

"CONSTITUTION OF MEANING IN WILFRED OWEN: A LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS"

*Dissertation Submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
award of the degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
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INDIA
1996**



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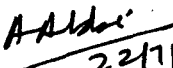
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CERTIFICATE

This dissertation entitled "CONSTITUTION OF MEANING IN WILFRED OWEN: A LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS" submitted by Mr. H. Shimreingam, for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy, is an original work and has not been submitted so far, in part or full, for any other degree or diploma of this or any other University.

We recommend that this Dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.


Prof. Kapil Kapoor
Supervisor


22/1/96
Dr. Anvita Abbi
Chairperson

Dedicated to
the revered memory of

MY FATHER,
Late H. WUNGNAOSHANG

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I must acknowledge the debt I owe to Prof. Kapil Kapoor, my supervisor, for his co-operation, advice, criticism and constant encouragement.

I am grateful to my family members especially my mother whose love, care and understanding constitute my strength. Also to my brothers and sisters who, to me, are my second parents - they met all my requirements and demands.

I thank the members of my local Church (Lanlungching Baptist Church, Imphal) whose constant prayers for me gave me strength and faith.

My thanks are due to the staff of J.N.U. Library, the British Council Library (New Delhi) and the Centre of Linguistics & English who co-operated with me and helped me in various ways during the course of writing this dissertation.

I also sincerely thank the following friends of mine whose concern I value: Onsing Marchang, Kanaso Shinglai, Paisho Keishing, the Kasar family, Rajnish Kumar Mishra, Somi Joseph, Shanti Kumar Meetei and various other friends and well-wishers who stood by me through thick and thin.

19th July, 1996

H. SHIMREINGAM

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BIOGRAPHICAL OUTLINE
WILFRED OWEN (1893-1918)

- 1893 18 March, Wilfred Edward Salter Owen (WO) born at Plas Wilmot, Oswestry, son of Tom and Susan Owen.
- 1900 11 June, WO starts school (in mid-term) at the Birkenhead Institute.
- 1906-7 Winter, Tom Owen appointed Assistant Superintendent, GW and LNER, Western Region; the family moves to 1 Cleveland Place, Underdale Road, Shrewsbury. WO starts at Shrewsbury Technical School.
- 1910 January, The family moves to Mahim, Monkmoor Road, Shrewsbury.
- August, WO and HO on holiday in Torquay, WO calls on Miss Christabel Coleridge, grand-daughter of the poet.
- 1911 April, WO again on holiday in Torquay; reads Sidney Colvin's Keats and visits Teignmouth.
- Summer, Works as a pupil-teacher at the Wyle Cop School, Shrewsbury, while preparing for matriculation examination. Visits British Museum to see Keats manuscripts. Hears he has matriculated, but not with honours.
- 1912 16 April, Arranges to take botany classes of University College, Reading, for six hours a week June Meets Miss Edith Morley, head of the English Department, University College.
- 1914 18 March, Twenty-first birthday.
- 25 July, Gives up job at the Belitz School.

- 4 August, War declared. French government moves to Bordeaux.
- 21 August, Meets the poet Laurent Tailhade.
- 1915 Early January, Channel considered unsafe. Invited to stay at Merignac until the spring.
- 1916 1 January, Home on week's leave.
- 27 February-5 March, Ten days' course in London; lodgings over the Poetry Bookshop.
- 4 June, Commissioned into the Manchester Regiment.
- 18 June, Reports to 5th (Reserve) Battalion, Manchester Regiment, at Milford Camp, near Witley, Surrey.
- 1917 1-2 January, Joins 2nd Manchesters on the Somme near Beaumont Hamel, in a rest area. Assumes command of 3 Platoon, A Coy.
- 1 September, 'Song of Songs' published in The Hydra.
- 13 October, Introduced by SS to Robert Graves, who is shown draft of 'Disabled'.
- 1918 26 January, 'Miners' publishers in the Nation.
- Mid-May, 'Song of Songs' published in The Bookman.
- 11 June, Request from Edith and Osbert Sitwell for poems to include in *Wheels* 1918.
- 15 June, 'Hospital Barge' and 'Futility' published in The Nation.

12-18 August, Embarkation leave; sees SS in hospital in London; spends evening with SS and Osbert Sitwell.

4 November, Killed in early morning on the canal bank.

11 November, News of WO's death reaches Shrewsbury. Armistice signed.

CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION: **OWEN AS POET**

INTRODUCTION: OWEN AS POET

Wilfred Edward Salter Owen was born in Oswestry on 18 March 1893. Wilfred inherited from his father the legend that they were descended from Baron Lewis Owen who, during the reign of Henry VIII, was Sheriff of Merionethshire. From his mother, whose father Edward Shaw had a long stint in public life and was elected to the office of Mayor of Oswestry in 1869. After the death of this Mayor of Oswestry, Tom Owen moved with his family to Birkenhead. Wilfred's mother Susan Owen was a devout lady and under her strong influence Wilfred grew into a serious and slightly priggish boy. At school in Birkenhead and later in Shrewsbury, he worked hard and successfully, especially at literature and botany. He had begun writing poems when he was ten or eleven, and fell under the spell of Keats, who was to remain the principal influence on his work. He matriculated at London University (but only with a pass) and took a job as pupil and lay reader to a Rev. Herbert Wigan but was not happy there, and in the summer of 1913 decided to go to France. He began as a teacher of English at the Berlitz School in Bordeaux but in July 1914 took the opportunity to become tutor to two boys in a Catholic family during which time he met and made friends with the French poet Laurent Tailhade, who gave him

intelligent encouragement in the poetry he was already beginning to write. While he was staying in Bordeaux, a visit to a hospital for the wounded soon opened his eyes to the true nature of war. He finally returned to England in 1915 and enlisted in the Artist's Rifles and was gazetted to the Manchester Regiment in June 1916 and sailed for France in December of the same year. After the Somme battles in 1917 he was invalided home and was sent to the Craiglockhart War Hospital, where he met Siegfried Sassoon and under his encouragement and guidance, Owen was soon producing poems far superior to any he had written before. Sassoon also introduced him to such other poets and novelists as Robert Graves, Arnold Bennet, H.G. Wells, and Osbelt Sitwell. He returned to his regiment in 1918 after being awarded the Military Cross for outstanding bravery and was killed in action a week before the Armistice while trying to get his men across the Sambre canal.

Wilfred Owen saw only five poems in print during his life time 'Song of Songs' in the The Hydra and the Bookman, 'The Next War' in the Hydra; 'Miners', 'Futility', and 'Hospital Barge' in The Nation.

Siegfried Sassoon who with the help of Edith Sitwell was the first to edit Owen's manuscript. Sassoon's 1920 edition of Owen's poems contained 23 poems and fragments,

and a 24th was added for the 1921 reissue. Edmund Blunden's 1931 edition added 35 more, and 1963, C. Day Lewis in his The collected poems added a further 19. The present poems selected for study are taken from Jon Stallworthy's The Poems of Wilfred Owen (1990) which includes Owen's 103 poems and 13 fragments. Owen's poem concerned with war are grouped under three heads. First, there are poems in which nature is the dominant element:

'Exposure' (February 1917), 'Anthem for Doomed Youth' (September 1917), 'Miners' (October 1917), 'Asleep' (November 1917), 'The Show' (November 1917), 'Hospital Barge at Cirisy' (December 1917), and 'The Last Laugh' (February 1978). Secondly, the Sassoon-like poems protesting against the war, in which anger, satire, or irony is especially directed against its continuation and thus, directed also at the civilian who seems to have little understanding of war's horrors: 'Le Christianisme' (April 1917), 'The Dead-Beat' (August 1917), 'Dulce et Decorum Est' (October 1917), 'Soldier's Dream' (October 1917), 'Wild with all Regrets' (December 1917), 'The Last Laugh' (February 1918), 'A Terre' (April 1918), 'Mental Cases' (May 1918), 'The Sentry' (September 1918), 'Spring Offensive' (September 1918), 'Smile, Smile, Smile' (September 1918), 'The Leterr', 'Conscious' (May 1917), 'Disabled' (October 1917), 'The

Chances', 'S.I.W.', 'Inspection'.

'The Parable of the Old Man and the Young', 'At a Calvary near the Ancre', 'On Seeing a Piece of our Artillery Brought into Action', 'The Next War'.

Thirdly, poems whose originating impulse is compassion or pity:

'Anthem for Doomed Youth' (September 1917), 'Miners' (October 1917), 'Asleep' (November 1917), 'The Calls' (June 1918), 'The Send-Off' (1918), 'Greater Love', 'Strange Meeting'.

Finally, poems which do not fit this division: 'Apologia pro Poemate Meo' (November 1917), 'Insensibility' (March 1918), 'Futility' (June 1918).¹

Poetry of the First World War

This dissertation is about the writing of the young English soldier poets who fought during the First World War and who expressed what they saw and felt on the Western Front. Interestingly, we may note that this was the first war in which ordinary educated English civilians took part either by voluntary enlistment or later conscription. The Military Service Act of 1916 required every unmarried man of

1. See, Jon Silkin, Out of Battle. The Poetry of the Great War, O.U.P., London, 1972, pp.206-207.

military age to choose one of the two courses:

- (1) he can enlist at once;
- (2) he can attest at once under the Group System and if he does neither, a third course awaits him; he will be deemed to have enlisted under the Military Service Act. The Napoleonic Wars were fought by professional armies as was the Crimean War. The first major modern war in which educated civilians were involved was the American Civil War, but no Englishmen were involved, or at any rate no articulate Englishmen.²

The ordinary educated Englishmen went to war along with the professional soldiers but, unlike the professional soldiers who were steeled by the unquestioning spirit of discipline and obedience, they became acutely sensitive and vulnerable to the brutality and futility of war. Moreover, they were inclined to express their thoughts and feelings in verse.

During the war years, that is between 1914 and 1918, hundreds war poets saw their work in print.

We may also note the pre-war mood: poets often advocate the heroic vision of a struggle for the right, of noble

2. John Lehmann, The English Poets of the First World War, W. Clowes (Beccles) Ltd., Great Britain, 1982, Intro., p.7.

sacrifice for the ideal of patriotism and country. But right from the start of the war the mood has changed and the war poets wrote of what they saw and felt. Martin Stephen says about the war poets: "For many people the anguish and the truth about the First World War are forever symbolised by the work of Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon, Isaac Rosenberg, and other famous 'trench poets'. So great is the association that, in Britain at least, the term 'war poets' can only mean the poets of the Great War."³

John Lehmann pointed out about this war: "It became a war of attrition, in which huge offensive were planned, again and again, and failed, at a shattering cost in material and lives. The carnage and suffering were ceaseless and to those taking part with rifle and bomb, increasingly pointless and full of horror."⁴

The pre-war period saw a literary movement known as "Georgian Poetry" coined and edited by Edward Marsh then secretary to Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty. To be more precise, Georgian years were from 1911 to 1922 when a series of anthologies were published during the reign of King George V. Edward Marsh introduces the Georgian

3. Martin Stephen, Never Such Innocent. A New Anthology of Great War Verse, Buchan & Enright Publishers, London, 1988, p.6.

4. John Lehmann, op. cit., p.9.

Poetry with the remarks that "English poetry is now once again putting on a new strength and beauty... we are at the beginning of another 'Georgian period', which may take rank in due time with the several great poetic ages of the past."⁵ The authors represented are Abercrombie, Bottomley, Brooke, Chesterton, Davies, de La Mare, Drinkwater, Flecker, Gibson, D.H. Lawrence, Masefield, Monro, Sturge Moore, Ronald Ross, E.B. Sargant, Stephens and R.C. Trevelyan.

Nature was the favourite subject of the Georgians and they wrote about the English farms and fields, birds and beasts, with care and delight. But the Georgians were regarded as bad poets. Robert H. Ross shows that ambitious adjective 'Georgian' which 'had been applied proudly by Marsh in 1912 to mean "new" 'modern", "energetic" had by 1922', come to connote only "old fashioned", "outworn", or "worse". Eliot and Pound thought that the Georgians had nothing to contribute to the development of modern English poetry. In 1934, C-Day Lewis in A Hope for Poetry called the Georgian poets, "a sadly pedestrian rabble" and further wrote about the disappearance of the Georgian Poetry from the literary scene: "The winds blew, the floods came: for a

5. Edward Thomas (ed.), Georgian Poetry 1911-1912, The Critical Heritage, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1977, p.67.

moment a few of them showed on the crest of the seventh great wave; then they were rolled under and nothing marks their graves. One only rode the whirlwind: Wilfred Owen, killed on the Sambre Canal, spoke about the barrage and the gas-cloud, saying to us, The poetry is in the pity."

Most Georgians found to their cost that they were becoming inflexible. War poetry and pastoral poetry alike were too narrow for the poets, ways of excluding too much of human experience. Robert Graves has always been an explorer. He found another way out. He dismissed the output of a whole decade as youthful enthusiasm and removed virtually all his early work, the Georgian and the military together, from his reprinted collections. As the Great War started, the Georgian Poetry which mainly dwelt on the themes of peace and security was left out for the shocking conditions of trench warfare on the Western Front by a negative psychological reaction. If the epic glorified primitive combat as a heroic occupation and a test of individual worth, and the notion of dying in the battlefield as the greatest sacrifice a man could make for his country, the poets of the First World War made it clear that a man could no longer depend on his personal courage or strength for victory or even survival; mechanization, the increased size of armies, the intensification of operations, and the scien-

tific efficiency of long-distance weapons destroyed the every elements of human individuality: courage, hope, enterprise, and a sense of heroic possibilities in moral and physical conflict.⁶

Tennyson in spite of his great talents was accused of being a poet of no insight. Tennyson who sings of the patriotic fortitude of the English crew in the charge of the light Brigade that remains intact in spite of their loss. But it tells us nothing about the fears of the men, and nothing about their courage either.⁷ But his poem Maud, although its subject is not war, creates an attitude, and one that is to be thought of as representing a kind of thought prevailing then. Tennyson examines the moral condition of the country and concludes that if any possible solution is not in sight then it would be better to go to war to purify the moral sickness:

And chalk and alum and plaster are sold to the poor for
bread,
And the spirit of murder works in every means of
life...
(Maud I, i, X)

And he proposes war thus:

Is it peace or war? better, war! loud war by land and
by sea,

6. John H. Johnston, English Poetry of the First World War, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1964, p.10.

7. Jon Silkin, op. cit., p.26.

warfare, Isaac Rosenberg's "Dead Man's Dump" depicts the pitiable degradation of the slain...."⁹

Amid such conditions a mood of bitter disillusionment was inevitable; this attitude, of course, provided the poetry of World War I with its major themes and materials.

The soldier-poet, indeed, was seldom inclined to take such liberties; he felt it his special role - even his obligation - to see and portray the war as a starkly contemporaneous event. His material was the reality of the war as personal experience revealed it to him and the unadorned expression or communication of that reality was his urgent concern.

The reactions of different poets of the world war vary ranging from the romantic idealism of Rupert Brooke through the pathos of Owen to a nightmare of horror, bitter disillusionment and indignation of Siegfried Sassoon. The English poetry of the First World War can be divided into two phases: the early phase, from the outbreak of war to about 1916, the time of the Battle of the Somme and the later phase, from 1916 to 1918 and the Armistice. The two phases were very different in mood. Poets of the first phase were Julian Grenfell, Rupert Brooke, Robert Nichols.

