

EXPRESSIONIST ANALYSIS OF WILFRED OWEN'S POEMS: ANTHEM FOR DOOMED YOUTH, DULCE ET DECORUM EST, A TERRE, FUTILITY AND STRANGE MEETING

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***Abstract:** This paper reveals representation of reality in Wilfred Owen's selected poems. It uses abstraction, artistic volition and interior monologue to explore expressionism in Owen's poems. It takes insight from the experimentation of Edvard Munch, Vincent Van Gogh and Strindberg. Expressionism breaks the narrowing limits of finite reality presented by the outward callous world. It focuses on the eternal feelings and emotions rather than the external objects. Wilfred Owen is remarkable in his poetic usage of metrical and musical effects and imagery. He sustains the courage to treat the ugly and strange matters. He reveals reality through metaphor and novel ways of applying colors. This study offers a fresh perspective to the readers to visualize Owen's poetry in a fresh position.*

***Key Words:** Expressionism, Wilfred Owen, Nightmarish Imagery, Abstraction, Artistic Volition, Interior Monologue.*

INTRODUCTION:

Expressionism rejects the imitation, mimesis and representation of the external world rather promote spontaneity through the artistic volition, abstraction and expressiveness. It indicates that reality is not objective, it is subjective varies from individual to person as individuals have the capability to redefine reality. Gyorgy M. Vajda says that 'Through the work of art, they wanted to create an autonomous world; for what mattered to them was not the world outside the self, but their own artistic consciousness'. (Vajda p. 47) This research explores expressionism in Wilfred Owen's war poems. War poetry consists of two schools of thought; jingoism and pacifism. Wilfred Owen writes his poems in Pacifistic terms. Pacifism is a doctrine that is against violence, war and callousness. It explores all the potential answers to square up all kinds of conflicts without war.

In Wilfred Owen's poems we find the courage to treat the ugly and unusual things, the violent revolution of reality through metaphor and novel ways of using colors that is his use of artistic volition. His poems Anthem for doomed youth, Dulce et Decorum EST, A Terre, Futility and Strange Meeting shatter all the old beliefs of glory and dignity. These poems present front as an Abattoir and mocks all the patriotic perception of warfare. Shah says that Owen's Strange Meeting is a veritable account of the futility of war, negligence of human emotions and above all innumerable dead bodies of young vigorous soldiers. (Shah 2013, p. 1)

He uses Abstraction, artistic volition, interior monologue, nightmarish imagery and interplay of past and present in the above mentioned poems. Patrick Jackson says that in order to express the annihilating and overwhelming forces of war to represent the unrelenting, brutal death of uncountable men and to demonstrate the horrors of modern war he delineates such things in finite terms. (Cited in Bloom 2002, p. 24)

ARTISTIC VOLITION:

In expressionist poetry we see the courage to treat the ugly and unusual things, the violent revolution of reality through metaphor and novel ways of using colors that is artistic volition. Expressionism determines form and therefore Punctuation, Syntax, Imagery, and so onward. Indeed, whatsoever of the formal elements and patterns of composition can be disjointed or bent to suit the purpose (Cuddon 1998, p. 297). Wilfred Owen's poetry is consistent with all the above mentioned characteristics together with the grandiose flavor of the imagery.

Wilfred Owen, in *Anthem for doomed youth* has used simile to narrate the soldiers' death in battle. It also portrays the Western Front as an Abattoir. By its usage, Owen shatters all the previous beliefs of glory, honor and self-worth. He mocks all the patriotic perception of warfare. The cattle – image dehumanizes the feelings of human beings. Harris says that various estheticians and artists have recognized the fact that the artist must penetrate to reality and embody his insight in his creation if it is to be worthy of the name of art. The mission of the artist is to reveal reality of the ordinary man, who is such a superficial observer, that he does not penetrate to the heart of things" (Harris 1929, p. 210).

