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POETRY OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF  
GUILLAUME APOLLINAIRE, WILFRED OWEN AND AUGUST STRAMM.

Submitted for the degree of M.A. by  
Kathryn D. Wilson, November 1983.

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine the nature of poetic response to war across the English, French and German languages. It attempts first of all to define the resources (specifically, the metaphor) available to the war poet, as opposed to the writer of war prose, in his new search for objective truth. The 1914-18 War was a testing ground for Poetry, compelled as never before by the imminence of the historical event. This study is therefore particularly concerned with tracing the various stages of a change in poetic language between 1914-18 which in part lead to the greater realism characteristic of later (20) poetry. These stages run from the gradual rejection of conventional poetic expression (Chapter 2)- a process seen as either quickened or impeded by the social and political climate in which the poet found himself (Chapter 3)- to the final emergence of a new medium adequate to the communication of the new realities (Chapter 4). This maturer poetic language found its most brilliant expression in the English humanitarian poetry of protest, the best of which stands alone, it is argued, as the finest poetry of the war (Section i-ii, Chapter 3). The aesthetic failure of the alternative French and German responses, which were largely ones of passivity and acceptance, is seen less as a product of personal talent, than as a direct result of national attitudes to the social and political valuation of the individual. Section iii of Chapter 3 looks at the German socialist and middle-class acceptance of the imperialist ideology of the ruling government and the subsequent alienation from Western liberal democratic ideals, as some of the reasons for the lack of open rejection of war. The different philosophical premises of German and English literature are also examined. Chapter 4 assesses the success of humanitarian and non-humanitarian poetry through a discussion of the individual metaphoric usage of Guillaume Apollinaire, Wilfred Owen and August Stramm. Factors such as internal congruity and technical accomplishment are considered, as is the role of metaphor in each poet's search for meaning. Although the war poetry of Apollinaire is negatively judged in this study, a diachronic view of the metaphorical development in Calligrammes during 1914-16 from early cliché to mature love lyric, does reveal some signs of the same movement away from aestheticism which inspired the English poets towards a greater involvement with the human concerns of Mankind at war and consequently to a richer, wiser and tougher poetry.

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## CHAPTER 1.

### ART AND WAR.

In a post 1945 society, Art has increasingly adapted to conditions where violence is a continuously dominant influence. The moral problem of the place of Art in a society at war, which faced writers seriously for the first time in 1914, has now been to a great extent transcended by more fashionable psycho-linguistic preoccupations. In 1914, the status and function of Art was severely challenged with the outbreak of unprecedented violence and destruction. The editor of the German review Das Grosse Jahr in his preface hinted not only at the ethical incompatibility of the opposing principles of Art and War, but also at the inadequacy of Art, "the nightingale in eagle's claws", to deal with the overwhelming force of events. For some critics, he admitted, the great moment in history did not seem to promise equal prominence for Art (1). More modern criticism poses essentially the same problem as one of structure :-

"In modern war poetry there is not infrequently a conflict between subject matter and form, truth and expression, for form is order and war is chaos." (2)

The global moral and philosophical questions, remain, however, unanswered:-

"The question therefore does seem to arise whether modern war is too overpowering, its tragic potentialities too vast to be expressed within a given lyrical form." (3)

To pursue either the philosophical or the linguistic question to its logical conclusion would lead inevitably to silence in face of the unutterable (3a). Fortunately for the genre of modern war poetry, few poets actually refused to write on philosophical grounds, with



the exception of some like Franz Werfel (4) and even fewer experienced linguistic difficulties which forced them to the limits of language and beyond, as was the case with August Stramm (5).

In fact, the opposite was true. With the outbreak of war came a veritable deluge of words (6). Art had seemingly embraced and transcended the enormity of War (7) in the spirit of Whitman's proclamation:-

"If peace is the routine, out of the (poet) speaks the spirit of peace (...). In war he is the most deadly force of war." (8)

The idea that Art and War are born of the same fierce spirit was, of course, a common theme to both patriotic and National Socialist writings and it is subsequently very difficult to distinguish between the extreme chauvinism of say, some English patriotic poets and the pre-fascist ideology of the German nationalist poets. The close identification of Art and War (9) was an easy step towards the official view of the propaganda function of Art in wartime (10).

The Introduction to Das Grosse Jahr, a special war-time edition of the supposedly liberal Die neue Rundschau (11) takes up this idea of the shared spirit of Art and War, with the ostensible emphasis on Art as a force for peace.

" Genau so steht das Werk des Dichters. Ohne die Gewalten, deren äusserste Erscheinung der Krieg ist, kann kein geistiges Leben gedacht werden und doch sagt alles geistiges Leben, Frieden."

((So stands the work of the poet. No intellectual life can be conceived of without the forces whose most extreme form War is, and yet all intellectual life says, Peace." (11a)

Such a view of the motivations of literature faces the poet or writer with an aesthetic dilemma made to sound like a moral one, tacitly ignoring that the inner tensions of Art do not derive exclusively from the opposition of philosophical or intellectual absolutes, but also from the conflicting principles of 'Peace' and 'War' in real life. To neglect this second aspect is to exclude Art from moral issues, as the editorial proceeds to do with the following definition of the poet's task in wartime - "Nicht den Krieg zu verherrlichen, nicht ihn zu schmähen, ist (des Dichters) Aufgabe" (p.15) (It is not the poet's duty either to glorify or revile war). The poet is then forced to adopt a fine Olympian stance. Such vague idealism (12) inevitably involves at some point what Jon Silkin refers to in his book Out of Battle (p.44) as the "exclusion of the recognition of suffering". It is precisely this moral isolation and its attendant attitudes which call into question the honesty and validity of much of the chauvinist or idealist poetry. Yet the spurious virtue which many patriotic writers could lend their work was one of the main reasons both for the continued consumption of nationalist literature by the public and indeed for the successful promulgation of official war policy and morale (especially in Germany). This paradoxical glorification of war in the name of good, explains why patriotic poets were still penning their inflated verses at the end of the war as if the evils of the Somme or Verdun had never happened and why, for instance, certain English lady historians were moved to produce attractively presented volumes about the war in order to counteract "the grim realities and savage brutalities" so that "the memory of the war should be touched to noble issue." (13) Such curious refusal to come to terms with the actuality of modern warfare was one of the more harmless aspects of wartime conservatism which, however, also encouraged much more ethically dubious, pro-war attitudes, which lasted far beyond into the next decade. Ernst Jünger, for instance, in a unbridled glorification of war in his novel Feuer und Blut (1929) speaks of the 'Sittlichkeit der Tat' (the virtue

of action) and of "nur die Tragik und Drama Selbst" (the pure tragedy and drama) of battle (14). His view of war as a vigorous spiritual training for a whole nation stems from pre-fascist ideology, but it is nevertheless an openly and energetically embraced National Socialism. Much more insidious in its duplicity is the militarism which masquerades in the anti-pacifism of such writers as Douglas Jerrold, whose attitude derives from extreme right-wing ideas about war as a necessary evil. In his article The Lie about the War (1930), he criticized pacifist writers such as Remarque, Barbusse and Graves for denying "the dignity and tragic drama to the war" - an attitude which he considered "not only unworthy but damnably silly and incredibly dangerous" (15). In Germany, novels such as Remarque's Im Westen Nichts Neues (1929) were also badly received being considered defeatist by the rightist critics and a deliberate romanticization by the pacifists (16). So high were the feelings of patriotism during the war that the pacifist writings of Romain Rolland or Henri Barbusse were openly condemned for what was seen as an attempted "démoralisation de la nation en temps de guerre." (17) The French poet, Guillaume Apollinaire, for instance, shows the naive patriotism of many intellectuals at that time. In a letter to Madeleine, he congratulates himself on having avoided what he considered to be the rather dubious utterances of Rolland.

"Romain Rolland fait de désagréables et très déplacées manifestations presque en faveur de l'Allemagne. Moi, j'ai publié au mois de février à Zürich un poème intitulé 2<sup>e</sup> Canonier Conducteur qui ne laissait aucun doute sur mes sentiments anti-boches" (18)

Hard-line patriotism such as this could often contain seeds of some curiously ambivalent attitudes towards war. Charles Péguy, in a pre-war essay Notre Jeunesse written in 1910, expresses in his strange contempt for peace a disturbing moral confusion :-

"Quand une grande guerre éclate, une grande révolution, cette sorte de guerre, c'est qu'un grand peuple, une grande race a besoin de sortir; qu'elle en a assez : notamment qu'elle en a assez de la paix." (18a)

(When a great war breaks out, a great revolution, a war such as this, it means that a great nation, a great race needs to break loose : that it has had enough, particularly, that it has had enough of peace.)

The success of such essentially propagandist patriotic writings could be seen to reflect the ideological conflict in the public mind "between the perceived disagreeable necessity of war and the wish to believe that good is triumphant in the universe." (19). Hence Thomas Mann's fascination with war as a necessary "purification" (Reinigung) and "release" (Befreiung), yet his recognition of it as a terrible affliction (Heimsuchung) on humanity (20). This awful paradox continued to be swallowed whole by a great many until the end of the war.

The themes of peace and war provide, therefore, somewhat obviously, the defining limits of the literary response to war. This fundamental bi-polar opposition is also responsible for the inner tension which is part of the greatness of modern war poetry (21). These thematic tensions can be seen at three different levels. The most obvious level is within the corpus as a whole and needs little mention. The second level is within the work of a single author and the third, more interestingly, within the imagery itself. At the first level the conflicts are self-evident, as the response to the war covered the whole span of ideological reaction. Polemic, particularly in the political writings, was inevitably rife between the intellectuals on all sides. The accusation of Germany's "Machievellian Duplicity"

published in Le Petit Journal in Paris on 3rd August, 1914 brought an immediate manifesto signed by 93 of Germany's most illustrious intellectuals (22). Romain Rolland was publicly rebuffed by Gerhard Hauptmann to whom he had written an open letter in the hope of rallying him to the internationalist socialist cause; H.G. Wells, although a committed pacifist, disapproved of Rolland's Olympian stance and his air of martyrdom (23); the brothers Heinrich and Thomas Mann were in bitter personal dispute about the ethics of German war politics (24).

The poetry of the period reflects the same broad spectrum of opinion and debate to be found in the political essays. At one extreme of chauvinism are the bellicose 'hymns of hate' - one of the most infamous being Ernst Lissauer's Hassgesang gegen England (1914) (25)

" Wir haben alle einen Hass  
Wir lieben vereint, wir hassen vereint,  
Wir haben haben nur alle einen Feind,  
Engeland. "  
(We all of us have one single hate  
Together we love, together we hate,  
We have but one common foe  
England.)

Rudyard Kipling's poem The Beginnings 1914-18 with its similar ominous rhythmns makes hardly more commendable reading.

" It was not part of their blood,  
It came to them very late,

With long arrears to make good,  
When the English began to hate.

Their voices were even and low  
Their eyes were level and straight  
There was neither sign or show  
When the English began to hate." (etc.) (26)

Equally unpalatable is the mixture of religious fervour and militant chauvinism so characteristic of the early period in all three countries and which is particularly dominant in Walter Flex's war anthology Sonne und Schild (1915) where he expresses such sacrificial sentiments as "Ich bin nicht mehr ich selbst. Ich war./ Ich bin ein Glied der heiligen Schar, die sich dir opfert, Deutschland" (I am no longer myself. I was./ I am a member of the holy flock which sacrifices itself to you, Germany.) (27).

The idealism of Rupert Brooke's The Soldier (If I should die think only this of me (1914)) continued to find echoes both at home and abroad (29), even when the stirrings of protest were beginning to make themselves felt in the pacifist writing of Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen (30), and in such reviews as the German Aktion (31).

The second area of thematic tension, that is, within the work of a single author, can be as we have seen, a reflection of such general moral ambivalence. More narrowly, however, these internal tensions are symptomatic of an ethical shift from an earlier idealist standpoint to one of increasing disillusion. Thus, for instance, Siegfried Sassoon wrote an extremely bloodthirsty poem, The Kiss (32)



" To these I turn, in these I trust;  
Brother Lead and Sister Steel.  
(...)  
He spins and burns and loves the air (...)  
She glitters naked, cold and fair. (...)  
Sweet Sister, grant your soldier this :  
That in good fury he may feel  
The body where he sets his heel  
Quail from your downward darting kiss. "

which is totally at odds with his later writing (33).

The process of change can be seen at work within a single poem, as in the work of the early minor poets (33a), who were clearly at a transitional point between the idealistic and experiential stages of the chronology of disillusion. Contradictory attitudes may, however, be present in the work of a poet, without there being any moral progression or change in outlook.

Heinrich Lersch, for instance, a successful German 'worker poet' (Arbeiterdichter) was capable of writing the inflammatory call to battle - "Herz aufglühe dein Blut" (Heart, let your blood burn up brightly) in support of the state war aims, without apparently compromising his socialist ideals, and also of producing the remarkably tender and compassionate poem Der Tote (The Dead Soldier) (34).

The third, possibly most intriguing area of thematic tension manifests itself at the level of imagery. The work of the French poet, Guillaume Apollinaire, provides abundant examples of metaphors which synthesize the themes of peace and war (34a). The theme of war as a thing of beauty in his notorious poem Merveille de la Guerre, or as an act of love in the poem Oracles are frequently occurring paradoxes. Ferdinand Simonis (35)

comments on this unusual fusion of thematic opposites ("Doppelaspekt") as being the defining element of Apollinaire's war poetry.

"Krieg und Liebe sind für den Dichter keineswegs einander ausschliessende Momente (...). Es erscheinen fortan oft das Schauspiel des Krieges und Gesten der Liebe in derselben Vision verschmolzen. (War and love are in no way incompatible forces for the poet. Hereafter, the spectacle of war and the acts of love become fused in the same vision.)

This is not to say, however, that the fusion achieved is always an easy or a successful one. The high inner tension of the paradox "O Guerre / Multiplication de l'Amour" (O war, multiplication of love) in Merveille de la Guerre still strains with the challenge to preconceived ideas, with the two-way pull of humour and obscenity, and the underlying irony of the "contrariness" of its perception. Such deliberate thematic opposition reveals the stark antithesis between the desires of the individual and the demands of war which was so clearly perceived by most writers (36). This antithesis between the principles of peace and war, is, as we have seen, the major motivation of all war literature : "it is the one great antithesis : simply War and Man" (Die eine grosse Antithese; der Krieg und der Mensch schlechthin) (37).