Rupert Brooke, the romantic figure was born of a Rugby

9. John H. Johnston, op. cit., pp.10-11.

housemaster on 3 August 1887. He attended his father's school in 1901 where he had a reputation as both a scholar and an athlete. From Rugby, he went to Ming's College, Cambridge where "he was regarded as one of the leading intellectuals of the day; he was absorbed into poetry, dramatics, and literary discussion".¹⁰ Brooke's first volume of poems, *Poems* (1911) appeared in December. He had also been instrumental in launching with Marsh the series of Georgian Poetry which made such a mark on the times. Brooke by this time had had an unhappy love affair, and a serious nervous break down as a result of it. He travelled to Europe in 1912 in search of peace of mind and wrote his famous 'The Old Vicarage, Grantchester in Germany'. He went to America and Canada, which he described in letters published in the West-minster Gazette.

Brooke returned to England in June 1924 on the very eve of the war and joined the Anson Battalion on September 27, Brooke's sonnets are "War Sonnets", "The Soldier", especially in the sense that they are vehicles for imperialist attitudes. Brooke wrote to Violet Asquith as he learned that he was being sent with Royal Naval Division to Gallipoli: "I've never been quite so happy in my life, I think.

10. Ibid., p.25.

Not quite so persuasively happy; like a stream flowing entirely to one end'. Jon Silkin wrote about the patriotic attitude of Brooke thus: "The tragic meaning possible here is of an unconscious adherence to public service and death, used to dissolve those personal problems with which he had been racked."¹¹ But "Brooke was perhaps not intelligent enough to have grasped the possible dimensions to learn from the experience, even when immersed in it."¹² I.A. Richards viewed Brooke's poetry as "no inside" and Vivian de Sola Pinto pointed out that Brooke was "a wonderful accomplished versifier" and further says that "his mind remained to the end that of a clever public schoolboy." In spite of the criticism which came from the fellow-soldiers and fellow-poets for his sonnets, Churchill wrote a fulsome obituary in *The Times* when Brooke died in the Aegean, which accelerated the growth of the Rupert Brooke legend.

Edmund Blunden was born in 1896, Kent, and attended Christ's Hospital, London. In 1914 he gained the senior classics scholarship at Queen's College, Oxford and privately printed two pamphlets of verse: *Poems* and *Poems Translated from the French*. Edmund enlisted in 1914 as a temporary 2nd Lieutenant in the 11th Royal Sussex Regiment and crossed

11. Jon Silkin, *op. cit.*, p.67.

12. *Ibid.*, p.68.

to France. In the valley of the Ancre and around Thiepval Wood Blunden experienced some of the most violent fighting of the war. In November, however, his unit was moved north to the Ypres salient, where it remained for an over a year. He was awarded the Military Cross for bravery and was transferred in 1918 to a training centre in England.

Edmund writes of nature and war. The most characteristic qualities of Blunden's poetry are derived from the themes and traditions of eighteenth-century pastoral verse. He takes delight in simple observation, evocation of a wide range of rural scenes, sensitivity to the rhythms and harmonies of nature.¹³

Significantly, for Blunden the tender rural memory and the experience of war are inalienable from each other.

Johnston writes: "Most war poets found their sensibilities harried and warped by battlefield scenes; for them truth was no longer beauty but ugliness, and ugliness was a truth that must be communicated at all costs. Blunden, however, retains his intellectual and imaginative poise, his senses are alert for beauty as well as danger and horror." Although, Blunden writes about war, he does not transform nature and he maintains his sensitive relationship

13. John H. Johnston, op. cit., p.117.

with nature. Blunden describes himself in the last sentence of *Undertones of War*: 'a harmless young shepherd in a soldier's coat'. Johnston in his penetrating study of Blunden draws a conclusion: "...there is no satire in Blunden's work" a remark which speaks volumes about Edmund Blunden.

Siegfried Sassoon, born in 1886 came from a well-to-do family on his father's side but his father having left his wife when Siegfried was five, he was brought up by his mother. He was educated at Marlborough and Cambridge. In 1906 he privately published his poems and he began to move in literary circles and by August 1914 was acquainted with writers like Edmund Gosse and Eddie Marsh, Rubert Brooke and W.H. Davies. Soon he began to contribute to the Georgian anthologies. Soon he found himself restive and unhappy. He enlisted in the Yeomanry two days before the war broke out and was sent to France. His first wartime poems show his ingrained love of the countryside, his belief in England's cause and the sense of 'fighting for our freedom'.

But the war gave a sever jolt to Sassoon. The Battle of the Somme removed the last vestiges of patriotism, and he began to write poems, bitter, satirical and as he has said himself deliberately written to disturb complacency. Sassoon wanted to show that war was a fact for which the poli-

ticians were responsible. Therefore his poetry had the twin aims of showing the suffering of the war-victims, and lashing out at the insensitive "brass hats" and the civilians who caused it. "They" embodies a vigorous attack on the ignorance, false optimism and hypocrisy of the Anglican Church at home:

The Bishop tells us: `When the boys come back
They will not be the same; for they'll have fought
`In a just cause....'
`We're none of us the same!' the boys reply.
`For George lost both his legs; and Bill's stone blind;
Poor Jim's shot through the lungs and like to die;
And Bert's gone syphilitic: you'll not find
`A chap who's served that hasn't found some change'.

And the Bishop said:

`The ways of God are strange!'

Sassoon was trying hard to present the great division that grew between the fighting soldiers and the civilians which in fact, led to a greater loyalty and fraternity among the soldiers themselves. During his period of convalescence at Craiglockhart, Sassoon remembers his soldier friends:

In bitter safety I awoke, unfriended;
And while the dawn begins with slashing rain
I think of the Battalion in the mind.
When are you going out to them again?
Are they not still your brothers through our blood?

(Sick-leave)

Sassoon becomes the most articulate spokesman for the mood of protest and rejection that animates the later poetry of the war. Sassoon's aggressive realism constitute a

second stage in the development of World War I poetry and the problems he confronted were the problems confronted by all the poets as they sought to communicate some of the catastrophic effects of the struggle.¹⁴

OWEN AS A WAR-POET

Owen's second editor, Edmund Blunden writes: "He was, apart from Mr. Sassoon, the greatest of the English War poets". Owen had begun writing Poems at an early age of ten or eleven. In the beginning Keats and Tennyson were his models but it was his meeting with Sassoon, a man seven years senior to him and already an established poet at Craiglockhart Hospital and the friendship which blossomed between the two made Owen a war-poet. From this meeting (i.e. August 1917) Sassoon became Owen's idol or hero. Owen writes to Sassoon in November 1917 thus: "...I held you as Keats+Christ+Elijah+my Colonel+my father+Confessor+Amenophis IV in profile. What is that mathematically?... If you consider what the above names have severely done for me, you will know what you are doing. And you have fixed my life however short." With the encouragement and guidance of Sassoon, Owen started producing poems far superior to any he

14. Ibid., p.78.

had written before. His letter of 22nd September 1917 refers to "my recent efforts in Sassoon's manner." By Sassoon's manner he means the bitterly satiric tone of Sassoon's poetry. Owen's efforts of "Sassoon's manner" may be grouped as follows:

S.I.W., Disabled, Dluce et Decorum est, the Dead-Beat, The Parable of the Old and the Young, The Chances, Mental Cases, A Terre, Inspection, and Asleep. We can also note the similarity between the lines of Owen's poem 'Mental Cases' and that of Sassoon's 'Suicide in Trenches':

Memory fingers in their hair of murders
Treading blood from lungs that had loved laughter.

- Mental Cases.

You Smug-faced crowds with kindling eye
Who cheer when soldier lads march by,
Sneak home and pray you' will never know.
The hell where youth and laughter go.

- Suicide in Trenches.

Owen combined Keats's apprehension of sound and vision to Sassoon's horror of war, in 'Spring Offensive':

Marvelling they stood, and watched the long grass swild
By the May breeze, murmurous with wasp and midge,
For though the summer oozed into their veins
Like an injected drug for their bodies' pains.
.....
.....
Hours after hour they ponder the warm field.
And the far valley behind, where the butter cup
Had blessed with gold their slow boots
Where even the little brambles would not yield,
But clutched and clung to them like sorrowing hands,
They breath like trees unstirred.

The second and third lines show a resemblance to Keats's "Ode to Autumn" but Owen uses the beautiful setting in a different vein, elaborating an ironic scene-setting for the horror and destruction of the soldiers.

Robert Graves in a letter to Owen in 1917 suggested that "for God's sake cheer up and write more optimistically". In reply Owen sent one of his greatest Poems, 'Apologie Pro Poemate Meo' in which his irony, his uncompromising realism and his compassionate fellow-feeling with the sufferings of the soldiers he led and amongst whom he lived in the midst of the fighting are expressed as a counterpoint to and transposition of the merriment that Graves appeared to be looking for.¹⁵

Owen came to see the real picture of war during his medical treatment at Craiglockhart Hospital and his sense of comradeship with his fellow soldiers and his anger was showered upon the indifference civilians who prolonged the war made him remark in his August 18 letter: "I wish the Boche would pluck to come right in and make a clean sweep of the pleasure boats, and the promenaders on the Spa, and all the stinking Leeds and Bradford War-profiters now reading John Bull on Scarborough sands." Owen, in his Poem, 'Insen-

15. John Lehmann, op. cit., p.60.

sibility' attacks on the callousness of the politicians and civilians at home and cursed for their indifference and stupidity:

But cursed are the dollards whom no cannon stuns,
That they should be as stones;
Wretched are they, and mean
With Dancity that never was simplicity.

In A Terre, Owen who himself was awarded Military Cross expresses the uselessness of military honours or decorations which for him are nothing but a mockery.

I have my medals? - Discs to make eyes close
My glorious ribbons? - Ripped from my own back
In scarlet shreds. (That's for your poetry book)

Unlike the traditional romantic poetry which was blind to the realities of the war and showed a false picture by glorifying war and death in the war for the sake of the country, Owen was writing a new kind of poetry which was in fact an anti-war poetry, like Sorley whose sympathy and admiration for the people of Germany and the country did not help him to hate the Germans. Sorley in his last sonnet writes:

Victor and vanquished are a-One-in death:
Coward and brave: friend, foe.

In a similar vein Owen brings about a compromise between the former enemies though in Hell and restores the broken thread of universal brotherhood in 'Strange Meeting':

"I am the enemy you killed, my friend
.....

Yesterday, through me as you jabbed and killed
I parride: but my hands were loathe and cold
Let us sleep now...."

In 1917 Owen's religious ideals had undergone a drastic change and he came to learn that one of Christ's important messages was 'Passivity at any price', and as the time rolled by, he realised a direct resemblance between the passive suffering of soldiers and that of Christ. He wrote to Osbert Sitwell in 1918: "For 14 hours yesterday I was at work-teaching Christ to lift his cross by numbers, and how to adjust his crown, and not imagine he thirst till after the last halt. I attended his supper to see that there were no complaints; and inspected his feet that they should be worthy of the nails. I see to it that he is dumb and stands at attention before his accusors. With a piece of silver I buy him every day, and with maps I make him familiar with the topography of Golgotha."

But the "Christ-soldier", whose sufferings are utterly meaningless compare to Christ whose suffering and death redeemed mankind. Owen said about the Christ-soldier:

And though your hands be Pale,
Paler are all which trail
Your cross through frame and hail:
Weep, you may weep, for you may touch them not.



C. Day Lewis writes: "...it is Owen, I believe, whose poetry came home deepest to my generation, so that we could never again think again of war as anything but a vile, if

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necessary, evil."¹⁶ He further gives his opinion about Owen: "His (Owen's) war poems... seem to me certainly the finest written by any English poet of the First War and probably the greatest poems about war in our literature... Looking once again at his poetry, thirty-five years after I first read it, I realize how much it has become part of my life and thinking so much so that I could hardly attempt dispassionate criticism of it. Now, as then, I find Owen's War poetry most remarkable for its range of feeling and for the striking power of individual lines. "He's lost his colour very far from here" would stand out even in a play by Shakespeare or Webster: "Was it for this clay grew tall?" has a Sophoclean magnificent and simplicity. Ranging from the visionary heights of *Strange Meeting* or *The Show* to the brutal, close-up realism of *Mental Cases* or *The Dead-Beat*, from the acrid indignation of such poems as *Dulce Et Dicorum Est* to the unsentimental pity of *Futility* or *Conscious* and from the lyricism of *The Send-Off* to the nervous dramatic energy we find in *Spring Offensive*, the war poems reveal Owen as a poet superbly equipped in technique and temperament alike."¹⁷

16. C. Day Lewis, The Collected Poems of Wilfred Owen, Chatto and Windus, London, 1963, Intro. pp.11-12.

17. *Ibid.*, pp.27-28.

Owen had expressed the sense of indignation and pity so fully in his works that the succeeding poets of the Second World War like Keith Douglas looked upon him for an inspiration. In fact, when the Second World War broke out, "the modern poet had no illusions about it, thanks to the poets of the First World War."¹⁸

18. A. Banerjee, Spirit Above Wars: A Study of the English Poetry of the Two World Wars, The Macmillan Press Ltd., London, 1976, p.8.

CHAPTER - II

OWEN'S THEMES

OWEN'S THEMES

Owen writes in his 'Preface':

"Above all I am not concerned with Poetry.
My subject is war, and the pity of War.
The poetry is in the pity."

And the dominant theme of Owen's poetry is -

'The pity of war, the pity war distilled.'

As a military officer engaged in the trench warfare on the Western Front he had first hand experience of the brutalities of the modern warfare, of its 'horrible', 'beastliness'; he saw with his own eyes how the youthful soldiers were ruthlessly killed by the enemy fire on the threshold of their 'undone years'. He realised that there was nothing noble about war, and everything in it was horrible and beastly. John Lehmann in his study of Owen has said: "Owen appears to have thought of his poems as manifestos, truthful reports on what was happening at the Front far deeper in their revelation than anything the war correspondents could or would write.... Owen wanted to stir compassion at its deepest levels for what was going on every day in the war areas, to make the public ask itself what end

the unceasing casualties - on both sides - were serving."¹

The first poem in which Owen expresses a deeply felt reaction to the war is the sonnet entitled "Happiness" which was not written until January 1917, the month of his arrival in France. Here the poet contrasts the innocent happiness of boyhood with the deeper joys and sorrows of experience - in this case the morality dubious experience of war. As he wrote from Craiglockhart on August 8, 1917, "Not before 1917 did I write the only lines of mine that carry the stamp of maturity - these:

But the old happiness is unreturning,
Boys have no grief as grievous as youth's yearning;
But have no sadder than our hope."

"Exposure", Owen's first important war poem, seems to be a particularization of the transforming experiences only hinted at in "Happiness". "Exposure" was written in February 1917. The theme of 'Exposure' is developed in terms of a paradox. The force of personal experience and awakened perception is visible in both form and content. "Owen is no longer the observer, as he is in "The Seed"; he is a participant who seeks some meaning for his own and others' suffering. He finds meaning, apparently, in the orthodox Chris-

1. John Lehmann, The English Poets of the First World War, W. Clowes (Beccles) Ltd., Great Britain, 1982, p.55.

tian concept of penance and expiation."²

In *Smile, Smile, Smile*, Owen shows how the 'half-limbed' soldiers were deceived by the politicians at home who made false promises; 'cheap homes not yet planned' which they would enjoy after the war was over. The soldiers were most painfully aware, at their own costs, how utterly false, how far from the truth, this newspaper version of the War and of the lot of the soldiers on the Western Front war. But every week on their front pages of the newspapers flashed the pictures of their broad smiles which deceived the innocent readers at home with the remark:

'How they smile! They are happy now, poor things.'

