit. Again, the verbs are very interesting: assault, grope all these verbs are examples of you know predatory sexual behavior or sexual violence right. So, which don't necessarily have consent and very dark sinister activities. And also look at the way in which Tiresias who had been who had seen hell who had seen the mythical quality of hell the mythical landscape of hell.

Now, finds himself situated in this modern urban setting, modern urban decadent setting and he can see everything together. For him time is one continuum this mythical time, historical time, and contemporary time. So, every time all the different dimensions of time come together in Tiresias and you know he who had sat by the Thebes and now I am sitting in London in this little apartment, this really decadent claustrophobic apartment and seeing and there is very quick sex or sexual activity which does not have any love does not have any intimacy and obviously, reflects the degeneration of human relationships at a very dark sinister level. And if you come back and see the aftermath of this activity what happens as a fallout of this activity and that becomes even darker in quality and this is he she comes you know the focus comes back to the woman over here.

She turns and looks a moment in the glass. The lover has gone he had he had groped his way down the stairs again the word grope is a classic verb for predatory sexual activity just like assault is and before that there was this patronizing kiss. You know there is no love, there is complete act of lovelessness which has been described over here and after he goes away what happens to her.

She turns and looks a moment in the glass, hardly aware of a departed lover her brain allows one half formed thought to pass. Again very important the passivity is very important the inertia is very important. And if you remember if we go back to the preludes the poem that we did the image of the quote unquote fallen woman who had just suddenly had this glimpse of her life as an epiphanic moment flickering on the screen like a cinema image prior to that and even after that everything was very passive her body is very passive her awareness of her own body is very passive because she is constantly trampled by insistent feet if you remember the lines from Preludes and the act of being trampled upon you know, obviously, it means that you become a reservoir and receiver of violence at a very bodily level and that numbs you essentially.

So, if you constantly get more and more violence given to your body and it if you internalize violence as a woman a time comes when everything becomes half formed when your brain is unable to create a fully formed thought everything becomes a half formed thought and she allows her brain allows one half formed thought to pass. Again, look at the very machinic metaphors over here.

It is not a mind it is a brain, okay. Again, there is a very big difference as you would know. The brain is this neural organism this neural machine or just rather this neural net of combinations electrochemical combinations and that allows one half form thought to pass is like an electric circuit allowing a signal to pass. It's the same thing the same metaphor the same rhetoric is being used over here to describe the human mind which has been described as a neural net which is allowing a half formed electrochemical reaction to pass, okay. It's that it's that mechanistic in quality.

And hardly aware of her departed lover - this half awareness this half formed thought is and obviously these become reflections of a numbed existence the numbed modernity in the metropolis right. So, again we go back to Georg Simmel's seminal work on the Metropolis and mental life. Where I talked about the modern condition of modernity as a


neurotic condition as an example of neurosis and that's something which you find over here as well.

Well now that is done and I am glad it is over. When lovely woman stoops to folly and paces about the room again alone she smooths her hair with automatic hand and puts a record on the gramophone. Again, automatic hand is very important the mechanistic movement the mechanistic motor movement is very important. Even the motor movement is automatic in quality even the motor movement is mechanized in quality right and this mechanization of motor movement is a reflection of the numbness of modernity right. So, this is a numbed human condition where you do not really have a feeling.

So, the entire sentient human quality is being numbed away and all you can have is half formed thoughts and half awarenesses and automatic motor movements maneuvering with what is around you right. So, this is like a motor maneuver which is quite automatic in quality and that is that that automatism is an important thing over here. And this is what I mean when I say the human body, the human motor movement, the human limbs, the human awareness, the human consciousness everything is converted into a mechanistic existence by this Metropolis ok.

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Upentopic | The Waste Land | 15




Undid me. By Richmond I raised my knees
Supine on the floor of a narrow canoe."

