

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

After analyzing six poems of Rupert Brooke's and Siegfried Sassoon's, I have come to some conclusions. In my opinion, it is clear that Sassoon's and Brooke's involvement in World War I has influenced both poets in writing their poems. This is revealed through the dictions each poet chose for their poems.

In the first poem, "The Soldier" by Rupert Brooke, he showed how one's death for his/her country is patriotic. It is shown through the theme, which is: **"One's sacrifice for his/her own country in war is patriotic."** Brooke managed to draw the readers away from the gruesomeness of war by choosing the dictions "flowers," "blest by suns," "happy," "laughter," "friends," "gentleness," and the "peace" to show the good things that the soldier will gain once he passes away, which gives us a rather happy and beautiful imagery rather than a gloomy and gruesome one. Not to mention that he also repeatedly mentioned the word "England" throughout the poem, giving more sense of nationality and patriotism in the poem.

In the second poem, "The Dead," Brooke succeeded to affirm sacrifice, honor and nobility through the poem. The theme for this poem is **"One's sacrifice in war will give the country and themselves nobility and honor."** The soldiers give up his "serene" time and the "sons they gave," which implies to their future, to go to war. For this sacrifice they will gain "honor" for themselves and for their country as Brooke stated that "honor" has come back just like a "king" that rules all over the country. They will also have regained their "nobleness" by making this sacrifice. They will have their own "heritage," which is a free and noble country.

In the last poem of Brooke that I have analyzed, "Peace," he showed the readers how war has given the soldiers a sense of inner peace. The theme of this poem is **"One can actually find peace during war if he/she is brave and willing to fight and die for their country."** These soldiers who are ready to go to war have "sharpened power," "clear eye," and blessed with the "youth." They are willing to go like "swimmers into cleanness leaping," like a jump into the water. Brooke emphasized their willingness by choosing the word "leap" to suggest a playful vibe; they bravely volunteer to join the war. These soldiers with their "laughing hearts" are not afraid of death for they will find a "release" which implies peace, if they die in war. They will no longer know the "shame" they had in their past, and the "agony" the soldiers feel during war will end because "death" will take it away. They will finally find peace.

The next poem is "Survivors" by Siegfried Sassoon. Sassoon's satirical and sarcastic point of view of war is seen in this poem which he wrote during his stay in Craiglockhart hospital in 1917. The theme of this poem is **"The traumatic**

effect war leaves in one's life lasts a lifetime." In this poem, Sassoon sarcastically said that the injured soldiers who go to war will "no doubt" heal, and that they are "longing to go out again." But it is all a lie, as Sassoon followed each of the phrases with "stammering, disconnected talk" and "scared faces." The soldiers' physical wounds might heal, but they would be left stammering, shocked and scared, which are the symptoms of a shell-shock patient; they are wounded psychologically. Their nights are "haunted" by "the ghosts of friends who died" and their dreams "drip with murder." The effect does not only apply to the soldiers, but also to those who are related to them, like their children. War has taken away their fathers, leaving them fatherless, "broken," and "mad."

The next poem by Siegfried Sassoon is "Counter-Attack." The theme of this poem is **"No matter how hard one fights during a battle, the fight is still helpless and futile."** The helplessness and futility are shown through the dictions in the poem as Sassoon began the poem by describing the soldiers' condition in the front line. Their faces are "pallid;" they are "unshaved" and "thirsty," "blinded with smoke," which show that they are unhealthy. Sassoon even used "trodden sand-bags" as a comparison for the dead soldiers' body because they are ignored and piling up like trodden sand-bags. Again, this comparison suggests helplessness because no one is taking care of the bodies due to the chaos and "clamour" in the battlefield that Sassoon compared to "gusts from hell." The soldiers are "muted," "dizzy," struck by a "galloping fear," not able to speak or fight to protect themselves. The soldiers' fate ends as they are "[choking]" and "bleeding to death" as no one helps them. And the futility is shown clearly at the end of the stanza when Brooke stated "the counter attack had failed."

The last poem of Sassoon that I analyzed is “Suicide in The Trenches.” This poem talks about how war takes away joy and innocence of life. The theme of this poem is **“War can ruin one’s innocence and enjoyment of life.”** This theme is seen through the dictions Sassoon chose. He opened the poem by telling a story of a “simple soldier boy” who grins at “empty joy,” “whistled early with the lark,” and “slept soundly” although the night is lonely and dark. These dictions show how innocent and naïve the boy is before he goes to war. He turns into a “[cowering]” and “glum” soldier in a cold “winter trenches” that are filled with “crumps and lice.” He feels so intimidated and dejected that he “put a bullet through his brain,” ending his life in such a horrible way because of war. Sassoon ended the poem with a bitter, sarcastic and angry tone as he stated that those who do not go to war, which then he compares war to “hell,” will never know and experience the horror and horrific images of war that take away the soldier’s “laughter” and “youth.”

Having analyzed all the poems, I found that these two poets had an obvious difference in their point of views of war. Brooke romanticized war, meaning making war seems more attractive and interesting than it really is; he wrote patriotic themed poems because of his failure to reach the battlefield as he passed away on his way to war, hence the positive imagery of war he brought in his poems using the dictions such as “happy,” “gentleness,” “peace” and “laughter” to romanticize the war. On the other hand, Sassoon had a realistic point of view of war. He showed the readers the gruesome and horrifying imagery of war he experienced himself during World War I, and it is displayed in his poems. Sassoon’s dictions are in contrast to Brooke’s. Sassoon used "stammering,

disconnected talk," "scared faces," "clamour," "gusts from hell," to realistically portray the war.

Although the two poets have a different point of view of war, both of them also share a few similarities. Both of them were British, both are soldiers and sent by the government to war, and wrote poems about war. Their themes are different; however, both of them focus on a public view of war. As stated in Sassoon's poem "Suicide in The Trenches," he was well aware of the people who support the war. From what he wrote in the poem, he realized that there are people who cheer for the soldiers who are marching to go to war. Those are the people who do not know how gruesome and traumatic war can be. In my opinion, those people, who are caught up by the government's propaganda of war, seem to think that going to war is patriotic, as seen in Brooke's poems' themes. Both poets brought people's points of view of the World War I in their poems. They can be said to represent the people who are for and against the war.

As of the figure of speech, both poems mostly use metaphor and symbolism to create an imagery of war based on their own point of view. For example, Sassoon used the word "hell" as the metaphor of war, the word "lark" to symbolize a joyful persona, while Brooke symbolized the beauty of England by the word "flowers," or referring to the men who do not want to go to war as having "sick hearts."

Last but not least, analyzing these poems has provided me with some knowledge about World War I and how it affected the people involved. The two poets have provided me with images and description of war in England through the poems. In my opinion, each poet has their own way in describing war and

neither of them are better than the other; they both succeed to show the readers about the people's point of view of war. At first, I agreed with Sassoon on his point of view about war, but after conducting more research, my view of these poets has undergone quite a change. I now understand why Brooke romanticized the war and why Sassoon wrote a satirical and gloomy poems on the war.