In his poem Owen 'speaks as a soldier, with perfect and certain knowledge of war at grips with the soldier'. His descriptions of the unimaginably filthy conditions of the dug-outs, the trench-life and the trench warfare as in *The Sentry* and *S.I.W.* which present his first-hand experience at the Western Front. *The Sentry*, for instance, presents a realistic picture of trench - a veritable dugeon - with all its squalid condition waist-high water and mud rising hour by hour as it rains and 'choking up the steps too thick with clay to climb' the dark air inside giving off offensive

2. John H. Johnston, English Poetry of the First World War, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1964, pp.172-173.

smell made all the more offensive -

With fumes of whizz-bangs, and the smell of men
Who'd lived there years, and left their curse in the
den,
If not their corpses...

S.I.W. (i.e. Self-Inflicted Wound) deals with the suicide of a soldier who was unable to bear the precarious existence amidst the horrid conditions of his trench-life.

Owen dwells the theme of human tragedy most powerfully in 'Futility'. The English soldier was killed before the day-break by an enemy bullet on the Western Front. This tragic and meaningless waste of youthful life which war brings about on a large scale, is what pains Owen most. Owen sought to redeem his experience by a poetic dedication to the task of interpreting the very misery and horror from which he recoiled and which in the end claimed his life. Unlike Brooke who had defined the early idealistic attitude, Owen defined the compassionate attitude which could be thought or felt during the latter half of the war. Though he writes out of the profound personal disillusion inspired by modern technological violence and its effects on the human spirit, his poetry transcends the moods and issues of wartime disillusionment. It is in this sense that Owen raises the lyric poetry of World War I to its highest and most nearly tragic level.

In "Dulce et Decorum Est" Owen invites the reader to share his experience in seeing the agonies of the gassed and dying soldier:

If in some smothering dreams, you too could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin.
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Bitter as the cud.
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desparate glory,
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est.
Propatria mori.

Unlike the traditional romantic poetry which was blind to the realities of the war and showed a false picture by glorifying war and death in the war for the sake of the country, Owen was writing a new kind of war poetry which was in fact anti-war poetry.

In "Greater Love" Owen presents the passionate love of a soldier for his fellow soldiers which was greater than the love between man and woman greater than the love of God. In the final stanza of the poem the modern soldier's sacrificial role is identified with that of Christ.³ Collins writes: "Greater Love, the most passionately perfect of all the poems of the war, declared that no love of beauty of beloved woman could be compared with the love and beauty

3. Ibid., p.193.

these English soldiers".⁴

In the preface, Owen says: "All a poet can do to-day is warn" and writes a letter to his mother on 4 (or 5th) October 1918: "I came out in order to help these boys - directly, by leading them as well as an officer can; indirectly by watching their sufferings that I may speak of them as well as a pleader can. I have done the first." As Owen was a good letter writer and most of his letters have their poetic counterpart. The last stanza of his "And I Must Go".

I heard the sighs of men, that have no skill
To speak of their distress, no, nor the will!
A voice I know. And I must go.

The idea behind Owen's writing poetry was to express the sufferings and agonies of the soldiers on the battle field.

Owen writes "Apologia Pro Poemate Meo" (i.e. an apology for any poetry) in November 1917. He felt duty bound to convey to his readers the truth, - the truth of war as he writes in his preface: "That is why the true Poets must be truthful":

I, too, saw God through mud,
The mind that cracked on cheeks when wretches smiled.
War brought more glory to their eyes than blood,
And gave their laughs more glee than shakes a child....
And witnessed exultation,
Faces that used to curse me, scowl to scowl,
Shine and life up with passion of oblation,
Seraphic for an hour; though they were foul.

4. A.S. Collins, English Literature of the Twentieth Century, London, 1959, Chap.IV, p.52.

Owen's purpose of writing this poem is, like in his other poems, to expose the false assumptions of the public at home. The poet wants both the politicians and civilians at home to know the suffering of the soldiers in the battle field.

The theme of futility of the soldiers' sacrifice is dealt in his poem, 'Strange Meeting'. The two dead soldiers meet in Hell:

And by his smile, I knew that sullen hall,
By his dead smile I knew we stood in Hell."

The enemy was a German conscript and from him the poet heard that he had 'courage' and the wisdom not to go in the war, but he was conscripted and informed the poet that he was reluctant to kill the poet (My hands were loath, and cold) but he 'jabbed and killed' the poet the previous day. Therefore, he could not convey the truth he had experienced:

"I mean the truth untold,
The pity of war, the war distilled."

Due to the ignorance of the peoples of the world the truth of war, greater destruction and calamity will come in the near future:

"Now men will go content with what we spoiled,
Or, discontent, boil body, and be spilled.
They will be swift with swiftness of the tigress.
None will break ranks, though nations trek from
progress."

It was this fear which compells Owen to write in his

'Preface'. That 'all a poet can do today is warn'. As the world did not pay any attention to his warning, the world tumbled into the holocaust of another devastating war - Owen's crusade against war proved to be ineffective and the feeling of pity degenerates into a sense of pathos when the tragic spectacle, out of which it arises, is one of unrelied gloom. Unfortunately Owen's profound capacity to feel 'pity' increased his need for objects of such pity,⁵ Owen was different from the romantic poets who glorified war and the notion of dying in the battle field as the greatest sacrifice a man could make for his country. As he wanted to tell the truth about war, he wanted to go back to the battle front, after he had recovered from his injuries: "It was not despair, it was more terrible than terror, for it was a blindfold look, and without expression, like a dead rabbit's. It will never be painted, and no actor will ever seize it. And to describe it, I think I must go back and be with them."⁶ Owen, in the last year of the war, and perhaps his own life, was so much obsessed by the horrors of war, so he was unable to find any possible alternative for the

5. A. Banerjee, Spirit Above Wars, Macmillan Ltd., London, 1976, p.60.

6. C. Day Lewis (ed.), The Collected Poems of Wilfred Owen, Chatto and Windus, London, 1963, p.173.

soldiers who were doomed to meaningless suffering. In 'Spring Offensive' Owen deals with the soldiers going in the battle fields, realise that they have come to the end of the world', and the beautiful nature imagery before the offensive:

Marvelling they stood, and watered the long grass
swirled.
By the May breeze, murmurous with wasp and midge,
For though the summer oozed into their veins
Like an injected drug for their bodies' pains.
But nature changes the moment they enter the battle
ground:
And instantly the whole sky burned
With fury against them, earth set sudden cups
In thousands for their blood; and the green slope
Chasmed and steepened sheer to infinite space.

In the final line of the poem the poet asks:

"Why speak not they of comrades that went under?"

Nature which symbolises the peaceful ordered world looks terrifying now in the eyes of the poet. The 'warm fields' and the buttercup 'blessed with gold' which are the symbols of happy aspects of life, change as the soldiers enter the battle field and even the little brambles cling to them "like sorrowing hands". The imagery of the battle field changes: the sky burns 'with fury', 'the golden buttercup turn into thirsting for blood, and the green slope is chasmed'.

Harold Owen, brother biographer of Wilfred remember which occurred two or three years before the outbreak of the

war, while the Owen family was returning home from Uffington church one summer night across the grass. In the darkness Harold's boots were completely covered with buttercup petals, in the darkness they glowed like gold which drew the attention of Owen and he tells his father "Harold's boots are blessed with gold". Citing this incident, Harold has remarked:

"Six or seven years later, under what different circumstances, Wilfred was to write the lines in *Spring Offensive*."⁷

And the far valley behind, where the buttercup
Had blessed with gold their slow boots coming up.

His present experience, in the context of the war, of the sight of his own boots and his comrades having been covered with the yellow buttercup petals, while they were travelling across "the far valley", at once revived his memory of the past incident of Harold's boots having been covered with the yellow buttercup petals while the family was crossing some meadows.

In the present situation nature imagery "warm fields", "buttercup", "little brambles" which gave the poet once some admiration, became most terrifying as the soldiers enter the battlefield. The imagery of the battlefield changes. The

7. Harold Owen, Journey from Obscurity (The Memoirs of the Owen family), 3 vols. (1963, 1964, 1965), Chap. VIII, pp.176-177.

sky "burns with fury", "the golden buttercup" turn into thirsting for blood, the green sloped is "chasmed".

In the final lines Owen asks:

"Why speak not they of comrades that went under?"

The few who survived could not speak for the dead soldiers as they were besmirched "blood over their souls", the buttercups become receptacles for blood, not givers of benison.⁸ Owen knew well that those who sacrifice their life for their country did so without dignity. That is why whenever he was home on leave he carried with him photographs of disabled and killed soldiers and, he would produce the photographs whenever any conversion glorifying, soldiers' sacrifice took place. In the Poem 'Asleep' a soldier who was killed lies with the contrast picture of the romantic lie conceived by the politician at home. The dead soldier after his death was shown lying in the battlefield:

There heaved a quaking
Of the aborted life within him leaping,
Then chest and sleep arms once more fell slack.
And soon the slow, stray blood came creeping
From the intrusive lead, like ants on track.

The tragic condition of the dead soldier may attract ants which becomes most horrifying.

Owen further continues:

8. D.S.R. Welland, Wilfred Owen: A Critical Study, Chatto and Windus, London, 1960, p.82.

Whether his deeper sleep lie shaded by shaking
Of great wings,
Or whether yet his thin and sodden head
Confuses more and more with the low mould,
His hair being one with the grey grass.
Who knows? Who knows? Who troubles? Let it pass!
He sleeps. He sleeps less tremulous, less cold,
Than we who must awake, and waking, say Alas!

The poet wonders whether the soldier, in his 'danger sleep' is conscious of 'the shaking of the great wings' and of 'the thoughts that hung the stars', while he lies in heaven on 'calm pillows of God's making'. But in actuality, the dead soldier's body is slowly decomposed and merged with the grass of the battle field. That is why in the last three lines beginning with a string of questions and ending in a simple hypocritical 'alas' of the people, there is a very pungent though subdued satiric glance at the stupidity, indifference, and hypocrisy of the 'Nations at home', which deliberately shut their eyes against the inhuman slaughter of the soldiers on the Western Front or, show their superficial sympathy for the victims of the War.

The effects of war on survivors, wounded, maimed, and those doomed to early death or the asylum are exposed and examined in 'A Terre', 'Disabled', 'Mental Cases' and 'The Chances'. In 'Wild with all Regrets' in its later version and in 'A Terre', Owen attacks those who preach cheap patriotism and proclaim the glory of war. He further exposes the hollowness and mockery of the laurels in the battlefield.

The poem starts with humorous note that soon turns into ironic and satirical. The officer's old romantic view of nature is now completely shattered: by his actual experience of its horrors and brutality. Now he realises from his first hand experiences that there is no heroism in the death of a soldier and dying for one's country is not necessarily an act of courage but it is absolutely meaningless:

I tried to peg out soldierly, - no use!
One dies of war like any old disease.
And the soldiers' philosophy of life is changed now
from his forever one: he hated "to live dead old".
Yet now... I'd willingly be puffy, bald.
And patriotic.

He no longer admires the military honours or glories which are nothing but a mockery:

I have my medals? - Discs to make my eyes close.
My glorious ribbons? - Ripped from my own back.
In scarlet shreds. (That's for your poetry book.)

The officer resent the fact that his superior social status cannot purchase himself even as partially a handicap as his servant has. He would gladly exchange his status for his servants' bodily wholeness:

I'd like to kneel and sweep his floors for ever, -
 (Wild with all Regrests)

and

How well I might have swept his floors for ever.
I'd ask no nights off when the bustle's over,
Enjoying so dirt.

(A Terre)

In 'Disabled', Owen deals with the theme of an invalid

soldier whose legs are amputated and has to depend on the kindness of others but is treated with neglect. The soldier is completely shattered morally and his youthful dreams or ambitions are also completely shattered. In his pre-war periods when he was a hero in the football ground:

One time he liked a blood-smear down his leg,
After the matches, carried should-high,
It was after football, when he'd drunk a peg
He thought he'd better join - He wonders why.

Owen enlarges on his motive - it is pride that imagines it will do as well on the one field as the other; pride excited by drinks, and the presence of his woman:⁹

Someone had said he'd look a god in kilts,
That's why; and may be, too, to please his Meg...

The soldiers' legs amputated which effected a permanent sexual incapacity and also the procreative principle:

Now he will never feel again how slim
Girls' waists are, or how warm their subtle hands;
All of them touch him like queer disease.

The soldier's present condition of amputated legs exposes the reality of male vanity:

To-night he noticed how the women's eyes
Passed from him to the strong men that were whole.

Judging on the motives of his joining the army must be really harsh and the feeling of being morally shattered and his present condition of being disabled arouses compassion.

9. Jon Silkin, Out of Battle. Poetry of the Great War, OUP, London, 1972, p.227.

Silkin describes the narrow mindedness of the women who sent them to the battlefield by garlanding them; 'They want their heroes, but they want them whole'.¹⁰

'Mental Cases' (which is changed from the title "The Derranged") was inspired by his stay at Craiglockhart. Sassoon also dealt with the same theme in his poem, 'Survivors'. Mental Cases deal with the survivors whose physical mutilations and distortions made them mad.

- Thus their hands are....
Snatching after us who smote them, brother,
Pawing us who dealt them war and madness.

Owen describes the most horrible tragic conditions of the disabled soldiers:

...prugatorial shadows,
Drooping tongues from jaws that slab their relish,
Baring teeth that leer like the skull's teeth wicked?
Ever from their hair and through their hands' palms
Misery swelters.

Sasi Das writes about this poem, "- the picture that Owen's mental cases evoke is never irony, put profound sympathy which, undoubtedly, Owen distils into his poem. For the awfully tragic fate of the mental cases he does not blame any individuals, but shares with others the burden of common guilt."

Owen is most concerned about the soldiers and his

10. Ibid., p.228.

sympathy for them gets the better of his anger against those responsible for their tragic death. The first line in the poem 'Anthem for Doomed Youth':

"What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?"

show that irony in the poem is stronger than anger or pity. But the motive of anger is changed into one of tragic pathos in the concluding lines. The irony continues in the concluding line of the actet:

"And bugles calling from sad shires!"

Perhaps the bugles seem to be calling for the soldiers from the sad shires. The irony is that it was those shires which must have sent them out to fight and get killed. The bugles constitute a mockery of sadness. Owen, however, turns away from any hard inspection of what those sad shires constitute, and settles for pathos of the sestet.¹¹ Therefore, the soldiers who died in the war were honoured posthumously.

In 'Futility', the soldier adopted by England is killed now in the battlefield. So no matter how hard the old kind sun which is the source of warmth and vitality, and which always awakens him in England or in France tries, it cannot bring him back to life. In the body of the dying soldier,

11. John Lucas, Modern Poetry from Hardy to Hughes, A Critical Study, B.T. Batsford Ltd., London, 1986, p.75.

however, the principle of vitality is destroyed by the negative principle of war, which robs life - and the process ultimately responsible for life - the purpose and meaning:¹²

Move him into the sun -
Gently its touch awoke him once,
At home, whispering of fields unsown,
Always it woke him, even in France,
Until this morning and this snow.
Was it for this the clay grew tall?
O what made fatuous sunbeams toil
To break earth's sleep at all?

In the last lines, the tragic and meaningless waste of the youth which was brought by war pained the poet. In spite of his sense of helplessness before the mysterious way of life, which nature brings about, Owen is most severed in his direct attack against the war-mongers and politicians at home.

Owen deals the theme of the physical effects of the war on human beings in 'The Show':

War cripples, maims, distorts, and corrupts the physical parts of the soldiers. Although there is hardly any reference of human being in the poem, men have become loathsome caterpillars, writhing and dying amid the scabrous landscape.¹³

The descriptions of this scene are most terrifying:

On dithering feet upgathered, more and more,
Brown strings, towards strings of gray, with bristling
spines,
All migrants from green fields, intent on mire.