He uses many images related to death, funerals and mourning such as 'choirs', 'bugles calling', 'sad shires', 'pall', 'flowers', 'holy glimmers of good – byes', 'bells', 'orisons', 'prayers', 'mourning', 'candles', and 'drawing down of blinds'. Pity of war is distilled into these poetic images. These images inspire the thousands of doom young soldiers – for whom something better can be done. *Anthem for Doomed Youth can be visualized as an expression of Wilfred Owen's struggle to live more extravagantly.*

In *Anthem for Doomed Youth*, the poet uses the technique of rhetorical question. He uses rhetorical questions in the beginning of each stanza for emphasizing the issue, for creating effects and to force the reader to ponder on the obvious answer. This poem is a sonnet written in iambic pentameter; the seven lines after each rhetorical question suggest the appropriate answers. It is also famous for its perfect usage of onomatopoeia.

Only the struttering rifles rapid rattle

Can patter out their hasty Orisons

In the above mentioned sentence, the four alliterated r- sounds along with four hard a-sounds produce the 'struttering' effect of rifle – fire. The combination of assonance and alliteration is functional in the illustration of rifle – fire. Each image in *Anthem for Doomed Youth* is replete with poignancy by the horrors, futility and the pity of war.

Craig. A. Hamilton praises *Anthem for Doomed Youth*, and *Strange Meeting* for these poems unique texture and fantabulous sound – patterns. In his view, the poet has used the sounds ‘Sep’ and ‘St’ in ‘spate’, ‘spout’ and ‘storm’, ‘reddest’ in the background of the passive flood of gas or blood. These sounds create a deliberate effect, but on the contrary, they also maximize the horrific expression of agony and pain. (Howarth 2005, p. 188)

The title of the poem is very ambiguous and divergent. It suggests two contradictory words such ‘Anthem’ and ‘Doomed’. Anthem denotes to a song/hymn of gladness and praise but ‘doomed youth’ suggests that this poem is certainly not making anybody dance or cheer up. It is ironic. How can a soldier be glad while he is doomed? By the title of the poem *Anthem for Doomed Youth*, he mocks at the patriotic perceptions about war.

The image ‘passing bells’ contrasts with the horrific experience of war where man dies like cattle. Passing bells denote to church bells which are rung at someone’s funeral, but for these doomed youth who is dying for his country, there are no ‘passing bells’. Rather angry sounds of guns are attributed to this youth. In prisons, these young ones are receiving rifle – fires. In Owen’s war poems, allusion and references have always an organizing function. The irony in his poems generally thrusts in two directions towards the source of the illusion or towards the situation itself. (Norgate 1989, p. 520)

Artistic volition is a non – mimetic method that permits to apply its stylistic devices to gain art of consciousness and the purpose of art that leads to reality. *Dulce et Decorum est* is fantastic for its imagery, half – rhymes, onomatopoeia, musical and metrical effects. It reveals a cruel and grotesque death of Owen’s fellow troops from mustard gas. In it, the poet has used the technique of dream – sequence. Nightmarish reality is shown when he recounts the incident of an enemy. He narrates this technique with the help of images such as ‘guttering’, ‘chocking’ and ‘drowning’.

He uses similes of ‘Bent double like beggars’ and ‘coughing like hags’ to acquaint the reader about the horrible, distorted and twisted bodies of soldiers. These similes depict the after effects of war. “‘*Dulce et Decorum EST pro’ patria Mori*’ is one of Horace’s best known lines, and one of his least well understood. Its frequent appearance on war memorials has led to sardonic and bitter reactions from such as Wilfred Owen and Bertolt Brecht...” Harrison further says that these lines stand for as “it is in any sense enjoyments for a man to die fighting for his country” (Harrison 1993, p. 91).