POETRY VERSUS PROSE AS A MEDIUM FOR THE EXPRESSION OF THE EXPERIENCE OF WAR (38).

It is largely the realistic novels, such as Barbusse's Le Feu (1916), Dorgeles' Les Croix de Bois (1919), Remarque's Im Westen Nichts Neues (1929), Graves' Goodbye to All That (1929), indeed all the books on Douglas Jerrold's black list (39), which are responsible for shaping the popular image of the First World War in a way that poetry has not. Certainly, the war poetry has left behind in the public mind certain very powerful images which still have lasting resonances, but in the English poetry particularly, it is precisely these images, such as contained in Graves' poem A Dead Boche ("Dribbling black blood from nose and beard") which have given it a reputation for exaggerated realism (40). That and a perhaps sometimes overly sentimental and romantic attitude to individual death (40a) prompted, for instance, W.B. Yeats' rather sour refusal to include Owen in the 1936 edition of the Oxford Book of Modern Verse, on the premise that his poetry was "all blood, dirt and sucked sugar stick."

J.H. Johnston also criticized the narrowness of the English war lyric, concluding that "passive suffering" is too limited a subject for great poetry (40b).

Narrowness of focus may have been a serious charge against the modern war lyric, if it had not been for the demonstrable success of certain great poems (Apollinaire's Si je mourais là-bas, Owen's Greater Love, Rosenberg's Dead Man's Dump) to fulfil so many of the positive virtues which critics liked to attribute to the prose writing of the war. Harvey Hewett-Thayer, an American critic of the early 1920's, for example, found in the pacifist German novels broadness of perspective, intellectual depth and moral integrity (41).

"(The pacifist novels) by constant implication look beyond today; they pause to ask about the warrior's larger self, his peacetime self; they express a wholesome scepticism for inconsiderate and manipulated enthusiasms; they communicate a sense of dignity unspeakably outraged and they appeal to the intellectual, the reflective side of man's nature."

In contrast to the analytical power and wide perspective of the novel, Hewett-Thayer denies the lyric any intellectual status at all:-

"Passion is not a function of intelligence; it may produce a perfect lyric, but great novels do not proceed from a section of the emotional organism which happens to be temporarily inflamed."

More than forty years later, J.H. Johnston (42) levelled the same criticisms at the English war lyric which he saw lacking in the "objectivity, restraint, selection and control" of the epic narrative (43). The following particularly damning condemnation was the beginning of the epic/lyric controversy which has lasted to recent years.

"Never before in literature had war been described with this painful compression of action and incident, with this narrowing of focus, this fragmentation of reality, this obsessive emphasis on isolated and irrelevant sensory details." Altogether Johnston preferred to see the war lyric as a product of passion (44), whose major aesthetic weaknesses he attributed to the lack of the "advantages of temporal remoteness" suffered by the soldier-poet with only the sky-line as a mark of his mental horizon.

The better poetry, however, was not written in the mud and blood of the trenches (45), but, like the successful novels, was conceived away from the battle and with as much attention to niceties of form and content. Despite Owen's publicly avowed dislike of Poetry

for Poetry's sake, he was very much a craftsman of the medium, and, for instance, perfected over many years the technique of assonantial pararhyme. As Blunden remarks of him in his Introduction to his own anthology of Owen's poetry, "He was (...) an unwearied worker in the laboratory of word, rhythm and music of language." Similarly, Apollinaire's apparently carelessly impromptu ideogrammes such as Du Coton dans les Oreilles or his loosely composed 'simultaneous' poems, were the result of a very carefully-thought-out poetic programme, as expounded in his critical writings, Les Peintres Cubistes and L'Esprit Nouveau. Balance and perspective were therefore not the sole privileges of the war novelist to whom alone was given the benefit of hindsight. Neither was knowledge about the wider issues a function of physical and temporal remoteness. As Apollinaire wrote in a letter to André Billy of the 3rd. September, 1915 in Anecdotes "fini le temps où le soldat ne savait rien de la bataille - dans cette guerre on sait tout au fur et à mesure." (Gone are the times when a soldier knows nothing of the battle - in this war one finds out everything in due course.)

When comparing, therefore, the relative merits of prose and poetry as a means of communicating war experience, it is not just a question of confronting logic with intuition, intelligence with passion, statement with metaphor, for to do so would be to pursue the rather arid controversy, which Chevalier (46) refers to as "la vieille opposition du dénotatif et connotatif." (47)

David Daiches in his book A Study of Literature (48) very sensibly recognizes the equal status of prose and poetry, pointing out that "Both aim at achieving the same kind of end." He does however admit that 'the mode of apprehension', 'the quality of insight' of the two genres must be dissimilar, as they each use

language differently. The later section of this chapter, in the analysis and comparison of three poems with their prose analogues aims to show the nature of this difference in the "quality of insight" (49). However, it is necessary first of all to consider what 'the end' of war writing is. One of the great claims of the prose writings emanating from the war is that they produce a highly 'realistic' and therefore 'truthful' and 'accurate' account of what actually happened (49a). This is, in essence, also the claim of Owen's poetic manifesto (49b., 50). The important question is not, however, as we have seen, whether poetry is more or less 'real' than prose. The fact is that both genres, from the ethereal idealism of Brooke's poetry to the most documentary realism of a war diary, are presented with the same aesthetic and moral problem of how to take crude primary experience and invest it with meaning - what Ross calls "the imaginative elucidation of the meaning of experience"(51). Even the most "realistic" documentation of war experience, is in essence, a literary and therefore 'imaginative' response. Recent critical analysis of the narrative form has shown, quite convincingly, that even the most objective historical reporting is none other than a product of the creative process. Hayden White, in his study of medieval annals (52), which consist of a bare list of dates and, as such, represent the simplest example of the historical documentary, establishes that the most objective piece of prose writing, shares with all other forms of fictional prose the same "story-telling" structure. The historian, even in an entirely objective analysis of events, attributes a certain value to narrativity (that is - the logical account and full interpretation of events) which White sees as stemming from a "desire to have real events display the coherence, integrity, fullness

and closure of an image of life that is and can only be imaginary" (p. 27).

This opinion as to the ultimate inability of any writing to achieve an exact reproduction of reality is commonplace, but Hayden's approach is interesting, particularly if compared with the earlier critical views concerning the 'authenticity' of war literature. John Norton Cru insisted, for example, that the value of any piece of war literature could be gauged solely by its closeness to the physical truth of the eye-witness - "The fighter sees what is " (53). His rejection of any element of imagination or story-telling for "the fundamental accuracy of dates" is ultimately a denial of Art. It is also an extreme formulation of J.H. Johnston's insistence on the objectivity of the epic narrative. Cru's unintentionally ironic aphorism "La vraie littérature se moque de la littérature" does not need modern research to show up the basic impossibility of his approach. Nevertheless, the requirement of authenticity will always be a proper demand made upon any literature which deals with war (see Chp.2, p. 83, for further discussion of this point).

Apollinaire was much less fierce in his approach to the problem of reality than, for instance, Sassoon (see below) or Owen, or indeed, some of the Expressionist war poets, such as August Stramm (see below) (54). As he states in his essay L'Esprit Nouveau, reality is for the poet eternally elusive and he should not attempt direct reproduction (of, for example "le vrombissement d'un avion" (the throbbing of the plane) because "la réalité sera toujours supérieure" (the reality will always be beyond reach) (p.389 ). The implication here is, that reproduction of reality as such is not only

by definition beyond art, but perhaps not even a concern of art in the first place. In his poetry, and most significantly in his war poetry too, Apollinaire's focus is not on the plain fact; for him the truth of art is "une vérité supposée" (an assumed truth), "une vérité littéraire" (a literary truth), "une fable" (a story). His view of art as the ultimate source of its own truth (despite its roots in life) is the major element which distinguishes him from the British war poets. His use of observation of the external environment of war "Je les note ces impressions (...) toutes fraîches, prises sur le vif" (I make note of these impressions, still fresh, as they occur) (Lettre à Lou p. 24.4. 1915) is entirely at the service of poetry and not for the purposes of accurately reporting the horrors. Owen's imagery, on the other hand, as Lane observes "is almost centripetally drawn to the fact of war" (55). Apollinaire's imagic range may be far wider than Owen's but he did not have the same sense of moral outrage sharpen the focus of his style. Indeed, he seemed to find the landscape of war at times an inhibiting factor to his poetic inspiration as one could deduce from a rather querulous remark made in a letter to Lou :-

"Racontez donc à votre ami ces choses amusantes afin qu'il recrée son esprit où n'alternent plus que des images pyrotechniques ou sylvestres." (56)

(So tell your friend of these amusing things so that he can refresh his mind where now alternate only sylvan or pyrotechnic images.)

Although Apollinaire may be rightly charged with lack of gravity (57) and exaggerated aestheticism (58) the opposite tendency to abandon poetry for the documentary account (which fortunately none of the British poets did consistently) is an equally unsatisfactory



procedure which militates against good art. Too great an emphasis on realism dulls the impact, as Lane reminds us - "A poem cannot all the time appeal to the senses, as this will ultimately deaden the sensitivity" (59). Art on the other hand, as he so rightly points out, has a very important function in contributing to man's awareness, in that it can stimulate the sympathetic imagination where brute experience is meaningless. "When experience exceeds the powers of primary comprehension, it can only be communicated by art." This rather large claim for the powers of art is corroborated by Owen's experience in the trenches when, in a letter to Sassoon, he recounts how his imagination of dead bodies seemed to him worse than the actual sight of them:-

"I have not seen any dead. I have done worse. In the dank air I have perceived it and in the darkness felt."

The second-hand apprehension of terror is paradoxically more acute than the actual primary experience, which deadens already fatigued senses. Owen reports a similar heightened awareness with the reading of Sassoon's poem Attack (And hope with furtive eyes and grappling fists, flounders in mud. O, Jesus, make it stop).

Apollinaire puts a similar emphasis on the ability of the word to give reality to the bare event:-

"Pour l'exprimer en dehors des actes il n'y a que les mots et le verbe situe, donne une réalité à l'acte, c'est pourquoi le verbe est si important." (60).

(In order to express independently of action, there are only words and the word locates, gives a reality to the act. That's why the word is so important.)

It would seem to be here, in its ability to give 'a reality to the act', and by the very virtue of all those attributes which J.H. Johnston found so detrimental, that the great war poetry, may, just occasionally, excel. the great war prose. Such exalted moments are rare, but they are nevertheless significant of that "quality of insight" (to alter Daiches' meaning) which is that of poetry alone.

The preoccupation of both genres with the truth of war, lead in both to a kind of neurosis of notation, to a desire to record reality as nearly as possible in the hope of recapturing its essential meaning (61). Hayden White (62) concludes from a study of the chronicles that "the meaning of the events is in their registration." Ernest Hemingway in A Farewell to Arms (63) makes the same point:-

"Certain numbers were the same way and certain dates and these with the names of the places were all you could say and have them mean anything."

This is presumably the force of the place-names and obscure soldier's jargon peppered randomly across the page in some of Apollinaire's poems such as Venu de Dieuze and S.P.. It is, to a large extent true, as Lane (p. 8) reminds us, that "poetic perception of fact is also of value." Unfortunately the mere recording of events, accessible to anyone with the same experience, often made for a tedious literature of fatiguing uniformity and not for greater insight into the experience of war. The repetitious observation of detail for its own sake was a particular weakness in those novels which based themselves on the diary format (64). An example, is to be found in Sassoon's Memoirs of an Infantry Officer (65):-

"An aeroplane droning overhead. A thistle sprouting thro' the chalk on the parapet; a cockchafer sailing thro' the air. Down

the hill, the Bray-Fricaut Road, white and hard."

Yet another example, a description of the inside of a trench, comes not from a novel, but from a poem by Apollinaire, Le Palais du Tonnerre (66)

"Le plafond est fait de traverses de chemin de fer entre lesquelles il y a des morceaux de craie et des touffes d'aiguilles de sapin. Et de temps en temps des débris de craie tombent comme des morceaux de vieillesse."

(The ceiling is made of railway-track cross-sections between which there are bits and tufts of fir needles. And from time to time pieces of chalk fall from it like old scaly skin.)

Such emphasis on detailed descriptions is more the domaine of prose. So strong was the desire to give a truthful account that the poet would often borrow procedures from the historian (the precise dating to the hour of a poem is common) or from the novelist in the use of colloquial language (67), of long description and the rhythms of prose (68 and 69). The same instinct towards truth would make the novelist borrow in the opposite direction in the use of rhetoric or heightened pictorial language (69a). The traditional function of the genres tended therefore to be less distinct (70). Sassoon tried to assume the objectivity normally associated with prose in an attempt to render human experience in images drawn from the sensory fact, rather than using traditional poetic analogues. In his autobiography, Siegfried's Journey, he mentions "a few genuine trench poems" dictated, as he tells us, by his resolve "to record my surroundings and (they were) usually based on the notes I was making whenever I could do so with detachment. These poems aimed at

impersonal description of front-line conditions and could at least claim to be the first things of their kind."

The recording of impressions, could, in inexperienced hands, be a rather bare technique and did not allow the author much scope to transcend the physical facts of war as perceived by the individual. This was a weakness of which Sassoon was fully aware, as he warns the reader in his Memoirs of an Infantry Officer (71).

"I also remember how I went one afternoon to have a hot bath in the Jute Mill. (...) Remembering that I had a bath may not be of much interest to anyone, but it was a good bath and it is my own story that I am trying to tell and as such should be received; those who expect a universalization of the Great War must look for it elsewhere."

The recording of impressions did not always make for a tedious or limited poem, as is the case, for example, in Apollinaire's L'Abri-Caverne. Some of the Expressionist poets who wrote for Die Aktion were capable of infusing highly metaphorical significance into seemingly disparate observations. In the following poem, Abschied im Frühling (Farewell in Spring) (72), there is an apparent discrepancy between the terse and matter-of-fact recording of impressions and the almost hallucinatory quality of the actual language (73), where metaphor spills over into the grotesque—

" Sonne raucht rot. Hellviolett dunstet Kontur  
fernen Waldes. Pfützen in Sturzäckern glühn  
golden.  
  