12. John H. Johnston, op. cit., p.187.

13. Ibid., p.189.

Those that were gray, of more abundant spawers,
Ramped on the rest and ate them and were eaten.
I saw their bitten backs curve, loop, and straighten,
I watched those agonies curl, lift, and flatten.

The poet was left quite shocked when he discovered that he had been one of the crawling mass; the head of one caterpillar, "the fresh-severed head of it," and his own feet were "the feet of many men".

Owen as in other war poems, deals with the theme of pity in 'Miners' which is one of the poems published during his life-time. The sacrifices made by miners are forgotten by the people who comfortably burn them in their houses. Likewise the sacrifices made by the soldiers who died in the trenches to insure the comfort and security of the future generations were forgotten by them.

I thought of some who worked dark pits of war, and died
Digging the rock where Death reposes
Peace lies indeed
Comforted years will sit soft-chaired
In room of amber;
The years will stretch their hands, well-cheered
But our lives' amber.
The centuries will burn rich loads with which we
groaned,
While songs are crooned.
But they will not dream of us poor lads
Lost in the ground.

The poet who knew the Halmerend Colliery explosion in which 150 miners were entombed in the disaster and his 29 October, 1917 letter also described the shelling on the Western Front three weeks before in which 5 girls died of fright in one

night. The fact that in both the incidents, most of the victims were young boys and girls must have appealed powerfully to Owen's imagination. The irony is that the next generation is so hard hearted that it fails to appreciate the great sacrifices made by the soldiers for their well being. The poet even anticipate the mind of the hard-hearted politicians or war-mongers who would most willing lay sacrifice men for flags:

We laughed knowing that better men would come,
And greater wars; when each proud fighter brags
He wars on Death - for Life; not men - for flags.

In 'Asleep', Owen first depicts the tragic death of a soldier who is killed in the battle-field and then presents the pitiable condition of the soldiers who survive him.

A soldier, exhausted after long days of fighting and long periods of wakefulness lies down in the battle-field, props his head on his pack, covers his face with his helmet, and falls asleep. As he lies sleeping, a bullet hits him through the heart, his body undergoes a spasm to reassert consciousness, then his tired body completely relaxes and he is dead instantly.

A fellow-soldier, perhaps the poet, starts pondering on the dead man's destiny whether the deadman survives in heaven under the care of God and looks down with God-like detachment on the turmoil of the earth below? Or is he now

reduced to a mere dead body mingled with clay and grass and just a human clay?

But whatever may be the case which brings about his tragic death - he is more fortunate than the rest of the soldiers who survive him. Because for them each awakening from sleep brings with it a renewed sense of the horror and pity of war.¹⁴

In 'The Send-Off', Owen is very harsh in attacking the war-mongers at home for sending these youthful soldiers to the gallows of death to meet their selfish end.

The new recruits are to be sent to unknown battle-field, so they line-up to board a train. They are garlanded with wreath and spray as if they are dead.

The onlookers - porters, a tramp perhaps the people who stand watching them going to the battle-field feel sorry for them. Unlike the professional soldiers who go to the battle-field boldly, these conscripts go to the battle-field stealthily - like criminals.

The onlookers are compelled to ponder on these recruits whether they even mock at the women who give them flowers? Further they (onlookers) ask one another whether these conscripts will return in train - loads like they do now?

14. J.H. Walsh, Presenting Poetry, Heinemann Educational Books, London, 1973, p.51.

Knowing the impending disaster of these conscripts, they (onlookers) draw a conclusion that a few soldiers may return back after the war is over.

CHAPTER - III

LANGUAGE AND THOUGHT

LANGUAGE AND THOUGHT

There is a very intimate relation between language and thought. We may quote Wardhaugh: "Language also provides with a means to express feelings, whether outright in the form of exclamations, endorsements or curses, or much more subtly through a careful choice of words."¹

In the first half of this century the problem of meaning has been a topic of discussion with philosophers and linguists alike, which resulted in the acceptance of a correspondence relationship between language and meaning. Therefore words must be used in a proper manner to give a meaningful message, and with the emergence of the philosophy of language we could see two streams of thoughts one advocated by Russell which falls under Referential theory of meaning and another advocated by the 17th century British philosopher John Locke which falls under Ideational theory. A good example of Referential theory is the word 'Tom' which is the name of a person. So the word is a representation of that person who is called 'Tom'.

Russell who is an ardent advocate of this theory speaks

1. Ronald Wardhaugh, Investigating Language: Central Problems in Linguistics, Blackwell, Oxford, Cambridge, USA, 1993, p.192.

thus: "Words all have meaning, in the simple sense that they are symbols that stands for something other than themselves." According to Russell only names which can be called proper names are those which have a reference, which is indeed their meaning.² "To understand a name you must be acquainted with the particular of which it is a name, and you must know that it is the name of that particular".³

He further provides an explanation of his naming (referential) theory: "Take the word 'red', for example, and suppose (....) that 'red' stands for a particular shade of colour (....). You cannot understand the meaning of the word 'red' except through seeing red things. There is no other way in which it can be done."⁴

But the critics have pointed out that the two expressions "the morning star" and "the evening star" have the same reference - the planet venus. The two expressions referring to the same object (the planet Venus) cannot hold the same meaning. Suppose the meaning of a term is the object it represents then - "the Morning Star" is identical to "the Evening Star" and same as "the Morning Star" is

2. Michel Meyer, From Logic to Rhetoric, John Benjamin Publishing Company, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, 1986, p.18.

3. B. Russell, Logic and Knowledge, Allen and Unwin, London, 1950, p.23.

4. Ibid., pp.193-194.

identical to "the Morning Star".

Ideational theory is based on how word constitutes its meaning when we use language. The ardent advocate of this theory is the Seventeenth Century British philosopher John Locke. In his, Essay concerning human understanding he writes: "Man, though he have great variety of thoughts, and such, from which others, as well as himself, might receive profit and Delight yet they are within his own Breast, invisible, and hidden from others, nor can of themselves be made appear. The Comfort and Advantage of Society, not being to be had without Communication of Thoughts, it was necessary, that Man should find out some external sensible signs, whereby those invisibile Ideas, which those invisible Ideas, which his thoughts are made up of, might be made known to others. For this purpose, nothing was so fit, either of Plenty or Quickness, as those articulate Sounds, which with so much Ease and Variety, he found himself able to make. Thus we may conceive slow Words, which we by Nature so well adopted to that purpose, come to be made use of by Men, as the Signs of their Ideas;.....

The use then of Words, is to be sensible marks of ideas; and Ideas they stand for, are their proper and immediate signification. The use Men have of these Marks, being either to record their own Thoughts for the Assistance of

their own Memory, or as it were, to bring out their Ideas, and lay them before the view of others; Words in their primary or immediate Signification, stand for nothing, but the Ideas in the Mind of him that uses them."⁵

According to this theory human mind is the store-house of ideas and thinking as the mental manipulation of stored ideas. Verbal communication is the conveyance of ideas from one mind to another. In this process language is the channel, 'The great conduit'. Locke's main thesis on language is in his Essay: Book III. According to him it is only by means of words, of language, that a person expresses his thoughts and their component ideas known to others. If each one of us wants to keep all his thoughts to himself they remain: 'within his own Breast, invisible, and hidden from others. But man finds a way to convey his thoughts to another, in which language comes on the way. He we may note two chief language functions: (1) to convey ideas from one mind to another and (2) to enable us to record our ideas for future consultation. Therefore to communicate our ideas to one another - we ought to use words. Locke did not say that all the words carry ideas. There are words which he calls "particles" which we now call "prepositions and

5. John Locke, Essay Concerning Human Understanding, (edited by) P.H. Nidditch, OUP, Oxford, 1975, Book III, Ch.2, Sec.1-2.

conjunctions" which are nothing but showing the relationship between the different ideas in a complete thought. Coming back to the theories of language, they can be classified into two:

1. Language is a representation/naming of things and objects.
2. Language constructs/recognises the object. Our perception of reality is through language. In this second view all thoughts are verbal/in terms of words. No thought is independent of language.

Keeping these theories of language in mind, we have tried to look at the representation/construction of ideas in these poems and have adapted analytical the model from N. Leech and Michael H. Short's' Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose (London: Longman, 1981). The merit of this book is an enumeration of the features of style. The first two chapters discuss the concept of style, chapter 3 presents a detailed analytical method for linguistic analysis of a passage. The methods are divided under four heads: lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech, cohesion and context. And chapter 4 deals with the various levels of style. In my effort to analyse the selected poems, I am mainly concentrating on the contents of the third chapter which is compre-

hensive and fine enough to capture nearly every fact of linguistic importance.

From the categories proposed by Leech and Short^I, have[^] selectively used the following categories:

1. Lexical Classes:

(i) **Nouns**. Classified into semantic classes: abstract, concrete and human.

(ii) **Verbs**. Classified into semantic classes: stative, dynamic, psychological, speech acts, etc. and see whether the verbs are transitive or intransitive and their agency (+human) or (-human). Assessment on how the verbs carry an important part of the meaning.

(iii) **Adverbs**. What semantic functions do adverbs perform (manner, location, time, degree, etc.)?

(iv) **Adjectives**. Are adjectives frequent? To what kinds of attribute do adjectives refer? Physical? Colour? Evaluative? etc.

2. Grammatical Classes:

I group the grammatical word classes (prepositions, pronouns, conjunctions, articles, etc.) to their particular features. I examine the structure of the sentence whether simple or compound or complex sentence so as to see how

these sentences carry the meaning.

3. Figures of Speech:

In this thesis, my main concerns are metaphors and similes. **Definitions.** First identification of the figurative languages (metaphors and similes) and see how do they depart from general norms of communication by means of the language code; for example, of deviations from the linguistic code. Analysis of metaphors - using Leech's (1969) linguistic model and similes - using Mammata's and Vamana's linguistic analytical models (this I deal in Chapter IV).

Using the parameters given above I select only four finest poems of Owen to be analysed. They are:

1917 Poems		1918 Poems	
Anthem For Doomed Youth	(14 lines)	Futility	(14 lines)
Asleep	(21 lines)	The Send-Off	(20 lines)
	-----		-----
	35 lines		34 lines

(The lines are approximately equal in number in both.)

I have also made some changes in presenting the sequence of the selected poems in the following manner: 'The Send-Off', 'Asleep', 'Futility' and 'Anthem For Doomed Youth'.

Now let us take the selected poems and see the correlation between language and thought.

POEM: THE SEND-OFF (1918)

Down the close darkening lanes they sang their way
To the siding-shed,
And lined the train with faces grimly gay.

Their breasts were stuck all white with wreath and
spray
As men's are, dead.

Dull porters watched them, and a casual tramp
Stood staring hard,
Sorry to miss them from the upland camp.

Then, unmoved, signals nodded, and a lamp
Winked to the guard.

So secretly, like wrongs hushed-up, they went.
They were not ours:
We never heard to which front these were sent;

Nor there if they yet mock what women meant
Who gave them flowers.

Shall they return to beating of great bells
In wild train-loads?
A few, a few, too few for drums and yells,

May creep back, silent, to village wells,
Up half-known roads.

1. Sentence

Words	Lines	Sentences	A.S.L.	Range				
128	20	8	16.0	20-	14-	19-	11-	7-
				26-	11-	20		

2. Punctuation

Comma	Stop	Dash	Apostrophe	Interrogation mark	Exclamation mark
15	7	4	1	1	-

3. Words

	LEXICAL	GRAMMATICAL
Total	58	30

4. Lexical Classes

Nouns	Verbs	Adverbs	Adjectives
Lanes, way, siding-shed, faces, train, breasts, wreath, spray, men, porters, tramp, camp, guard, women, wrongs, flowers, bells, train-load, drums, village, wells, roads = 24	Sing, line, stick, watch, stand, hush-up, staring, miss, unmove, wink, go, hear, mock, nod, wean, give, beating, creep, yells = 19	Down, grimly, then, secretly, there, back, = 6	dead, gay, white, close, great, hard, dull, casual = 9
			Total = 58

5. Grammatical Classes

Prepositions ^a	Pronouns	Conjunctions (coordinating)	Conjunctions (subordinating)	Negative (not/n't)
To, with, with, to, from, to, to, to, of, for, to = 11	They, their, them, we, they, them, they, they, these, who, they, they, a few, a few = 14	And, and, and, and = 4	-	nor = 1
				Total = 30

Semantic Classes

6. Nouns

Human	Abstract	Concrete
Faces, breasts, men, wrongs, tramp, guard, women = 8	-	Lanes, way, siding-shed, train, faces, breasts, wreath, spray, tramp, camp, signal, lamp, flowers, bells, train-loads, drums, village, wells, roads = 16

7.				8.	
Stative	Dynamic	Psychological	Speech acts	Transitive	Intransitive
stick, watch, stand = 3	line, wink, hush-up, go, send return, creep = 8	mean, miss = 2	sing, mock, yells = 3	line, stick, watch, miss, wink, give, return, = 7	stand, nod, hush-up, go, hear, mock, mean, creep = 8

9. Modality

Can/could	May/might	Shall/should	Will/would	Must	Ought
-	May = 1	Shall = 1	-	-	-

10. Agency

+human agency	-human agency
Sing (line 1), Line (line 3), Stick (line 4), watch (line 6), staring (line 7), miss (line 8), hush-up (line 11), go (line 11), hear (line 13), send (line 13), mock (line 14), mean (line 14), give (line 15), return (line 16), creep (line 19) = 15	Unmove (line 9), nod (line 9), wink (line 10) = 3

11. Adjectives

Physical	Colour	Evaluative/emotive
great = 1	white = 1	dead, gay, hard, casual, dull = 5

12. Adverbs

Time	Location	Manner	Focusing
-	Down, there, back = 3	grimly, secretly = 2	-

13. Pronouns

1st person	3rd person	Personal	Demons- trative	Relati- ve
Ours, we =2	they, their, their, them, they, they, them, they = 9	Ours, their, their = 3	these = 1	which, who = 2

14. Articles

Definite	Indefinite
the, the = 2	a, a, a, a = 4

15. Sentence Structure

Simple	Compound	Complex
Lines 1-3 Lines 4-5 Lines 16-17 Lines 18-20	Lines 6-8 Lines 9-10 Line 11	Lines 12-15

Nouns

The nouns (24) found in this poem are all concrete nouns. The description is direct and concrete rather than abstract as no abstract noun is found in this poem. The

nouns like *lanes, way, siding-shed, train, wreath, men, porters, tramp, guard, women, wrongs, drums, village, etc.* show a common place anywhere in the world and social intercourse. Owen is equally good in presenting a picture of the characters in the poem: the new recruits obediently went their way and lined up the train, dull porters watched them, a casual tramp stood staring etc.

Verbs

Verbs are frequent in this poem (19) indicating some action as the dynamic verbs (*line, hush-up, go, send, etc.*) which show little care in taking account into the thinking of the new recruits as few psychological verbs (*mean, miss*) and found in the poem and other categories of verbs which are prominent are speech acts (*sing, mock, yells*); perceptions (*hear, watch, wink etc.*). The prominence of intransitive verbs in this poem may be noted. As intransitive verbs do not clearly specify, like transitive verbs, the impression we get is that we do not know to which front these new recruits are sent to fight, but only hope that a few shall creep back home when the war is over.

Adverbs

Adverbs (7) are not frequent in this poem. Equally

half of the adverbs (3) are that of place especially direction: *down, there, back* and two adverbs of manner in - ly: *grimly* and *secretly*. So, there is an absence of modification of action in this poem.