The word ‘distance rest’ of the line fourth is used as ironic. Distance rest at the front of soldiers may be dealt. The poet uses visual images (bloodshed, boots, limped) in line fifth and sixth to make the reader feel about the soldier’s endless march. *Dulce et Decorum EST* is an attack upon the ignorant and aggressive behavior of non – combatants (civilian). Noragte says: “... In its bitter excoriation of ‘the old lie’ the energy of the Owen’s poem encompasses more than a single ‘liar’, just as its barbed reference to the Horatian motto signals the rejection of something more immediate than a merely traditional philosophy of battle. (Noragte 1989, p. 520)

The war is tiring and aimless for the young men on the front. The poet uses similes such as floundering like a man in fire or lime (to get to the reader familiar with pain the soldiers are burning with) and under a green sea (to express a sense of the pervasiveness and extent of gasoline). *Dulce et Decorum est* deals with the unconsoling truthfulness and horrors of war (pity of war). In this poem Owen narrates the ambiguous experience of a soldier as Hughes says that the traumatic experience precisely does not stabilize into the single objective scene. The haunting image of the drowning in a gas attack (green sea) can rationally be explained. It can be simpler and psychologically processed. It produces a subjective impression of the misty panes of the mask and combination of gaseous state. (Hughes 2006, p. 165)

Wilfred Owen has used metaphor in it such as 'hunting flares' to portray the exhaustion. The metaphor 'Drunk with fatigue' shows that soldiers are confused and they are not alert due to the constant bombardment at the front. Another metaphor 'drowning' denotes gas effects on the lungs. He uses adjectives such as 'smothering', 'hanging', 'corrupted', 'bitter' and 'vile' with negative connotations to convey the horror of the situation. To impart a sensation of urgency, the poet uses repetition of prentice cry 'Gas! Gas! Gas!' and minor sentence ('quick boys!'). One critic says about *Dulce et Decorum est* as the aural patterning, timing and power of metaphor have intervened. It mediates directly between the orbit of our imagination and the trench scene through specific citations and direct description to the front landscape. (Graham 1984, p. 5)

He uses combination of elevated language with absolute chaos to describe the horrible experience of war i.e. 'ecstasy of fumbling'. He uses metaphor 'haunting flares' with frightening connotations because these flares scare the military men like Ghost and make noise like weeping of specters. By the frightening noise of shells the troops cannot sleep.

The use of hyperbole in this poem (i.e. all lame ... All blind) indicates the large number of sufferers who have got foot and eye injuries during trench war. He offers a terrible description of the man's agonies by using Onomatopoeia and vivid adjectives, for example 'the blood comes gargling from his forth corrupted lungs.'

He uses language such as 'ardent', 'high zest' and 'glory' to provide a contrast to the earlier verses. First person story in the poem such as 'I', 'my', 'me' conveys the idea that the poet has personally gone through the whole office. It also creates an understanding of war affects. 'My friend' relates sarcastically this poem with the allusion to Jassie Pope, who wrote patriotic and Jingoistic poems. Her poems encouraged the boys to take part in warfare. In excitement the teenage join the army without knowing the real spot in social movement. *Dulce ET Decorum Est* is a reaction against her poetry.

The poet has used finale onomatopoeia when he says trudge – sludge. This depicts the terrible conditions of war which this doomed youth suffers. The whole poem presents an idea of poet's participation in warfare.

Wilfred Owen's poems such as Disabled, Spring Offensive, Dulce et Decorum EST and Exposure show the direction in which he narrates the pity of soldiers. It exposes the undignified,

horrific death of a soldier in a gas attack. The tone, imagery, word choice and other literary techniques used in the poem, *Dulce et Decorum EST* describe the pity of war.

