

Twentieth Century Fiction
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Lecture – 24
Araby – Part 1

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Dubliners, by James Joyce

ARABY

NORTH RICHMOND STREET being blind, was a quiet street except at the hour when the Christian Brothers' School set the boys free. An uninhabited house of two storeys stood at the blind end, detached from its neighbours in a square ground. The other houses of the street, conscious of decent lives within them, gazed at one another with brown imperturbable faces.

The former tenant of our house, a priest, had died in the back drawing-room. Air, musty from having been long enclosed, hung in all the rooms, and the waste room behind the kitchen was littered with old useless papers. Among these I found a few paper-covered books, the pages of which were curled and damp: *The Abbot*, by Walter Scott, *The Devout Communicant* and *The Memoirs of Vidocq*. I liked the last best because its leaves were yellow. The wild garden behind the house contained a central apple-tree and a few straggling bushes under one of which I found the late tenant's rusty bicycle-pump. He had been a very charitable priest; in his will he had left all his money to institutions and the furniture of his house to his sister.

When the short days of winter came dusk fell before we had well eaten our dinners. When we met in the street the houses had grown sombre. The space of sky above us was the colour of ever-changing violet and towards it the lamps of the street lifted their feeble lanterns. The cold





So, hi and welcome to this NPTEL Course entitled Twentieth Century Fiction, where we are looking at Joyce's collection of short stories, *Dubliners*. We have just finished T S Eliot's poem *The Wasteland* and the short story we will start off with today, is something called *Araby* which is obviously, from the collection *Dubliners*. Before we dive into the text, just some little summary about the collection as a whole.

So, what kind of short stories constitute this collection *Dubliners*? So, as the very name suggests this is about Dublin; the city in which James Joyce wrote these short stories the setting of these stories as in *Ulysses* which is his novel which we will do in due course of time, but this is essentially about the decadence of Dublin, this is essentially about a jobless Dublin, it is about Dublin which is alcoholic, alienated; obviously, part of the Empire, the British Empire, but you know this English, Irish tension is very much there; especially in this particular short story towards the end where we find that there is this mention of the English accent and how the English accent is interestingly different from

the Dublin accent and how that it is not just an accent, but a status marker, a cultural marker, so to say right.

So, it is about the jaundice situation of Dublin, it is a dead and decaying city. The Church; the Catholic Church over here, it is a very decadent institution, it is come into a natural death and you know everything around there; the faith system, the belief system, things which sustain the citizens of Dublin they all come into an end, so to say.

Now, in this particular setting we have this, this story about a fantasy. It is about a romantic fantasy about a boy by a boy, an unnamed boy who has this fantasy for a girl is also unnamed, but she is just called Mangan's sister right. So, Mangan's sister becomes his object of desire for the boy, and Araby in this story is basically about a bazaar, it is about this oriental bazaar in Dublin, where the different merchandise different kinds of markets from the orient would come, would be brought to be sold in that particular bazaar.

So, in that sense it becomes a very exotic space, it becomes colonial space and it is a space where the boy goes in a quest to get his perfect gift for his beloved. So, you know as in Ulysses there is also this mythic substructure in this particular story, it is about a quest to get the ideal gift to the chalice, so to say, for the beloved and the boy in the story is knight in shining armor, the knight in the quest story. The quest narrative was going to the particular place to get that chalice with this immortal chalice of love and life and bring it back to the you know his ladylove.

So, that is the mythical subtext which is there, underlying the story, but on a surface, this is very much a story about Dublin, early twentieth century Dublin which is like I said very decadent very jaundiced, very diseased city. It is about jobless, drunkards and dysfunctional families and the failing and falling Catholic Church which cannot contain the people at the level of faith and sustenance.

So, as in most of Joyce's stories, there is a lot of symbolism in this particular story as well. So, we need to pay a very careful attention to certain symbolism symbols around institutions and markets. And most of the symbols are about decadence, it is about deadness, it is about hypocrisy; sexual hypocrisy, moral hypocrisy, religious hypocrisy etcetera right. So, that symbolic structure, that symbolic mapping or the mapping of

symbols is something which we should pay very close attention to as we move on with the story.

