

THE DARK RENAISSANCE OF THE WAR POETRY: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN THE POETRY OF THE TWO WORLD WARS

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ABSTRACT: *"Wars have no memory, and nobody has the courage to understand them until there are no voices left to tell what happened," -Carlos Ruiz Zafón, The Shadow of the Wind. The literature of war is a literature of paradoxes, the greatest of which is the fact that it comments continuously on its own failure. War writers often lament their incapacity to describe the realities of armed combat, the inexpressible nature of the subject matter, the inadequacy of language, and the inability of their audiences to understand. Tim O'Brien writes of the war he experienced in Vietnam: "There is no clarity. Everything swirls. The old rules are no longer binding, the old truths no longer true. Right spills over into wrong. Order blends into chaos, love into hate, ugliness into beauty, law into anarchy, civility into savagery. The vapors suck you in. You can't tell where you are, or why you're there, and the only certainty is overwhelming ambiguity."* From ancient Nordic ballads to Masai folk songs or Red Indian sagas, war has always been a predominate theme in literature. Zafon in The Shadow of the Wind portrays a war ravaged Barcelona and comments, *"There's something about that period that's epic and tragic"* for like the Old English Elegiac poetries, the Arthurian Romances, Gorky's Mother or Tolstoy's War and Peace, the literature of the Great Wars have altered human perception and the very fabrics of literature. However, we witness a distinct line between the literature of both world wars. The Second Great War threatened the humankind like never before. It was a manmade crisis which threw us to the brink of extinction, and thus displaying the futility of human existence. As humanity experienced the terror of the 'absurdity' of reality, the philosophy of 'nothing to be done' surfaced in their consciousness. This paper aims to evaluate the marked change in the form of poetry written in the two Great Wars and how far the Second World War was responsible for the advent of Modernism.

KEYWORDS: Poetry of the Great Wars, Existentialism, Trench Warfare, Blitz, Women poets of the First World War, Modernism, Genocide, Surrealism.

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The First World War of 1914-18 left its fierce and its permanent impress on English literature, especially English poetry, paradoxically enriching it with an exclusive kind of sharpened sensibility, unorthodox diction, acute and serious expressions of heightened emotions of courage and fear, nobility and disgust, hatred and pity. There were thousands, probably millions, of poems written in English by the soldier poet in their early twenties in the First World War. In these are recorded vividly the moments' feelings, and experiences of encountering death at the trenches and of suffering constant danger, suspense and horror. Very few of those writings could be preserved, and very few of these poets have got critical recognition. But some of them like Rupert Brooke, Wilfred Owen, Isaac Rosenberg, Siegfried Sassoon and Edward Thomas deserve careful study, and few more like Grenfell, Blunden, Charles Hamilton Sorley, Nichols and Read deserve mention, even in the brief summary of the phenomenal poetic genre. The source of all enduring poetry lies in an intense and overwhelming emotion. The emotion must be overwhelming, and suffered as it were to the last limit of the soul's capacity.

It is usual to note the two contrasted attitudes of war, represented chiefly by Brooke and Owen. The former sings patriotic songs glorifying war, praising heroism, and deifying martyrs. The latter groans at the inhuman cruelty youth are subjected to in the battle field, and strongly protests against the callousness of those who are in power and seeks more power through war at the costs of countless precious youths. One is romantic and idealistic; the other is nakedly realistic about the horror of war. It should be admitted, however, that Brooke believed from the depth of his heart that war was glorious and was happy to die in the fullness of youth. And Owen wrote in the intended Preface to his war poems –

*"Above all I am concerned with poetry.
My subject is war and the pity of war.
The poetry is in the pity."*

Mainly because he did not write the sweet and smooth 'Georgian' poetry, which was one aspect of Brooke's earlier poems. Nevertheless Owen's war poems have given him permanent place among the talented Modern English poets. In 1914 an English war-poet was expected to be a representative, a prophet, champion and consoler. He had to appear for the nation and steel its heart for battle. This is what Julian Grenfell did in his poems like Into Battle:

*'And is dead who will not fight
And who dies fighting has increase.
All the bright company of heaven
Hold him in their high comradeship,
The Dog-Star and the Sisters Seven,
Orion' Belt and sworded hip'*

In the same vein Laurence Binyon composed for his For the Fallen. But the greatest inspire of war was undoubtedly Rupert Brooke, whose series of sonnets under the title 1914 had also some poetic charm. He was joyous, fearless, versatile and purposeful in his verse. Churchill called him a noble son of England living in time 'when no sacrifice but the most precious is

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acceptable.' The idealistic sonnets of 1914 were penned in a small field book among notes from military lectures and personal memos. They express exalted views of heroism in graceful style. But they are really poems not of war so much as preparation for war. The most famous of these is The Soldier, whose initial title was The Recruit. Like an ideal patriot he says,

*If I should die, think only this of me;
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is forever England.*

He compares his martyr heart to 'A pulse in the eternal mind.' In The Dead he claims that he who sacrifices his life fighting for his country 'leaves a white/Unbroken glory, a gathered radiance, / A width, a shining peace, under the night.' Brooke, like Tennyson in Blow, Bungle Blow, declared the largeness of spirit that ends with a prophecy of peace. On reading Brooke's sonnets D.H Lawrence could not deny their sincerity and said "It is terrible to think that they are opposing truths, but so it is"

Sassoon's most well known poem is Counterattack, where the "sudden buttocks" and "clotted heads" are abruptly and brilliantly contrasted with the human, living perception of something non-human. It is given an ironic turn by the introduction of "the jolly old rain." It evokes what has been called "an almost lunatic back-slapping camaraderie endemic to a society insensible to human pain and insensible to the grotesque dead." Sassoon follows Charles Hamilton's Sorley's entreaty, "say not soft things as other men have said" Sassoon's Dulce et decorum est attacks the lie that it is divine to die for the country. He also voiced his protest in poems like Does it Matter and Fight to Finish.