Immer aus Ierchengeschwächter Flur  
lösen sich Dolden  
blaugrüner Kugeln, gleiten  
Vor meinen Augen weg. " (etc)

(Sun reeks<sup>\*</sup> red. Bright purple smokes the distant  
outline of the wood. -

Puddles in the ploughed up fields glow golden.  
From the meadow enfeebled by lark song  
Float off  
Umbels of blue-green shot  
which drift away before my eyes. ) (etc)

\* To smoke or emit noxious vapour < O.E. reocan// G. rauchen)

The German poem certainly conveys something beyond the bare impressions and has "more of the significance" of which Lane speaks, than, for instance the Sassoon extract. The difference lies in the "quality of insight" which separates the objective report from subjective illusion. But the distinction is not such an easy one as would first seem. As will be seen later, the difference is less of a qualitative one, because, to some extent, both prose piece and Expressionist lyric can be seen as examples of metaphorical writing (74). First of all, at the risk of an obvious confrontation which both J.H. Johnston and A.E. Lane see fit to avoid, there will follow an outline of some of the differences between these two particular examples of poetry and prose.

Superficially, Sassoon's diary extract is a piece of realistic and basically unexciting description. There is no surprise in the observation that an aeroplane "drones" or that a thistle "sprouts", no new synthesis which offers us insight into the everyday experience. On the other hand, the German poem presents us with relations which have no direct correlatives in the real world. The sun does not normally "reek". Here the metaphorical usage of the verb has detached the action from its normal subject and applied it to a new

one, thereby exploring the new structure of relations (75).

Through the negative associations of the verb "reek" (Fire, Hell, Death, Suffering) and "red" (Blood, Death, Madness), the universal principle of the sun as a life-giver is suppressed. The later image of the smoke from the gun-fire rising above the meadow like flower-heads (umbels), is a further example of a "reversed" nature image, where the grotesqueness of the comparison denies the inherent meaning of the natural order. In such absurd and grotesque imagery which was a common feature of the Expressionistic war lyric (76), the two opposing themes of nature idyll and war are brought into uneasy contiguity, such that the natural boundary between the two worlds is destroyed within the inner processes of the metaphor. Both terms therefore become ambivalent and impure. Uwe Wandrey (77) sees in the utter negation of the grotesque metaphor an implicit protest against the loss of meaning which was often the result of the experience of war. Certainly, this is the force of this particular poem with its apprehension of the debasement of nature and the reversal of the natural order of things. Yet the same fear of the imminent destruction of nature, the same comprehension of absurdity and futility, is implicit in Sassoon's prose piece. The necessity he felt to record the minute details of his immediate environment, or such homely incidents as the taking of a bath, derives from the fact that such details are themselves innately charged with a significance beyond their surface meaning. They refer to something far deeper in the psyche of the soldier poet (as he reminds us "it is my own story I am trying to tell"). There is clearly, some significance beyond, for example, the relating of the bathing incident as such and our knowing that he took a bath. The fact was, that it was a good bath. The principle 'bath' with its associations of simple innocent pleasure and the

delight in a young and healthy body is offered as an alternative to the principle of war. It becomes a symbolic and emotional act of protest. This is the strength of the metaphor. It transcends normal language not only by the development and exploration of new analogies but also by the important synthesis of intellectual and emotional response (78), as Charles Hartmann so rightly points out in his essay (79):-

"The way (metaphor) does seem to excel the ordinary capabilities of language lies in a service that partakes at least as much of emotion as of cognition, and above all unites the two. (...) Metaphor not only lets us know, it helps us to know what we know : to understand."

Apollinaire uses a technique ostensibly similar to the Expressionist poet, which, as we have seen, relies heavily, superficially at least (but see later p. 30 ) on the recording of mainly visual impressions (see, for instance Il y a). Apollinaire, however, rejected literary Impressionism, referring to it in a letter to Madeleine (80) as

"informe, si lointain, passé surtout, surtout en art"

(formless, so distant, above all out-moded, particularly in art)

and replacing it with his own poetic aesthetic of "simultanéisme" (81).

Writing in Der Sturm in 1912, he contrasts the techniques of simultaneism with the enumerative and notational processes of (presumably) Impressionism (82):-

"la simultanéité ... seule, est création : Le reste n'est que notation, contemplation, étude. La Simultanéité, c'est la vie même."

(Simultaneity alone is creation. The rest is simply notation, contemplation, study. Simultaneity, is life itself.)

Apart from his large philosophical claims for the new aesthetic

which aligned him with the futurists (83), the new style seemed to restate the basic "creative" principles of highly metaphoric language, that is, "speed" (vitesse) —swiftness of association (as well as of communication), "concentration" (raccourci) and a "marvellously lyric flavour" (une saveur merveilleusement lyrique), by which he presumably meant the intimacy and intensity he believed to be lacking in Impressionism. Above all, he prized the new "simplified" syntax of "le style télégraphique" for all the qualities (long-windedness, the restraints of logical discourse) which it did not share with prose (a medium he did not excel in). Within the new poetry he felt he had greater freedom and greater access to the entirety of experience. The feeling of being everywhere at the same time, which is a dominant theme in his war poetry (84), is symptomatic both of the confidence he had in his new technique and in himself as singer and prophet of the war (85).

In the poem Il y a he passes from image to image without the constraints of grammatical or poetic form, compiling lists in what, despite his earlier condemnations, seems to be a veritable frenzy of enumeration (86). The requirements of immediacy and closeness to life (87) of his poetic theory, lead him, interestingly, in many poems to a close affinity with prose whose structural foundations he had rejected in the concept of 'le style télégraphique'. The very borderline nature of these poems can reveal, however, much that is interesting in the poetic process. J. Claude Chevalier (88) in his discussion of the prose poem, makes just this point:-

"Plus proche du discours quotidien se situe un texte de ce genre, plus l'acte poétique dégage son évidence."

(the closer to everyday speech a text of this type is, the more evident becomes the poetic act.)



In the following section, a comparison of three poems with their prose analogies (see Appendix.) is intended to illuminate further the nature of the poetic mode of perception. The discussion of the Sassoon excerpts aims to show how the metaphorical process of selection and contraction serves to sharpen the moral focus of his satire, while the analysis of the Apollinaire letter and poem shows the necessity of metaphor for the heightening of significance. Finally, the short section on the work of August Stramm points to the immense linguistic and philosophical problems which faced both the prose and the poetry of the war, and which lead in his case to the total deformation of language itself.

The comparison of Sassoon's poem Lamentations with a letter of his describing the same incident provides a fairly straightforward illustration of language, which while bearing every appearance of superficial similarity with prose, nevertheless functions according to strict poetic rules of selection and contraction, allusion and association. On first reading, the language of the poem seems very close to conventional usage with its appropriation of bald statement, its (for Sassoon) characteristic lack of metaphor and adoption of the rhythms of speech. Yet the few poetic structures which do intrude, indicate the operation of deeper symbolic processes. For instance, the very simple personification of darkness as "blind darkness", although not particularly remarkable in itself, immediately shifts the language to a different register. Darkness is no longer the physical attribute of the real world, through which the Sassoon of the letter stumbles, but represents on a symbolic level, the realization of man's essential isolation in a suddenly hostile environment. (Compare Stramm's intense metaphorical development of this theme in the poem Der Ritt). By a simple change of metrical emphasis

which slows the rhythm of the first half of line 2, the monosyllable 'blind' momentarily assumes a heavier stress and, with it, the expectation of significance normally associated with such essentially 'rhetorical' usage (89). By thus motivating the poetical as well as the physical associations of the word 'blind', Sassoon is able to prepare at a higher level of meaning a major theme of the poem, which is the helplessness and the humiliation of the individual in war. This 'universalization' of the anecdotal detail of the letter "groping about in the dark and tripping over tent ropes" is a straightforward but crucial aesthetic device. The apparently "realistic" presentation of the incident in the guard room is transformed by the principles of selection and contraction which apply in any metaphorical process. After manipulating the reader's emotional response towards the theme of suffering through the use of unobtrusive, but deliberate poetical structures, Sassoon, in the second part of the poem beginning : "it was no good trying" is able to exploit the qualitative contrast of heavily colloquial prose for the purposes of the satirical message. The now pejorative description of the man's grief- "howled and beat his chest" serves to deflate the earlier universalization "from the blind darkness I had heard his crying" and to sharpen the focus on the real meaning of bereavement for the individual. The apparently value-laden emphasis of "moaned, shouted, sobbed and choked" which bring out the full implications of the man's loss of dignity, does not prepare the reader for the shock of the final line, which provides the realization that what was seeming sympathy, is, in fact, the coldly clinical reflection of the officer's distaste. The satirical impact of the last line not only serves as a bitter condemnation of military values, but also as a piquant reinforcement of Sassoon's own pacifist message. The careful management of alternating 'narrative' and 'poetic' structures is essential to the

antithetical structure of satire, for it is through the deeper qualitative contrast between poetry and prose that Sassoon is able to explore the ideological conflict between the values of peace and those of war.

In the same way that the narrative and poetic modes alternate in Sassoon's poem, there is a recurrent transition from observation to metaphor in Apollinaire's poem Le Palais du Tonnerre, which process Margaret Davies notices in relation to another poem as "l'aller et venir entre l'abstrait et le concret" (the to and fro between the abstract and the concrete) (90). In Le Palais du Tonnerre Apollinaire is trying to establish a connection between the material environment of war and the intellectual and emotional processes which cumulate in Art. As H. Klein reminds us (p.47 "where is the connection?") this is ultimately an impossible task. Thus, the use of the barbed-wire as a symbol for memory, or the dug-out as an image of the spirit of modern art is unsatisfactory, insofar as it fails to create any solid correspondences or any convincing resonances of association and identification. One may accept the transformation of the dug-out into a palace, but once one has acquiesced in the fantasy, there is nothing of substance in the symbol which will carry us to a deeper understanding of the processes of art in a new age. Apollinaire's rapid assumption of the magician's metaphorical garb may reveal, on one level, more about the psychology of the soldier's escape fantasies, than the creative imagination of the poet. Yet his obsessive return to the metaphor within a basically descriptive poem is indicative, that, for this poet at least, the resources of realism are insufficient (90a). He moves instinctively both in the poem and the letter, to the more flexible and expressive

area of metaphor, whether it be easy cliché where he describes to Lou the insect bullets or grandiose allusion to a mythicized silence — (le grand silence)

One feels, however, that Apollinaire in his search for new synthèses and new combinations has failed in the ultimate search for significance. The incongruity, the half-worked quality of many of the metaphors would seem indicative of technical sloppiness. An example of the unfortunate clumsiness of certain of his metaphors is to be found in the image of the spade "à la face effrayante" (with an awful face) which is likened to the dreadful eyes of a dead soldier. The comparison has a certain spurious significance but Apollinaire somehow fails to exploit the power of the grotesque equation by adding a rather awkward explanation about the screws in the spade - "deux yeux réglementaires qui servent à l'attacher sous les caissons" (two regulation eyes which are used to attach it underneath the carts) which has the effect of immediately suppressing the metaphor. The intrusion of a prose mechanism here destroys the balance of the poem, in a way that Sassoon, for instance, just barely avoids in Lamentations. This steady alternation of description and metaphor, is, as we have seen, a dominant characteristic of the poem and is, unlike the more purposive structuring in the Sassoon poem, an indication of thematic instability, where experience and fantasy co-exist in uneasy equilibrium. A critical moment in the development of the poem's direction is reached at the pivotal simile "Comme on fait à la mémoire", which, in its topographical isolation, takes the full weight of the transition from reality to fantasy. Previously, continual reminders such as "qui paraît" (which appear) "qui tint lieu" (which stand in place of) "semblable" (like) keep the reader

fully aware that the basis of comparison is the real world. However, there is a sudden metaphoric emphasis in the repetition - "Des musettes bleues des casques bleus des cravates bleues des vareuses bleus" (Blue knapsacks blue helmets blue ties blue jackets.) which overloads the balance and the whole poem flips over into fantasy. Apollinaire has conjured himself into a world where he, not the war, is master. This essential banishment of the presence of war in the poetic transformation of reality, is, as he explained in a letter to Lou (91) the object of the poetic impulse:-

"Tu sais que ma méthode, Lou, est d'observer ce qui tombe sous mes sens pour en déduire ce qui est au dehors de mes sensations immédiates." (You know that my method, Lou, is to observe what is presented to my senses in order to deduce what is outside my immediate sensations). In this particular poem the process of deduction goes far enough to offend our sense of historical appropriateness; as for instance in the rather silly line "six lits couverts de riches manteaux bleus" (six beds covered with rich blue coats) which would be more appropriate to a fairy-tale romance. Such far-reaching inappropriateness of the imagery is yet another indication of the general inadequacy of a purely aesthetic response in face of the historical reality of war.

.....

In poems such as Le Palais du Tonnerre and Merveille de la Guerre Apollinaire was aiming at creating new syntheses which would shock and surprise and which would radically alter our perspectives on the world, as he writes in L'Esprit Nouveau (92). Many of his aesthetic writings in Les Peintres Cubistes, and the programme L'Anti-Tradition Futuriste all show the influence of Marinetti (92a).

However, Apollinaire's absorption of the ethos of Futurism was tempered by his own natural inclination to the values and ideals of classicism.

The German poet August Stramm (born six years before Apollinaire in Münster and who fell in battle in September 1915 on the Eastern Front) was also greatly influenced by Marinetti's lectures given in November 1913. Yet Marinetti's teachings about the communicative possibilities of the new "style télégraphique" (Telegramstil) did not lead Stramm to the play-world of uninhibited associations as Apollinaire's natural enthusiasms did (93), but to darker recesses of the human psyche where the correspondence between consciousness and word, word and reality, seemed threatened with dissolution (94). Stramm had instinctively assimilated Marinetti's ideas about the new telegraphic style, because it seemed a medium which had similarities with his own experiments with language and which addressed the same problem of communication of reality. Using the concept of the "parole in libertà", of words free from contextual taint, Marinetti argued the possibility of penetrating "into the very substance of the material world" and of disrupting "the blunt hostility which separates us from it" (95). This assault on reality is the aim of the exclamatory style which is a feature both of the prose piece Der Letzte (The Sole Survivor) and the poem Angriff (The Attack). The intensity of the single word chains such as "Mord Müdigkeit Rasen Wut" in the prose piece and the exclusively monosyllabic lines of

the poem is achieved by such technical procedures as syntactic dislocation, répétition and concentration (96). The aim of this abbreviated, intensified modification of prose, is to sharpen the focus of the language, to 'burn' and to 'explode' a way through the crust of the material world, in order to reach the reality beyond. This dislocation, this explosive dissociation of language into its most basic elements which was the main objective of Stramm's "Wortkunst" poetics (97), curiously heralded the parallel destruction brought about by the war. The fragmentation of external realities found its linguistic reflection in the splintered syntax. Indeed, Stramm's lyric seemed to have waited for and needed the war

"Die Zertrümmerung der Sprache : ihr Zerfall in Brocken, die jeweils ihre geballte Energie aus sich entladen - Spannungsgeschosse, die explodieren und die Verszeile aufreissen, konkretisierte sich in der Umwelt des Krieges." (98)

(The shattering of language : its disintegration into fragments each of which discharges its own pent-up energy - like live missiles which explode and tear up the fabric of the verse, found its concrete realization in the environment of war.)