So, having given you a very brief outline of the summary and the context in which the story emerges from, let us dive into the text and see what the text is. So, this is *Araby* by James Joyce which should be on your screen. North Richmond Street being blind was a quiet street except at the hour when the Christian Brothers' school set the boys free. So, the very first sentence is quite loaded, as you can see North Richmond Street being blind. So, in the very beginning we have this idea of the dead end, the blind street, something which does not take you anywhere right. So, the deadness of the street, the blindness of the street is quite symbolic in the sense of the directionless-ness of the Irish Society at that point of time.

It was a quiet street except at the hour when the Christian Brothers' school set the boys free. So, you know this little bit is also quite symbolic, the Christian Brothers' school is; obviously, a religious institution. A catholic school presumably it you know the only time that particular street became active and vibrant and had some life in it, was when this Christian Brothers' school set the boys free.

So, you know the whole idea of conveying the endless school with the freedom of the boys, it just goes to show how this particular institution could be seen or was perceived by the boys as some kind of an imprisonment right and that again in a more macro structure it becomes quite dialogic with the Irish society of the time religion; obviously, over here becoming not mode of liberation, but as in mode of imprisonment, something which is imprisoning you, it setting you free at the end of the day and only at the end of the day when your Christian Brothers' school set you free, do you have any amount of freedom to do something you like right.

So, the Christian Brothers' school; obviously, becomes a metaphor of imprisonment; spiritual imprisonment, moral imprisonment and a blindness of the street. It is obviously, a metaphor for deadness and blindness and directionless-ness, it is a Cul-De-Sac geographically speaking, but in more symbolic level it is actually about the blindness of the society as a whole. And an uninhabited house of two stories stood at the blind end. The word blind comes again, at the blind end detached from its neighbours in a square

ground. The other houses of the street conscious of decent lives within them gazed at one another with brown imperturbable faces.

So, the brownness and the imperturbable quality of the houses, it is obviously, a very somber symbolism of the lack of warmth in this kind of neighborhood you know they all gaze at each other with brown imperturbable face. Nothing can perturb them at a level of human engagement and the irony is, this degree of brownness and imperturbability is equated with decency right. So, decency is equated with lack of warmth or with coldness, so to say. And the only other house which does not have that warmth is quite literally a dead house because it's uninhabited.

So, if we take a look at the symbolism in the very first paragraph of the story we find it's littered with symbols and of deadness, detachment, claustrophobia etcetera. And jaundiced situations, blindness comes twice, you know detachment is you know depicted and the fact that a house, the only house which is not decent is uninhabited. It is obviously, a symbol of a lack of life you know the end of life, it is the people who have left the house, so to speak.

Now, what kind of house was that, why was it uninhabited. So, what is the absence which is being you know pointed at, because in Joyce as in many other modernist texts absence becomes very potent pointer towards certain kind of presence. So, it is not very absence in proper absence sense, it is an absence which indicates a former presence a posthumous presence sometimes, a degree of spectrality if you will, it is the end of something, but at the same time it is also a reminder of what it used to be right. So, absence in Joyce is something which we must pay careful attention too.

So, why what, why is that particular house is uninhabited? And you know now we come back to the speaker's house and there too we have a sense of deadness coming in and how is that. So, the former tenant of our house a priest had died in the back drawing-room. So, we have the image of the dead priest, again very symbolic, it is a deadness of religion which has been depicted over here. The death of the priest is a very symbolic death. If you read for instance Irish Literature is full of priests, it's full of different kinds of missionary presences.