Dulce et Decorum EST exposes an ironic distrust of all the traditional ideologies. The title of the poem is ironic. *Dulce et Decorum est* means that it is dignified to die for one's country. He mocks at a verse of Horace's poem *Dulce et Decorum EST pro patria Mori* means it is sweet and honorable to die for country. In this poem he refuses to prettify war in order to illuminate the direct, raw and uncensored truth. Thomas says about Owen that the voice of Wilfred Owen's poetry speaks to us with terrible strength and new significance about the revolving stages of thirty years of his life. We cannot forget his poetry by considering it as the voice of one place, about particular and one war. We cannot allow ourselves to think of it as. He is a poet of all places, all times and all wars. (Thomas 1954, p. 125)

Keith V. Comer states about Wilfred Owen's vividness that he makes his readers to confront as much reality as he is able to create. He involves three senses of listening, examining and tasting in this poem when he reads:

... The blood

Come gargling from the froth – corrupted lungs

Bitter as the cud

This poem does not promote patriotic feelings, but it is about a gas attack. Wilfred Owen knows that it is nothing glorious to die during a retreat. It is not good to promote that war is glorious rather it is a crime. All his poetry is replete with the horrors of trench experiences. This poem shows vividly the state of mind of the poet, ambitions and the war frustrations from which this universally esteemed poem arose. According to Van Gogh that art either in poetry or in painting should be self – creation of the artist.

Artistic volition is used by Wilfred Owen in this poem, *A Terre*. Wilfred Owen writes about his poem, *A Terre* to Sassoon that he has not succeeded in writing poetry if poetry is in simplicity, imaginativeness, sympathy, resonance of vowels. He inquires of Sassoon's thinking about the vowel – rhyme stunt. In his own view, his poetry is replete with rhyme – variation.

Expressionist artists also use variations in style. Wilfred Owen does not copy the existing technique, but distorts it. He makes variations in rhyme scheme; half – rhyme and Para – rhyme. In this poem he has used this technique in varying. He uses Para – rhyme scheme such as sap – sap – soup, fronds – friends, winds – wounds, rat – rut – rot, shoots – shouts, long – lung, shell – shell, brutes – brats. He also makes a variation in a half rhyme scheme such as sure – share – shower, ware – hear stone – stunned, old – bald, hitting – hurting, money – many, year – air and that – thought. He also has used eye – rhyme such as now – know. Riesman cements him in these words that Owen has sought new ways to distort the language. His mastery of onomatopoeia, alliteration, dissonance and assonance has often been cited. Perhaps his most consistently brilliant devices was the use of Slant rhyme..." (Riesman 2012, p. 140)

There are also some full rhymes such as ever – over, ware – hear and once – wince. In this poem Wilfred Owen has used similes such as 'fingers fidget like ten idle brats', 'bandage

like pennies', 'one dies in war like an old disease', 'medals like discs' and 'glorious ribbons like scarlet shreds' all show the uselessness of his early efforts because of war – wounds that let not make him relax for a single moment. The other simile is 'legs as lilac – shoots' shows his desire to be a flower. The flowers have no fear of dying a sudden death.

Wilfred Owen has image 'discs to make eyes close' to show the uselessness of winning medals of bravery and valour and he calls them in *Dulce Et Decorum Est* as 'the old lie'. Next image, 'ripped from his back' represents the image of ripped flesh because of bombs, shells or bayonets. 'Puffy bald and patriotic' gives the image of the officer's present condition.

Wilfred Owen has also used an extended metaphor of Death – dirt that he has used in lines thirty to thirty five that man is made of dirt and sooner or later he has to become a part of this dirt. *A Terre* has ten stanzas of variable length. Each explores a different situation of the dying officer's life. The first four lines narrate his physical state and next six lines represent his mental condition. In the third stanza, the officer looks back at the passing days of his life with despair and sadness. Lines twenty five to thirty five shatter all pride in man's life as he is made of dirt and will be a part of it after death. Till the last line, the whole poem is replete with terror and after effects of war. War has affected the men at front both physically and psychologically.

He uses alliteration to create a feeling of awkwardness. He has used f – sound in Fingers –fidget, w – sound in wind – would – work and at the end of the poem again w – sound in weaned – what – wounds to create uniqueness in content and form. He has used consonance in hitting – shooting – hinting and hurting to kill the boredom and sameness from the poem.