Adjectives

Adjectives (9) are frequent in this poem of which larger numbers are evaluative types: *dead, gay, hard, dull*, etc. and adjective of physical attribution occurs in one place: *great* and of colour also in one place: *white*.

Sentence Structure

In this poem, we could locate eight (8) sentences of which Owen uses four simple sentences three compound sentences and a complex sentence. Owen is harsh in attacking the politicians and war-mongers at home for not taking account into any consideration of the thinking of the youthful soldiers and send them to the jaws of death. Owen uses very simple but forceful sentences in his attack. Therefore, there is a directness of thought and expression in this poem. Following simple sentences clearly show this:

"Down the close darkening lanes they sang their way
To the siding-shed,
And lined the train with faces grimly gay."

(lines 1-3)

(This is a simple sentence.)

The poet asks whether the new recruits will come back home train-loads like they go now. The immediate answer is that a few people will come back home when the war is over. This Owen employs a question and answer form and found as simple sentences:

S V

"Shall they return to beating of great bells
In wild train-loads?" (lines 16-17)

S

"A few, a few, too few for drums and yells.

V

May creep back, silent, to village wells,
Up half-known roads." (lines 18-26)

Transitivity

Transitive	Intransitive
-----	-----
line, stick, wink, give, return, creep, watch = 7	stand, nod, staring, hushed-up, go, hear, mean, creep = 8

By using Halliday's formulation⁶ in analysing Golding's novel The Inheritors we can also formulate a description of a typical clause, in terms of its process, participants, and circumstances and thereby see the Agent-patient relationship:

1. There are a number of participants in this poem: the soldiers (they), dull porters, a casual tramp, wrongs (criminals) we, women etc. but the soldiers (they, taken as

6. M.A.K. Halliday, "Linguistic function and style an enquiry into the language of William Golding's The Inheritors" in S. Chatman (ed.), Literary Style: A Symposium, OUP, London/New York, 1971, pp.351-360.

a group) which is the central participant and therefore is the subject; this is,

- (a) actor in a non-directed action (action clauses are intransitive) or the participants in a mental process (the ones who perceived, ...

Dull porters watched them and a casual tramp
Stood staring hard, etc. (lines 6-7);

- (b) they (the soldiers, or inanimate objects (signals nodded), a lamp winked (line 9);
- (c) unmodified, other than by a determiner which either anaphoric demonstrative (These) or with parts of the body (their breasts).

2. The process is

- (a) action (which is always movement in space....)

"Down the close darkening lanes they sang their way
To the siding-shed,
And lined the train.... (lines 1-3)"

- (b) Location - possession ...

Their breasts were stuck all white with wreath and
spray (lines 4)
or mental process (thinking and talking as well as
seeing and feeling - if they yet mock what women meant
Who gave them flowers. (lines 14-15)

3. The circumstances attendant on the process, not as participants in it, these are stative expressions of place/in the form of prepositional phrases:

"...from the upland camp" (line 8) or if dynamic, expressions of direction (adverbs only... Down the close darkening lanes. (line 1)

The central and obligatory participants (they) - we call them the affected participants - which are inherently involved in the process. This corresponds to the actors in an intransitive clause of action (they sang their way (line 1), they went... (line 11) to the goal in a transitive clause of action/these were sent... (line 13), and to the ones who perceive, etc. in a clause of mental process (Dull porters watched them, and a casual tramp stood staring hard... (lines 6-7). There are secondary, optional participants (a tramp... line 9), these are present since the process is being regarded as brought about by some agency other than the participant affected by them, we call them the "agents". We also note that this agent is non-human being and the processes are represented as resulting from an external cause. Whether the type of process, there tends to be only one participant (they, taken as a group so used in singular) any other entities are involved only indirectly, as circumstantial elements. It is as if 'doing' was as passive as seeing, and things are no more affected by actions than by perceptions. Their role is as in clauses of mental process, where the object of perception is not in any sense "acted on" -- it is in fact the perceiver that is the

"affected" participant not the thing perceived -- and likewise tends to be expressed circumstantially (e.g. Dull porters watched them line 6).

POEM: ASLEEP (1917)

Under his helmet, up against his pack,
 After so many days of work and waking,
 Sleep took him by the brow and laid him back.

There, in the happy no-time of his sleeping,
 Death took him by the heart. There heaved a quaking
 Of the aborted life within him leaping,
 Then chest and sleepy arms once more fell slack.

As soon the slow, stray blood came creeping
 From the intruding lead, like ants on track.

Whether his deeper sleep lie shaded by the shaking
 Of great wings, and the thoughts that hung the star,
 High-pillowed on calm pillows of God's making,
 Above these clouds, these rains, these sleets of lead,
 And these winds' scimitar,
 - Or whether yet his thin and sodden head
 Confuses more and more with the low mould,
 His hair being one with the grey grass
 Of finished fields, and wire-scraggs rusty-old,
 Who knows? Who hopes? Who troubles? Let it pass!
 He sleeps. He sleeps less tremulous, less cold,
 Than we who wake, and waking say Alas!

1. Sentence

Words	Lines	Sentences	A.S.L.	Range
172	21	10	17.1	25, 14, 20, 16, 70, 2, 2, 3, 2, 14

2. Punctuation

Comma	Stop	Dash	Apostrophe	Interrogation mark	Exclamation mark
21	5	5	2	3	2

3. Words

	LEXICAL	GRAMMATICAL
Total =	80	45

4. Lexical Classes

Nouns	(Main) Verbs	Adjectives	Adverbs
Helmet, pack, days, work, sleep, brow, death, heart, life, chest, arms, blood, lead, ants, track, sleep, wings, stars, scimitars, head, mould, hair, grass, fields, autumns, wire-scraggs, thoughts, pillows, clouds, rains, sleet, lead, God, Winds = 34	take, lay, take, heave, abort, leaping, fall, come, creeping, lie, shaking, confuse, hang, finish, know, trouble, hope, pass, sleep, sleep, wake, waking, say = 23	slow, deeper, great, intrusive, calm, thin, sodden, slack, more, low, grey, less, soon, rusty-old = 15	Once more, less tremulous, less cold, there, so, no-time, under, up = 8
Total = 80			

5. Grammatical Classes

Prepositions	Pronouns	Conjunctions (coordinating)	Conjunctions (subordinating)	Negatives (not/n't)
against, by, of, in, with, of, by, with, in, by, of, on, of above, of = 14	his, his, him, him, his, him, many, his, his, his, who, who, who, he, he, we, who = 19	and, and, and, and, and, and, and = 9	whether, or whether = 2	not = 1
Total = 45				

6. Semantic Classes

Nouns

Human	Abstracts	Concrete
brow, heart, chest, arms, blood, head, hair	thoughts, sleep, death	helmet, pack, wings, stars, rains, sleets, mould, grass, fields, wire-scraggs
= 10	= 3	= 17

VERBS

7.			8.		
Stative	Dynamic	Psycho-logical	Speech acts	Transi-tive	Intransiti-ve
lay, lie, pass, sleep, sleep, wake	take, take, abort, heave, quaking, lea-ping, fall, come, creep-ing, intrud-ing, hang, shaking, waking	confuse, know, hope, trouble	say	take, lay, take, hang	heave, fall, come, lie, confuse, know, trou-ble, wake, hope, pass, sleep, sleep
= 6	= 13	= 4	= 1	= 4	= 12

9. Modality

Can/could	May/might	Shall/should	Will/would	Must	Ought
-----------	-----------	--------------	------------	------	-------

10. Agency

+human agency	-human agency
heave (line 5), leaping (line 6), fall (line 7), high-pillowed (line 12), confuses (line 16), knows (line 19), hopes (line 19), troubles (line 19), pass (line 19), sleeps (20), sleeps (line 20), wake (line 21), say (line 21)	take (line 3), lay (line 3) take (line 5), come (line 8) shade (line 10), hang (line 10),
= 13	= 6

11. Adjectives

Physical	Colour	Evaluative/emotive
great	grey	slow, deeper, calm, thin, more, more, sodden, intrusive, soon
= 1	= 1	= 9

12. Adverbs

Time	Location	Focusing	Degree
Once more, no-time	Under, up, there	so	less tremulous, less cold
= 2	= 3	= 1	= 2

13. Pronouns

1st person	3rd person	Demonstrative (this/these)
we	his, his, him, him, his, him, him, his, his, his, his, it, he, he	these, these
= 1	= 14	= 2

14. Articles

Definite	Indefinite
the, the, the, the, the, the, the	a
= 7	= 1

15. Sentence Structure

Simple	Compound	Complex
Lines 1-3 Lines 4-5 Lines 5-7 Lines 8-9 Lines 20-21	-	Lines 10-18 is a subordinate clause and the clauses in lines 19-20 like "Who knows?", "Who hopes?", "Who troubles?", "Let it pass!" and "He sleeps" are all principal clauses.

Nouns

In this poem, there are a number of nouns (34). We expect that Owen might use more abstract nouns in this poem

as the title of the poem 'Asleep' indicates, but we are surprised to find that he uses more concrete nouns (22) than abstract nouns (3). We may also note that what we call concrete human nouns refer to human features: brow, heart, arms, head, hair, etc. and a larger number of concrete nouns refer to non-human animate and inanimate objects or things (ants, stars, pillows, clouds, lead, etc.). The writer of the poem perhaps a fellow-soldier, is impelled to ponder on the dead person's destiny whether he survives as a spirit risen to some celestial realm, with God-like detachment. In fact, some of the concrete nouns in the poem are in the mind of the poet who perceives Christian's 'heaven' (great wings, God's making etc.) indicating abstract features.

Verbs

The large number of verbs (23) we find in this poem are mostly dynamic in nature indicating movement: *quaking*, *leaping*, *fall*, *come*, *creeping* etc. Even the stative verbs have implications of movement:

'Sleep took him by the brow and laid him back'
and
'Death took him by the heart.'

Owen uses fewer number of transitive verbs (4) than intransitive verbs (12). The transitive verbs in the poem appear in only two lines:

`Sleep took him by the brow and laid him back.'
and
`Death took him by the heart.'

Intransitive verbs do not specify, as the transitive verbs do. The impression we get is that we do not know (who knows) but only hope (who hopes) that the dead soldier survives as a spirit with God-like detachment.

Adjectives

There are 15 adjectives in this poem. The larger number of adjectives is of evaluative type (slow, deeper, calm, thin, etc.) suggesting a range of question marks in the minds of the poet and the surviving soldiers who enquire of themselves whether the dead soldier really survives in heaven enjoying the bliss of life under the care of God or whether the dead soldier becomes mingled with mud and grass - the adjective 'great' suggests 'God' in heaven and the adjective of colour 'grey' suggests the lifeless 'mund'. We may note the adjectives are attributively used (calm pillow - we do not mean - 'The pillow is calm') and we may also note that all the adjectives are used attributively to qualify the nouns used in this poem.

Adverbs

Adverbs (8) are frequent in this poem. Adverbs show

time, place, manner, degree etc. A soldier exhausted after performing his duties falls down asleep (the adverbs - up, there, under, etc. clearly show the location), an enemy bullet hits him and he dies when he, the soldier, does not really have the time to die (the adverb *no-time* suggests) and the dead body undergoes a spasm, as consciousness attempts to reassert itself; then his body relaxes completely (the adverb *'once more fell slack'* clearly shows the manner). A fellow soldier, perhaps the poet, contemplates on the destiny of the dead soldier whether he survives in heaven under the loving care of God or whether he merely becomes a lump of mud but that does not really matter because the dead soldier is more fortunate (the adverbs - *'He sleeps less tremulous, less cold'*, show this) than the surviving soldiers for each dawning of a day brings them afresh the thought of the horror of war.

Sentence Structure

In this poem, *'Asleep'* there are ten (10) sentences in all of which simple sentences and complex sentences are equal in number but compound sentence is not in use. Owen first begins by telling the condition of his tragic hero who is killed by an enemy's bullet while sleeping soundly. (The first four [4] sentences are all simple sentences.) (Sen-

tences five [5] to nine [9] are all complex sentences), we may also note that lines 10-18 form a subordinate clause and the clauses in lines 19-20 viz.: "Who knows?", "Who hopes?", "Who troubles?", "Let it pass!" and "He sleeps" are the principal clauses. The interrogative sentences and the exclamatory sentence in line 19 are nothing but principal clauses and even the declarative sentence in line 20 ('He sleeps') is also a principal clause since the surrounding clause depend on it for deriving a fuller meaning. The following skeleton diagram of the clause structure clearly shows this:

Independent clause(s)	Subordinate clause(s)
1. Who knows	Whether his deeper sleep... ... Or whether yet his thin...
2. Who hopes	Whether his deeper sleep... ... Or whether yet his thin...
3. Who troubles	Whether his deeper sleep... ... Or whether yet his thin...
4. Let it pass	Whether his deeper sleep... ... Or whether yet his thin...
5. He sleeps	Whether his deeper sleep... ... Or whether yet his thin...

The interrogation in the first three clauses, the spirit resignation of the fourth clause and the categorical decla-

ration of sleep, i.e., death in the fifth are characteristic predications for the soldier's condition and destiny.

As we have observed above, Owen first relates the sorry condition of his tragic hero who is killed while sleeping by an enemy's bullet; the poet contemplates on the destiny of the dead soldier, then Owen derives a conclusion that whatever may be the destiny of the dead soldier, he is more fortunate than the surviving soldiers including the poet himself for each awakening from sleep, they become once more aware of the horrors of their condition. Thus, Owen uses a simple sentence in the concluding line which aptly conveys the message.

Transitivity

K. Wales, in his Dictionary of Stylistics writes, "The different patterns of transitivity are the prime means of expressing our internal and external experiences, which is part of the ideational function of language."⁷ The concept of transitivity is associated with M.A.K. Halliday who in 1971 enquired into the linguistic transitivity in Golding's novel The Inheritors.⁸ According to Halliday, "Transitivity

7. K. Wales, Dictionary of Stylistics, Harlow, Longman, 1989, p.466.

8. M.A.K. Halliday, op. cit., p.359.

is the set of options whereby the speaker encodes his experience of the processes of the external world, and of the internal world of his own consciousness, together with the participants in these processes and their attendant circumstances, and it embodies a very basic distinction of processes into two types, those that are regarded as due to an external cause, an agency other than the person or object involved, and those that are not." Therefore Halliday's main concern is to present an agent/agents and the affected participant(s).

Transitivity involves grammatical cases - particularly *Agent* and *Object*. *Agent* by definition implies volition, animacy and activity. *Object* is something or someone acted upon or ruled by the action of the Verb. In intransitive verbs, there is no object. The action is the end in itself. Transitive verbs have both *agent* and *object*. Thus, any noun occurring in a phrase containing Agent and Dative must be (+animate). A soldier exhausted by fighting and by long periods of wakefulness, lies down on the battle-field, props his head on his pack, covers his face with his helmet, and falls asleep. But the poet's way of telling the story:

'Sleep took him by the brow and laid him back.' The noun (sleep) has animate strength of taking the soldier by the brow and laying him back. Fillmore suggests a new way

of looking at the functional structure of sentences and says a message can be divided into those parts which are 'in perspective' and those that are 'out of perspective'.⁹ He goes on to say that "it is the orientational or perspectival structuring of the message which provides the subject matter for the theory of cases...."¹⁰ "The assignment by case frames of semantico-syntactic roles to participants in the situation represented by a sentence contains the assignment of a perspective on the situation. For instance, any agent that is brought into perspective must be the subject of the sentence."¹¹

To substantiate our point, let us see Huddleston's example of the sentence. 'The wind moved the stone',¹² the wind may be interpreted as having its own energy and hence as being agent, or as being merely a direct cause of the stone moving, and hence as instrument called, perhaps, "force". Likewise, the non-object agents, (Sleep, Death) in

9. C.J. Fillmore, "The Case for Case Reopened" in P. Cole and J.M. Sadock (eds.), Syntax and Semantics, vol.8: Grammatical Relations, Academic Press, New York, 1977, p.61.