*Does it matter? Losing your sight?
There's much splendid works for the blind*

Edward Thomas's poem reflects his changing attitude to war from The Pity of War to Aftermath. Thomas himself drew a distinction between subtle (private) patriotism and deliberate (public) patriotism, by saying "The worst of poetry being written today is that it is too deliberately, and not inevitably English. There is more in it of the shouting of rhetorician, reciter, or politician than of the talk of friends and lovers." His most remarkable poems are the Owl, When First, Addlestrot and No one Such as You. The Owl shows sensitively and poignantly that the mental depression, grief, disgusts and panic of war are more powerful than physical agony and hardship:

*And salted was my food, and my repose,
Salted and sobered, by the birds voice*
We have his sarcastic version of the millennium in February Afternoon:

*Time swims before me, making as a day a thousand years
And men stride and bear the stroke
Of war as ever, audacious or resign*

There are also unforgettable skeptical poems like The Trumpet and No one Cares Less than I.

No one cares less than I

*Nobody knows but God
Whether I am destined to lie
Under a foreign clod.*

There have been war poets; but Owen was not one who seized upon the opportunity of war, but on whose being was saturated by a strange experience, who bowed himself to the horror of war until his soul was penetrated by it, and there was no mean or personal remaining unsubdued in him. In the fragmentary preface which so deeply bears the mark of Owen's purity of purpose, he wrote: "*Above all this book is not concerned with poetry. The subject of it is war, and they pity of war. The poetry is in the pity.*" The poems are calm. In spite of the intense passion which is their impulse, they have a haunting serenity. In many of these poems there is no more rebellion, but only pity and regret, and the peace of acquiescence. It is not a comfortable peace, this joyless yet serene resignation; but it is a victory of the human spirit. We receive from it that exalted pleasure, that sense of being lifted above the sphere of anger and despair which the poetic imagination alone can give as in Anthem for Doomed Youth :

*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.*

Strange Meeting is complete, archived, unfaltering, and it is not solitary, for although Owen write no other poem which is wholly on this secure imaginative level, we cannot but regard it as the culmination of poems hardly less achieved. Exposure is charged with the same somber mystery and the unity of technique and emotional intention is almost as close. Greater Love, Which seems to have been written before Owen's final period had begun, will reveal the purity of the poet's emotion to those who may be disconcerted by his later works; as in the magical metaphors of the last five lines of this concluding passage of A Terre :

*My soul's a little grief, grappling your chest,
To climb your throat on sobs; easily chased
On other sighs and wiped by fresher winds.
Carry my crying spirit till it's weaned
To do without what blood remained these wounds.*

In Mental Cases the verbal texture of the lines so consistently empathetic, quite apart from any forcefulness of diction, as to be almost rhetorical: while the rhythm in direct contrast, is so markedly unrhetorical to be virtually colloquial. The result is groping, jolting and clutching effect, magnificently appropriate to the subject, in which one can almost feel the convulsive vitality of the words struggling to become articulate through the quiet, choking, ironic monotony of the rhythm.

"The emotional and intellectual content of Owen's verse is valuable because it expresses, in terms of poetry, a personal reaction to experience which, at the time of their incidence at least, felt most men hopelessly inarticulate." – I. M. Parsons

To see him in his flame-lit-perspective, against the background now of the war space, shivering the snow under the slitting wind, marooned on a frozen desert, or crying in a little oven of mud,

that his "senses are charred," is to see a man consigned to articulate immolation. He buries his smashed head with his own singed hand, and himself is the intoning priest over the ceremony, the suicide, the sunset. He is the common touch. He is the bell of the church of the broken body. He writes love letter home for the illiterate, dead, ignorant, uncaring, hapless as the rest of the bloody troops, he is their arguer shell-shocked into diction, though none may have understand. He is content to be the unheard prophet in Death's Country: for fame, as he said, was the last infirmity he desired.

He believed there was no one true way because all ways are by-tracked and rutted and pitfall with ignorance and injustice and indifference. He was himself diffident and self-distrustful. He had to be wrong, clumsy, affected often and ambiguous, bewildered. Like every man at last, he had to fight the whole war by himself. He lost, and he won. In a letter written towards the end of his life and many deaths, he quoted from Rabindranath Tagore: "*When I go hence, let this be my parting word, that what I have seen is unsurpassable.*"

"None of the writers deemed the distinguishing spiritual element of sufficient meaning, however to give it their full critical attention. Yet I believe it is important enough in Owen's mature poetic thought to warrant equal if not more attention than that given to either his aesthetic accomplishment or his poetical conviction. In the subsequent discussion I seek to establish the point of view that Owen was above all spiritual poet, and that distinguishing spiritual element in his poetry is thoroughly developed religious concept which he called greater love, its source, I believe, is to be found in the impact on his thinking made by the life of Jesus..." Joseph Cohen

Owen's poems emphasize the somewhat narrow but strongly entrenched Old Testament concept of God as a disinterested through jealous, sternly just, tribal Deity. To worship him is to compound love with the fear the soldier feels towards his commanding general. In the poem Exposure this fear finds expression through discipline in the face of death: "*To-night, his frost will fasten on this mud and us, / Shriveling many hands, puckering foreheads crisp*" Through the winter stalemate the soldier sustains his faith, but when that season ends the fear clearly predominates: "*For God's invincible spring our love is made afraid.*" War has, for the poet, halted the incarnation of divine love, since the invincibility of spring referred to here is no longer the renewal of life in the Adonis-Osiris-Christ tradition: "*Nor ever suns smile true on a child, or field, or fruit,*" but the stern judgment of death by fire for those sojourning in the new Sodom and Gomorrah.

In Spring Offensive he records the increased casualties, but he makes a point of mentioning that God is not oblivious to these deaths. Of those whose lot it is to die, he writes that "*Some say God caught them even before they fell.*" In Apologia Pro Poemate Meo Owen begins on a different tack with the line, "*I, too, saw God through mud,*" developing forthwith the divinity in man; and in To My Friend With an Identity Disc and The Chances God is thanked for specific blessings. He remains however, essentially the "Jahveh" of the Old Testament, mysterious, taciturn and silent. Owen could not accept explicit assurances of a reward from Him in next world for making the supreme sacrifice in this one. In The End he first posed the query:

*After the blast of lightning from the east,
The flourish of loud clouds, the Chariot throne,
After the drums of time have rolled and ceased
And from the bronze west long retreat is blown,*

*Shall Life renew these bodies? Of a truth
All death will he annul, all tears assuage?
Or fill these void veins full again with youth
And wash with an immortal water age?*