Stramm's profound demands on language had already gone far beyond even Marinetti's wildest expectations of its capabilities (99). His desperate attempts to come to terms with reality stretched not only the limits of aesthetic theory, but also the bounds of reason. His linguistic problems were greatly exacerbated by his experience of trench life, which seemed to confirm his doubts about the ultimate inexpressibility of words. Nothing could describe the horror of war, as he writes in a letter to Walden from the trenches 6th. October, 1914 -

"Was soll ich sagen ? Es ist unendlich viel Tod in mir Tod und

Tod. In mir weint's und aussen bin ich hart und roh. (...)

Wo sind Worte für das Erleben ?"

(What shall I say ? There is endless Death in me, Death and more Death. I am crying inside but on the outside I am hard and tough (...)) Where are the words for the experience ?)

In the same letter he also begins to question the existence of the boundary separating the mind's experience of the world and the world itself. The environment of battle seemed to him to be uninspired with its own evil meaning : the world had become both an actively malicious agent of horror and a symbol of impending doom. If reality thus stood for itself, Stramm no longer saw the need for poetry at all.

"Ich dichte nicht mehr, alles ist Gedicht umher. Elendes feiges heimtückisches Grausen und die Luft kichert höhnisch dazu und gurgelt donnernd von den Bergen (...) Es ist alles nicht wahr und alles Lüge"

(I'm not writing poetry anymore, poetry is all around me. Miserable fearful malicious horror, the very air sniggers scornfully and gurgles down thunderously from the mountains (...)) None of it is true, it is all lies.)

The emotionality, even incoherence, of his letters from the front is reflected in his literary writings and shows that Stramm was not bound to a programmatic illustration of aesthetic theories. However, the intensity, the sheer dynamism of his work is typically Expressionist. The exclamations, the staccato rhythms, the disrupted syntax are, as we have seen, conventional elements of a programmatic style which had the aim of achieving the unmediated direct communication of both objective and subjective reality. This reality had to be free from any traditional associations which might prevent its clear



communication (100). Again Stramm comes close to Marinetti's view of poetic language as necessarily distancing itself from the grammatical and semantic conventions of ordinary usage. Poetry written in a language which bore any resemblance to the old order of prose, because automatically subordinate to that order, thereby forfeited the originality and independence of poetic vision. The new poetic process, therefore lay in the alienation of language from itself, in order not to hinder the immediacy and intensity of the communication process. Thus the language of the prose piece (See Appendix) is stripped bare of its supporting grammatical elements; so that the whole is constituted of discrete parcels of raw linguistic energy, which vibrate and collide in the dynamics of the new relationships.

"alles zusammen, den Graben. Schützengraben. Schutz. Grab. (...)  
schießt! schießt! Der Wald! ja, in den Wald! Schädel. Wolken  
lustig! (...) seht! ich schieße, schieße. Verstärkung. hört!  
Trommeln. Hörner. Tata trr! eilt da hinten. eilt!"

(all together, the dug-out, trenches, shelter, grave (...)  
Fire! Fire! The wood! Yes, into the wood! Skulls. Clouds. fantastic!  
Look lads, I'm shooting, shooting. Reinforcements. Listen! Drums!  
Bugles . Tara trr . Hurry up back there . Hurry . )

In the use of this highly impressionist style, Stramm was aiming at a naturalist reproduction of a particular experience. However, such writing more often achieves the opposite effect of either exaggerated rhetoric or total banality. The fragmented style of Robert Nichol's poem The Assault (101) with its attempt at absolute realism, is equally unimpressive -

"Lights, Blurr. / Gone. / On, on Leād. Leād. Hail. /  
Spatter. Whirr Whirr (...) Bullets a stream. Devouring thought  
crying in a dream. (etc)"

Both poets felt that only a special kind of truncated diction could serve to communicate the intensity of the original experience. Stramm, particularly, considered that the concentrated power of the single word drew from the clear original sources of language, that is, from the very fountain and spring of expressivity itself.

Wilhelm Duwe remarks on the fact that in Stramm's poetry, the reproduction of language is confined to the "original sounds" (Urlaute) which alone could activate the deep seated areas of human experience, (die menschlichen Urerlebnisse). He also points out the crucial communicative importance of the isolated substantive and the verb in Stramm's poetry. "So bestehen die Verse fast ausnahmslos aus Haupt- und Tätigkeitswörtern." (His poems comprise almost without exception of nouns and verbs.) (102).

The poem Angriff (Attack) chosen as a thematic analogue of the prose piece just discussed, aptly illustrates Stramm's particular reliance on the use of single words in isolation. Like most of his poems, Angriff consists of a vertical chain of verb clusters such as

Winken  
Flattern  
Knattern

initiated or terminated by single nouns

Greifen Fassen  
Balgen Zwingen  
Kuss

The poem is a much shortened version of the prose piece. Here the effect of experience on the poetic language is one of greater syntactic dislocation and compression. The poem nevertheless completes the same thematic cycle of struggle ending in death or nothingness, a favourite leitmotiv of Stramm's both in his war poems and surprisingly, his love lyrics (102a). Whereas, however, the prose piece is set against a physically and psychologically familiar background, with the quick moving stream-of-consciousness style presenting us with a subjective but clearly comprehensible experience of trench fighting, the poem has no precise location, no central individual consciousness.

The only statement of relationship is to the 'Du' (102b) of "Dein Lachen weht" (Your laughter laments (weh) who presumably represents the enemy.

The emotional effect of the metaphoric juxtaposition of the two dissimilar areas of experience of joy and grief is evocative far beyond the parallel section in the prose piece which alludes to the hysterical laughter of the soldier (Lachen! ich lache! drei Tage stürzen. brüllen! drei Tage Jahre Ewigkeiten! (Laughter! I'm laughing! for three days plunging forward! yelling! three days years eternities . )

The line "Dein Lachen weht" is reminiscent of the powerful mood of regret in Owen's poem Strange Meeting, achieved through the same association of joy and pain:-

"By his smile (.....)

By his dead smile, I knew we stood in Hell

With a thousand pains that vision's face was grained,"

The second part of Angriff moves from recognition of the enemy to the actual combat

Greifen Fassen

Balgen Zwingen

(Grabbing Holding

Wrestling Overcoming)

The description is economic in the extreme, yet ambiguous in reference, for the actions of the verbs could be equally applicable to the embrace of lovers

Umfangen

Sinken

(Encompassing

Sinking)

as to the grapple of enemies. The word "Kuss" (kiss) which is interpolated between the two descriptions of movement, has all the connotations of the 'kiss of death', overlaid with sentimental memories of love, as in the prose passage where the soft comfort of a mother's arms are

recalled at the instant of death. The final "Nichts" (Nothing) of the poem corresponds to the expressive silence after the final hearty "Mother!" which terminates the prose piece.

Paradoxically, the poem Angriff, sent to Walden from the actual front line, is a much more distant and objective expression of the experience of war, than is the prose poem Der Letzte which was written before the war. Conversely, another poem Der Ritt, which has its roots in quite banal everyday experience (one of Stramm's Sunday outings on horseback, at the end of which his children would usually be waiting to meet him), is a terrifyingly intense expression of man's existential struggle in a hostile world. The visceral horror which Stramm elicits from his evocation of a "blood-red vapour, viscous and cloying" (blutroter Dunst betastet zach die Sehnen) as it "fingers" the man's "sinews", "creeping" and "sliming" (notice the more dynamic use of the gerund "schleimend") into his joints, with its associations of repulsion, fear and helplessness, takes on a metaphysical dimension lacking in the more prosaic physiological detail of Der Letzte - (Dreck! Blut blutiger Dreck. Blut modert zu schnell. (...)) der Kerl blutet! ein kleines Loch kann so bluten! (Filth! Blood! bloody filth! Blood moulders too quickly, the poor sod's bleeding! a small hole like that bleeding so much). Der Ritt could well have as its motivation the experience of war, so vividly is the Blunden-like corruption of nature portrayed, which, transformed into some evil force, destroys not only innocent life (the child's scream, the man, the horse) but also itself - "Die Erde tobt, zerstampft in Flüche sich" (The earth rages, tramples on itself, cursing to destruction). To judge from the original 'innocent' impulses of the poem, these powerful images are intended more as representations of ideas (103) than of actual visual or sensory experience, as in the traditional image, despite Stramm's insistence on the role of feeling rather than intellect. (see Chapter 4, footnote 125). This is presumably also true of his war poetry to a great extent. It is difficult to see from the poetic form how far Stramm was influenced by the physical and emotional experience

of trench realities as his poetic usage was seemingly little altered by the experience of war (see p. 30) (like that of Apollinaire but unlike that, for instance, of Owen). Stramm's images are, however, undeniably successful in translating a particular state of mind through concrete physical impressions such as, for example, the "creeping" and "sliming" in Der Ritt and the "grasping" and "wrestling" in Angriff. Yet sometimes the technique is carried to embarrassing lengths and many of his poems seem to degenerate into desperate incoherence, as in the final lines of Der Ritt

"mich und mein Tier

mein Tier und mich

Tier mich! "

(Me and my animal

My animal and me

Animal me! ")

Such examples constitute for the German critic, Wilhelm Duwe (104) the final limits of Expressionism:-

"So erreichte der Expressionismus seine äusserste Grenze, über die jeder weitere Schritt hinaus in einen luftleeren Raum, das heisst, ins Absurde führen musste. Stramms beste Gedichte liegen auf diesem schmalen Grat, der das Geniale vom Banalen trennt." (105).

(Thus Expressionism reaches its most extreme limit, a step beyond which would inevitably lead into an airless space, that is Absurdity. Stramm's best poems tread this fine line which separates genius from banality).

Stramm's final artistic failure to come to grips with the reality of war reflects, not a lack of technical ability or emotional sensitivity, but, perhaps, ironically, a surfeit of both. As such, his failure reflects the ultimate problems facing the lyrical expression of the theme of war, as discussed earlier in this chapter. The next will consider the work of the 'patriotic' poets, who, at the opposite extreme to

poets like Stramm and, later, Owen, were neither technically nor intellectually equipped to notice that such problems existed, yet who were as preoccupied in their own way with significance in their search for the 'Great Truths' about Mankind at war.

.....

(1) Das Grosse Jahr 1914 - 15 (S. Fischer Verlag, Berlin, Nov. 1915  
Einleitung p. 13)

"Die Kunst (...) musste sich obenein von heimlichen und öffentlichen Feinden sagen lassen, dass die grosse Stunde nicht ihre Stunde sei."

(Henceforth Art had to allow both hidden and public enemies to say of it that the Great Hour was not its own.)

(2) Patrick Bridgewater, German Poetry of the First World War, in European Studies (Vol. 1, No. 2, 1971, p. 168-9)

(3) By "lyrical" the author presumably means the more general category of "war poem". For the controversy concerning the "lyric" versus the "epic" mode as a suitable medium for the topic of war see Chp. 2.

(3a) One young French officer refused to write anything about his experience in the trenches because he saw literary language as a surface embellishment incapable by definition of communicating the reality of war-" quand on parle de la guerre on l'orne trop".

(Quoted in John Cruickshank, Variations on Catastrophe, (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1982, p. 36.)

(4) Franz Werfel (1890-45) produced poetry which veered sharply away from subjectivism and its spirit derived from the new, intenser and more strenuous experience of the world which was proclaimed by Whitman and Verhaeren. The vague sublimity of his theme being generally "to sing the idea of all" (Walt Whitman, The Complete Poems, ed. Francis Murphy, Penguin 1975, p. 309) revealed itself in such programmatic titles as Der Weltfreund (1911, World's Friend) and Wir Sind (1913, We are). His poetry does not concern itself with the experience of the 1914 - 18 war, but turns more towards the solution of post-war social problems.

(5) P. Michelsen, Zur Sprachform des Frühexpressionismus bei August Stramm, in Euphorion 1964, (Vol. 58, pp. 276 ff.) This article is almost entirely devoted to an analysis of Stramm's style and his philosophy of language. See particularly pp. 292 - 8. Stramm's preoccupation with the "reality at the other side of language" made "the unutterable" the major theme of his poetry. "Das Unsagbare wird für ihn zum Gegenstand des dichterischen Sagens." ("The subject of poetic expression becomes for him the Unutterable")

(6) The vastness of the literature emanating from the Great War is a well-known fact. Marc Ferro in his book La Grande Guerre 1914-18 (Gallimard, Paris, 1969) notes that there are at least 50,000 volumes kept in the Bibliothèque de Documentation Internationale Contemporaine. Partick Bridgewater in his article German Poetry of the First World War (op.cit. p.149) gives the following statistics for German poetry alone:- An estimated 50,000 poems were written daily. By March 1915, war poems totalled some three millions, which equals 16,600 poems a day for 6 months. In the course of 1915, 450 anthologies of verse were produced.

(7). See Chp 2, p. 66ff. for the misplaced ideas of those poets who hoped to see in the revival of the epic Genre. a means to a new beginning for poetry.

(8) Walt Whitman (op. cit. p.742).

(9) Thomas Mann, in Gedanken im Kriege (Politische Schriften und Reden, 2ter Band) (Fischer Bücherei, 1968, p.11-12), for instance, makes a close analogy between the spirit of Art and that of War.

"Sind es nicht völlig gleichnishafte Beziehungen, welche Kunst und Krieg miteinander verbinden ? (...) Jenes siegende kriegerische Prinzip von heute : Organisation — es ist ja das erste Prinzip, das Wesen der Kunst. Das Ineinanderwirken von Begeisterung und Ordnung (...) Hingebung bis aufs Ausserste; moralischer Radikalismus (...)"