So, if we take a look at J M Synge's drama *Riders to Sea* or even the *Playboy of the Western World*, we find that both are depicted both are set in seaside setting, in seaside

you know conditions in a very remote coastal conditions of Aran Islands and over there especially in *Riders to the Sea* we have the image of the young priest. And the youngness of the priest is in contrast of the agelessness of the sea. So, the sea is ageless, the sea is timeless, the sea is almost mythical in quality. Compared to which the priest in that particular drama *Riders to sea* by J M Synge, you know that this the priest is young. So, Christianity as religion is very young compared to the agelessness of the Sea, so to speak.

So, over here the dead priest becomes a very symbolic, absent figure or absent presence, so to speak. And now we find how the absent presence or the spectrality of the dead priest, it informs the spatiality, you know this space is informed by the spectrality by the shadowy presence of deadness and how is that so, and this should be on your screen as I go on reading. Air musty from having been long enclosed hung in all the rooms and the waste room behind the kitchen was littered with old useless papers right.

So, again the whole idea of littering the kitchen with old useless papers is interesting and the sense of litter, sense of trash becomes important again if remember quite a bit of *Waste Land* by Eliot is about urban trash, it is about the generation of trash, the production of waste, so to say urban waste and we have a similar kind of a waste symbolism over here where the waste from behind the kitchen is littered with old useless papers.

So, that sense of litter is important if you remember Eliot's *Preludes*, it also had the image of the evening newspapers and; obviously, the very definition of evening newspapers as stale news, it is something which has come to an end, it does not have any symbolic commodity value anymore right. So, the old newspapers, old useless papers over here are examples of litter, and that litter is; obviously, filling in the kitchen and the waste room adjacent to the kitchen

So, among these I found and this is the first time the first-person narrator is introduced, I. I found a few paper-covered books the pages of which were curled and damped down. *The Abbot* by Walter Scott the *Devout Communicant* and the *Memoirs of Vidocq*, I liked the last best because its leaves were yellow. So, Joyce is really a master in terms of focalization right. So, what is, what is happening over here this entire story has been focalized through an adolescent imagination through a childlike imagination right.

So, it's a child's eye which is telling you the story it is the hand which holds the camera. So, to speak. The narrator who is unfolding the story and before you. And if we take a look at the cognitive bias at play over here the narrator likes the last book best for what reason, not because of the content because its leaves were yellow. So, this is a very childish reason to like a particular book is reflective of the narrator's imagination, the narrator's situatedness or the narrator's maturity right and this is very deliberately presented to us, because his immaturity will; obviously, you know it will get converted into something else as the story progresses.

But at this point of time it is focalized through an immature imagination, something which is telling you that there are three books in front of me and you know the names of three books are A B and C, the Abbot and the devout communicant and the Memoirs of Vidocq. I love the last one best because the pages were yellow colored right, it's a very childish reason to like a book, but that is precisely, the point that point is conveyed to us that the imagination of the narrator is very childish in quality. It is not really a mature imagination right.

The wild garden behind the house contained a central apple tree and a few straggling bushes under one of which I found the late tenants rusty bicycle pump. Now this is full of biblical and sexual imagery and this is something which we find throughout Joyce's writing oeuvre, especially in Ulysses. The Wild Garden and The Central Apple Tree are clearly Biblical symbols and a few straggling bushes around are; obviously, images of waste, it is not really a beautiful garden, it is not really a pretty garden, it is a wasted garden it is a garden which is sort of coming to an end which is full of litter. And in the bushes under the few straggling bushes the late tenant's rusty bicycle pump - a very phallic symbol.

So, again it is a very decadent phallic symbol rusty bicycle pump and Joyce is full of, you know his writing is full of these symbolic sexual symbolism and moral symbolism and religious symbolism. All put together in an entanglement which is very complex, but at the same time it is very compelling, and this is part of the scandal you face as a writer writing it up on a time the fact that he very indiscriminately used sexual symbolism and religious symbolism together, something which shocked the his contemporary moral demography, his moral imagination which is something we will find more pervasively in Ulysses, but here we find this Freudian symbol coming in. The tenant's rusty bicycle

pump juxtaposed with the central apple tree. He had been a very charitable priest. In his will he had left all his money to institutions and the furniture of his house to his sister.