In this poem, the poet has created a photographic presentation of the wounds of a dying officer. Wilfred Owen again negates the idealist belief of glory, honor and valor which the whole nation, the girls and upper society promote. It also represents the fear dwelling in the heart of the recruit. Death is approaching to him like a disease. He wants to be a servant, but not a war afflicted dead one. The same concept of being something else is base of abstraction in Expressionism. In the whole poem the officer again and again nullifies the so – called medals of valor that seems 'only discs to close eyes'.

Artistic volition is also found in Wilfred Owen's Poem, *Futility*. Wilfred Owen exhibits sun as a central metaphor in his poem *Futility* to reveal grief for a fallen soldier, his despair at the pointlessness of war and to demonstrate the real nature of bloody war. Sun is also taken as annotations of life and warmth. The image, 'Fields half – sown' manifests life and growth of man still incomplete and unfulfilled. The image 'snow' contrasts cold with the sun. 'Seeds' provides an image of potential and life of human beings. 'Cold Star' again is taken as a contrast of warmth and sun.

Like *Anthem for Doomed Youth* here, in this poem Owen again uses a rhetorical question to emphasize the value of life. Words 'stir?', 'tall?', and 'all?' with question mark manifest the worthlessness of man's life. The image, 'clay grew tall' is a reference to man's creation. The fields unsown symbolize opportunity and all the potential in a soldier's life that has finished due to the cruelties of war, it also indicates the rural area of the soldier's home.

The title of the poem, *Futility* indicates the pointlessness of war, the soldier's death, the rebirth of the soldier, creation and life. He demonstrates full – rhyme such as tall – all, snow – know and half – rhyme such as star – stir, seeds – sides and once – France. He also uses eye – rhyme such as now.

In this poem, the poet has personified Sun in a beautiful way. Personifications such as Sun with its touch has the ability to awake the soldier and whispering of fields are used. The words such as knowing, wakes, woke, kind old and rouse may correlate with sun. Owen uses the technique of assonance, words such as awoke, once, home, sown, woke and snow. In these words, o- sounds create a sad tone of mourning.

The poet also uses connotation for example the words 'whispering', 'fields', 'unsown', 'clays' carry emotional association with the doomed youth. In this poem Owen presents the co – existence of past and present to shift between the battle – field and home. This technique also gets the poem relevant and immediate. He uses words such as 'this', 'now', 'woke' to show contrast between present and past time.

He repeats the word 'awake' in order to emphasize the death of the young military man. The soldier will not wake again. The word 'gently' may be perceived as kindness and softness of home life when compared with the massacre of the battlefield.

In *Strange Meeting* the poet also uses artistic volition in the sensory faculty that he uses variations in Syntax, in Rhyme (half – rhyme and Para - rhyme) and construction. This poem is replete with Para – rhyme and Half – rhyme such as escaped – scooped, groined – groaned, bestirred – stirred, moan – mourn, years – yours, wild – world, spoiled – spilled, tigress – progress, mystery – mastery, taint – stint, wheels – wells, friend – frowned and killed – cold to create mental restlessness and to break the monotonous movement of the regular rhyme. He has used one eye – rhyme such as hair – hour.

Words like ground – grained create a sensory perception of sight and hearing. He has used the technique of the Oxymoron in words such as strange friend, profound dull, gloomy hall and dead smile. It is a fine example of his experiment in assonance and dissonance. Half of the poem is consistent on Para – rhyme while the other half is in free – verse. Dylan Thomas says that Wilfred Owen is always experimenting with the texture and shape of the poem in order to find the intensity of the language.