(Are there not fully comparable relationships which link together Art and War? Today's triumphant military concept : Organization, is indeed the very first principle, the very essence of Art. The mutual interaction of enthusiasm and order (...) Dedication to the extreme limit; moral Radicalism (...))

cf. also Ernst Jünger, Feuer und Blut (p.61,) who speaks of the image of war as rising from the smoke like a "blood-red orchid" and likens it to "a work of art such as would be appreciated by real men"

(Und lässt das Bild der grossen Schlacht aus dem Rausch aufschliessen wie eine blutrote Orchide, mit goldenen Feuerstreifen geflammt. Das ist ein Kunstwerk, wie es Männern Freude macht").

(10) It is easy to see from the temper of the criticism in Das Grosse Jahr just how well and how far bellicose nationalist ideology could be incorporated into the thought systems of war-time Germany. (For further discussion of this point see Chp. 3, p.139ff)

(11) See Geschichte der deutschen Literatur, op.cit., p.79.

"die Rundschau" wandte sich an die nicht ausgesprochen reaktionär orientierten Teile der bürgerlichen Bildungsschicht, öffnete aber breit und kritiklos ihre Spalten den modernen und kultivierteren Varianten proimperialistischer Ideologie."

"The Rundschau addressed itself to that section of the cultivated bourgeoisie which was not completely reactionary in tendency (...) yet was uncritical enough to open its columns wide to the modern more intellectual variants of pro-imperialist ideology".



(11a) The clear difference in moral emphasis of liberalist democratic thought is to be seen in the following extract from President Wilson's address to some naval cadets in Annapolis on 5th. June 1914 (quoted in Frank Field, Three French Writers and the Great War, (OUP 1975, p. 1)) "The new things in the world are the things that are divorced from force. The things that show the moral compulsions of the human conscience, these are the things by which we have been building up civilisation, not by force."

(12) For instance, the stated aim of the Rundschau was to strive towards a "peace of strength, beauty and justice" (an einem Frieden der Kraft, der Schönheit und der Gerechtigkeit) (Advertisement)  
The desired aim of War Poetry should be to make "precious again what had become cheap", that is, "the individual soul which is the arena of all war and of all peace." ("wieder kostbar zu machen, was wohlfeil geworden ist. (...)) die einzelne Seele, den Schauplatz alles Krieges und alles Friedens.")

(13) Quoted from an article in The Times, Dec. 10th, 1914.  
See also John Cruickshank, Variations on Catastrophe - Some French Responses to the Great War (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1982, Introduction) on the reasons behind the early nationalist pro-war enthusiasms.

(14) Ernst Jünger, op.cit., p. 487, p. 515.

(15) Douglas Jerrold, The Lie about the War (Faber and Faber, London, 1930)

(16) "Remarques Buch enthält, statt des rationalen Ideals des ewigen Friedens (...) nur geschickt mit pazifistischen Seufzern montierten Militarismus." (Remarque's book contains, instead of the rational ideal of eternal peace (...) only militarism cleverly disguised behind pacifist sighs.) Manfredd Kuxdorf, Mynona versus Remarque, quoted in The First World War in German Narrative Prose (ed. Charles N. Jenno, University of Toronto Press, 1980, p. 88).

(17) Georges Bonneville, Prophètes et Témoins de l'Europe, (Sythoff Leyde, 1961, p. 34)

The abbé Sirech, chaplain-in-chief of the lycées of Lyons thought that the author of Le Feu deserved the most drastic form of punishment. "If the military tribunals condemn a poor soldier who refuses to sacrifice his blood for his country to be stood up against a wall, what punishment do you deserve, Monsieur Barbusse ?"

quoted in Frank Field (Three French Writers and the Great War, C.U.P. 1975, p. 40) . On the other hand, a quarter of a million copies of Le Feu had been sold by November, 1918 (see Field, op.cit., p. 39)

(18) Lettre à Madeleine, 18 juillet, 1915. (Tendre Comme Le Souvenir, Gallimard, Paris, 1952)

"Romain Rolland has made some disagreeably inopportune proclamations almost in favour of Germany. As for myself, I published in Zürich in February a poem entitled 2e Canonnier Conducteur which left no doubt as to my anti-boche feelings."

(18a) Oeuvres en Prose 1909-14 (Librairie Gallimard 1957, p. 501 ff.)

(19) Taken from Baschwitz, Der Massenwahn (Mass hysteria) quoted in Harold D. Lasswell, Propaganda Technique in the First World War (London, Kegan Paul, n. date, p. 54)

See also Maurice Bowra, op. cit., on the heroic spirit which beautifies, p. 4ff.

(20) Thomas Mann, Gedanken im Kriege op.cit., p. 10.

He adds further "was die Dichter begeisterte, war Krieg an sich selbst (...) als sittliche Not" (what inspired the poets, was War in its own right (...) as a moral necessity)

(21) Paul Fussell, in his book The Great War and Modern Memory (CUP, 1975) sees the basic symbolic oppositions in war poetry (between Peace and War and its thematic adjuncts Life and Death, Love and Hate, Nature and Technology) as symptomatic of what he terms the 'versus habit' - the 'melodramatic dichotomizing' which leads to a "fatal lack of subtlety":-

"Simple antithesis everywhere. That is the atmosphere in which most poems of the Great War take place, and that is the reason for the failure of most of them as durable art." (p. 82)

In view of the many memorable poems which do succeed in 'synthesizing' these opposites, Fussell's opinion does seem to lack critical sensitivity.

(22) see Lasswell op.cit.

(23) R.A. Francis, Romain Rolland and some British Intellectuals during the First World War, in Journal of European Studies (Sept. 1980 p. 192)

(24) Maurice Boucher, Le Roman Allemand 1914-33 et la Crise de l'Esprit, (Presses Universitaires de France, Paris 1961). Heinrich Mann was the leader of a group of pacifists who "combattaient le régime imperial, l'autocratie, la volonté de puissance et la mystique d'une mission allemande" (resisted the imperial regime, autocracy, the will to power and the mystique of a German mission) whereas Thomas Mann's goal was "l'humanité harmonieuse" which was, unfortunately, also the dream of many high-ranking Germans associated with the Imperial government.

(25) Julius Bab: Der deutsche Krieg im Deutschen Gedicht, Aufbruch und Anfang (Verlag Morawe und Schesselt, Berlin 1914, 2ter Teil, p. 36)

Lissauer's poem elicited an equally strident reply from the Frenchman J. de Marthold, Chant de Haine, Réponse à Berlin (1915)

(26) Rudyard Kipling, Selected Verse, (Penguin Books, ed. James Cochrane, 1981, p. 281)

(27) Walter Flex, Sonne und Schild (n. pub. 1915 p. 44)

(28) Similarly, the French Catholic poet, Francis Jammes, reaches the height of sentimental religiosity in his poems Cinq Prières pour le temps de Guerre.

(29) Apollinaire's poem, Si je mourais là-bas, although thematically dissimilar, does bear a strong resemblance to Brooke's title. Emile Verhaeren included in his anthology, Les Ailes Rouges de la Guerre (Mercure de France, Paris, 1916, p. 165) a commemorative poem to Rupert Brooke written in abstract rhetorical style and which continues the myth of the youthful poet and idealist, heroic victim of a tragic destiny:-

"Jeune, ferme, rapide et souriant  
Voyant déjà surgir au clair des prunelles  
Les golfes d'or des Dardanelles."

(Young, strong, swift and smiling  
Seeing already in the bright mirror of his eye  
The golden bays of the Dardanelles.)

(30) see Chp. 3, p.105 ff.

(31) Die Aktionslyrik (pub. Franz Pfemfert 1916) was a literary review with strong international pacifist tendencies. It had a long list of contributors from many nations among whom were Oscar Wilde, Heinrich Mann, Charles Péguy, Francis Jammes. The following is the review's manifesto taken from the Introduction:-

"Die Aktion war bis zum Ausbruch des Weltunheils das radikalste Organ Derer, die in keinem Kriege 'Erhebendes', 'Grosses', oder gar 'Heiliges' erblicken konnten. Mehr als vier Jahre hindurch kämpfte die Aktion gegen "Völkerkrankheit Chauvinismus (...). Sie widmete sich in dieser Zeit ausschliesslich der Aufgabe, ein Asyl zu sein für internationale Literatur und Kunst".

('Action' was, right up to the outbreak of world disaster, the most radical organ of those who were unable to see in any war anything 'Uplifting', 'Great' or even 'Divine'. For more than four long years 'Action' struggled against the national sickness of Jingoism. It gave itself up to the sole task of offering asylum to international literature and art.)

(32) The Kiss appeared in the 3rd. volume of Georgian Poetry 1916-17.

(33) For an account of Sassoon's development as a war poet see J.H. Johnston, English Poetry of the First World War, (Princeton University Press, 1964, p. 71-112).

(33a) See Chapter 2, p. 22ff.

(34) The apparent contradiction of themes is typical of the work of the Arbeiterdichter, whose anti-governmental social democratic

principles were capable of absolute reconciliation with the most extreme of chauvinist views. Such ideological naivety was easily exploited by the Imperial Government (see Chp. 3, p. 134). Patrick Bridgewater in European Studies Review (Vol. 1, No. 2, 1971, p. 165) describes the Arbeiterdichter as 'patriotic Christian idealists who were also social democrats'. Likewise, Martin Walser in his discussion of Lersch's novel Hammerschläge, (Hammerblows) (Suhrkamp Verlag, 1980 Nachwort p. 261) comments on the easy marriage of opposing ideas in Lersch's writing as a whole and describes it as "sehr deutsch, sehr katholisch, sehr kleinbürgerlich, sehr sozialistisch. Weiss jemand ein gewinnenderes Ensemble?" (Very German, very Catholic, very bourgeois, very socialist. Can anyone think of a more winning combination ? )

(34a) See Chp. 4 p. 122.

(35) Ferdinand Simonis, Die Lyrik Guillaume Apollinaires (Bouvier Verlag, Bonn, 1967, p. 89).

(36) For instance, Ernst Jünger (op.cit. p. 61) remarks on the opposition between duty and personality, individuality and immortality life and death, which faced every individual in war. (Das Widerspiel zwischen Aufgabe und Persönlichkeit, Individualität und Unsterblichkeit, Leben und Tod.)

(37) Mielke- Homann, Der deutsche Roman (Dresden, 1920, p. 510).

(38) This study does not aim to give any adequate account of the novel during the First World War. For some insight into this topic see :

(For the French Novel)

Albert Schinz, French Literature of the Great War (1920)

Leon Riegel, Guerre et Littérature, (ed. Klincksieck, 1978)

Frank Field, Three French Writers and the Great War, (C.U.P., 1975)

John Cruickshank, Variations on Catastrophe - Some French Responses to the Great War, (O.U.P. 1982)

(For the German Novel)

Mielke- Homann, Der deutsche Roman -op.cit.

Maurice Boucher, The First World War in German Literature, op.cit.

(For a comparative study, French, German, English)

Leon Riegel, op.cit.

Holger Klein, The First World War in Fiction (Macmillan, 1976)

and references therein.

For a list of prose works dealing with pre-war society and attitudes to the war see Bibliography. For some major prose works on the war, see Bibliography.

The war novel which expressed patriotic sentiments and which exalted the heroism of the ordinary soldier (e.g. René Benjamin's well-known Gaspard (1915)) were popular till the end of the war. In France, openly nationalist writers such as E. Psichari in L'Appel des Armes (1913) received much attention before the war for their mystical glorification of combat. Psichari's words "Les canons sont les réalités les plus réelles qui soient, les seules réalités du monde" (The guns are the most real realities ever, the only realities in the world) equals in its bellicose fervour any of the proto-fascist writings which were extant in German at the time (see Riegel, op.cit. ) and which Mielke-Homann condemns as blind self-righteous jingoism. (p. 501). The shift to a more realistic appraisal of the realities of war took place generally around 1916, with the advent of Barbusse in France and Rudolf Binding in Germany who as early as 1914 was already showing up the ludicrous inappropriateness of the old-fashioned Prussian military values, (Aus dem Kriege (10th Nov., 1914) in Dies war das Mass (Rutten und Loening, Potsdam, 1940)

"Es ist ein seltsames Geschäft der Krieg. Gegen diese wirken menschliche Anordnungen töricht und unbeholfen, ja beleidigend theatralisch. Ich sehe den General vor mir, der eine unserer Brigaden führte. Es wurde ihm gemeldet, dass aus dem weissen

Schloss (...) von einer kleinen Besatzung dauernd Widerstand geleistet wurde. Er erhob den Arm zu einer Feldherrngeste und rief hoch vom Pferd nach vorne zeigend wie ein Eroberer der Welt : 'Werft Feuer in das Schloss', womit dann der Fall für ihn erledigt schien."

(War is a peculiar business. Human regulations seem ridiculous and clumsy, even insultingly theatrical in face of it. I can still see now before me the General who commanded one of our brigades. He had been told that a platoon was offering constant resistance from the white villa. He lifted his arm in the imperious gesture of a commander-in-chief and standing up in the stirrup, pointing in a forward direction, he shouted like a conqueror of the world - 'Open fire on the house' - with which the matter seemed to him to be closed.) For further information on the novel as a genre, see footnote 63.

(39) see Douglas Jerrold, op.cit., Preface.

(40) Henri Barbusse's novel Le Feu was also generally disliked for its exaggerated realism which seemed to many to border on the grotesque (see Albert Schinz, also Hewett-Thayer, see below, "The book drips with blood, with brains and entrails")

Remarque's All Quiet on the Western Front (1929) and Ernest Hemingway's A Farewell to Arms (1929) were also criticized as immoral for certain more earthy aspects of their portrayal of war. In 1933, 'Im Westen' was banned for all Germany by the Nazis "Gegen literischen Verrat am Soldaten des Weltkrieges" (For a literary betrayal of the soldier of the Great War) and A Farewell was banned in Boston after its appearance in installments in the Scribner's Magazine (May-October, 1929) by the chief of police as "dirty, immoral, disgusting garbage."

(40a) See chapter 3, footnote 9 for criticism of this tendency in Owen.

(40b) By which he meant 'Epic' poetry. See chapter 2, p. 79ff.

(41) Harvey Hewett-Thayer, The Modern German Novel (Boston, 1924 p. 235).

(42) J.H. Johnston, op.cit., p. 13.

(43) see Chp. 2, p. 6ff on the failure of the epic war poem.



(44) That many war lyrics, including those written or anthologized by poets of established talent, were overly-emotional, indeed mawkishly sentimental, is immediately recognizable from a most superficial reading of the literature. See, for instance : Henri de Régnier, Sonnets de Guerre (ed. Emile Paul, 1915); Heinrich Lersch, Deutschland muss leben (Eugen Diederichs Verlag, Jena, 1935); Robert Nichols, Such was my Singing (ed. Collins, 1942).

