

## The Importance of Elsewhere

Lonely in Ireland, since it was not home,  
Strangeness made sense. The salt rebuff of speech,  
Insisting so on difference, made me welcome:  
Once that was recognised, we were in touch

Their draughty streets, end-on to hills, the faint  
Archaic smell of dockland, like a stable,  
The herring-hawker's cry, dwindling, went  
To prove me separate, not unworkable.

Living in England has no such excuse:  
These are my customs and establishments  
It would be much more serious to refuse.  
Here no elsewhere underwrites my existence.

*Philip Larkin*