When war came Owen saw its solution not in the love based on fear but in a love based on sacrifice. His poetry expounded and reiterated the responsibility in terms of Christian sacrifice rather than in terms of military discipline or patriotic duty. At A Calvary Near the Acre is one of several poems which deals with this theme:

*One ever hangs where shelled roads part.
In this war He too lost a limb,
But His disciples hide apart;
And now the Soldiers bear with Him.*

In Strange Meeting the ghost of the enemy soldier whom he has betrayed, calling him friend in the world of shades, says that he might otherwise have made a gift to posterity. But :
*It seemed that out of the battle I escaped
Down some profound dull tunnel, long since scooped...*

*'Strange friend,' I said, 'Here is no cause to mourn.'
'None,' said the other, 'save the undone years, The hopelessness...*

*For by my glee might many men have laughed,
And of my weeping something had been left,
Which must die now. I mean the truth untold,
The pity of war, the pity war distilled...*

The conclusion of Insensibility is a solemn condemnation of those with no compassion for the victims of the fighting :

*By choice they made themselves immune
To pity and whatever grieves in man*

The Show is one of the poems referred to where Owen's individual artistry is most clearly distinguished. It opens with the line "*My soul looked down from a vague height with Death*" and unveiling of a stupendous, automatic, painful scene of modern war - almost the hieroglyph of the end or the denial of our civilization. This is of the order of those panoramas as in Thomas Hardy's Dynasts, or of the Vision of Dante. The poet's high imagination is voiced with a clear certainty. Such composition might justify wonder even in a critic when it is remembered what the author's situation was, either involved in the mud pits and barrage he describes or about to be among them. Imagination triumphs. "*The experience of war had given to Wilfred Owen a new set of values; he knew the power of poetry and as a poet he believed that he could and should express the horror and pity of war.*" - Hilda D. Spear

Of Shelley he wrote to Siegfried Sassoon, "*Serenity Shelley never dreamed of crowns me,*" and again in his poem, *A Terre*, he refers with slight irony to Shelley's expression of Pantheism in the forty second stanza of *Adonis*:

*"I shall be one with nature, herb, and stone,"
Shelley would tell me. Shelley would be stunned:
The dullest Tommy hugs that fancy now.
"Pushing up daisies," is their creed, you know.*

War was making a mockery of Shelley's philosophy, and Owen believed that the common man had gone beyond the experience of romantic poet. The true poet had to interpret things afresh in the face of new and larger demands. It was an effort to push the Keatsian romantic behind him; the old poetic phrases sprang uncalled to his mind; the conventional epithet was written before it could be recalled. Yet the experience of war had given to Wilfred Owen a new set of values; he knew the power of poetry, and as a poet he believed that he could and should express the horror and pity of war :

*For leaning out last midnight on my sill
I heard sighs of men that have no skill
To speak of their distress, no, nor the will!*

In *Insensibility* the "*pathetic fallacy*" of nature was exposed; the soldiers could only "*know war lasts, rain soaks, and clouds sag stormy.*" The sympathies they attributed to nature were in themselves ant romantic, for they were alien sympathies : dawn mass[d] in the east her melancholy army" and like the opposing forces, "*Attack[ed] once more in ranks on shivering ranks of gray*"; heaven was "*the highway for a shell*"; the air shudder[ed] black with snow" which was more deadly than the flights of bullets; to the war's "*mental cases*"

Huckleberry Finn ends with its hero's despairing withdrawal from a civilization whose true nature he has come painfully to recognize, just as in *Strange Meeting*, the dead soldier has the courage and the wisdom necessary "*To miss the march of this retreating world*" The lonely independence of which Huck is the fictional symbol becomes increasingly dominant in Owen's poetry in direct proportion to the increase in his dedication to the task of speaking for "*these days...as well as a pleader can.*"

The reconciliation of enemies, the sense of the brotherhood of man, and of the ultimate conquest even of death, as well as the title phrase *Strange Meetings* are common to many genres of literature. Another parallel maybe found towards the end of Keats's *Endymion* :

*Or when in mine
Far under-ground, a sleeper meets his friends
Who know him not, each diligently bends
Towards common thoughts and things for very fear;
Striving their ghastly malady to cheer.*

The imaginative fore of *Strange Meetings* resides in the fact that it is not a friend or an enemy that the soldier meets so much as an alter ego. The fascination that this idea had for the Romantic imagination is illustrated in Rossetti's drawing *How They Met Themselves*; it recurs

in Poe's William Wilson and in other tales; and it receives a particularly interesting form in Emerson's assertion "*that should he ever be bayoneted he would fall by his own hand disguised in another uniform*".

*"For by my glee might many men have laughed,
And of my weeping something has been left,
Which must die now. I mean the truth untold,
The pity of war, the pity war distilled".*

-Strange Meeting (Owen)

Owen writes in the preface to his Poems "*This book is not about heroes English Poetry is not yet to speak of them... My subject is war and the Pity of War. The poetry is in the pity. Yet these are to this generation in no sense consolatory. They may be to the next. All a poet can do today is warn. That is why the true poets must be truthful.*"

Owen belonged to a group of war poets whose poetry showed a new outlook on life created by a firsthand experience of warfare. Like the trench poems of Sassoon, Roseberry and Herbert Read, Owen's poems produce as perspectives the collection activity of the 'human animal'. Backed by the authority of his experience as a soldier and sustained by the nobility of a sensitive soul capable of confronting truths, Owen's poetry goes beyond being a personal gesture. His poetry is true for all times. Owen writes in 1918 of his experience in the battlefield "I came out in order to help these boys directly by leading them as well as an officers can; indirectly by watching their sufferings that I may speak of them as well as pleader can." Owen thus shattered the illusion of the glory of war. This poetry recorded not the high hopes that animated the English Youth at the outsets of the war but the slow annihilation of the youth for whom "each slow dusk is a drawing down of blinds". Moreover, it recorded not what the war did to the men's bodies and senses but what it did to their souls:

*"And some ceased feeling
Even themselves or for themselves"*

As in Disabled, soldier having lived entirely through the body, is not able to adapt to disability and is thus wanting not just for the dark, but for death. The tonal effect is to make us revalue a life which might have seemed uninteresting before the tragedy, useless afterwards as Owen's narrations compels us to see the worth as it was for him; "*the poetry is in the pity*".