Robert Nichols admitted in his Introduction (p. 32) to the above anthology of his poems that his war poems were the "least satisfactory" of his poetical compositions, being the product of "an exceedingly guileless, highly emotional and inordinately romantic youth."

See also Emile Villard, Guerre et Poésie 1914-18 (La Baconnière Neuchâtel, 1949) for an amusing exposé of the sentimental attitudinizing of the French patriotic poets.

As early as 1914, Julius Bab, the German critic and reviewer, was beginning to see that the emotional sincerity shown by thousands of would-be contributors to his anthology of War Poetry, was not conducive to great art.

"Es liegt aber in der Natur aller künstlerischen Dinge, dass der Autor selber - den Ton, den er meinte, im Ohr ! - nicht weiss, ob er's auch getroffen hat; er nimmt die gute Meinung für die Tat. (...)  
Es gibt viel ehrenwerte Meinung, aber - ach so wenig ! künstlerische Taten ! (Der Deutsche Krieg im Deutschen Gedicht: Aufbruch und Anfang  
(Verlag Morawe und Schesselt, Berlin 1914, Nachwort)

(It is in the nature of all artistic things, that the author himself often does not know if he has hit off the right note which he hears in his mind; he takes his good intentions as proof of success.  
(In the contributions people have sent in) there are a great many honourable intentions, but oh dear, so few artistic successes !

For a perceptive contemporary judgement of the 'sentimental attitude' adopted by Rupert Brooke, see Charles Hamilton Sorley, Poems and Selected Letters (ed. H.D. Spear, Blackness Press, 1978). His rejection of sentimentality in pre-war English poetry which he wrote in a paper on Masfield at School - "The voice of our poets and men of letters is finely trained and sweet to hear; it teems with sharp saws and rich sentiment; it is a marvel of delicate technique: it pleases, it flatters, it charms, it soothes, it is a living lie - would apply quite aptly not only to the war poetry of Brooke, Hardy and Kipling, but to that of Verhaeren, Lersch and some of Apollinaire. (See also Chapter 2, p.76ff and Footnotes for a further discussion of sentimentality.)

(45) Owen, for instance, wrote much of his poetry in the sanatorium at Craiglockhart and the bulk of his war lyrics did not reach his intended audience until after his death. Only in 1919, in the review Wheels were 7 major poems published.

Similarly, August Stramm wrote a very realistic prose-piece Der Letzte (The Last One) about 'going over the top' (which was published as a poem in Der Sturm in Oct. 1914) actually before the war. This shows how essentially independent of experience the process of artistic creation can be - "Wie unabhängig das künstlerische Erlebnis von äusseren Tatsachen ist" - (Quoted in P. Michelsen, "Zur Sprachform des Frühexpressionismus bei August Stramm", op.cit. p.289). Apollinaire likewise wrote the greater part of Calligrammes during his time in the artillery, "at the front certainly, but at a distance nonetheless from the unspeakable horror of the front-line trenches" (Roger Little, p.46)

(46) Jean-Claude Chevalier, Alcools d'Apollinaire - Essai d'analyse des formes poétiques (Letters Modernes, Minard, Paris 1970, p. 9)

(47) The discussion of genre is still a continuing one.

cf. Michael Hamburger, The Truth of Poetry (Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London 1969, p.23) Sometimes states the obvious - "What is common to all modern poetry is the assertion (...) that syntax in poetry is wholly

different from syntax as understood by logicians and grammarians"

R. Cardinal, Figures of Reality - A perspective on the Poetic Imagination.

(Croom Helm, London, 1981) still sees fit to keep his sword sharp.

"Poets are by definition writers who prefer lyrical density and illusion to the long-winded clarification of prose."

For more technical descriptions see : Edward Stanliewicz Poetic and Non-Poetic Language in their Interrelation (Mouton, Warszawa and s'Gravenhage , 1961).

(48) David Daiches, A Study of Literature (OUP, London, 1948 p. 143)

(49) Arthur E. Lane, in his book An Adequate Response : The War Poetry of Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon (Wayne State University Press, Detroit 1972, p. 133) considers "the difference between poem and letter" (in a discussion of Sassoon's The Sentry) as "being so evident as to need no exegesis." He nevertheless makes a brief check-list of some of the differences between the poem and prose piece and under the heading 'poetry' he includes the remark "much more of the significance." Exactly how the poem is able to carry more of the significance than its prose analogue is a crucial and not entirely self-evident point left undiscussed.

(49a) See chapter 2, p. 80ff.

(49b) Chapter 2, p. 82.

(50) Owen's attitude to the problem of poetry and truth derived from contemporary attitudes about the nature and function of Art in modern society. Poetic realism was the order of the day (see Robert H. Ross The Georgian Revolt (Southern Illinois University Press, 1967, p. 35 ff)- "Objectivity and again objectivity" Ezra Pound), but a realism which should be free of posing of any kind. 'Modernity' for its own sake was not accepted, a fact illustrated by the rather cool reception which Marinetti received at a poetry-reading at Harold Monro's Bookshop - "what he writes is not literature, only an aide-memoire for a mimic" (Edward Marsh to Rupert Brooke 14th. Dec., 1913). Similarly, sentimental

posing and rhetorical gesticulation were frowned upon. The rather terse editorial comment in The Poetry Review August 1912 (Vol. 1, No. 7, p. 360) which criticized a poetical rendering of the sinking of the Titanic, shows the tendency of critical opinion to expect a certain amount of sober realism in poetry. (That this was not always achieved is another matter.)

— "Mr. Macfie has not avoided the usual poetic pose : his ode is not real - we fear he has not immortalized his subject."

For more views concerning the relationship of Truth and Poetry see David Daiches, The Place of Meaning in Poetry, (Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1935) and Michael Hamburger, op.cit., particularly p. 5 ff.

(51) Quoted in Arthur E. Lane, op.cit.

(52) Hayden White, The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality in Critical Inquiry, (Autumn 1980, Vol. 7, No. 1)

(53) John Norton Cru (in translation from the French) War Books, A Study on Historical Criticism (Ed. Pincett and Marchand, San Diego University Press, 1976, p. 47)

(54) It is beyond the scope of this study to discuss the Expressionist aesthetic theory, which in any case did not constitute a unified programme. The expressionist view of Art with regard to Reality is also far less straightforward than that of the Georgians or indeed the Cubist inspired aesthetics of Apollinaire cf. Kurt Pinthus, German poet and critic who wrote from the trenches in 1915:

"The common will of the latest poetry is to free reality from the outline of its appearances, to free ourselves from it (reality), to overcome it, not by its own means, not by evading it, but, embracing it all the more fervently, to conquer and master it by intellectual penetration (des Geistes Bohrkraft) by suppleness, by a longing for

clarity, by intensity of feeling and by explosive force." (Die jüngste Dichtung in Die weissen Blätter (Vol. II, 1915, No. 12, p. 1503)

For contemporary accounts of Expressionism see :

Menschenheitsdämmerung. Ein Dokument des Expressionismus. (ed. Kurt Pinthus, Hamburg, 1959)

Also :-

J.W.M. Willett, Expressionism, (Weidenfeld and Nicholson,)

W.H. Sokel, The Writer in Extremis, (Stanford University Press, 1959.)

Articles :

Frieda Bachmann, Die Theorie, die historischen Beziehungen und die Eigenart des Expressionismus, in Germanic Review (Vol. 2, 1927, pp. 229 - 243.)

H.R. Ferriot, L'effusion et la violence : Symbolisme et Expressionisme in Revue de Littérature Comparée (Vol. 54, 1980, pp. 71 - 79)

Anthologies :

Lyrik des expressionistischen Jahrzehnts (DTV, München, 1979)

Expressionismus und Dadaismus, (hrsg. von Otto Best, Reclam, Stuttgart, 1980)

Deutsche Arbeiterdichtung 1910 - 1933 (hrsg. von Gunter Heintz, Reclam, Stuttgart, 1974)

(55) Arthur E. Lane, op.cit. p. 149.

(56) Lettre à Lou, le 26 mai 1915, Ombre de Mon Amour, Gallimard, 1969.

(57) cf. Lane's rather witty and perceptive comment applies in great part to Apollinaire's war poetry:-

"To transfer images (away from war) would be - if I may use a pun seriously - to defy the gravity of war itself."

For contemporary critical opinion of the 'fantaisiste' quality of Apollinaire's poetry see :

(i) Georges Duhamel, Les Poètes et la Poésie (Mercure de France, MCMXIV), particularly the Chapter Quatre Poètes Fantaisistes p. 315 ff). where he makes his famous comparison of Apollinaire's poetry to "une boutique de brocanteur". For the comments of the young surrealists see Debon, Guillaume Apollinaire Après Alcools, (p.126)

(ii) Marcel Raymond, De Baudelaire au Surréalisme (Paris, 1914) p.220 ff. "le monde est un rêve et le rêve est un monde".

(iii) For Apollinaire's own denial of the charge, see TCS, le 9 août, 1915, "poète c'est vrai, mais pas fantasque du tout." Much of the key criticism aims at proving the seriousness of Apollinaire's punning technique:-

See Marie-Jeanne Durry, Alcools (Paris, 1964)

Arminal Marrow, Form and Meaning in Apollinaire's Picture Poems (Australian Journal of French Studies, Vol. V, No. 1 Jan./April, 1968) speaks of the "deep brilliant illumination" which surpasses the surface triviality of the pun.

Jean-Claude Chevalier, in Apollinaire et le Calembour, in Europe, (Nov.-Dec. 1966 p.75) speaks of the pun as "l'acte poétique par excellence." See also :

Margaret Davis, Apollinaire, (Edin. 1964).

(58) See Apollinaire's own rather coy definition of himself as a poet - "Je n'ai pas de système poétique ou plutôt j'en ai beaucoup." (I have no poetic system or rather I have too much).

For further discussion of Apollinaire's "aestheticism" see Chap. 3. p. 120 ff.

(59) Arthur E. Lane, *op.cit.* p.23.

(60) Tendre Comme Le Souvenir, p. 48.

(61) For a further discussion of the problems of meaning see Chp. 2 p. 80 ff.

(62) Hayden White, *op.cit.* p. 12.

(63) Ernest Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 196.

(64) The predominance of the 'diary format' as a structural form weakened the classical status of the novel considerably during the war. First hand accounts such as Weisweiler, Impressions et Visions de Guerre (1914) and Henri Malherbe, La Flamme au Poing (1917) were barely distinguishable from fictionalized autobiographical 'novels' such as Siegfried Sassoon's Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man (1930) produced much later. Such works are very episodic in nature and consequently lack the overall control of vision which was expected by contemporary critics, of the novel. Thus the authors Mielke-Homann of Der deutsche Roman (Dresden, 1920) were unimpressed by the quality of the German novels issuing from the war - "Die Kriegerromane und - Novellen mit ganz wenigen Ausnahmen (sind) nicht Kunstwerke im eigentlichen Sinne, nicht durchgearbeitete Gestaltungen, sondern meist formlose Mitteilungen des überstarken Erlebens" (p. 497) (The war novels and short stories are not, with a very few exceptions, works of Art in the real sense, they are not thoroughly worked-out constructions (...) but mostly formless expressions of overwhelming first-hand experience.)

The need to invest the facts with their so sharply perceived 'meaning' did often lead to a neglect of content and to a subsequently compensatory over-emphasis of form. An extreme example of the 'poetic perception of facts' is to be found in the absurdly over-literary monologues of Jean Paulhan's Le Guerrier Appliqué (1914), which certainly fail to communicate much significance.

On the other hand, a work like Remarque's Im Westen Nichts Neues, which is compositionally extremely 'episodic' has all the power of a major work.

(65) Siegfried Sassoon, Memoirs of an Infantry Officer, (London, 1930.p.33)

(66) Le Palais du Tonnerre, O.P. p. 254.

(67) See Apollinaire, S.P., Du Coton dans les Oreilles, Sassoon, Twelve Months After. See also footnote 82, Chapter 3.

Tournadre's opinion ( p. 75 ) that

"l'abondance d'un vocabulaire précis et concret ancre plus encore (...) les poèmes de guerre dans la réalité vécue par le poète" is true up to a point. Nevertheless, the concrete vocabulary of war derives from a particularly arcane soldier's jargon and its inclusion merely reinforces the esoteric nature of many of the poems.

(68) Jon Silkin, First World War Poetry, (Penguin, 1979, Introduction) speaks of the "incisive prose virtues which Sassoon deploys in bringing home his messages." For a long documentary type description of the environment of war see Apollinaire Il y a. For the rhythms of prose see Sassoon, Trench Duty, Apollinaire, Dans l'Abri Caverne Alfred Lichtenstein, Only Yesterday I walked .. Gestern noch ging ich.

(69) Alfred Lichtenstein, Gedichte und Geschichten, Vol. I (ed. K. Lubasch, München, 1919).

(69a) Well-known rhetoric flourishes in Barbusse's Le Feu or the seismographic fluctuations in style in Remarque's Im Westen Nichts Neues.

(70) Albert Schinz, op.cit., Introduction, p. xi.

"War literature created its own style. Quite naturally, the traditional distinctions of descriptive, dramatic, lyric and epic styles were disregarded."

(71) Memoirs of an Infantry Officer, op.cit., p. 18.

(72) Die Aktionslyrik, (ed. Franz Pfemfert, 1916, p. 34)

(73) The lurid splashes of colour are strongly reminiscent of an Expressionist canvas, of say, Van Gogh, who used colour much in the same way as the German poet, to express 'inner states of being'. Van Gogh explained his artistic technique in the following words :



(translated from the French)

"Ich versuchte mit dem Rot und Grün die schreckliche Leidenschaft der Menschen zum Ausdruck zu bringen." (I tried with the use of red and green to express the terrible passion of men.) Quoted in Frieda Bachmann, op.cit. p. 232.

(74) At the risk of appearing commonplace it may be pointed out here that it could be said that all writing is metaphorical, in the same way that all writing is an act of the imagination (Hayden White)

See Charles O. Hartmann, Cognitive Metaphor in New Literary History, (Vol. XIII, Winter 1982, No. 2, pp. 279-339)

(75) Charles Hartmann op.cit. gives an interesting (if perhaps rather indigestibly mathematical) slant to the well-worn discussion of the metaphor. He stresses the analytic (=cognitive) function of the metaphor which "concentrates on the relations (his italics) among the terms of the vehicle and transfers them to the tenor." p. 334.

