

In Wilfred Owens book, War Poems and Others he uses many techniques ^{in his writing,} that explore the horrors of war. Two of his most powerful poems are 'Futility' which deals with the life and death of a soldier, and 'Dulce et Decorum Est' which describes the horror of gassing ^{that} ~~which~~ many soldiers experienced during the war.

The poem 'Futility' by Wilfred Owen is a poem about the life and death of one soldier, but is written in such a way that the death of the millions of other soldiers is suggested. In this poem Owen challenges the nobility of war and the ultimate act of giving ones life for ones country, and also (by the end) raises the question of the Futility of all existence.

The poem opens gently but Dramatically,

in an urgent and present tense. "Move him into the sun", like an officer commanding his men as they handle the limp body of a fallen soldier. It tells ~~us~~ us, as the audience, that this man is dead and that any hope of his recovery lies in the refusal ^{al} to accept it, in the absurd hope that the sun, the earth's source of warmth and traditional giver of life will somehow bring this man back to life. We can almost see and hear as the men struggle to place the body in the sun. Hoping, praying that a miracle will occur.

"Owen juxtaposes the beauty and tranquility of rural England to the hideous battlefield of France. "Gently its touch awoke him once, whispering of fields unsown." This gives life to the man/^{subject} of the poem. He was a real

man and it quite emotional. This man was a rural lad, who ~~once~~ had fields to sow. He worked with nature and woke with the sun, even in the unnatural environment of war - "Even in France." But now as it seems, not even the sun will wake him now, and Owen contrasts the sun's rejuvenating power to the wintry world of death - "Until this morning and this snow." However on this dull note, Owen still finishes stanza 1 in the vain hope that this man might nonetheless be roused: "If anything might rouse him now, the kind old sun will know." Owens affectionate personification towards the sun may sound encouraging, but can be read dismissively. It has a 'child-like, nursery rhyme quality' which suggests that the speaker is aware that no rousing will

take place even if they wish it could happen. The introduction to the sun in the first stanza, sets up for the concentration for it in the second. The second stanza begins focusing on the soldier's body, but progresses from his death to the questioning of the purpose of the entire universe ~~the~~ ^{and} the age-old-mystery of the beginning of ~~the~~ life and the reason for being: this is where Owen takes us back to the original creation of the world - "Think how it wakes the seeds, Woke once the clays of a cold star." Here the sun is praised for being the original creator of life and the renewer of creation. The sun is placed and regarded so highly yet the poem continues to say "Are limbs - so dear - achieved. Are sides full merved - still warm - too hard to stir? Owen

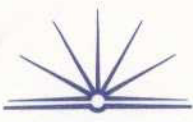
wonders why, the sun, with such power cannot ~~Breath~~ new life into the dead and how is it that man, developed from the earth and ~~the~~ nurtured by the sun are destined to be cut down so brutally without the prospect of resurrection? ^{IF IS} Owen's particular adoration for the physical perfection of the young soldier that make Futility not only of this man's death, but the way in which he died, so painful. Owen goes on ~~to~~ to question the Futility of all existence. "O, what made Fatuous sunbeams toil, to break earth's sleep at all?" Owen decisively deflates his earlier ~~address~~ affectionate address to the "Kind old sun". Sunbeams are now fatuous - purposeless and idiotic. Owen in this powerful ending wonders

why an earth which permits such ~~creedly~~ ^{cruelty} ~~creedly~~ to its creatures was ever brought to life in the first place? This poem not only describes the horrors of war, through the eyes of the soldiers but also talks about the ~~FATA~~ Futility of life is it is our destiny to be 'cut down' in such an awful way.

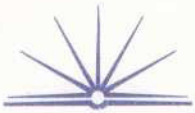
In another poem 'Dulce et Decorum est' by Wilfred Owen, it gives an extremely visual representation of ~~the~~ the horrors of war. It starts by describing the ~~soldiers~~ ^{soldiers} in two similes which contrast to the usual depiction of the soldiers - "Bent double, like old beggars under sacks, knock-kneed coughing like hags." The soldiers have pre-maturely aged because of the horrendous conditions



they have experienced during the war. The soldiers are physically derelict and mentally numb - "all went lame, all blind, death even to the hoots, of the tired outstripped five nines that dropped behind." The onomatopoeia of 'hoots' and 'dropped' allows us to experience the sound of the 5.9 calibre shells, even though Owen writes the soldiers can not hear them, for the audience we can see and hear what the soldiers are experiencing. The soldiers in their zombie like state are making their way back to the trenches when all-of-a-sudden "GAS! GAS! Quick boys." The geriatric youth are now boys again, Owen in combining the two gives us a grotesque vision of prematurely aged youth. The boys fumble for their gas makes for



protection, but one is too slow. Owen describes this as a nightmare vision enveloped in the sickly colour of poison gas. "Through the panes of thick green mist, I saw him drowning. In all my dreams, before my very sight. I saw him drowning. Guttering, choking drowning." Guttering, choking is then followed by more verbs - hanging, Gargling, writhing which continues this grotesque picture. More visuals are introduced. "If you could hear at every jolt, the blood came gargling from the froth corrupted lungs." The main point of this poem is suggested in the title 'Dulce et Decorum est' which is from an ancient Roman poet, Horace, which in translation declares. It is a sweet and decorous deed to die for ones



country. ~~But Owen does~~ But Owen does not understand that such ~~the~~ things the soldiers saw, and deaths they witnessed first hand were anything close to sweet, decorous, noble or dignified.

~~His~~ Owens poetry is certainly successful in portraying the horrors of war through his poetry. The purpose of his poetry was to shock the civilians at home out of the propaganda induced complacency which they have been subjected to. His poetry is truly powerful.