Disgust, irony, pity and subversion of the romantic notion of warfare are nature characteristics of Owen's poetry form the dominant moods of Spring Offensive, written in the summer of 1918. The poem records the experience of the war in the spring offensive of 1917. Spring has always been the season of birth and a traditional setting for poetic experience (Keats's Spring Odes) and here is the birth of a tragedy, a beginning of the annihilation of humanity. Owen was aware that his generation was living through horrors, which the Romantic had not dreamed of and that poetry must change in order to describe them and hence the poetry of Owen doesn't tend itself to a celebration of life but life only as a durable experience in the battlefield "*Halted against the shade of a last hill*", the soldiers stand on the borderline of life and death. They know that beyond the "*last hill*" is death and the shade no more offers solace but it is Hades to which they will be ultimately doomed. As the men walked through flowering, friendly landscape to the 'last hill', some of them "carelessly slept". There is a similar impression in

Exposure, while they march they “*drowse, sun-dozed, Littered with blossoms trickling where the blackbird fusses*” subconsciously contemplating “*Is it that we are dying?*” While “*many there stood still*” fully aware to the doom that would inevitably dawn.

In Keats’s Ode to Autumn, Autumn at the moment of ripeness watches “the last oozing hours by hours”, while for these soldiers, the hours bring the bullet for their blood to ooze into hell. “*Injected drug*” suggests that they are being artificially stimulated to perform acts which are against nature. As they look at the hill, they are about to storms, the ‘blank’ sky above it is like a fortune teller’s glass reflecting the question – “*Is it that we are dying?*” The “*warm field*”, the buttercups and the “*little brambles*” which clutched and clung to them like sorrowing arms are attempting to protect them, almost urging them to deny death. As the soldiers wistfully look at the stretch of green glass, Owen captures the contrast between the turmoil within the soldiers and the tranquility in the natural landscape. Life as if will lose its significance as the youth of these men is scarified.

Othello’s “*Pride pomp are circumstance of war*” are contrasted with the march of the “*doomed youth*”. The point that Owen wants to impress upon the readers is that twentieth century warfare is business like and systematic slaughter. “*O larger shone that smile against the sun,— . Mightier than his whose bounty these have spurned*”

The sympathy with the men is enormous but the poet’s judgment is that they have knowingly rejected the sun, the source of life and therefore as in Futility, it cannot help them. “*O what made fatuous sun beams toil/ to break earths sleep?*” Why should the earth wake up to a dawn that sees “Spring Offensive”?

“*And instantly the whole sky burned/ with fury against them; earth set sudden cups/ In thousands for their blood*”. The benign flowers become a chalice expectant for their sacrificed blood. “*Some say God caught them even before they fell*” is only a sentimental “*expression of a temporary pious consolation, it does not lessen the fury of hells upsurge*” Not Valhalla, the traditional home of dead warriors, not the traditional home of dead warriors, not the Christian heaven which the Church promised soldiers, but to the vast Nothingness where the dead soldiers of the Great War go like the soldiers of Strange Meeting, they are trapped and can only sleep – “let us sleep now”. Those survivors who come back suffer such psychological dislocation that they do not retain the capability to communicate the horror. Desmond Graham writes in *The Truth of War*, “They (survivors) do not speak of them because they remind them of what they as killers had brought about. What the soldiers want is to forget.” The truth remains untold and hence the pity enhance.

The First World War can be marked as a Dark Renaissance, which observed a tremendous evolutionary metamorphosis in all aspects of human civilization, such as: Science, arts, philosophy, economy and societal subjects. And feminism, gender roles being an integral part of society was not an exception of it. As Millicent Fawcett states, women transitioned from domestic serfdom to social freedom by the end of World War I. This is due to the fact that women moved from domestic life into the industrial realm of society. It is quite evident that while the world faced one of the human-generated greatest threats in history, which shoved humanity to the brink of extinction, the insignificant borderline between home and outer world, and the invisible shackle which bound women, soon vanished.

There was a sudden change in the market place, as more men went to fight at the battlefield, the domestic business and workplace demanded more women to replace them and continue the productivity. As statistics shows, 37% of the women were employed by the end of the war. However, despite faced by this massive disruption of gender roles in a patriarchal society, still there was a concerning amount of violation of rights in workplaces. Unable to unionize, the women were forced to have low wages and more work hours even after the war.

At the same time, the identification of the term 'home front' implied that theatre of war is masculine and home is feminine. But Susan Kingsley Kent protests, "*Women at the front represented the war with a tone and imagery 'markedly dissimilar from those at home.'*" The reflection of which is quite evident in the contemporary women writings.

During the war, a considerable surge of women authors was noticed. Mostly of these female writers were getting published in anthologies, newspaper, periodicals, factory newspaper and women's magazine. British women quite sincerely recorded the battle experience both at in domestic zone and battle field. These works can be considered a well-documentation of firsthand interaction with the soldiers. The subjects roamed around life in trenches, insignificance of youth life at the battlefield and also maintaining moral support from mainland Britain. Nosheen Khan claims that 500 women wrote on war at this time. However, most of the female authors suffered from the anxiety and fear that their works will soon fall into obscurity.

The outbreak of World War I entirely crumbled down British society's rigid hierarchy. While more and more men were sent to foreign lands to hold the guns, women came out of the household and became the spine of the Britain, ensuring the vast empire to continue its operation. But on the other side, as a large amount of women shifted to important jobs which were previously oriented for men, it created a massive void in the industries such as "*traditional women's trades*". Businesses like tailoring, dress-making, millenary, pottery faced the lack of laborers.

As Paul Fussell states, contrary to the conventional idea, Britain observed a rise of women war poets along with men. Most of those authors belonged to military hospitals, battlefield or at home in the factories. The themes circled around romance, heroism, outrage or suffering. However they greatly feared the fact that they would be soon overshadowed by the male poet. But contrary to their presumption, a good number of female poets and their works survived in the post-war era. Vera Brittain, a nurse in the Voluntary Aid Detachment is one of the remarkable women war author who penned many poems and stories about the great war. Lady Margaret Sackville expressed the absurdity of the war in the poem Pageant of War, while she marked the women contributing to the war as life-savers. The servitude of women were also not ignored by the male authors, as Rupert Brooke attributed credit to women in his poem There's Wisdom in Women.