10. Ibid., p.61.

11. Kirsten Malmkjaek and James A. Anderson, The Linguistics Encyclopedia, Routledge, London/New York, 1991, p.69.

12. Rodney D. Huddleston, The Sentence in Written English, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1971, pp.72-73.

the poem 'Asleep' may be interpreted as having their own energy and hence as agents, as being merely direct power of taking the soldier, and hence as instruments, or as having a role which is distinct from both agent and instrument. And Fillmore would explain this sentence with reference to the notions of perspective and of meaning being relativized to the scenes mentioned above. And to quote his word "Perspectivizing corresponds, in English to determining the structuring of a clause in terms of the nuclear grammatical relations."¹³

POEM: FUTILITY (1918)

Move him into the sun -
Gently its touch awoke him once,
At home, whispering of fields half-sown.
Always it woke him, even in France,
Until this morning and this snow.
If anything might rouse him now
The kind old sun will know.

Think how it wakes the seeds -
Woke once the clays of a cold star.
Are limbs, so dear achieved, are sides
Full-nerved, still warm, too hard to stir?
Was it for this the clay grew tall?
- O what made famous sunbeams toil
To break earth's sleep at all?

13. C.J. Fillmore, op. cit., pp.79-80.

Data

1. Sentence

Words	Lines	Sentences	A.S.L.	Range
90	14	7	12.85	17- 13- 12- 14- 14- 8- 12

2. Punctuation

Comma	Stop	dash	apostrophe	interrogation mark	exclamation mark
8	4	5	1	3	-

3. Words

	LEXICAL	GRAMMATICAL
Total =	44	19

4. Lexical Classes

Nouns	Verbs	Adverbs	Adjectives
Sun, home, fields, France, snow, sun, seeds, clay, star, limbs, sides, clay, sunbeams, earth	Move, touch, awake, wake, rouse, know, think, wake, wake, achieve, stir, grow, toil, break	Gently, morn- ing, once, now, once, always, so, even, too hard	Kind, old, cold, dear, fatuous, tall, full- nerved, warm
= 14	= 14	= 8	= 8
			Total = 94

5. Grammatical Classes

Prepositions	Pronouns	Conjunc- tions (coordi- nating)	Conjunc- (subordi- nating)	Negative (not/n't)
Into, at, of, in, until, of to, for, to	Him, its, him, it, him, any- thing, him, it, it	and	-	-
= 9	= 9	= 1		
				Total = 19

Semantic Classes

6. Nouns

Human	Abstract	Concrete
limbs, sides,	-	Sun, home, fields, snow, sun, clay, star, limbs, sides, clay, sunbeams, earth
= 2		= 13

7. Verbs

Stative	Dynamic	Psychological	Speech acts	Transitive	Intransitive
-	Move, awake, wake, rouse, wake, wake, stir, grow, toil, break,	know, toil	whispering	Move, awake, wake, rouse, wake, wake, break	know, think, grow, achieve, toil
	= 10	= 2	= 1	= 7	= 5

8.

9. Modality

Can/could	May/might	Shall/should	Will/would	Must	Ought
-	Might	-	-	-	-
	= 1				

10. Agency

+human agency	-human agency
Move (line 1)	Awake (line 2), wake (line 4), rouse (line 6), know (line 7), wake (line 8), wake (line 9), grow (line 12), toil (line 13)
= 1	= 8

11. Adjectives

Physical	Colour	Evaluative/emotive
tall, fatuous	-	Old, kind, cold, warm, dear, full-nerved
= 2		= 6

12. Adverbs

Time	Location	Focusing	Degree
Morning, now = 2	-	Once, always, once, even, always = 5	too hard = 1

13. Pronouns

1st person	2nd person	3rd person	Relative	Demonstrative	Personal
-	-	Him, its, him, it, him, anything, him, it, it = 9	-	-	-

14. Articles

Definite	Indefinite
The, the, the = 3	a = 1

15. Sentence Structure

Simple	Compound	Complex
Lines 1-3 Lines 4-5 Lines 8-9 Lines 10-11 Line 12 Lines 13-14		Lines 6-7

Now, let us survey the four major word classes - nouns, verbs, adverbs and adjectives.

Nouns

Concrete nouns (*sun, fields, home, snow, clays, seeds, star, etc.*) abound in this poem and indeed account for

three-fourths of all nouns. Though the description of the concrete nouns are not direct but intellectualised through the act of perception by the onlooker (a soldier). Abstract nouns when they occur, give rays of hope for the undying soldiers.

Verbs

Verbs are rather frequent in this poem which also denote that it is full of action because action verbs (*move, awake, rise, stir, toil, break, etc.*) abound here. Other categories of verbs which are prominent are that of copula verbs (*will, are, was, etc.*) and verbs of cognition (*know*), and speech act (*whispering*) are also present in this poem.

Adverbs

Focusing adverbs, like *once, always, even, etc.* may be noted which account half of the adverbs used in this poem and adverbs of time (*morning, now*) and manner (*gently*) account the rest.

Adjectives

Adjectives (7) are frequent in this poem, and nearly all of them are evaluative adjectives (*kind, old, cold, warm, hard, etc.*) and adjectives showing physical size

(tall, factuous) but the rest have nothing to do with colour, emotion, etc.

Sentence Structure

In this poem, there are seven (7) sentences of which six (6) sentences are simple and only one (1) complex sentence but no compound sentence is in use. The impression we get in this poem is that Owen is very harsh in attacking the war-mongers for sending the new recruits in the battlefield and the result is the destruction, futility, a waste of lives; so uses factual sentences. The first two sentences are said to be simple but the third one is complex:

"If anything might rouse him now
Sub clause
The kind old sun will know." (lines 6-7)
Pr. clause
(complex sentence)

The remaining sentences are all simple. The irony is - the sun which is the source of vitality and strength which has always awakened the soldier at home, even in France, but it could not do so now. The concluding sentences are all in simple-interrogative sentences which suggest Owen's criticism of the war-mongers for sending the youthful soldiers to the gallows of death which will bring nothing but futility, a waste of lives.

Transitivity

Transitive	Intransitive
Move, awaken, wake, rouse, wake, wake, break = 7	know, think, grow, achieve, toil = 5

There are very few participants in this poem 'Futility'. When we speak of participants, we mean the speakers and the listeners, addressors and addressees which corresponds to agent - patient in transitivity.

The participants are the sun, the dead soldier and the passive onlookers (whose presence are felt - e.g. Move him into the sun - Line 1).

A dead soldier is moved in the sun to be awakened by it like it always did at home, even in France. So the principal agent in this poem is the "sun". Our knowledge of 'Case Grammar' which says that any noun occurring in a phrase containing Agentive and Dative must be [+animate].

In our case the neutral agent the "sun" acts as an agent, so confuses us:

Gently its touch awoke him once (line 2)
Always it awoke him, even in France (line 4)
If anything might rouse him now
The kind old sun will know (lines 6-7)

Think how it wakes the seeds -
Woke once the clays of a cold star. (lines 8-9)
...sunbeams toil
To break earth's sleep at all? (lines 13-14)

We can speculate the neutral agent, the "sun" as having its own energy and hence being agent or as being merely a direct cause of the soldier's waking and hence as instrument, or as having a role which is distinct from both agent and instrument called, perhaps "force". This can be justified by quoting Halliday's words, "the processes are seldom resulting from an external cause; in those instances where they are, the "agent" is seldom a human being."¹⁴

In the above clauses, the only central and obligatory participant, the "dead soldier" is the affected participant who is always inherently involved in the process. The secondary participant, the "sun" which is being regarded as being brought about by some agency and the process is affected by it since this "agent" is in the actor in a transitive clause of action and initiator in various types of causative:

...its touch woke him... (line 2)
...it woke him... (line 4), etc.

From the above discussion, we may point out that the sun which always wakes the soldier, the seeds which also woke once the clays of a cold star (as the transitive clauses indicate) could not waken the dead soldier now no matter how hard it toils. Like Halliday, who in his analy-

14. M.A.K. Halliday, op. cit., p.353.

sis of Golding's novel The Inheritors tries to link the people "at the level at which they constitute a norm, a world-view, a structuring of experience",¹⁵ Owen also tries to link the lives of the soldiers at the Western Front.

POEM: ANTHEM FOR DOOMED YOUTH (1917)

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
 - Only the monstrous anger of the guns.
 Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
 Can patter out their hasty orisons.
 No mockeries now for them; no prayers nor bells;
 Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs, -
 The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
 And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?
 Not in the hands of boys but in their eyes
 Shall shine the holy glimmers of goodbyes.
 The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
 Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
 And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

Data

1. Sentence

Words	Lines	Sentences	A.S.L.	Range
109	14	7	15.5	8-7-12-32-9-17-24

2. Punctuation

Comma	Stop	dash	apostrophe	Interrogative mark	Exclamation mark
3	4	5	1	3	-

15. Ibid., p.359.

3. Words

	LEXICAL	GRAMMATICAL
Total =	54	34

4. Lexical Classes

Nouns	(Main) Verbs	Adjectives	Adverbs
Passing-bells, cat- tle, greens, rifles, mockeries, prayers, bells, voice, mour- ning, choirs, choi- rs, shells, bugles, shires, candles, hands, boys, eyes, glimmers, good-byes, pallor, girls, bro- ws, pall, flowers, tenderness, minds, dusk, drawing-dawn of blinds, shrill = 32	die, stuttering, patter, wailing, calling, hold, shine, rattle, orisons, = 9	Monstrous, rapid, has- ty, new, demented, holy, slow, sad patient = 9	as, only, only, out = 4 Total = 54

5. Grammatical Classes

Prepositions	Pronouns	Determiners	Auxiliaries	Negatives (not/n't)
for, of, for, save, of, for, to, in, in, of, of, of, = 14	who, their, them, them, all, their, of their, any = 8	What, what, these = 3	can, be, shall, shall = 4	no, no, nor, nor, not = 5 Total = 34

Semantic Classes

6. Nouns

Human	Abstract	Concrete
hands, boys, eyes, pallor, girls, minds, choirs, choirs = 8	tenderness = 1	passing-bells, cattle, guns, rif- les, bells, choirs, choirs, shel- ls, bugles, shires, candles, hands, boys, eyes, holy glimmers, pallor, girls, brows, pall, flo- wers = 21

7. Verbs

Stative	Dynamic	Psychological	Speech acts
hold			mockeries, prayers, mourning, shrill, wailing, calling
= 1			= 6

8.

Transitive	Intransitive
hold, calling	die, patter shine
= 2	= 3

9. Modality

Can/could	May/might	Shall/should	Will/would	Must	Ought
Can	May	Shall, shall	-	-	-
= 1	= 1	= 2			

10. Agency

+human	-human agency
wailing, shrill, hold, shine, = 4	rattle, calling = 2

11. Adjectives

Colour	Physical	Evaluative/emotive
-	monstrous = 1	rapid, hasty, demented, sad, slow = 5

12. Adverbs

Location	Manner	Focusing
Out = 1	-	only, only, as, only = 4

13. Pronouns

1st person	3rd person	Relative
-	their, them, them, their, their = 5	who = 1

14. Articles

Definite	Indefinite
the, the, the, the, the, the, the, the, the = 9	nil

15. Sentence Structure

Simple	Compound	Complex
Line 1	Line 5-8	-
Line 2	Lines 12-14	
Lines 3-4		
Line 9		
Lines 10-11		

Nouns

In this poem, we can see that there are a large number of concrete nouns (guns, rifles, choirs, pallor, etc.). Larger number of these concrete nouns refer to the equipments or instruments associated with the soldiers in their daily activities. We may also note that these abstract nouns refer to customary observations showing/expressing grief at losing a beloved one in death (mourning, shrill, good byes, etc.). The prayers, the voice, the mourning, we could hear but we could not touch. For human being, Owen uses hands, boys, eyes, girls, brows and the simile 'as cattle' which refers to the human beings being butchered like cattle in the battle ground.

Verbs

There are very few verbs in this poem, one-fourth of the nouns. Most verbs involve human activities and speech acts: drawing, calling, stuttering. Even the only stative verb 'held' has the implication of movement indicating physical position 'held' to speed them.

Adjectives

To accompany the aural act of the verbs, Owen uses an equal number of adjectives effecting aural and mental perception: monstrous, rapid, sad, new. We may also note the parallel of the adjectives:

monstrous	rapid	new
holy	slow	sad

Could there be any meaning in this which we can speculate only through mental perception?

Adverbs

As we have observed earlier that Owen uses equal number of verbs and adjectives, we expect him to use nearly an equal number of adverbs. But we are surprised to note that he uses only a few adverbs and that too, mostly focusing adverbs and only in one place we locate adverbs of place 'out' which indicates a common place that is, the place

where war can occur at any time, etc. Nevertheless Owen uses quite a large number of focusing adverbs such as only, nor, etc.

General

Owen is very particular about the words he uses. We may note that he uses quite a large number of nouns and pronouns but pronouns of 1st person and 2nd person are not in use. We may also note that Owen does not use adjective of colour but uses powerful adjectives like 'monstrous'. As we have observed Owen is very particular about the words he uses and let us bear in mind that he is a soldier poet who has by now realised the futility of war and has become quite critical which we can see in his not using the adverb of time indicating that a natural calamity like war can occur in any period of time.

Finally we may also note that not a single indefinite article is used in this poem "Anthem For Doomed Youth" and out of the total 9 articles we find in this poem, all are definite articles 'the'. So Owen particularises what he means to say, is very definitive.

Sentence Structure

What passing-bells for these who die us cattle? It is

a simple-interrogative sentence.

The second sentence (line 2):

- Only the monstrous anger of the guns
Simple sentence

The third sentence (lines 3-4):

Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
NP

Can potter out their hasty orisons.
Predicate

It is a simple sentence.

The fourth sentence (lines 5-8):

No mockeries now for them; nor prayers nor bells;
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs -
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.
These lines can stand alone.

And they are independent clauses but joined by the conjunction "and" which is essential for a compound sentence.

Therefore it is compound sentence.

The fifth sentence (line 9):

What candles may be held to speed them all:
It is a simple interrogative sentence.

The sixth sentence (lines 10-11):

Not in the hands of the boys but in their eyes
NP
Shall shine the holy glimmers of goodbyes.
Predicate

The sentence is found to be simple.

The last sentence (lines 12-14):

The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
one clause
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,
one clause
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds
one clause

It is found to be a compound sentence since three independence clauses can give a meaning of their own and can stand alone.

Transitivity

Transitive	Intransitive
calling, hold = 2	die, patter, shine = 3

First, let us find out how many participants are there in this poem, 'Anthem For Doomed Youth'. The participants are the dead soldiers, the choirs of wailing shells, bugles from the sad shires, the soldiers who survive them and the flower girls.