(76) See Uwe Wandrey, Die groteske Metapher in Das Motiv des Krieges in der expressionistischen Lyrik. (Hartmut Ludke Verlag, Hamburg 1972 p. 94 ff.)

(77) Uwe Wandrey, op.cit. p. 94.

(78) Compare Ezra Pound's time-worn definition of the metaphor as "that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time."

(79) Charles Hartmann, op.cit. p. 338.

(80) T.C.S. p. 48.

(81) See Les Peintres Cubistes; Méditations Esthétiques (Hermann, 1965, p. 45-56 particularly) for Apollinaire's exposé of cubist thought techniques.

See also Chroniques d'Art

For further discussion of the poetic technique of Simultanism see:

(i) Jean Burgos, Pour une approche de l'univers imaginaire d'Apollinaire in La Revue des Lettres Modernes (RLM) (No. 10, 1971).

(ii) K.R. Dutton, Apollinaire and Communication, in Australian Journal of French Studies, Vol. 5, 1968, pp. 303-328.

(iii) Cecily Mackworth, Guillaume Apollinaire and the Cubist Life, (John Murray, London, 1961)

(82) For a clarification of the sometimes confusingly similar techniques of literary Impressionism and Expressionism see Bachmann, op.cit., p. 232. The distinction is, she sees, between an 'external' and Static' and 'internal and dynamic' view of reality.

(83) See Chp. 3 p.112 and footnote 44 for Apollinaire and Futurism.

(84) cf. Merveille de la Guerre, Oe.P. p. 271

(85) cf. Chant de l'Honneur, Oe.P. p. 306

"Je chante la beauté de toutes nos douleurs."

(86) The long lists in poems such as Il y a do not seem to differ from the process of "enumeration" or "notation" which he deplores in Les Peintres Cubistes.

Although Margaret Davies' in her book Apollinaire (Edinburgh

1964, p. 215) acknowledges the basically 'anti-realistic' impulse of Apollinaire's poetic theory of simultanism as "the answer to the need to escape from description and imitation and representation which he acknowledged very early in life.", the simultanist poems do give the impression of straightforward "quasi-mechanical"

(Bohn) recording. cf. Willard Bohn, Metaphor and Metonymy in Apollinaire's Calligrammes (Romanic Review, Vol. LXXII, No. 2,

March 1981, p. 173) - "The great majority of those poems appear to have been visually generated. For one thing, Apollinaire seems to have wanted a pictorial survey of life at the Front."

(87) "Il faut habituer l'esprit à concevoir un poème simultanément comme une scène de la vie", Les Peintres Cubistes, op.cit. p. 54.

(88) Jean Claude Chevalier, Alcools d'Apollinaire, op.cit. p. 13.

(89) Frederick Hoffmann in The Novel of World War I. A document in the History of Surprise, (p.517).

comments on the purpose of rhetoric as being not only to direct the readers' attention away from fact, but "to link fact with one or

several of the systems of larger meaning which in any period circumscribe fact". His observation that "eloquence also acts to slow down the rhythm of factual succession" is true of the second line of this poem - but Sassoon's intention was to delay for the purpose of intensification rather than mask the revelation of truth.

(90) Margaret Davies, in reference to Les Feux du Bivouac, Oe.p. p.250.

(90a) Compare, for example, Leon Wolff's prose description of the essential dullness and unloveliness of trench life.

"And finally, in the intricate, mole-like maze of the Western Front were the dug-outs, in their most primitive form merely extra-large holes scooped into the side of a trench for the personal use of one man. But many caverns were minor marvels of crude engineering ingenuity that housed dozens of troops. Here in the fetid smell of unwashed bodies and dank earth the men lived when not on active duty, made coffee in brown pots, dried their stockings, played chess, warmed potatoes, dozed, argued, cleaned their rifles, wrote letters, waited for morning, or guard duty, or a bit of action. (pp 6-7) Leon Wolff, In Flanders Fields, The 1917 Campaign, (Longmans Green & Co, London, 1959)

(91) Lettre à Lou, le 23 avril, 1915.

(92) Guillaume Apollinaire, L'Esprit Nouveau et Les Poètes, in Mercure de France (Vol. CXXX, 1st. Dec., 1918, pp. 385 - 396)

The aim of the new poetry is to "déterminer de nouvelles découvertes dans la pensée et dans le lyrisme" and to explore "les joies nouvelles qui jalonnent les énormes espaces imaginatifs". cf. also his Poème Lu au Mariage d'André Salmon, Oe.P. p. 83.

(92a) See chapter 3, p. 112.

(93) See Helmut Meter, Apollinaire und der Futurismus, (Schönböck Verlag, 1977, p. 136)

"Zivilisatorischer Optimismus als die von der Psyche unbefangenen akzeptierte Einwirkung alles Modernen und dessen unmittelbare, reflexionsfreie Wiedergabe ist das Hauptmerkmal von Apollinaires zum Experiment neigenden Simultaneitätsgedichten")

(Social optimism is the main characteristic of Apollinaire's experimentally-orientated simultaneous poems. It is reflected in an uninhibited acceptance of all that is modern, and in a direct, spontaneous poetical reproduction.)

(94) Zur Sprachform des Frühexpressionismus bei August Stramm, op.cit. p. 298.

"Hinter diesem aufgewühlten(...) Stil steht Stramms tiefes Misstrauen gegen das Bewusstsein, das er mit Vehemenz entwertet."

(Behind this impassioned style lies Stramm's deep mistrust of consciousness, which he violently depreciates.)

(95) *ibid*, p. 296.

(96) *ibid*, p. 294, offers the further concept of 'Dezentration' 'decentralization'.

(97) Taken up by Walden and others, it became a coterie style extensively illustrated in publications in Der Sturm.

(98) Zur Sprachform, op.cit. p.300.

(99) Marinetti "Il Futurismo si fonda sul completo rinnovamento della sensibilità umana" quoted in Meter, op.cit. p.11,

(Futurism is based on the complete renewal of human sensibility.)

(100) Wilhelm Duwe, Deutsche Dichtung des 20 Jahrhunderts, (Band I Orell Füssli Verlag, Zürich, 1962, p.266).

(101) Robert Nichol, Ardours and Endurances (Chatto and Windus, London, 1918, p.37).

(102) Wilhelm Duwe, op.cit., p.267; "bei Stramm ist die Sprachgebung auf die Urlaute beschränkt".

(102a) See chapter 2, p. 231ff.

(102b) Other possible interpretations of 'Du' will be ignored for the purposes of this discussion. See, however, chapter 4, footnote 124.

(103) The 'ideeliches Bild' (idea-ful image) was a 'discovery' of the Expressionist poet Lichtenstein, supposedly built on the association of primary ideas, rather than sensory impressions. However, such an exclusive usage was hard to maintain even by its Expressionist advocates.

Further explanation of the "Ideeliches Bild" can be found in Lichtenstein's own commentary on his poem, Die Dämmerung - which he describes as a montage of discrete elements, held together by one idea. The image, "An einem Fenster klebt ein fatter Mann" (A fat man is stuck on a window) is reproduced without unnecessary detail "Ohne überflüssige Reflexionen" or explanation and is very much as it appeared to him at the time.

(104) Wilhelm Duwz, op.cit., p.267.

APPENDIX A.

LAMENTATIONS.

I found him in the guard-room at the Base.  
From the blind darkness I had heard his crying  
And blundered in. With puzzled, patient face  
A sergeant watched him; it was no good trying  
To stop it; for he howled and beat his chest.  
And, all because his brother had gone west,  
Raved at the bleeding war; his rampant grief  
Moaned, shouted, sobbed, and choked, while he was kneeling  
Half-naked on the floor. In my belief  
Such men have lost all patriotic feeling.

(From Selected Poems, p. 26, Faber & Faber, 1968)

The 5th. I.B.D. Adjutant<sup>f</sup> advised me to draw some blankets; the store-room was just round the corner, he said. After groping about in the dark and tripping over tent ropes I was beginning to lose my temper when I opened a door and found myself in a Guard room. A man, naked to the waist, was kneeling in the middle of the floor, clutching at his chest and weeping uncontrollably. The Guard were standing around with embarrassed looks, and the Sergeant was beside him, patient and unpitying. While he was leading me to the blanket store I asked him what was wrong. "Why, sir, the man's been under detention for assaulting the military police, and now 'e's just 'ad news of his brother being killed. Seems to take it to 'eart more than most would. 'Arf crazy 'es been, tearing 'is clothes off and cursing the war, the Fritzes. Almost like a shell-shock case 'e seems. It's his third time out. A Blighty one don't last a man long nowadays, sir." As I went off into the gloom I could still hear the uncouth howlings. "Well, well; this is a damned depressing spot to arrive at" I thought, (...). The war seemed to be doing its best to make me feel unheroic.

(From Memoirs of an Infantry Officer, p. 163)

## APPENDIX B

Nous arrivons sans encombres aux tranchées des fantassins, fosses blancs, creusés dans la craie, c'est d'une propreté, d'un silence inconcevables. J'ai écrit à quelqu'un que j'imaginais ainsi la muraille de Chine, mais ici c'est un fosse, des fosses, car ces boyaux s'enchevêtrent à l'infini. Ils ont des noms. L'un de ces cheminements porte le vôtre: allée Madeleine. Je l'ai suivi avec un émoi dont vous sourirez peut-être. Dans chaque boyau tous les cinq ou six mètres un enfoncement permet de se ranger pour laisser passer ceux qui viennent en sens contraire; en face du renforcement est un trou pour l'écoulement des eaux. La plupart de ces boyaux sont à l'hauteur de l'homme, mais il y en a un où il faut ramper, c'est un boyau de seconde ligne. En première ligne, nous étions à 80m. des tranchées boches, on les voyait très bien par les meurtrières et les créneaux. Il y a des créneaux partout, dans certains postes avancés, au lieu de créneaux, ce sont des meurtrières: sur la tranchée, des caisses de bois sans fond ni couvercle et de petits sacs de terre dessous et autour. On voit peu de soldats. Ils sont dans des cagnats souterraines.

(.....)

Ces premières lignes et les postes d'écoute paraissent frêles, légers, une véritable voilette sur le visage de la France, qu'ils préservent cependant des atteintes d'insectes affreux. Les balles sifflaient au-dessus de nos têtes, sans danger naturellement. Elles sifflaient dans le silence ou plutôt fouettaient ce grand silence.

(From Tendre Comme le Souvenir, pp.20-21)

### LE PALAIS DU TONNERRE

Par l'issue ouverte sur le boyau dans la craie  
En regardant la paroi adverse qui semble en nougat  
On voit à gauche et à droite fuir l'humide couloir désert  
Où meurt étendue une pelle à la face effrayante à deux yeux  
réglementaires qui servent à l'attacher sous les caissons.  
Un rat y recule en hâte tandis que j'avance en hâte.  
Et le boyau s'en va couronné de craie semé de branches  
Comme un fantôme creux qui met du vide où il passe blanchâtre  
Et là-haut le toit est bleu et couvre bien le regard fermé par  
quelques lignes droites  
Mais en deçà de l'issue c'est le palais bien nouveau et qui  
paraît ancien. (etc).

(From Calligrammes p. 254)

TRANSLATION.

We arrived without incident in the infantry trenches, white corridors, dug out of the clay, inconceivably clean and silent. I wrote to someone that that was how I imagined the Wall of China, but here it's just corridors and more corridors, because the network of trenches is endless. They each have names. One of these traverses goes by your name : Madeleine Alley. You'd probably smile at how moved I was as I went along it. Every five or six yards in each trench there is an alcove which allows one to stand aside in order to let people pass coming from the opposite direction; opposite this alcove is a drainage hole. Most of these trenches are man-high, but there are some in the support trenches where you have to crawl. On the front line, we were 80 yards from the German trenches, we could see them through the peep-holes and over the parapets. There are parapets everywhere, in certain advanced positions instead of parapets there are peep-holes; on top there are wooden boxes without bases or lids and small bags filled with earth stuffed beneath and around them. You don't see many soldiers. They are in the dug-outs underground.

(.....)

The front line trenches and the listening post seem fragile and insubstantial, nothing but a veil over the face of France yet they preserve from the attack of dreadful insects. The bullets were whistling above our heads, harmlessly of course. They whistled in the silence or rather they whipped this great silence.

PALACE OF THUNDER.

Through the exit opening into the chalk trench  
Looking at the opposite wall which seems made of nougat  
One can see to the left and right the damp solitary corridor stretch away  
Where a spade lies dying whose terrible face has two regulation eyes  
which serve to attach it to the gun-carriages.  
There a rat retreats hurriedly as I advance hurriedly  
And the trench continues crowned with chalk spread with branches  
Like a hollow ghost which leaves a void wherever it passes deathly-white  
And up above, the roof is blue and blocks off effectively one's view  
enclosed by a few straight lines  
But beyond the exit there is the very new palace yet which seems ancient.