The mainland of Britain first perceived the horror of war during the England bombing. This was well conveyed in Rose MacCulay's poem The Shadow. There was an attempt to bridge the gap between the common sufferings of the British citizen at home and the soldiers at the warfront. Her another poem Many Sisters to Many Brothers expressed her disgust on the projected inferiority of the women regarding their contribution to the war. It also pondered on

the subject of the equality importance factor of the soldiers and the supports. Vera Brittain conveys the heroism of women during the war in her poem The Sisters Buries.

Some of the notable female authors of the Great War who left a mark on the history were Vera Brittain, May Wedderburn Cannan, Rose MacCaulay, Jessie Pope, Margaret Postgate Cole, Alice Meynell and Margaret Sackville

Catherine Reilly stated the fact that women's writing was overshadowed by the false implied priority of the greater male writings, while Vincent Sherry agrees that women had a strong and powerful literary voice which had always been ignored.

Vera Brittain, as mentioned, was not just a remarkable wartime author but also she actively contributed to the medical service. Her most important work is Testament of Youth, a memoir on her war experience, and also a literary memorial to her fiancé, brother and dearest friends. Another of her ambitious work is Letter to Peace-Lovers, in which she makes a firm stand against the Allies' policy of the rapid bombing on German cities.

May Wedderburn Cannan is another fierce author, who apart from being a literary figure had also served for the MI5. Her books of poetry being War Time (1917) and dedicated to her deceased fiancée; The House of Hope (1923) Rose MacCaulay's Many Sisters to Many Brothers was anthologized in a volume for collecting funds for Belgian refugees. While her novel Non-Combatants and Others was far removed from the fantasy of longing for the trenches, her heroine is depicted as a nervous art student who has a brother and a cousin living in France. The cousin gets shell-shocked; the brother eventually kills himself at the Front, after seeing his best friend blown to bits. And the protagonist throws herself into working for peace.

Jessie Pope is best known for her patriotic poetry of the First World War. Published from 1914 onwards, her verse was later collected in the volumes Jessie Pope's War Poems (1915), More War Poems (1915), and Simple Rhymes for Stirring Times (1916). Her works have been widely read and attracted both admiration and condemnation.

Margaret Postgate Cole's most famous poem, The Falling Leaves, was one of the first anti-war poems from a woman's perspective. Her Afterwards became a powerful critique of the war which moved beyond the battlefields to a postwar sense of futility and desolation. Alice Meynell's poems are often considered underrated. Her most remarkable work is Summer in England, 1914, which compares the beauty of that last summer with the terrible fall into war. It also bears a religious touch. In the final stanza depicts a Christian reward onto the soldiers' death. It opens with a question to which she answers. The soldiers who are dying for their friends are conveying the most Christian of deaths, and finally they get the 'kiss of Christ' as a image of salvation. During the WW1 Margaret Sackville also published a collection of poems called The Pageant of War (1916).

#This form of poetry however witnessed a dynamic shift with the break of the Second World War. Almost within 20 years after the end of World War I, the world was yet again faced with another grim threat which threw humanity to the very brink of extinction. A war much larger and devastating than the World War I in all aspects; a war so massive that all the participating nations gambled all their resources and powers upon it and the border between civilians and army was soon erased. The horror of the war can easily be detected in famous scientist J. Robert Oppenheimer's comment, "*We knew the world would not be the*

same. A few people laughed, a few people cried. Most people were silent. I remembered the line from the Hindu scripture, the Bhagavad-Gita; Vishnu is trying to persuade the Prince that he should do his duty, and to impress him, takes on his multi-armed form and says, 'Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds.' I suppose we all thought that, one way or another"

And rightly, a war of this great scale left millions of casualties and few indelible scars on the history. The war went from September 1939 – 2 September 1945, exactly 6 years and 1 day. While it killed roughly around 60 million, which was almost 3% of the 1940 world population. At the same time the world also observed more horrific brutalities of war destruction which has never been seen before. These included, mass killing of the civilians, Holocaust, strategic bombing of industrial and population centers, chemical warfare and atomic bombing.

Amidst this great existential crisis, there still few artists existed who were able to vent their frustration and sorrow through poetry. Some of these remarkable war poets are : Timothy Corsellis, Keith Douglas, Benjamin Fondane, Mirza Gelovani, Woody Guthrie, Randall Jarrell, Sidney Keyes, Alun Lewis, Boris Pasternak, Henry Reed, Karl Shapiro, Leonid Vysheslavsky, Franz Werfel, Vladislav Znanadporov.

Though World War I and World War II, both are referred to as The Great War, World War II surpassed The First World War in every aspect. It was a war which the world had never witnessed before. Humanity was pushed to its extremes as the warring nations threw their entire economic, industrial, and scientific resources behind the war effort. Unlike the First World War, the World War II stretched from the sky to the land to the sea and underwater. The measurements were taken to the new levels as every leading nation of World War II secretly initiated their own atomic bomb projects. Towards the end of the war, atom bomb was considered as the trump card to win the war, and the first one to draw it would usurp the victory. Apart from that, WW2 also witnessed war both on the battlefields and domestic zone, as Governments around the world built their own spy agencies, trying to infiltrate their enemies to the very core. Perhaps this is why the war was not just fought physically but also to the psychological realms. Perhaps advent of this new age apocalyptic war frightened great mind such as Einstein so much that he commented, *"I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones."*

Perhaps the horridness of the Second World War obscured the minds of the literary figure so much, that we observe a void of literary production in this time, unlike World War I. Another reason for this literary void could be that as G.G Williams states, *"the 1930's had been too desperately concerned with economic problems to be a really poetic decade; therefore relatively few people were either reading or writing poetry in 1939."* However this age of great crisis witnessed the flourishing of a certain type of poetry which heralded the advent of modernism. Poets such as Eliot and Tagore profoundly influenced the later generations. This effect of modernism and postwar-futility is quite evident in the following lines of William E. Stafford's poem At the Bomb Testing Site

*"There was just a continent without much on it
under a sky that never cared less.
Ready for a change, the elbows waited.
The hands gripped hard on the desert..."*

The two wars are distinguished in the usage of military technology. While the trench warfare was the basic strategy during the First World War, the Second World War saw significant development in technology. For example, the usage of Tanks, German air force's "blitzkrieg" that crumbled cities to the ground and have provided significant impetus to the literature of this period.