There is not much confusion in this poem since it is a poem about paying a tribute to the dead soldiers who are brought home from the battlefield. The soldiers who are sent to an unknown battle-field ('The Send-Off') become tired due to long days of fighting and long hours of wakefulness and fall asleep and one hit by the enemy's bullets and killed him (them) ("Asleep"). The sun (or rather the war-monger) which always wakes the soldier(s) at home, even in France could not wake him (them) now, no matter how hard it toils ("Futility"). The dead soldiers are honoured by guns shooting, the choirs, wailing, bugles calling, candles lighting, paying flowers tribute and paying respect to their

coffins. We identify a number of "agents" in this poem, for example, "bugles" and we may think of this "agent" having its own energy and hence being agent or as being merely a direct cause of calling for the dead soldiers from the sad shires and hence as instrument, or as having a role which is distinct from both agent and instrument called, "force".

The mutual agents, the "guns", "the bugles" which have their own energy, called for to cause the action may be taken as simply instruments/equipment and the direct "agents" are the people who used these instruments/equipment.

The central and obligatory participants, the dead soldiers are, as we said, the affected participants who are always inherently involved in the process. The secondary participants are the people who bring about the cause and initiators of action in various types of causatives.

CHAPTER - IV

METAPHOR AND SIMILE

METAPHOR AND SIMILE

Metaphors and similes are not just mere ornaments and wilful expressions in any work of art. Poets in general are fond of employing metaphors and similes for they provide the means of expressions for those thoughts and feelings which cannot be expressed by ordinary words.¹ Therefore the use of metaphors and similes can be described as: "The analogy by which the human mind explores the universe of quality and charts the non-measurable world."²

Before we start analysing the metaphors and similes used by Owen in the selected poems - Anthem For Doomed Youth, Futility, Asleep and The Self-Off - first let us acquaint ourself with the concepts of metaphor and simile and select a model/models either from Western Poetics or Indian Poetics which will be adequate for our analysis.

Metaphor

The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines metaphor thus:
"application of name or descriptive term to an object to

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1. M. Murray, The Problem of Style, Oxford University Press, London, 1922 (reprint 1973), p.83.
 2. M. Murray, In the Countries of the Mind, Oxford University Press (Second Series), 1931, p.2.

which it is not literally applicable'. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines metaphor as a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea used in place of another by way of suggesting a likeness or analogy between them'. Metaphor is derived from two Greek words meta 'change' and phero 'I bear' which comes to mean a transfer of significance from one object or idea to another. Best example of metaphor is: 'Camel is the ship of the desert'. A ship is literally a vessel that sails on the sea; a desert can be thought as a 'sea' of sand; the camel that travels across this metaphorical ocean on the ship sails across the real one can therefore be called a ship of the desert.

The most outstanding discussion of metaphor in modern times is taken up by I.A. Richards (1936) who devised the term 'tenor' for the subject of a metaphoric expression and the term 'vehicle' for the object of comparison, the metaphoric word itself, or the image conveyed by the word actually used. Leech (1936) reformulates Richard's formula and brings forth the methods of analysis in three stages. I quote here one of the models for this model will suit us in analysing the types of metaphors used by Owen.

Construction of 'tenor' and 'vehicle' by postulating semantic elements to fill in the gaps of the literal and figurative interpretations. He further shows his model by

drawing a chart of the top line which represents the tenor (TEN) and the bottom line the vehicle (VEH) of the metaphor.³ Let us see his analysis of the metaphor:

"The sky rejoices in the morning's birth"
[Wordsworth, Resolution and Independence.]

TEN: The sky [looks bright at] in the morning's beginning
VEH: [animate] rejoices in [animate's] birth

Leech explains his analysis thus: "the gap-filler 'animate' is used twice to fill out the vehicle, for there is no reason here to restrict the class of meanings allowed in these positions by the selection conditions of *rejoice*, which demands an animate subjects, and *birth*, which demands an animate genitive complement."⁴

There are three types of metaphors such as, dead, dying (or weary or worn out), and living. Since we are concerned with living metaphors such as - 'The cold wind prowls round the windows', the dead and the dying metaphors do not call the need for explanations. Murray says that living metaphors are offered with a full conscious of their nature as substitutes for their literal equivalents.⁵

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3. Geoffrey N. Leech, A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry, Longmans, 1969, p.154.
 4. Ibid., p.155.
 5. Patrick Murray, Literary Criticism A Glossary of Major Terms, Longman Groups Limited, UK, 1982, p.84.

Extended metaphor: Leech defines an extended metaphor as "a metaphor which is developed by a number of different figurative expressions, extending perhaps over several lines of poetry." Two other kinds of metaphors are distinguished:

(a) Compound and mixed compound metaphor:

According to Leech, "a compound metaphor consists in the overlapping of two or more individual metaphors".

Example:

Unchangeable, save to thy wild waves' play,
Time writes no wrinkle in thine azure brow:
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.
[Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, IV]

Mixed Metaphor:

According to Murray, "a mixed metaphor occurs when two or more metaphoric words or expressions applied to the one subject are incongruous or incompatible with another. The effect can be ludicrous."

Example of mixed metaphor:

`The hand that rocked the candle has kicked the bucket;
`All these bottlenecks and red tape must be ironed out',
etc.

Simile

A figure of speech related to metaphor is simile in which similarity, rather than identity, is asserted. The Dictionary meaning of simile is the comparison or likening of two things having some point or points of resemblance, both of which mentioned are mentioned and the comparison is directly stated. It is a comparison between two unlike objects. Most commonly used words in similes are - "like", "as", "or", "than" and the formula "like as... so do" is also in used. In the Western tradition simile is regarded as a version of metaphor and has very low profile. Whereas in the Indian literary tradition simile has an equal status with metaphor and every theory in Indian Poetics gives importance to *upma*, simile. Mammata⁶ in his Kavya Prakasha defines simile as: "when there is similarity of properties, while there is difference (between the objects themselves)".

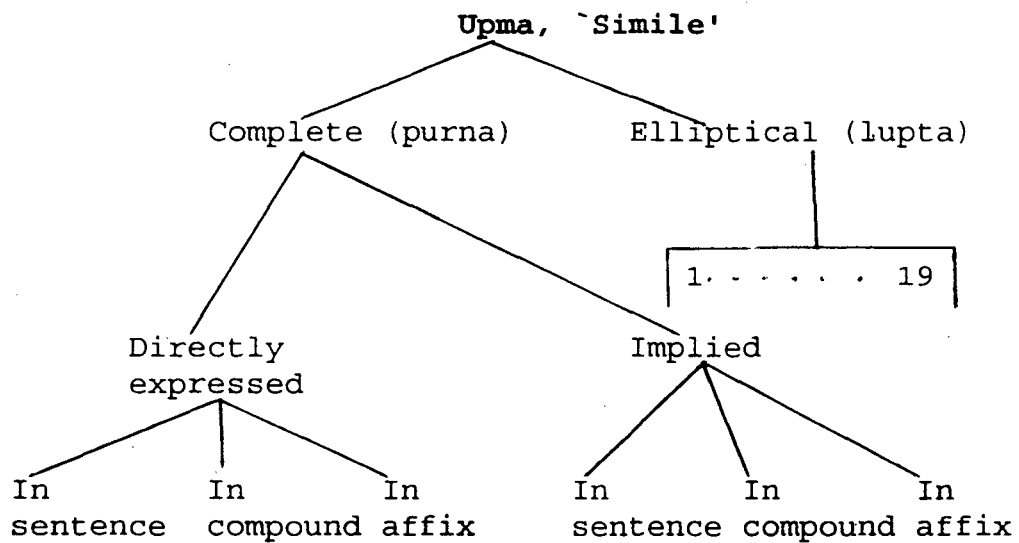
According to Vamana, the 8th century poetician - all figurative or indirect meaning and expressions in language are but aspects of *upma prapanca*, 'the constructs of similitude'.⁷ The validity of Vamana's knowledge is that "all

6. Mammata, Kavya-Prakasha, Ganganath Jha (tr.), Bharatiya Vidya Prakashan Oriental Publishers & Booksellers, Delhi, 1985 edition, p.348.

7. Kapil Kapoor's forthcoming article "Analogy as Argument in Adi Sankara's Vivekacudamani", p.4.

meaning is a product of juxtaposition and relation between objects and between words and objects and the cognitive process of making sense of the reality proceeds by recognising how a given new experience or phenomenon falls, and within which schema already available to us."⁸

In the Sanskrit Poetics, simile can be located in the four following syntactic types: (i) in an affix, (ii) in a compound, (iii) in a clause (or sentence), and (iv) in a pair of sentences (or discourse). We have also inherited the following typology of *upma*, simile⁹ from the Indian Poeticians:



8. Ibid., p.4.

9. Ibid., p.12.

Mammata¹⁰ who divides simile into two: (a) Complete and (b) Elliptical explains that in a complete simile the following factors exist - (i) the object compared, (ii) the object compared to, (iii) the common property and (iv) terms signifying similitude. In an elliptical simile, either one or two or three of these factors are omitted. Indian poeticians recognise the elliptical simile has 19 sub-types according to the element or elements omitted - the common property may not be mentioned, the object compared to may be left unexpressed, or the term of similitude may be left out, or more than one of these elements may be omitted.¹¹

We have noted that death, futile death, and meaninglessness of war are the themes of Owen. Also, there is no heroicism in the death of a soldier and dying for one's country is not necessarily an act of courage or honour. We will now examine Owen's major figures of speech, his metaphors and similes to see how Owen employs these to constitute his central ideas/themes.

First let us identify all the metaphors used by Owen in the selected poems:

10. Mammata, op. cit., p.350.

11. Kapil Kapoor, op. cit., p.14.

in The Send Off:

...signals nodded, and a lamp
winked to the guard (lines 9-10)
(It is a compound metaphor).

in Futility:

Move him into the sun -
Gently its touch awoke him,
At home, whispering of fields half-sown.
Always it awoke him, even in France,
Until this morning and this snow (lines 1-5)

(This is an extended metaphor.)

If anything might rouse him now
The kind old sun will know (lines 6-7).
O What made fatuous sunbeams toil.
To break earth's sleep at all? (lines 13-14)

in Anthem For Doomed Youth:

...the monstrous anger of the guns (line 2)
...bugles calling for them from sad shires (line 8)

The above metaphors can be classified as animistic metaphors which attribute animate characteristics to the inanimate, but the following metaphors are all humanizing metaphors which attribute the characteristics of humanity to what is not human:

in Asleep:

Sleep took him by the brow and laid him back (line 3)
Death took him by the heart (line 5)

The following metaphor is different from the rest:

in Anthem for Doomed Youth:

"...candles may be held...
Not in the hands of the boys but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of goodbyes".
(lines 9-11)

Now let us differentiate the 'tenors' and 'vehicles' of the above metaphors in the following chart:

	Tenor	Nature of Tenor	Vehicle	Deviation
The Send-off	...signals	inanimates	animate (perhaps the porters or the on-lookers etc.)	inanimates
	...a lamp	inanimate	animate (...a casual tramp or an officer)	inanimate to animate
Futility	...sun	inanimate	animate	inanimate to animate
	The kind old sun	inanimate	animate	inanimate to animate
	...fatuous sunbeams	inanimate	animate	inanimate to animate
Anthem For Doomed Youth	...the guns	inanimates	animates	inanimates attributing animate characteristics
	...bugles	inanimate	animate	inanimates attributing animate characteristics
Asleep	Sleep	physical state	animate (...a mother etc.)	physical state to animate
	Death	non-physical state	inanimate (a bullet) animate (a fellow-soldier)	non-physical state to animate

Poem: The Send-Off:
Metaphors:

Signals nodded, and a lamp winked to the guard.

This is a compound metaphor since two individual metaphors:

Signals nodded... (1) and
...a lamp
winked to the guard... (2) are found.

The first is a dead metaphor although it may be a living metaphor once but has passed into common speech. The second is a living metaphor since it reminds of the incident when the dull porters, a casual tramp were watching the newly recruits who were sent to the battlefield. Living metaphors are offered with a full consciousness of their nature as substitutes for their literal equivalents.¹²

In order to locate the 'tenor' and 'vehicle' in the living metaphor, let us use Leech's (1969) linguistic device and frame in the following manner:

T.	a lamp	flushed	to the guard
V.	(animate)	winked	to the guard

The gap-filler animate is used to fill out the vehicle, for there is no reason to restrict the class of meanings allowed in this position by selection condition of "wink" which demands animate subject. The literal meaning is somewhat similar in meaning to the metaphorical expression.

The vehicle of this metaphor can be 'an officer'. If we put 'winked to' in the frame 'the officer', the result is

12. Patrick Murray, op. cit., p.84.

a literal expression: "The officer winked to the guard", which is not, however, similar in meaning to the original metaphor, being a statement about an officer rather than about a lamp. We may also note that Owen is a poet who always tries to improve his tools, here skillfully employs two different types of metaphors (i.e. dead and living) in an expression and intellectualised even the inanimate objects like 'signals', 'a lamp' having the capacity of doing animate actions. Looking into the whole context we may visualise the metaphors 'signals' and 'a lamp' which correspond to "dull porters" and 'casual tramp' respectively or the passive-onlookers (public) who perceive the impending disaster of these newly recruits as they are sent to the battlefield. That is why Owen attacks the war-mongers for sending these newly recruits to the battlefield to be butchered 'as cow' to meet their selfish ends, 'not men - for flags'.

There is a close resemblance between the lamp and the officer as both are capable of winking or flickering (to the guard). Therefore, the comparison between 'a lamp' and 'an officer' is apt because the one which is used metaphorically has a literal counterpart.

Asleep

To locate the "tenors" and the "vehicles" in the following metaphors:

"Sleep took him by the brow and laid him back"

and,

"Death took him by the heart."

We can frame the metaphors in the following manner using Leech's (1969) linguistic device:

T. Sleep took him by the brow and laid him back

V. (animate) took him by the brow.... (1)

T. Death took him by the heart.

V. (animate) took him by the heart.... (2)

The gap-filler animates are used in both the metaphors (1) and (2) to fill out the vehicles, for there are no reason to restrict the classes of meanings allowed in these positions by selection condition of 'take' in (1) and (2) which demand animate subjects.

'Sleep' is often taken as feminine gender and death, masculine by philosophers in general and poets in particular. So the vehicle of the metaphor (1) is 'a mother'. If we put 'took' in the frame 'the mother's back', the result is the expression:

"The mother took him by the brow and laid him back
in her back".

And, the vehicle of the metaphor (2) is 'an enemy' and the result is the expression:

"The enemy took him by the heart."

The literal expressions in both (1) and (2) are roughly similar in meaning to the original metaphorical statements, although they are not exactly the real meaning of the metaphorical expressions.

A soldier exhausted by long hours of fighting and wakefulness, lies down and asleep. An enemy's bullet hits him and kills him. Being an innocent soldier and one who has also sacrificed his life for others (his country), he deserves heavenly bliss of life but nobody knows whether he gets heaven or not.

We can also link these metaphors 'sleep' and 'death' with the type of religion say e.g. "animism". Animism is the belief that all objects, both animate or inanimate are permanently or temporarily inhabited by spirits or souls. Very commonly the view is held that the spirit visits a man in sleep. After the death of a person the spirit is freed from the physical limitations and can wander irrespective of time and space. People must appease the spirits through rituals. In Hinduism, if a man does not feed his ancestors, their spirits will not feel happy in the other world.

Coming back to our discussion, we may visualise that

the inanimate concept/abstract subjects 'sleep' and 'death' have the capacity of doing animate actions. And the Christian concept of the existence of 'heaven' and 'hell' and the belief that after death a man will be rewarded heaven or hell according to his earthly actions are suggested here. Like 'spirits' or 'angels' who under the supervision of God (in heaven) and demon (in hell) take care of their subjects, these metaphors 'sleep' and 'death' take care of the sleeping soldier but these (sleep, death) are the only channels through which the above metaphors 'heaven' and 'hell' will be rewarded. Therefore, the comparison between 'sleep' and 'a mother' is apt as both are taken as caring, loving person/concept. Just as a mother always takes care of her tired child, 'sleep' takes care of the tired person for 'sleep' is often taken as caring, lovely, etc.