About Wilfred Owen's assonant ending, John Middleton Murry says that it is a discovery of a genius. Wilfred Owen has used second rhyme in a lower pitch than the first in the couplet. This 'dying fall' registers a haunting uneasiness and creates a muffled beat. (p.25)

In this poem, Wilfred Owen has used alliteration again and again such as repetition of W – sounds in the following line: "Now men will go content with what we spoiled", repetition of m – sound in line: "For by my glee might many men have laughed", repetition of b- consonant in the line "Or discontent, boil bloody and be spilled" and again in the end of poem we find repetition of w – sound such as "they will be swift with swiftness of tigress". This repetition of words conveys auditory images. An expressionist does not constantly emphasize factors that

determine a literary work. A piece of art has creative techniques, the character of raw materials, artist's intention and historical conditions. He introduces a concept that denotes the unity or sum of creative forces. These forces consist both of form and content that organize the work of art. This concept is 'artistic volition' (Panofsky 1981, p. 19).

Artistic volition also helps to gain art of consciousness and the purpose of art that leads to reality. Wilfred Owen describes his purpose of art in his poem *Anthem for Doomed Youth*. His poems *Dulce et Decorum est* and *Anthem for Doomed Youth* set our attitude towards war. Owen writes poetry with an intense focus on war, with an extraordinary insight of the human psyche and experience.

In his poems he depicts the futility and sufferings of war from his first hand experience at the Somme. He is overwhelmed by the senseless killing of human beings in the First World War. He presents war as blasphemy, seduction and rape. He is angry at the proclamation of religion that is so useless in this situation. Poetic emotions in this poem are the new thing and important. He takes references from the *Old Testament* to quote the incident of 'tyrants treading blood'. He denounced all notions of the glorification of warfare.

Siegfried Sassoon comments on Wilfred Owen that he never writes his poems to create an effect of personal gesture. He pities others, he does not pity himself. He is also acknowledged as the master of metrical variety and a technically accomplished poet. His poetry shows beauty. It is coupled with grim realism and a deep sense of compassion. He proclaims that his aim is to write about war; the sufferings and the pity of war. True poetry may depict the pity of war effectively.

He writes about the devastating effects of war on the young soldiers. He conveys meanings in his poems by a carefully developed structure, rhyme and meter. He conveys the sights and sounds of war trauma by his use of figurative language especially by images, onomatopoeia.

The focus of the poem, *Dulce et Decorum EST* shifts from the presentation of reality to the expression of the unconscious; in it we find distortion, thickening of texture, and corresponding intensification. Wilfred Owen presents a totally different appearance of soldiers that is an unexpected view. Usually military soldiers are pictured as strong, healthy and brawny looking men. The poet replaces this false image of an athletic army man with old beggars and hags. War has turned these premature men into shabby appearances.

About *Strange Meeting* Edmund Blunden says that it is one of the most imaginative statements of tranquility, remoteness and dynamic war experiences. Siegfried Sassoon comments it as an elegy to unknown recruits of all nations and a passport to immortality. The rubric of the verse form, *Strange Meeting* is an unusual clash between a dead and a living soldier. Often times we meet two enemies having revenge against each other, but here in this poem we find them with a spirit of reconciliation. Wilfred Owen has borrowed the title of the poem from P. B Shelly's poem 'Revolt of Islam'.

Through *Strange Meeting* Wilfred Owen has criticized the futility, savageness and primitiveness of war. He condemns the thoughtless decisions of politicians and regression of the modern world. He calls these politicians as swift tigresses who are quick to play with the lives of young soldiers.

Wilfred Owen plays a function of a social or political thinker rather than only aesthetician. He plays a role of transformer in order, fulfill his new pursuit of disclosing 'untold truth'. He seems gloomy as 'none will break ranks' and countries will not stop to send their young ones to the battle field like lambs to the slaughter house. In lines twenty seven to thirty elements of artistic volition are again found. The poet keeps himself separate from the purpose (the reality that he is going to tell).

ABSTRACTION:

The poet also uses abstraction in this poem. Abstraction means the enjoyment of the self projected into an object or form. In Worringer's view this technique provides comfort to the primitive humanity who used an abstract line in geometrical ornaments. Abstraction excludes all trace of organic life that is change, growth and decline from the human life. It provides a refuge from the caprice of the physical world. Through abstraction, the artist is able to penetrate from the world of external objects to 'the things itself' and to lay hold of and portray the essence of things, their profound truth (Weinstein 2010, p. 50).