However, the grimmest aspect of the Second World War was the Holocaust. According to the Holocaust Encyclopedia of United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, *"The Holocaust was the state-sponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators, between 1933 and 1945. Jews were the primary victims - six million were murdered. Roma (Gypsies), physically and mentally disabled people and Poles were also targeted for destruction or decimation for racial, ethnic, or national reasons. Millions more, including homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi tyranny."*

When the Nazi Party came into power on January 30, 1933, there were roughly 525,000 Jews living in Germany, about 0.86% of the total population. However to the end of the war, almost six million Jews were killed by the Nazis from all over Europe Hitler's hatred towards Jews is more evident in Mein Kampf : *"...of the tolerance that the Aryan is always ready to accord a religious creed. For actually, the Mosaic religion [Judaism] is nothing other than a doctrine for the preservation of the Jewish race. ...A Jew is and remains a typical parasite, a sponger who like a noxious bacillus keeps spreading as soon as a favorable medium invites him. And the effect of his existence is also like that of spongers: wherever he appears, the host people die out...The Jew today is the great agitator for the complete destruction of Germany."* The horror of the age is well reflected in Alexander Kimel's poem The Action In The Ghetto Of Rohatyn :

*"Do I want to remember?
The peaceful ghetto, before the raid:
Children shaking like leaves in the wind.
Mothers searching for a piece of bread.
Shadows, on swollen legs, moving with fear.
No, I don't want to remember, but how can I forget?
Do I want to remember, the creation of hell?
The shouts of the Raiders, enjoying the hunt.
Cries of the wounded, begging for life.
Faces of mothers carved with pain.
Hiding Children, dripping with fear..."*

One of the first ignition of Holocaust initiated with the 'Kristallnacht' or also known as "Night of Broken Glass", a state sponsored pogrom which burned/damaged more than 1,000 synagogues, destroyed 7,500 Jewish businesses, killed 91 Jews and arrested about 30,000 Jewish males aged 16 to 60. The support of the government was more evident through Gestapo chief Heinrich Müller telegram to all police units stating: *"in shortest order, actions against Jews and especially their synagogues will take place in all of Germany. These are not to be interfered with."* the terror of such massive scale pogrom is more apparent in Historian Martin Gilbert observation, *"It was a neutral stance, not a hostile one, but this neutral stance was to cost a multitude of lives."* The Nazi Government crafted Holocaust to a level of art. As Dr. Nancy E. Rupprecht remarks *"The Germans employed the latest in European and especially in*

modern American business technology and techniques in order to increase the efficiency of murder. Adolf Hitler did not invent genocide, but he did industrialize the process of mass murder. The goal for Eichmann, Mueller and their subordinates was to do their jobs in the most economical way possible. Treblinka and some of the other death camps used carbon monoxide gas, but it was far less efficient than the Zyklon-B (prussic acid) used at Auschwitz-Birkenau that could kill large numbers of people in three to fifteen minutes, thereby substantially increasing the daily death totals." The horrors witnessed by this age get reflected in Avrom Sutzkever's expressive poem Frozen Jews

*"Have you seen, in fields of snow,
frozen Jews, row on row?
Blue marble forms lying,
not breathing, not dying.*

*Somewhere a flicker of a frozen soul -
glint of fish in an icy swell.
All brood. Speech and silence are one.
Night snow encases the sun..."*

Apart from the Holocaust, there were other genocides took place throughout the war. Few such examples are : genocide of the Serbs, the Polish genocide, the genocide in Volhynia and Eastern Galicia, genocide of the Romani people and the Nanking Massacre.

Barbara Sonek recalls this horror in Holocaust through the following words:

*"From the ashes, hear our plea.
This atrocity to mankind can not happen again.
Remember us, for we were the children
whose dreams and lives were stolen away."*

By the end of the war, it was quite apparent that the first one to use atom bomb would have the winning card. Apart from US, Britain, Germany and the USSR were running full scale development projects, while Japan was considering it. The Manhattan Project was a research undertaking during World War II that was able to create the first nuclear weapons . It was basically led by the United States while had the support of the United Kingdom and Canada. The United States dropped at bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9, 1945, killing 129,000 of people. It remains the only use of nuclear warfare in history. After one of the most horrific cold-blooded genocide of the history President Truman proudly stated that the United State and the Allies had "spent two billion dollars on the greatest scientific gamble of the history-and won." The satanic devastation of nuclear explosion becomes more evident in Wilfred Burchett's words: "Of thousands of others, nearer the centre of the explosion, there was no trace. They vanished. The theory in Hiroshima is that the atomic heat was so great that they burned instantly to ashes - except that there were no ashes." The angst against the inhuman cruelty gets reflected in Kurihara Sadako's poem Let Us Be Midwives! :

*"Midnight . . .
the basement of a shattered building . . .
atomic bomb survivors sniveling in the darkness . . .
not a single candle between them . . .
the odor of blood . . .*

the stench of death . . .
the sickly-sweet smell of decaying humanity . . .”

Though both World Wars were being referred as The Great War, however immense differences remain between those. The humanity stood still and spectated with horror at the infernal reality. At the end of the First World War there were hopes for a better future, for the humanity itself as they learned from their mistake. But at the end of The Second World War, there only remained misery and despair. It left a worldwide generation of handicapped beings, as it was not the Axis Power which lost, the loser was humanity itself. This great disaster perturbed the Great Souls of humanity to the very core. The vigorous Romanticism which was apparent during the First World War became futile and soon ceased to exist. Lin Rowell catches the terror in Galatos :

“Forced from the town, their line a shattered shell,
But intact yet, though thin and thinning still.
Where shrapnel scarred and gashed and warrior fell,”

A massive transformation of the conventional was needed at the dawn of this apocalyptic era, and it was much instigated by the World War II. During and after the Second World War humanity witnessed some of the most heinous crime never witnessed before in the history. Usually the wars before, including the First World War were fought and won at the battlefield. But the Second World War erased the boundary. Bombing of civilians in their homes, destroying ration supply to mass genocide, the humanity faced the horror of extinction. And in order to deal with such overwhelming emotions of pain, grief, fright and bewilderment, they needed to adopt subconscious process to endure and survive. From which the surrealist movements become popular. The First World War was heralded as the "war to end all wars", however the atrocities committed during the Second World War shattered all the confidence humanity had. Tristan Tzara, the leader of Dada movement remarked that any society capable of creating such monstrous wars, did not deserve war; thus an anti-thesis of art. Anti art provided grotesque ugliness instead of beauty. The early movement was influenced the atrocities of the Second World War, which eventually led to surrealism. But instead of punishing humanity for its inhumane sins, it rather focused on the psycho-emotional fabric of subconscious mind.