"My feet are at Moorgate, and my heart
Under my feet. After the event
He wept. He promised 'a new start'.
I made no comment. What should I resent?"
"On Margate Sands.300
I can connect
Nothing with nothing.
The broken fingernails of dirty hands.
My people humble people who expect
Nothing."
la la

To Carthage then I came
Burning burning burning burning
O Lord Thou pluckest me out
O Lord Thou pluckest310
burning

Death by Water

Phlebas the Phoenician, a fortnight dead,
Forgot the cry of gulls, and the deep sea swell
And the profit and loss.
A current under sea
Picked his bones in whispers: As he rose and fell



So, and then we come back to the end of this poem at this particular section where the reference to Carthage; to Carthage then I come burning burning burning O Lord Thou

pluckest me out O Lord Thou pluckest burning. So, the reference over here is Saint Augustine, Saint Augustine's confessions which is this collection of his writings. Now the whole idea of burning away is an example of purgation which connects to the title of this particular section Fire Sermon which is essentially a message from the Buddha Gautam Buddha which is essentially about how to control bodily desires how to control your sexual desires and how to you know sublimate your sexual desires into something more substantial, something more mystical, something more spiritual.

And this connection between Buddha and Saint Augustine is important over here because you know we are looking at two different dimensions of philosophy one eastern philosophy represented by Buddha and we have western philosophy represented by Saint Augustine and the connection over here is very very important because in a Waste Land by the time the poem ends you will find that the poem ends with the reference to the Gita the Upanishad the Gita where there is a reference to shanti shanti shanti that is what the speaker says in the end.

So, this entire gaze towards eastern philosophy is important where you know we are looking at the way in which bodily desire sexual desires can be converted can be sublimated into something more redemptive in quality. So, this whole idea of burning burning burning is a reference to purgation reference to the burning flesh which is not essentially about the degenerative sexual desire which is getting burnt away. And then we move towards the lord, over here towards the spiritual existence which will sublimate you into a better existential level and this reference to Saint Augustine is important.

Because you know if you look at the historical Saint Augustine I mean he moved like Buddha for instance he moved into spirituality after an experience after an entire life of lust after an entire life of earthly pleasures and only after he was exhausted of all lively pleasures exhausted of all lusty pleasures he moved on to the spirituality just like Buddha did. So, Gautam Buddha if you remember he was a prince you know when he was born and he grew up in this entire life of lust and luxury and all kinds of earthly pleasures and only after he gets exhausted of it he gets enlightenment to move away from that earthly pleasure into something more spiritual something more sustainable right.

So, the entire movement from sexuality to spirituality is something which is represented over here through two different historical and mythical not mythical philosophical figures right. So, one the eastern philosophical figure of Gautam Buddha and a western one of saint Augustine and again what the poem does over here, it makes a combination of two different schools of philosophy both aiming to do the same thing the movement away from sexuality into spirituality which is what the Waste Land is all about.

So, burning over here becomes an example, experience of purgation and only through purgation can we reach elevation can you reach an example of a state of spirituality. So, if we take a look at the Dantesque model of divine comedy. So, Inferno followed by Purgatorio and at the end you reach Paradiso right. So, the Italian words for an Inferno, Purgatorio, Paradiso you can only reach paradise only after you go through purgation of the entire experience of burning away your sins, burning away your fleshly desires, burning away your earthly desires. Only after you burn away everything can you reach the Paradiso condition or the Paradiso in Dante's Divine Comedy right.

So, we have a similar kind of experience of purgation described over here. So, this concludes the third section of Waste Land the Fire Sermon we move on to the next section in our next lecture. We will just go through it again and connect it to the entire poem. For instance the Burial of the Dead and then followed by the second section and the third section you will find there is a continuum across the entire poem which makes it such a moving poem it is one of the greatest poems written in modern times and it is one of the most articulate voices of modernity Western European modernity and the decadence of modernity as a spiritual condition is something which Eliot's poem depicts very graphically and very compellingly. So, I will see you the next section with the next section in the next lecture.

Thank you for your attention.