So, again look at the irony at play, the first part of sentence is interesting he had been a very charitable priest nothing wrong with that. So, priest full of charity and the next sentence immediately it has this very coded irony and packed into it. Why so? Because it is told to us in his will he had left all his money. So, the fact that his charity is defined by his possession of money, he has left all his money to institutions and the furniture of his house to his sister.

So, nothing really charitable about it so to speak in the very fact that he managed to make a lot of money which is being indicated by all his money. It is obviously, undercutting any priests in charity was supposed to have. So, it is not really a life of renunciation, it is a life of acquisition which he has left behind to his institutions and sister ok.

So, we have already had abundant examples of religious hypocrisy, sexual hypocrisy and a general sense of decadence which is pervasive in a Irish society right and this particular cul-de-sac this neighborhood it stands for Dublin as a whole and every little thing in that you know is a micro is a microcosmic example, so, to say of the decadence in Irish society religious institutions failing you the priests becoming hypocritical and it's a very decadent sexual morality at play as well right and that is something which you find running throughout the story.

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pages of which were curled and damp: The Abbot, by Walter Scott, The Devout Communicant and The Memoirs of Vidocq. I liked the last best because its leaves were yellow. The wild garden behind the house contained a central apple-tree and a few straggling bushes under one of which I found the late tenant's rusty bicycle-pump. He had been a very charitable priest; in his will he had left all his money to institutions and the furniture of his house to his sister.

When the short days of winter came dusk fell before we had well eaten our dinners. When we met in the street the houses had grown sombre. The space of sky above us was the colour of ever-changing violet and towards it the lamps of the street lifted their feeble lanterns. The cold air stung us and we played till our bodies glowed. Our shouts echoed in the silent street. The career of our play brought us through the dark muddy lanes behind the houses where we ran the gauntlet of the rough tribes from the cottages, to the back doors of the dark dripping gardens where odours arose from the ashpits, to the dark odorous stables where a coachman smoothed and combed the horse or shook music from the buckled harness. When we returned to the street light from the kitchen windows had filled the areas. If my uncle was seen turning the corner we hid in the shadow until we had seen him safely housed. Or if Mangan's sister came out on the doorstep to call her brother in to his tea we watched her from our shadow peer up and down the street. We waited to see whether she would remain or go in and, if she remained, we left our shadow and walked up to Mangan's steps resignedly. She was waiting for us, her figure defined by the light from the half-opened door. Her brother

Now, we move on and then we have this description of space and how the sky and the space are mixed together to create a certain kind of affective condition ok, and we will find an example of you know children playing together and the fact that so much so much time is spent, time and space is spent over here describing children's playful activities is interesting, because the narrator will gradually move away from this right.

So, he will go through a metamorphosis of sort, where he will suddenly become very mature and his maturity will come out of love. So, this whole idea of love over here; obviously, it is a very erotic event in this particular story, but the complexity of the story is the child, because of his catholic upbringing, because of his deeply religious upbringing, will fail to acknowledge the erotic sentiments of love, the erotic component of love, it is something which is forbidden for him, to even acknowledge it.

So, he will couch it in religious metaphors which makes it even more scandalous. He will couch it in you know devotional metaphors which will make it even more scandalous, but you know in his confused adolescent imagination it is exactly how he will couch it. So, his erotic impulses will be couched and conveyed in very coded religious symbolism in this particular story, but let us take a look at how the children's playful activities are depicted to us at this section.

When the short days of winter came dusk fell before we had well eaten our dinners. This is; obviously, a dinner and you know you know British Irish way was which is

something a meal that is had at the end of the day, the dusk fell well before we have eaten our dinners. When we met in the street the houses had grown sombre. Again, the ghostly quality has been depicted over here, somber, spectrality it's very spectral in quality something shadowy and ghostly ok. The space of sky above us was the colour of ever-changing violet and towards it the lamps of the street lifted their feeble lanterns right.