And, the comparison between 'dead' and 'an enemy' is apt because both have the capacity of taking (away) life as dead is often taken as harsh, unwanted entity/concept and something that comes when not wanted like an enemy who is harsh, unwanted. Sleep, death used metaphorically have their literal counterparts in 'a mother' and 'an enemy'.

Futility

In order to locate "tenors" and "vehicles" and identify

the type of metaphoric expressions used by Owen, let us use Leech's (1969) analytic linguistic device. We can frame the metaphors thus:

Move him into the sun -

- | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| T. ...its | touch | awoke him | /At home, whispering of
fields half-sown |
| V. ... (animate's) | touch | awoke him | /At home, whispering of
fields... (1) |
| T. ...it | awoke him, even | /Until this working and
in France | and this snow |
| V. ... (animate) | awoke him, even | /Until this morning...
in France | (2) |

The metaphor:

If anything might rouse him now

The kind old sun will know. Let us

put in the proper clause order:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------|
| The kind old sun will know | /If anything | might rouse
him now |
| T. The kind old sun will know | If anything | might rouse
him now |
| V. ... (animate) will know | If (animate) | all... (3) |
| T. ...fatuous sunbeams | fail to break | earth's sleep |
| V. ... (animates) | toil to break | (animate's) sleep
... (4) |

The animate gap-fillers are used only once in (1) and (2) and used twice in (3) and (4) to fill out the vehicles, for there are no reasons to restrict the classes of meanings allowed in these positions by selection conditions of (1) touch, (2) awake, (3) 'know' and 'rouse' and (4) 'toil' and 'break' which demand animate subjects. The literal expressions in (1), (2), (3) and (4) are somewhat similar in

meaning to the metaphorical statements. These metaphorical expressions are identified as 'extended metaphors' for the metaphor, 'the sun' which is involved in the first line of the sentence develops a number of figurative expressions extending to the last line of the poem. The metaphor, 'the sun' which is the source of energy and vitality of life toils in vain to wake the dead soldier like it always did at home and even in France. The vehicle of this metaphor is a man "a war-monger". The soldier whom this man/war-monger brought up so lovingly is killed in the battlefield, so no matter how hard this man/war-monger tries to wake the dead soldier, he (the dead soldier) will not come back to life. He may also note that Owen is harsh in attacking the war-mongers/politicians at home showing them the 'futility' of what they practiced: 'dying in war as the greatest sacrifice a man could make for his country which according to Owen is nothing but a waste or futility.

We may conclude our discussion by saying that there is an obvious resemblance between the sun and a politician who we take them, both having the capacity of taking away life; both are powerful (the one literally, the other metaphorically).

Anthem for Doomed Youth

Metaphors:

...monstrous anger of the guns (line)
...bugles calling for them from sad shires (line 8)
...candles may be held....
Not in the eyes of the boys but in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of goodbyes (line 9-11).

The first is an animistic metaphor because it attributes animate characteristic to the inanimate. 'Monstrous anger' is a phrase often used to denote animal behaviour of man. We can say, 'monstrous anger of the king' (meaning, the king is very angry). And the adjective 'monstrous' is associated with animate noun/nouns having terrifying power who is/are difficult to control when angry.

For the second metaphor we can also formulate a device like we do in the other metaphors by using Leech's (1969) linguistic device in order to find out the 'tenor' and 'vehicle':

T. ...bugles calling for them from sad shires
V. ...{animates} calling for them from sad shires
...(people)

The animate gap-filler is used here to fill out the vehicle, for there is no reason to restrict the class of meanings allowed in this position by selection condition 'calling' which demands animate subject(s). The vehicle of this metaphor is 'the people'. If we put 'calling' in the frame 'people', the result is the expression:

...people calling for them from sad shires."

The literal meaning is somewhat similar to the metaphorical expression and after all, 'bugles' are blown by men in the time of the dead.

The third metaphor:

"...in their eyes
Shall shine the holy glimmers of goodbyes."

Looking into the whole context, the soldiers who died in the battlefield were honoured posthumously by shooting guns, maintaining pin-drop silence save the choirs shrill and blowing bugles. So the meaning of this metaphor is:

'The living soldiers' heartfelt respect for the departing souls whose bravery and sacrifices they will always remember throughout their lives. Two separate comparisons are used: 'that between the brightness of the candles and the shining of the holy glimmers - both give light to darkness' which equates the living soldiers' heart-felt respect for their former comrades.

Let us now identify all the similes in the selected poems and see the nature of comparison in the following chart:

Similes (Figure 1)

	Nature of comparison or Status

The Send-Off	
Their breasts were struck all white with wreath and spray As men's are, dead. (1) (lines 4-5)	Very harsh. The status of the soldiers who went to the battlefield is degraded.
So secretly, like wrongs hush-up, they went (2) (line 11)	The comparison is very cruel as the soldiers who in their zeal for personal... glory and patriotism are compared with criminals who are nothing but destructive forces i.e. anti-social elements. The suggestion is that at least the soldiers' fate is such.
Anthem for Doomed Youth	
...Who die as cattle (3) (line 1)	The comparison is again not elevating, as the soldiers who sacrifice their lives for the integrity of the nation are compared with mere cattle. The status of the soldiers is thus degraded.
The pallor of the girls' brows shall be their pall (4) (line 13)	The linking together of the pallor of the girls - who are known for shyness, innocence and the pall of the new recruits who die fighting for the nation's cause should be noted. But we should bear in mind that the dead soldiers are all conscripts and nobody is taking into account their thinking or feeling of protest, etc. Therefore the comparison is

equal. Just as the feelings, emotions of the girls are concealed in their mind only a hint of paleness can be seen on the face, the thinking of the new conscripts is not taken into account. And when their final destruction comes, like the pallor which conceals the feelings of the girls their (the conscripts) palls become the covers of their coffins which conceal their thinking/feelings forever.

Their flowers the tenderness
of patient minds
(5) (line 13)

Unlike the above similes, this comparison is very beautiful and the compared is equal.

...each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds
(6) (line 14)

This simile is very moving - the dawning of a day is a welcome sign for beginning of everything but here the dawning of a day means the coming of a coffin. Therefore the status is unequal. The object compared is reduced in positive value. It suggests that war is nothing but a futile effort of man. Neither group will benefit from it.

Asleep

He sleeps less tremulous,
less cold than we who awake,
and waking say Als!
(7) (lines 20-21)

The comparison is very harsh because the conditions of the living soldiers are far inferior to the conditions of the dead soldier who now sleeps forever - peacefully. The status is degrading.

Let us also differentiate the similes used in the selected poems between 'complete' and 'elliptical' similes and identify their sub-categories and let us also see the domains from which the 'objects compared' come, and the kind of meaning that gets constituted.

Fig.2

	Complete	Elliptical
in The Send-Off		
<p>Their breasts were stuck all white with wreath and spray As men's are, dead</p>	<p>Both 'the object compared' and 'the object compared to' are present. The term signifying similitude 'as' is present. So it forms a 'directly expressed simile'. The poet foresees the impending death of the new conscripts in the battlefield. So he equates the very act of sticking wreath and spray on their breasts (by the people) with the act of placing wreath and spray to the death. This can be seen only through mental perception (cognition) of the poet.</p>	-
<p>So secretly, like wrongs hush-up, they went</p>	<p>Directly expressed simile. The new recruits who instead of going to the battlefield boldly go to it as if they ashamed like criminals. It suggests their protest against war and their sense of guilt in killing an enemy (a fellow human being). This realization comes through experience.</p>	-

in Anthem For Doomed Youth

...who die as
cattle?

Both 'the object compared'
and 'the object compared
to' are present. And the
term signifying similitude
'as' is also present.
Therefore, it is a 'directly
expressed simile'.
The soldiers who are sent
to the battlefield to protect
the integrity of the country
are killed like cows are
killed in abatoirs. This
is cognised through personal
experience.

The pallor of the
girls shall be their
pall

Though the term signifying
similitude like 'like', 'as'
etc. are missing yet both
'the object compared' and
'the object compared to'
are present. The copula
relationship between the
pallor of the girls and
the pall of the dead sol-
diers should not be lost
sight of. Therefore it is
an implied simile. Just
as the feelings, emotions
of girls are concealed in
their mind - only a slight
hint of paleness can be seen
on their face, nobody is
taking into account the
feelings, their protest
of war of the new recruits.
So when their (soldiers')
final destructin come, like
the pallor of the girls which
conceals their feelings, emo-
tion, the pall of these
recruits covers their coffins
which conceal their feelings,
thinking forever. The Simili-
tude can be perceived
only through cognition.

Their flowers the
tenderness of patient
minds.

Implied simile
Every creature loves flowers
for their beautiful colours
and sweet fragrant and perceive
them to be pure, tender, etc.
Man grows flowers with extreme
care for different purposes -
for his satisfaction or for
commercial value, etc. Like
flowers nature endows the
fairer sex pureness, sweet-
ness, tenderness, etc. That
is why girls are often compar-
ed with flowers for their
tenderness, innocence, etc.
When the coffins of the dead
soldiers are brought home,
the poet sees through his
mental perception that the
bouquets presented by the
flower-girls are very pure,
tender.

...each slow dusk
a drawing-dawn of
blinds

Implied simile
The dawning of a day is a
welcome sign for beginning of
everything but here the dawn-
ing of a day means the coming
of a coffin which suggests
that war will bring no good
thing to mankind, but only
destruction - waste of lives
and properties. This reali-
zation comes only through
mental perception - cognition.

in Asleep

He sleeps less tre-
mulous, less cold
Then we who awake,
and waking say
Alas!

This is a directly expressed
simile because both 'the
object compared' and 'the
object compared to' are
present and the term sig-
nifying similitude 'than'
is also present. No matter
whether the dead soldier
survives in some celestial

realm or becomes mix-up
with mere mud and clay - he
sleeps peacefully, forever
which there is no regretful
waking up. But for the
surviving soldiers each
waking up from sleep remind
them the horror of war. This
comes from their personal
experiences - experiential.

From the above observation, we may say that Owen only uses complete similes in the selected poems and out of the seven complete similes we could identify Owen uses four (4) 'directly expressed similes' and the rest (3) all belong to 'the implied similes'.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

In this dissertation we have examined Wilfred Owen's major poems to see what is the co-relation between his ideas and his language. Our effort has been to examine the nature of his vocabulary and his figures of speech - through the densities of his words. We are able to see clearly his mental focus and his perspectives. In the poem, 'The Send-Off' Owen uses only concrete nouns (24) viz., *lanes, way, siding-shed, train, men, porters, tramp, women, etc.* which signify commonness, a common place anywhere in the world and in social intercourse. Also in the poem, 'Futility' concrete nouns abound but the description of the concrete nouns is not direct but intellectualised through the act of mental perception. Abstract nouns give rays of hope to the undying soldiers when they occur. In 'Anthem For Doomed Youth' like the rest of the selected poems, Owen uses more concrete nouns (e.g., *guns, rifles, etc.*) which refer to the equipment often associated with the soldiers in their daily routine. As this poem is about paying a homage to the dead soldiers - the abstract nouns Owen uses refer to the customary observations showing/expressing grief at losing a loved one in death (mourning, goodbyes, etc.)

Being a war poet writing on the war theme, the verbs

Owens uses are mostly dynamic in nature indicating fullness of actions. Owen uses only a few features of psychological verbs which shows that the war-mongers do not take into account the thinking/protest of the soldiers who are sent to the battlefield (The Send-Off) and killed in the battlefield 'as cattle' are killed in abatoirs ('Anthem for Doomed Youth'). So the man whom England brought up dearly is dead now, no matter how hard England tries to wake him as she always did before, he cannot be waken up (Futility) showing that war is nothing but a meaningless effort of man which will bring nothing, but a waste of lives - a futility.

In the selected poems, adverbs are rather in frequent compared with other lexical classes (nouns, verbs and adjectives). Owen employs mostly adverbs of place like *out, there, down, back*, etc. in the manner of command (from a military officer to his soldiers) to go *out, there* (the battlefield), *down* (in the trench) and *back* (to creep back), etc. An enemy's bullet hits the soldier and dies while having a sound sleep when he does not have time to die (*no time*). The adverbial modification gives primacy to space in Owen's thought - the events are located in space; time is not so pertinent. Even the adverbs of place are rather generalised. So it could be any place.

Owen is very particular about the adjectives he uses

and most of them are found to be of evaluative types - *kind, cold, warm, hard, dull, dead, slow, calm*, etc. indicating his philosophical bent of mind. Owen could even contemplate on the destiny of the dead soldier whether he survives in some celestial realm or just becomes a part of clay mingled with mud and grass.

In the analysis of the sentence structure we could see how careful Owen is in using his language. As we have observed, Owen tries to show the meaningless effort of the hard-hearted politicians in sending the youthful conscripts to the gallows of death. In his attack against the war-mongers, Owen uses simple but forceful sentences, the general public become just mute observers of the prevailing situation and their conversation takes the form of compound sentences suggesting a chain of thought. Sometimes he speculates on the fate of the soldiers and then Owen uses only complex sentences, etc. In his 'Preface' Owen writes:

"Above all I am not concerned with Poetry
My subject is war, and the pity of war".

and he further clarifies the purpose of writing poetry: 'all a poet can do today is to warn'. That is why, wherever Owen puts a question - he also provides an immediate answer.

Owen's 'figures of speech' enable us to have an insight into how his mind establishes association and what these

associations add - what nuances of meaning are added by these associations. Owen uses animistic metaphors which attribute animate characteristics to the inanimate. Most of the metaphors are made by deviant subjects. Using Leech's (1969) linguistic analytical model we are able to differentiate between the 'tenors' and the 'vehicles' and we are also able to show that the concept/entity which is used metaphorically has a literal counterpart. Owen also uses humanizing metaphors which attribute the characteristics of humanity to what is not human. For example, in 'Anthem For Doomed Youth', Owen says the *monstrous anger* of the guns. *Monstrous anger* is a phrase used to denote animal behaviour of man. The adjective *monstrous* is associated with animate noun/nouns having terrifying power who is/are difficult to control when angry. We may say, *monstrous anger of the king* (meaning, *The king is angry*), etc. Such transference makes and the whole world look more fearsome - even the objects are malignant.

Using Mammata's parameters proposed in his *Kavya-Prakashā*, we are able to see the 'nature of similes' used by Owen and also able to identify whether the similes used are complete or elliptical or some other sub-category. By using the 8th Century Sanskrit poetician Vamana's analysis, we are also able to focus on the domains from which the 'objects

compared' come , and the kind of meaning that gets constifuted thereby.

As is evident from our analysis of the (selected) poems, we are able to say that there is no heroicism in the death of a soldier and dying for one's country is not necessarily an act of courage or honour. War is a futile effort of man. Neither group will benefit from it. This, in fact, does not mean that our analysis has exhausted all the possible applications of the models proposed. Within the constraints of time and space, we could not have more than just touched a few categories. What do we gain by this linguistic methodology? What is its advantage? The insights we derive are perhaps not strikingly new - familiar criticism has talked of these things. What this method achieves is to explicate *how* the ideas are constituted; it explains the grounds or foundation of the familiar literary response. Besides we get an insight into his proferred modes of crafting his lines.

It is to be expected that there is a co-relation between language and thought. The research task is to explicate it. This explication has not only clarified how Owen's poems are read and understood - it has also deepened on our appreciation and understanding.

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