In his poem, *A Terre* Wilfred Owen uses Abstraction. The officer is content at being transformed into a 'lilac – shoots'. He is happy to grow like the petals of lilac – shoots in the spring wind. This thought saves him from the boredom. The poet uses the term 'anthropomorphism' the basis of abstraction in the monologue of the officer. In the whole poem the officer makes different wishes such as to be a mouse, but not a dead one in war. He considers that little creature (mouse) as the lucky one who finds a way to live a happy life even in the trenches. Worringer says in *Abstraction Und Einfuhlung* about abstraction in the following words that the artwork as an independent organism, stands alongside of nature on equal terms and, in its deepest essence, has no connection with it, in so far as man understands 'nature' to be the visible surface of things (Munich 1964, p. 35). The whole poem reveals Wilfred Owen's desire to find peace.

O Life, life, let me breathe ... a dug out rat!
Not worse than ours the existence rats lead ...
Nosing along at night down some safe vat,
They find a shell – proof home before they rot.

The officer finds relaxation and enjoyment when he projects himself into 'a mouse', 'a servant', even 'a flower', 'a microbe', 'a muck man', 'an herb', and 'a stone'. He says that he will be one with nature, herb and stone. He further states:

I shall be better off with plants that share
More peaceably the meadow and shower

Patrick Jackson comments on Wilfred Owen's writing style that in order to express the annihilating and overwhelming forces of war, to represent the unrelenting, brutal death of uncountable men and to demonstrate the horrors of modern war he delineates such things in infinite terms. (Bloom 2004, p. 24)

Such a fantastic use of abstraction we find in his poem *Strange Meeting*. Abstraction (Expressionist technique) is going away from the finite reality to the infinite one. It also focuses of retrogression (returning of humanity to its origin).

Like the poem, *A Terre* here in *Strange Meeting* he finds relaxation or being dead rather than injured or psychologically effected and lying in a hospital bed. Abstraction is a term in which a person sees himself different from what he is at present. It helps to forget the worries and tensions. By using the same technique Owen arranges a dramatic meeting between two dead soldiers who are enemies. It is present in the poem, *Strange Meeting* when the soldier says:

"Strange, friend" I said, "Here is no cause to mourn"

"None", said the other And

It seemed that out of the battle I escaped

He uses words such as 'smile', 'friend', 'no cause to mourn', 'hope', 'beauty', 'laughed', 'truth', 'progress', 'courage', 'wisdom', 'mastery', 'sweet wells', and 'sleep' to lessen the disastrous effects of death in battle. He creates a dreamy world (illusion of reality) to provide relaxation to his readers.

In another poem, *Futility* he uses abstraction once again. He uses words such as 'sun', 'gently', 'fields unsown', 'home', 'morning', 'kind', 'dear – achieved', 'warm' in this poem. The above mentioned words with positive combination bring relaxation to the reader. It makes the terrors of death less threatening.

INTERIOR MONOLOGUE:

Interior monologue is an expression of the most intimate thought. It lies near the unconscious in its form. It is produced in the direct phrases reduced to minimum of syntax. It is a technique that is used to represent the processes of character's inner life and the psychic content that are entirely or partly united. He says that interior monologue is a character's speech in a scene that introduces us the interior life of that character. It is free from author's intervention, commentaries and explanations. (Humphrey 1954, p. 24)

The expressionist artist Wilfred Owen expresses the inner experience by presenting the world as it appears to the mind – a troubled, abnormal and emotional state of mind. His poems imply that mental condition is representative of anxiety – ridden man in the terror of war that leads him to chaos. His poem *A Terre* narrates same mental condition of its character/ narrator.