So, the feeble quality is interesting, it is a very feeble attempt to have any illumination in this darkness right. So, everything is getting dark and sombre and the lanterns in the street are just very feeble compared to the darkness, which is very quickly falling in the streets. The cold air stung us and we played till our bodies glowed, our shouts echoed in the silent street. The career of our play brought us through the dark muddy lanes behind the houses where we ran the gauntlet of the rough tribes from the cottages, to the back doors of the dark dripping gardens, where odours arose from the ashpits, to the dark odorous stables where a coachman smoothed and combed the horse or shook music from the buckled harness right.

So, again if we take a look at the very sensory movements over here. They are very interesting the sense of touch, the sense of smell, the sense of you know sight. They all combine together to describe the career of play. So, what has been described to us it is a very physical, geographical activity it is a movement of boys in a particular neighborhood, but the way it is depicted to us it is very clear that, it is very sensory in quality and the focus is on the senses and that is something which is very modernist in terms of representational politics. Here the whole thing is about consciousness how you perceive it is not a reality around you and I am sure all of us by now this point in our course, we should have begun to understand modernism as a literary exercise that tries its best to capture human imagination to capture human consciousness.

And hence we have this obsession with consciousness, this obsession with the whole idea of representing the you know workings of the mind so to say. So, all these different markers, the sensory markers are important over here, the odorous tables, the word odorous appears twice over here. The dark dripping gardens, odors arose arising from the ashpits, the stables are odorous so to speak and shook music from the buckled harness.

So, again a sense of hearing the horses the harness of course, and the coachman is shaking the harness and producing music out of it right. So, the entire movement of the boys is depicted through the sensory markers which is obviously, a very modernist technique. When we returned to the street light from the kitchen windows had filled the areas. If my uncle was seen turning the corner we hid in the shadow until we had seen him safely housed. So, it is the first figure of the adult over here right.

So, the adult coming in the adult as the enemy to the children over here. So, the moment adult appears in the scene the children hide right. So, we hid in the corner until we had seen him safely housed. So, the adult coming here becoming an enemy, becoming a disturbance to this playful ludic activity, to this ludic landscape. So, to say where the children are playing together in different kind of boys' games.

So, the uncle is an enemy to this play. And now we have the object of desire for the boy. Or if Mangan's sister came out of the doorstep to call her brother in to tea, we watched her from our shadow peer up and down the street, we waited to see whether she would remain or go in and if she remained we left our shadow and walked up to Mangan's steps resignedly.

So, then Mangan's sister would come out and call his brother call her brother for tea and they would hope, the boys would hope the she would go away, having given up on her brother, but sometimes she would stay and insist on her brother coming back and if she did that, all the boys would go and resign which is to say they will that will formally close the play for the day.

She was waiting for us, her figure defined by the light from the half-opened door. So, again as in Eliot we find the descriptions over here visually quite cinematic. So, the visual grammar is very cinematic, it is a photo play of light and shadow which is; obviously, something early cinema was very keen on doing right. So, she was waiting for and her figure defined by the light from the half-opened door.

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oldsters, by James Joyce - Araby

always teased her before he obeyed and I stood by the railings looking at her. Her dress swung as she moved her body and the soft rope of her hair tossed from side to side.

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

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. Her name sprang to my lips at moments in strange prayers and praises which I myself did not understand. My eyes were often full of tears (I could not tell why) and at times a flood from my heart seemed to pour itself out into my bosom. I thought little of the future. I did not know whether I would ever speak to her or not or if I craved to hear how I could tell her of



Her brother always teased us teased her sorry before he obeyed and I stood by the railings looking at her. Her dress swung as she moved her body and the soft rope of her hair tossed from side to side.

So, look at the very metonymic close ups, again very cinematic. So, the boys' eyes are falling on Mangan's sister's different parts of her attire; the hair, the dress is swinging and every bit is being described very metonymically. So, she never is described as a whole person. She is always focused in different fragments, through different close up techniques and that is something which we find at the very beginning of the story and now the focus shifts completely. So, we find that this is a very good example of focalization, because whatever we get as readers is focalized. So, the eye of a certain narrator right and when that focus shifts we also get a different kind of story. We get a different landscape because the focus has shifted right.