Though the surrealist movement was quite disrupted by the worldwide crisis of the Second World War, but most of the works produced around this time shared few common features. The representation of death through various metaphors was a very commonly used. The importance of the manifestation of death is more apparent in André Breton's speech, *"Surrealism will usher you into death, which is a secret society. It will glove your hand, burying therein the profound M with which the word Memory begins. Do not forget to make proper arrangements for your last will and testament: speaking personally, I ask that I be taken to the cemetery in a moving van. May my friends destroy every last copy of the printing of the Speech concerning the Modicum of Reality."* [André Breton , 'First Surrealist Manifesto', Paris, 1924. University of Michigan Press, 1969.]

In Dali's Metamorphosis of Narcissus (1937), is seen two hands holding a seed. While the right seed seemed to be germinating, the left one was crumbling, and at the center of the piece are malnourished, decaying people. The painting could be a foreboding of the worldwide unrest and the approaching war. Not just surrealism, the Second Great War provided ignition to

several other short or long lived artistic-literary movements, such as vorticism, thus eventually leading us to modernism and post-modernism. The avant-garde movement in the west observed a major tide during the time of crisis.

Though the modernism movement initiated in the late 1800s, the post World War II witnessed a surge in its evolution. As Alexander Gonzalez puts it, *"In many ways, modernism is a reaction to the atrocities of the World Wars as well as to the Victorian ideals that preceded them. In the widespread suffering and chaos that followed the wars, the older ideals seemed questionable, as did many moral precepts. Modernist poets were therefore concerned with breaking established rules, traditions and conventions, and finding a distinctly contemporary mode of expression, through countless experiments in form and style. The chief concern was the intricacies of language and how to use them, as well as with writing as an end in itself."*

The world was crumbling as the wave of skepticism hits it in a war torn era, and modernism find its roots in such scattered state of utter confusion. The Victorian romanticism was coming to extinction as the modern poet suffered and survived in the apocalyptic world, frustrated and agonized, struggling to vent out their angst through their poetry. And thus they utilized and applied new forms and styles tailored to fit the new perception of the world. The trend can be observed in Karl Shapiro's The Conscientious Objector Related Poem Content Details :

*"The gates clanged and they walked you into jail
More tense than felons but relieved to find
The hostile world shut out, the flags that dripped
From every mother's windowpane, obscene
The bloodlust sweating from the public heart,
The dog authority slaver at your throat.
A sense of quiet, of pulling down the blind
Possessed you. Punishment you felt was clean."*

As the pioneer of modernism, Eliot played a pivotal role in its early development along with contemporary Modernist poet Ezra Pound. As he states "The poet's mind is in fact a receptacle for seizing and storing up numberless feelings, phrases, images, which remain there until all the particles which can unite to form a new compound are present together" (T. S. Eliot). He certainly threw off the conventional emotional aspects of poetry, instead examined it with more logical, scientifically and skeptical perception. According to him poetry was the highest for of science, as for he despised the science which crumbled so many cities to dust. With such revolutionary concept, Eliot and many other Modernist poets, such as William Carlos Williams, William Butler Yeats, Pound, and Dylan Thomas, approached to depict the world they witnessed before them in poetry, rather than hallucinate their readers with a false delusional world. They viewed themselves as extremely realistic, as Eliot remarks, *"What we have to do is to bring poetry into the world in which the audience lives and to which it returns when it leaves the theatre; not to transport the audience into some imaginary world totally unlike their own, an unreal world in which poetry can be spoken. What I should hope might achieved, by a generation of dramatists having the benefit of our experience, is that the audience should find, at the moment of awareness that it is hearing poetry, that it is saying to itself: "I could talk in poetry too!" Then we should not be transported into an artificial world; on the contrary, out own sordid, dreary, daily world would be suddenly illuminated and transfigured."* (From Poetry and Drama, 1951) (Quoted in T. S. Eliot)

Existentialism first came under the limelight in the post-world war era, when the wave of skepticism brushed away all the conventional philosophical values. Hayden Carruth remarks the rise of existentialism as “...like an elephant entering a dark room: there was a good deal of breakage and the people inside naturally mistook the nature of the intrusion.” The sudden dawn of existentialism had a hostile welcome from the contemporary intellectuals. Like Carruth puts it: “On one hand the Neo-Thomists and other moral philosophers were alarmed by Existentialism's disregard for traditional schemes of value; on the other the positivists and analytical philosophers were outraged by Existentialism's willingness to abandon rational categories and rely on nonmental processes of consciousness. Remarkably violent attacks issued from both these camps, set off all the more sharply by the enthusiasm, here and there, of small welcoming bands of the avant garde. That the welcomers were no less ill-informed about Existentialism than the attackers, didn't help matters.”

As known, the advent of World War II witnessed a surge in feminism. As women filled the void in most sectors, the literature was not an exception. Some of the significant women authors of the era are, Flora Hendricks, Helen Goldbaum, Josephine Jacobsen, Eve Merriam, Margaret Stanley-Wrench, Marion Strobel, Mary E. Bulkley, Julia Garcia Games, Josephine Miles, Muriel Rukeyser, Brenda Chamberlain.