In *Strange Meeting* we find a unique blend of dialogue into a monologue. Interior monologue is found when Wilfred Owen turns hell (an abstract idea) into finite reality. The speaker says there is:

And by his smile, I knew that sullen hall;

He makes variation in interior monologue and says: 'I mean the truth untold'. In line thirteen he again uses interior monologue:

"Strange friend", I said, "Here is no cause to mourn"

In line thirty nine, he says:

I am the enemy you killed, my friend.

I knew you in this dark; for so you frowned

Yesterday through me as you jabbed and killed.

NIGHTMARISH IMAGERY:

Sokel defines expressionistic nature of Night town (dreams) as thoughts become events. The most brutal desires are acted out in dreamlike scene. The most monstrous fears become envisioned reality. (Sokel 1959, p. 44) Wilfred Owen creates a dream – like world where we find two enemies as friends in his poem *Strange Meeting*. A soldier escapes from the battle through a tunnel and meets a dying German soldier. Some critics regard these two soldiers as two sides of Owen; his spiritual destiny and artistic vision. (Bloom 2004, p. 23) German Enemy in *Strange Meeting* represents the evil, man's alter ego or aggressive character of the psyche. This poem also laments about the loss of human identity. It condemns the spiritual as well as physical death of both society and an individual.

Through this dream – like experience the poet conveys a message that all the soldiers, including Wilfred Owen are ready to pay their lives in the service of human beings but not through bloodshed, wounds and causes of war. This is the untold truth, the reality that he wants to define. He arises many questions about the legacy that is going to be left for young generation. He has stressed that the young generation will not content on their 'spoiled', 'discontent' and 'boil bodies' in war. A new generation has no courage to stop all this nonsense. Edmund Blunden says that *Strange Meeting* is a dream. It is founded on the actuality of the tunneled trenches with muffled security and smoky dimness. It shows the rows of recruits painfully sleeping. The officers, sergeants and corporals attempt to wake them for duty. (Blunden 1958, p. 128)

Wilfred Owen has used dream – sequence in his poem, *A Terre* to show the desperate condition of an officer. The officer finds peace, no – where because of the wounds (both physical and psychological), he receives in a retreat. He finds peace in carefree and peaceful days that he spent at home. In nightmarish reality the imagination weaves and spins new patterns upon an insignificant background of real life events. It is a blend of experience, memories, pure inventions, improvisations and absurdities. Those who follow the author's thinking find some similarity between the life's unmanageable and motley canvas and apparent jumble of a dream. (Carlson 1983, p. 205) In *A Terre* the officer speaks:

Sit on the bed; I'm blind and three parts shell,

Be careful; can't shake hands now, never shall.

Both arms have mutinied against me ... brutes.

INTERPLAY OF PRESENT AND PAST:

Wilfred Owen has used interplay of past and present in this poem. For the soldier time is not linear but mingles into a single moment of rueful confusion and pain. His plans of past, present and future are collapsed and turn into empty dreams. These lines from the poem *A Terre* show this technique very effectively:

“Sit on the bed. I’m blind and three parts shell”. And
 A short life and a merry one, my buck!
 We used to say we’d hate to live dead – old,
 Yet now ... I’d willingly be puffy, bald,
 And patriotic.....

Rafati defines expressionism that in it an artist distorts reality to create an emotional effect. It is a subjective art form. (Rafati 2012, p. 118) Interplay of past, present and future is also present in these lines when the officer says:

My servant lamed, but listen how he shouts!
 When I’m lugged out, he’ll still be good for that.

To conclude, we can say that Wilfred Owen has participated in war. He died the same year, First World War ends. He sees the ultimate reality. He takes this reality to his readers by employing a very fantabulous tone. He remains calm while describing the bitter reality of life at front. He rejects all patriotic notions of bravery, valour and heroism by calling them old lies. He ends his one poem by saying: ‘the old lie: *Dulce et Decorum est* – pro patria mori’ (it is sweet and honorable to die for one’s country: an old lie). He writes about the physical anguish and injuries of soldiers.

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