So, it can be a close up, it can be a long shot, it can be a panoramic view, it can be a very you know fragmented view depending on the focus. So, the focalization is important over here and she is a, this particular person, the unnamed narrator is a focalized figure through which we get to see the whole story and now we get to know the, we get a more of a sort of a telescopic shot, so to speak on Mangan's sister.

Every morning I lay on the floor in the front parlor watching her door. The blind was pulled down to within an inch of the sash so that I could not be seen. So, this is almost

like a voyeuristic gaze which we see. So, you know the blind as he pulls the blinds down within an inch of the sash and within this inch, between those inch he takes a look at Mangan's door waiting or hoping to see a, get a glimpse of his sister. So, this is a completely a voyeuristic male gaze which is in operation.

When she came out on the doorstep my heart leaped. I ran to the hall seized my books and followed her. I kept her brown figure always in my eye and, when we came near the point at which our ways diverged, I quickened my pace and passed her. This happened morning after morning. I had never spoken to her except for a few casual words, and yet her name was like a summons to all my foolish blood ok.

Now; obviously, this is an example of boyhood crush. So, so she he is; obviously, in love with her, he is fascinated by her; obviously, sexually it is a lot of erotic undertone in this. The brown figure appearing in a in his imagination, and he is just waiting for her to come out the doorstep and the moment he sees her through this very voyeuristic gaze through the slits of the Venetian blinds, he takes his books and runs just to get a glimpse of her and you know walked with her till a point in which the ways diverged, but the last sentence is interesting over here, because as I mentioned this is a very Irish setting; a very Catholic Irish setting where there is a lot of hypocrisy about sexuality.

So, the very acknowledgement of sexual impulses bodily impulses impulses is a taboo in this particular setting and; obviously, this is a very middle class and maybe, perhaps a lower middle-class Irish house which is over-determined by this religious; this consumption of religious hypocrisy. So, the foolish blood over here is; obviously, the sexual feeling that he has for her, but the word summons is interesting, because it is a very religious word right.

So, the way it is described to us, her name was like a summons to all my foolish blood. So, it's couched in very religious rhetoric. Well actually talking about something deeply erotic and that is the confusion we are talking about over here and that confusion is reflective of the larger hypocrisy of the Irish society in which this boy is embedded right. So, and that's something which we find over and over again in Dubliners as a collection, it's full of alcoholic people, it's full of hypocritical priests, it's full of stagnation or figures of stagnation. What makes it worse is religious hypocrisy the moral hypocrisy of

the society which is controlled by the church. This very decadent falling church of the Irish Catholic Church in this particular case ok.

And now we have these metaphors of the quest coming in, the metaphors of the mythic quest coming in. And as I mentioned there is a mythic subtext, a mythic method which is very deliberately appropriated by Joyce as we talk about something very banal right. So, the whole idea over here is to go to this market called Araby and fetch something which is attractive for the girl. By the way it is described in a boy's imagination it is no less than a quest, in his childhood adolescent imagination. It is something of a supreme significance to him and that supremacy of significance is something which is depicted, by the choice of metaphors or the choice of markers ok.

So, let us take a look at this. 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 laborers, 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.

So, if we take a look at the soundscape in Dublin over here, it is very interesting, it has got religious songs, it has also got people drunken people shrieking, it has got bargaining women, it has got people cursing, the curses of labourers and drunkards, and then amidst all this we have the shrill litanies of shop boys, and the nasal chanting of street singers and then there are ballads about the troubles in our native lands. So, it is a very difficult and decadent political situation which has been described over here and the sound scape is very important because that is very reflective of the condition, the cultural condition of Ireland in which this particular story is set.