Like most of the mainstream movements such as Romanticism, Transcendentalism – the term Existencilism provides us a false presumption. Existencilism is much vaster to be recognized or defined by a single word. However it is quite evident that existencilism bloomed from the human despair and awareness of their own incapacibilities. During the World Wars, Paris became the experimentation lab of existentialism, while it shed light upon the new mode of surrealistic theatre known as “Theatre of the Absurd”. Numerous historians made contributions to the early development of absurdity in France as the horrific revelations of gas chambers and war atrocities coming out of Germany in Post-War era. The pivotal concept of The Theatre of the Absurd was to depict a man's helplessness and futile existence in a world without purpose. War poetry can also be dissected to realize ‘Existentialism’ in a more prominent way. Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen shines brightly under this light. The absurdity of war reflects highly in their poetry to emphasize the pointlessness of our existence. Like Simone de Beauvoir puts it: “From the very beginning, existentialism defined itself as a philosophy of ambiguity. It was by affirming the irreducible character of ambiguity that Kierkegaard opposed himself to Hegel, and it is by ambiguity that, in our own generation, Sartre, in *Being and Nothingness*, fundamentally defined man, that being whose being is not to be, that subjectivity which realizes itself only as a presence in the world, that engaged freedom, that surging of the for-oneself which is immediately given for others. But it is also claimed that existentialism is a philosophy of the absurd and of despair. It encloses man in a sterile anguish, in an empty subjectivity. It is incapable of furnishing him with any principle for making choices. Let him do as he pleases. In any case, the game is lost. Does not Sartre declare, in effect, that man is a “useless passion,” that he tries in vain to realize the synthesis of the for-oneself and the in-oneself, to make himself God? It is true. But it is also true that the most optimistic ethics have all begun by emphasizing the element of failure involved in the condition of man; without failure, no ethics; for a being who, from the very start, would be an exact co-incidence with himself, in a perfect plenitude, the notion of having-to-be would have no meaning.” [Simone de Beauvoir, *The Ethics of Ambiguity* (1947)]

As Randall Jarrell writes in Eighth Air Force :

*"I have suffered, in a dream, because of him,
Many things; for this last saviour, man,
I have lied as I lie now. But what is lying?
Men wash their hands, in blood, as best they can:
I find no fault in this just man."*

World War II also showed us the futility of existence, as humanity experienced the 'absurdity' of the reality they realized "Nothing to be done." The end of war also saw the rise of Absurdism, as humanity failed to comprehend the futility and loss of such war. And this gave birth to the Theatre of the Absurd. As Martin Esslin puts it, *"The Theatre of the Absurd attacks the comfortable certainties of religious or political orthodoxy. It aims to shock its audience out of complacency, to bring it face to face with the harsh facts of the human situation as these writers see it. But the challenge behind this message is anything but one of despair. It is a challenge to accept the human condition as it is, in all its mystery and absurdity, and to bear it with dignity, nobly, responsibly; precisely because there are no easy solutions to the mysteries of existence, because ultimately man is alone in a meaningless world. The shedding of easy solutions, of comforting illusions, may be painful, but it leaves behind it a sense of freedom and relief. And that is why, in the last resort, the Theatre of the Absurd does not provoke tears of despair but the laughter of liberation."* [Martin Esslin, in Introduction to Absurd Drama (1965)]

Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot could be a remarkable evidence for what Esslin believes is the essence of modernism. As Perloff comments, *"... Waiting for Godot was written in 1947-48 following the Second World War. Even though Beckett never explicitly wrote about the war, there were many allusions made to it in his work. In Waiting for Godot, there is a ravaged, desolate landscape, a strange environment that is new to the characters, a world that is now pointless but which used to have meaning, mysterious beatings, anxiety over being seen by others, anxiety over waiting, and displaced individuals. All of which resembles what Beckett and others would have experienced during the war."* [Perloff, Marjorie. *"In Love with Hiding": Samuel Beckett's War*. The Iowa Review 35.1 (Spring 2005): 76-103. JSTOR. Web. 25 Mar. 2013.] Samuel Beckett's other absurdist play, Endgame, carries on similar concept but in more grim metaphor for death than Godot. Like Godot, It lacks any consequential action. Endgame only provides us the vague feeling of a finale. Even though death does not appear at the end of Endgame, there is a strong sense that it is nearby and the waiting.

Another pioneer of The Theatre of Absurd is Tom Stoppard. His masterpiece Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead is evident of the post-world war unrest and the tension of the Cold War. Stoppard's main characters, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, are two individuals who find themselves in the center of an incomprehensible world. While Godot is "about the uncertainty and frustration felt by Didi and Gogo in their interminable waiting in limitless time, Stoppard's is about the uncertainty felt by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in trying to understand the origin and meaning of events which they come to realize are carrying them to their deaths"(Duncan 59). As Michael Hinden suggests, Stoppard's play is an example of his ability *"to absorb and to work through Beckett, not to get around him"*

There was thus a marked transformation in man's perception of the human animal and the Second World War, for good, disintegrated his soul and sounded the doom of all things that

had previously held society together- religion, conscience or humanity. There is thus a steady transformation from Arnold's "*Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song. / There, in a meadow, by the river's side. A flock of nymphs I chanced to espy.* " to Eliot's depiction of the "hollow men" of "etherized" humanity chuckling its way "like ancient women gathering fuel in vacant lots" into self annihilation. Arnold's serene Thames is long since evaporated, giving way to the signifiers of modernity: "*empty bottles, sandwich papers, Silk handkerchiefs, cardboard boxes, cigarette ends*":

"The nymphs are departed.

Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song.

The river bears no empty bottles, sandwich papers,

Silk handkerchiefs, cardboard boxes, cigarette ends

Or other testimony of summer nights. The nymphs are departed.

And their friends, the loitering heirs of city directors;

Departed, have left no addresses.

By the waters of Leman I sat down and wept . . .

Sweet Thames, run softly till I end my song,

Sweet Thames, run softly, for I speak not loud or long.

But at my back in a cold blast I hear

The rattle of the bones, and chuckle spread from ear to ear.

A rat crept softly through the vegetation "

From the death of the mortal body as was the theme of the First World War, (*These had seen movement, and heard music;/ known Slumber and waking; /All this is ended – The Dead*, Rupert Brooke) The Second World War showed the horrors of the death of the soul (*We have lingered in the chambers of the sea/ By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown/ Till human voices wake us, and we drown.* - *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*, T. S. Eliot). The poetry of the two World Wars bore in themselves a marked difference in style, form or theme. The Second World War finally showed humanity the futility of existence; for mankind was left to experience the 'absurdity' of the reality and they ponder that "Nothing to be done."

In the end it could be said that the Second World War challenged the very concept of human existence. A change that had begun with the First World War, the Second World War made its outcome inevitable. Every concept, belief or philosophy which were unquestioned before were put under the microscope. It was a purge of humanity to question the apocalyptic horrors as the Wars left only ashes. The War was but an evanescence that would leave humanity metamorphosed and transcend into a '*hollow man*' kept waiting eternally in the hope for the arrival of a '*Godot*'.

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