

procedure or solemn practice associated with burial
Funeral Rites 1975

nostalgic tone ① religion

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
→ navigating
→ digging
★ medium for self discovery

I shouldered a kind of manhood stepping in to lift the coffins of dead relations.
PAST TENSE

They had been laid out in tainted rooms, their eyelids glistening, their ^{weeping} dough-white hands shackled in rosary beads.

★ memories of funerals
★ rhyme + half rhyme
★ enjambment
★ free verse, regular structure

allusion to pastoral setting
prisoner of death

onomatopoeia
Their puffed knuckles had unwrinkled, the nails were darkened, the wrists obediently sloped.

universal, pluralised too many?
★ Personal

- ① - 8 stanzas - past t.
- ② - 7 stanzas - present t.
- ③ - 5 stanzas - fluid (future, present, past)

kenning - colour
The dulse-brown shroud, the quilted satin cribs: I knelt courteously admiring it all

juxtaposition
observance of tradition

as wax melted down and veined the candles, the flames hovering to the women hovering

reverence + appreciation of the importance of ritual
personification
repetition comparison

behind me. And always, in a corner, the coffin lid, its nail-heads dressed

role of women in Irish society
★ How grief works w/in a community

comfort + affection of ritual
Grief is iceberglis in nature

with little gleaming crosses. Dear soapstone masks, kissing their igloo brows had to suffice

Catholic traditions
cold, icy DEATH imagery
foreboding

before the nails were sunk and the black glacier of each funeral pushed away.

cold imagery
★ black is a symbol of darkness

present II
Now as news comes in of each neighbourly murder we pine for ceremony, customary rhythms:

paradoxical
sectarian violence imagery
★ presenting a new way of looking at grief

★ deliberate referencing to The Troubles
★ deliberate links to the past

the temperate footsteps of a cortège, winding past each blinded home. I would restore

literal: blinds down
fig: blinded by fear + violence to the fact the events are wrong

the great chambers of Boyne, prepare a sepulchre under the cupmarked stones. Out of side-streets and by-roads

location in centre of Ireland - prehistoric → PAGAN
reference to Boyne battle

look to the past to navigate present issues
★ largeness of dead + mourning

imagining now, taking the present w/him