But also, see the way how all this converges into this one meaning for the boy, because the only meaning he has at this moment is a desire for that woman, the desire to get the attention of the woman, the love for that woman that he is beginning to feel in his adolescent body in his adolescent imagination. These noises converged in a single sensation of life for me. I imagined that I bore my chalice safely through a throng of foes.

So, again this equation of himself with the knight is interesting because; obviously, he has grown up consuming that kind of a narrative, whether through the church, whether through reading religious books etcetera. So, again he is couching, his sentimental erotic feelings with using religious metaphors. So, he imagines himself as a knight carrying a particular chalice through a throng of foes.

So, everyone is a foe, everyone is his enemy around him and he is bearing his chalice with all the protection that he is capable of producing. So, as to say, which is to say that he is bearing the image of his beloved in his mind, despite the very inimical conditions of laborers and drunkards and you know shop boys, shrieking out the shrill litanies.

So, again the choice of metaphor is very interesting, it is almost a religious metaphor, even when he is talking about something very sexual or erotic in quality ok. Her name sprang to my lips at moments in strange prayers and praises which I myself did not understand. So, again a strange prayer is very a symbolic over here. It is prayer and praises which is again religious, but then they are strange and her name comes up in those prayers. So, again we have very interesting you know entanglement of erotic and religious register in a very confused imagination.

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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. Her name sprang to my lips at moments in strange prayers and praises which I myself did not understand. My eyes were often full of tears (I could not tell why) and at times a flood from my heart seemed to pour itself out into my bosom. I thought little of the future. I did not know whether I would ever speak to her or not or, if I spoke to her, how I could tell her of my confused adoration. But my body was like a harp and her words and gestures were like fingers running upon the wires.

One evening I went into the back drawing-room in which the priest had died. It was a dark rainy evening and there was no sound in the house. Through one of the broken panes I heard the rain impinge upon the earth, the fine incessant needles of water playing in the sodden beds. Some distant lamp or lighted window gleamed below me. I was thankful that I could see so little. All my senses seemed to desire to veil themselves and, feeling that I was about to slip from them, I pressed the palms of my hands together until they trembled, murmuring: "O love! O love!" many times.

At last she spoke to me. When she addressed the first words to me I was so confused that I did not know what to answer. 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.



My eyes were often full of tears I could not tell why and at times a flood from my heart seemed to pour itself out into my bosom. I thought little of the future. I did not know whether I would ever speak to her or not or if I spoke to her how I could tell her of my

confused adoration. My body was like a harp and her words and gestures were like fingers running upon the wires.

So, again a harp which is essentially a religious musical instrument and you know that has been described, that has been used to talk about a very eroticized body. A body which is very sexualized, a body which is beginning to feel a sexual sensation for the beloved, but that is being couched, that is being conveyed to us, using very confused religious symbols, religious markers, spiritual markers, you know contemporary markers which he has consumed as a boy growing up in Ireland growing up in Dublin.

So, this is a very good example this particular story. Those of you interested in an m e t, material engagement theory which is to say how do you engage with the materiality around us right. So, because every form of materiality is discursively produced. So, the way you engage with a certain symbol whether it's a religious symbol or you know a totemic symbol of any kind, it's determined by your consumption of meaning in that particular setting. So, harp over here, prayers over here, summons over here, chalice over here these are all very strategic metaphors. These are markers of certain kind of sentiments for this particular boy, this Irish boy growing up in a very decadent Dublin ok.

And now we have this very atmospheric scene where we have this spectrality mixing with desire. So, he goes to the space where the priest had died and it is a very symbolic scene. One evening I went into the back drawing-room in which the priest had died. So, the absent priest; so, the absence religion, the absent faith, the faithless space. So, to speak right he goes into that particular space. It was a dark rainy evening and there was no sound in the house. Through one of the broken panes I heard the rain impinge upon the earth, the fine incessant needles of water playing in the sodden beds.

Some distant lamp or lighted window gleamed below me. I was thankful I could see so little. All my senses seemed to desire to veil themselves, and feeling that I was about to slip from them, I pressed the palms of my hands together until they trembled, murmuring; 'o love! o love!' many times. Now, again this is a very erotic experience, but he does not want to acknowledge it because he cannot acknowledge it. He is not you know this is a taboo for him, growing up in that kind of a setting.

So, everything is very religious, he goes to the dark drawing room in which the priest had died. So, it is some kind of a quasi-religious space in which he wants to feel, it is raining outside and again the rain seems to be something which is you know it's like an incessant needle of water playing in the sodden beds and he can see some illumination outside of his window and also he is thankful he could see so little because you know this races forth his imagination. He wants to imagine a certain situation, he does not want to see what is really there, because he wants to fantasize a certain scene.

So, this is; obviously, a scene of fantasy, a scene of fantasization, so to speak. And then the next the last bit is interesting. All my senses seemed to desire to veil themselves and feel that I was about to slip away from them. I pressed the palms of my hands together until they trembled murmuring 'o love! o love!' many times. So, again this is a very sexual kind of an activity. So, the pressing the palms of the hands together until they trembled is an example of a certain kind of erotic sensation that he is experiencing in his body as an adolescent male, but; obviously, he is couching that using religious platonic metaphor, sublimating it, so to say using a certain kind of metaphor a rhetoric that is useful for him that is consumed while he is growing up 'o love! o love!' many times.

So, it is very reified it is very rhetorical, it is very performative right. That is something that he is sublimating into a different kind of a linguistic register right. So, again we have a very interesting combination of different kinds of registers religious register, erotic register, sublimated register, banal registers all coming together to produce a very confused sensation over here.

Now, the last bit is interesting and I will stop at this point. This is suddenly it cuts into sort of you know clock time at last she spoke to me. So, again look at the shortness of sentence the degree of finality about the sentence at last she spoke to me. When she addressed the first words to me I was so confused that I did not know what to answer. 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 right.

So, the first mention of Araby happens over here, and again look at the very abruptness in which this entire conversation takes place. There is no introduction, there is no getting to know each other, suddenly he is asked that whether or not he will go to Araby right and that Araby becomes a metaphor over here of ideal space, utopian space you know,

and I forgot whether I answered yes or no. It would be a lovely and splendid bazaar and she said she would love to go.

So, again the whole attachment with Araby is interesting, because Araby is then subsequently equated in his mind with a splendid space, with a utopian space, a space of desire, a space where you can go as a knight in a quest for something which will please his his beloved and we will come back to that. So, the entire story after this becomes a mythical quest. So, to say to go to Araby and like most myths this ends in frustration. So, when he actually goes to Araby, it just turns out to be just a bazaar, it turns out to be just a space which is completely dark and banal and mundane and that is a big disillusionment for him in terms of his romantic you know expectation, the economy of expectations that he has produced in his romantic imagination.

So, that entire story now from this point of time will be about going to Araby and then feeling in the quest and the frustration experienced in that particular quest which is something which completely decimates his childlike imagination.

And again, just to summarize very quickly we find this very confused adolescent imagination which is getting more and more sexualized over here, but it is very confused, because of its consumer kind of religious rhetoric, religious metaphor, religious knowledge which does not allow him to acknowledge sexuality in a very freeway. It is a very repressed society and that repression is something which is very clearly evident in a way feelings are not being acknowledged or feelings are being confusedly articulate.

There is very, a lot of confusion going on in terms of how feelings are articulated and acknowledge even by the self, not even conveyed, but the very acknowledgement of it is very confused acknowledgement, and that is obviously, connected and relatable to the bigger structure of hypocrisy in contemporary Irish society in which the story is set.

So, I stop at this point today and in the next lecture we will just move on and see how the quest for Araby is sort of conveyed to us in very symbolic mythical terms, very deliberately just inflated significance, just so when the deflation comes in the end it becomes a very painful deflation for the boy. So, I will cover all that in our next lecture and I stop at this point today.

Thank you for your attention.