APPENDIX C

He! da oben! Lachen! ich lache! drei Tage stürzen! brüllen! drei Tage Jahre Ewigkeiten! und bist noch nicht zerstört! verfluchter Himmel! Blaubalg! pafft Zigarren und stiebt Asche. alles zusammen, den Graben. Schützengraben. Schutz. Grab. die Stellung wird gehalten bis zum letzten Mann! vorwärts Jungens. Das Blaugespenst klemmt rote Augen auf. rot. feuer-rot. verschlagen. Der Tag hält nicht aus. so oder so! schiesst! schiesst! Der Wald! ja in den Wald! Schädel. Wolken, lustig! der beste Schütze darf. ja. darf. zuerst schlafen. Teufel! schlafen! Mord Müdigkeit Rasen Wut! He! Bursche? Bursche da vorn! willst du? willst du schießen? du? ja? der Kopf zwischen die Beine geklatscht? Drückeberger! schießen! knallen! seht! sie kommen aus dem Wald. raus aus dem Lauf! die Backe gesetzt! brav! brav! Schnell-feuer! Blaue Bohnen! Bohnen! Blau-Augen! mein Schatz hat blaue Augen. haha! drauf! drauf! sie laufen. Korn nehmen. Zielscheiben. laufen. Mädchenbeine. ich beisse. beisse. verflucht. Küsse scharfe. drauf gehalten! Standvisier Aug in Auge! Wasser? was? die Läufe glühn! alle Schläuche glühn. letzte Nacht hat die Feldflasche zerschlagen. das trockne Glas geleckt. die Zunge blutet. schluckt. schluckt. schiesst die Flinten kalt. euch selber kalt. kaltes Blut! da vorne pfützt Wasser. Pfui Teufel! gierig! Dreck! Blut. blutiger Dreck. Blut modert zu schnell. Feuer! Schnellfeuer! raus! nicht einschlafen! wer? nehmt ihm die Patronen aus der Tasche. wir brauchen sie. der Kerl blutet! ein kleines Loch kann so bluten! schießen! Zielpunkt. Donner! Knacken! des Flattern! so müsst ihr auch schießen. zielen. gut. ruhig. die Hunde drüben. die arme Erde. Brief in der Tasche? natürlich. schlapp und gleich tot auf der Nase. "mein lieber Mann! " ja. Männer brauchen wir. aber keine toten hier. essen. Bröckel Schokolade. Mutter. schießt Kerle. ach Mütter weinen immer. schiesst! ich war ein weicher Junge. Teufel! Kopf hoch! die Nasen aus dem Dreck! Was?! keiner? alle? Faulenzer! Verstärkung. hört ihr? Verstärkung kommt. Feind nicht ranlassen! die Flinten vor! Teufel! totsein ist Schande! seht! ich schieße. schieße. Verstärkung. hört! Trommeln. Hörner. Tata trrr! eilt da hinten! eilt! Muttertränen. Vaterbrünste. Dreck! Drei Tage Dreck! Menschen! meine Mutter hat mich immer so sorgsam gewaschen. Grab. Hölle. Teufel. mein Arm schießt. Finger ladet. Auge trifft. Hurrah! Hurrah! die Beine in die Hand! Hurrah! Tod und Leben! hurrah! Eisen! Hurrah! drauf! Mein Kopf! Kopf! wo ist mein Kopf? voran fliegt kollert. brav. Bursche! in den Feind! beißen beißen! Säbel! ha! weich der Vaterbauch. weich. Mutter. wo bist? Mutter, seh dich nicht? Mutter du küsst. Mutter. rauh halte mich. ich falle doch. Mutter. ich falle. Mutter.

Der Letzte (First published in Der Sturm, October 1916)

Der Angriff      The Attack

Tücher  
Winken  
Flattern  
Knattern  
Winde klatschen  
Dein Lachen weht  
Greifen Fassen  
Balgen Zwingen  
Kuss  
Umfangen  
Sinken  
Nichts

(First published in Der Sturm, Sept. 1915)

Der Ritt

Die Äste greifen nach meinen Augen  
im Einglas wirbelt weiss und lila schwarz und gelb  
blutroter Dunst betastet zack die Sehnen  
kriecht schleimend hoch und krampft in die Gelenke!  
Vom Wege vor mir reisst der Himmel Stücke!  
Ein Kindschrei gelt!  
Die Erde tobt, zerstampft in Flüche sich  
mich und mein Tier  
mein Tier und mich  
Tier mich!

in Tropfblut 1919

TRANSLATION.

Hey! You up there! Laughing. I am laughing. Storming, yelling for three days! Three days, years eternities! and you are not overthrown yet! damn you to Hell! Windbag! puffing at cigars, dropping ashes. all together, the trench. the dug-out. Shelter. Grave. the position will be held to the last man! forward lads. The bluish ghostly face raises red eyes open. red. fire-red. sleepy. The day won't last long. this way or that! fire! open fire! The wood. Yes into the wood! Skulls. Clouds, fantastic, the best shot may. Yes, may sleep first. To hell! Sleep. Murder Fatigue Madness Anger. Hey! Boy? You boy in front! will you? will you shoot or not? you? yes? your head jammed between your knees. Shirker. shoot! crack! look! they are coming out of the wood. get up at the double! take aim! steady! steady! Quick fire! Bullets! Blue streaks. Blue eyes. My love has blue eyes! ha ha! at them! at them! they are running away. look through the sight. line up the target! run. Girls' legs. I bite. bite. damn. Kisses sharp. hold fire. Gun-sight glass to eye. Water? what? the barrels are red hot. all the barrels are red hot. last night broke the water bottle. Licked the dry glass. the tongue bleeds. swallow. swallow. shoot till your gun's cold. till you're cold. cold blood! there's a puddle of water up front. Revolting! greedy! Filth! Blood! bloody filth! Blood goes off too quickly. Fire! Quick fire! out with you! no sleeping there! who? take his cartridges out of his pocket. we need them. the poor sod's bleeding. to think that such a small hole can bleed so much. shoot. a hit. Thunder! Cracking! Fluttering! this is how you too must shoot. take aim. good. easy does it. those dogs over there. the poor earth. Letter in his pocket? of course! bang and fell straight down dead! "dear husband" Yes. We need men. but not dead ones. eat. bits of chocolate. Mother. shoot men. oh. Mothers always weep. shoot. I was a sickly boy. To hell! Head high! Get your noses out of the dirt! What? No-one? Everyone? Idlers! Reinforcements. do you hear? reinforcements are coming. Don't let the enemy in! Guns at the ready! To hell! it's such a shame to be dead! look! I'm shooting. shooting. Reinforcements. listen! Drums! Bugles! Tata trr. hurry up back there! hurry! Mother's tears. Father's lust. Filth. Three days of filth! people's. my Mother used always to wash me so carefully. Grave. Hell. To hell! my hand pulls at the trigger. my finger loads the ammunition. The sight locks on! Hurray! hurray! they're running their legs off. Hurray! Death and life! Hurray! iron! Hurray! At them! My head. head. where is my head? it's flying forward raving. steady. Boy. at the enemy! bite bite! Bayonets. ha! soft father's belly. soft. Mother. where are you? Mother, I can't see you! Mother you're kissing. Mother. uneven hold me. I'm still going to fall. Mother. I'm falling. Mother.

The Attack

Cloths

Wave

Flutter

Crack

Breezes clap

Your laugh laments.

Grasp. Hold

Wrestle. Master.

Kiss.

Embrace

Fall.

Nothing.

The Ride

The branches grab at my eyes

In the monocle it whirls

White and lilac, black and yellow

Bloodred vapour fingers stickily the sinews  
creeps slimily upwards and

convulses in the joints

The sky rips pieces of

The path before me!

A Child's scream shrills out.

The earth rages

curses and tramples  
itself.

Me and my animal

my animal and me

Animal me!

CHAPTER 2.

THE EPIC RESPONSE.

"Artistic creation is always a complicated turning out of old forms, under the influence of new stimuli which originates outside art."  
(Trotsky, Literature and Revolution.)

Letter to The Times, October 1, 1914.

"Sir,

You print this morning a series of marching songs offered for the use of our soldiers (...). The writer of the words "A.C.A." says that he has written in the simplest words possible, such as a private soldier might think and write for himself.

When a writer of eminence and distinction strives so valiantly to lend his powers to the service of the common people it seems ungracious to emphasize the fact of his failure (...)

IN the second verse of the last of the songs, your correspondent has written :-

"Here's to Lord Kitchener, brown with the sun,  
Gentle, persuasive and balmy."

It is obvious to most that the most immediate meaning to Tommy of the last word would be of the popular expression "barmy", that is, "imbecile, half-baked cracked, dotty or lunatic." I feel, however, that no such criticism was intended of Lord Kitchener by the well-intended author. I would suggest, however, that-

"If you do not see life as he (Tommy) sees it and use words as he uses them to express ideas which you share with him you cannot write for him at all."

Letter from Wilfred Owen to Siegfried Sassoon, 22 September, 1918.

"Is this (Spring Offensive) worth going on with ? I don't want to write anything to which a soldier would say NO COMPRIS !"

.....

Scars upon my Heart (Women's Poetry and Verse of the First World War), ed. Catherine Reilly, Virago Press, London, 1981, p. 49).

"If you have words  
Fit words, I mean.  
Not your usual stock-in-trade  
Of tags and clichés -  
To hymn such greatness  
Use them.  
But have you ?  
Anyone can babble.  
If you must wax descriptive  
Do get the background right.  
A little right."

.....

En ces jours déchirants, Paris, Payot et Cie, 1916. Préface de  
Henri Bataille (p.9)

(Dans la littérature de guerre il faut)

"Non des cris et des couplets de facile patriotisme (...) Mais  
(...) des strophes équilibrées, sobres toujours."

(What the literature of the war needs is not the impassioned  
rhyming couplets of a facile patriotism, but verse where balance and  
moderation always prevails.)

Der Deutsche Krieg im Deutschen Gedicht, Julius Bab, p. 3, 1914:

"Nicht viele von den zahllosen Dichtern dieser Stunde vermochten den allgemeinen Gehalt der Zeit so mit menschlicher Eigenart zu durchdringen, dass das Besondere, Konkrete, Sinnlich-Lebendige einer künstlerischen Form zutage ist. Die meisten mussten sich mit Variationen altüberkommener poetischer Formen begnügen und konnten deshalb auch nicht das Neue sagen, das zu hören uns drängte."

( (After the outbreak of war)

There were not many out of the countless poets of the moment who were able to penetrate the general spirit of the time with such individual humanity so as to bring its essential, concrete, sensuous and vital aspects to light in the form of Art. Most of them had to content themselves with variations of age-old traditional poetic forms and were therefore not able to tell us of the new things we all so craved to hear.)

.....

These passages which span the entire chronology of the war, reflect the realization on the part of more sensitive critics and poets that poetry was no longer a hermetic art, but that it had to take into account a truth external to itself, a truth, furthermore, which was immediately verifiable by the millions who had gone through the experience of war. The rift between civilian and military experience had already in the first month or so after August 1914 made itself apparent and this separation, which was as much psychological as physical (1), was to find its literary correlative in the departure of the 'new' war poetry from the old forms and conventions - that "principal poetic patrimony (of) pre-lapsarian pastoralism, expressed in sub-Keatsian diction" of which Silkin (2) speaks in connection with the English poetry. The development of a "relentless, uncompromising honesty (3) was the hallmark of the later realism. This metamorphosis was, however, relatively slow. In the early stages, civilian and soldier poets alike had instinctive recourse to the familiar images and rhythms of conventional poetry, simply because there were no other literary precedents (3b) which could tell them how to write about modern war. The genre they chose was the Epic, but neither the form nor the style were suited to the personal and intimate experience of suffering in war. Early attempts to imitate the epic form and tone resulted in long-winded poems which either tried to re-cast trench skirmishes as legendary battles or attempted to convey the quick intensity of individual experience in Olympian narrative style. Le Grand Exemple, by Leon Lahovary, a Belgian poetaster, is a case in point. Here the potential poignancy of the subject matter-a father's grief at the loss of his son in the trenches- is sacrificed to the assumed objectivity of the narrative stance, the ludicrous aggrandizement of the central figure and the preoccupation with high style :



Au loin, le canon gronde, on meurt sous la mitraille.  
Le père, chef prudent qui conduit la bataille,  
Voit juste, pense clair et parle ferme et haut,  
Donne des ordres qu'on exécute aussitôt.  
Un officier survient qui dit :- Mon général-...  
-Quoi?- Xavier...votre fils...est mort près des tranchées...  
-Tant d'énergie et tant de jeunesse fauchées-...

( ..... )

Mais, courageux, stoïque et résigné, le père,  
Qui dictait gravement des ordres souverains,  
Songe, prend un instant sa tête entre ses mains,  
S'efforce de chasser la vision trop chère,  
Ordonne à sa douleur sublime de se taire,  
Puis, ne pensant qu'à la patrie et qu'au devoir,  
Donnant le grand exemple à tous, et sans surseoir,  
A quelque decisive action projetée,  
Il dit:- Continuons - et reprend sa dictée.

(In the distance, the big guns rumble, men are dying under a  
hail of bullets,  
The father, prudent leader in command of battle,  
With straight eye, sharp mind and strong clear voice,  
Gives orders which are immediately executed.  
An officer appears, saying " General, sir..."  
"Well?"-"Xavier...your son...died near the trenches..."  
"So much energy and so much youth brought down..."

( ..... )

But brave, stoical and resigned, the father  
Who had been gravely dictating his sovereign orders,  
Ponders, puts his head a moment in his hands,  
And forces himself to dismiss the too dear vision,  
Bids his sublime grief be silent,  
Then, thinking only of his country and his duty,  
Setting a great example to all, and without delay,  
Planning some decisive action,  
He says..."Let us continue " and carries on his dictation.)

Although the epic form was soon lost, the epic spirit was maintained in the continued use of a heroic style, despite the obvious lyric form and subject matter. The terms 'heroic' and 'epic' became universally confused and many poets were convinced that the Epic had been reborn merely through the adoption of the grand manner. This did much to inhibit the initial development of new forms and meanings. Indeed, it took a significant period ( the usual date is around summer 1916 after Verdun and the battle of the Somme ) for the full implications of total war to be realized ( if they were at all ) and in turn, for the appropriateness of traditional poetry as a means of expressing the new realities to be questioned (4). Nevertheless, by the end of the war, certain irrevocable changes had taken place which were essentially to alter the nature of poetry in a way which the previous experimentations of movements such as Cubism, Futurism, Imagism and Expressionism had only formally achieved (5). An amusing illustration of this change is to be found in Paul Fussell's listing (6) of the Victorian pseudo-heroic clichés currently available to the early English patriotic poets. Such archaisms were later to find a poor degree of tolerance among the more experienced soldier-poets. The typically 'English' virtues which Fussell finds in such words as

"gallant"	(to be earnestly brave)
"staunch"	(to be solidly brave)
"ardent"	(to be nobly enthusiastic)

naturally had their French counterparts in

"vaillant"

"ferme"

"plein de flamme"

respectively.

The corresponding descriptions of the 'furor Teutonicus' reveal themselves in much more ponderous adjectives such as "entschlossen" (decisive), "fest" (steadfast), "hart" (tough), "unbeugsam" (unbending, intransigent).

Epic euphemisms for the war itself :

"l'infernal orgie"

"der blutige Sturm"

"sanguine strife",

or for the ordeal of shell-fire :

"le fer démolisseur"

"Sturmen von Erz"

"fiery drench"

or for death in a glorious cause :

"le laurier triomphal et vermeil"

"das kostbare Gut" (costly good)

"the glorious cost"

(note the interchangeability of the terms here) are all uniform in their lack of reference to the concrete reality of modern warfare.

(7) The complacency with which the civilian, and particularly, female civilian poets tended to regard the fact of death was profoundly indicative of their total ignorance of what it meant to die in the trenches. The recurrence of blood imagery, for instance, is positively ghoulish, as in this excerpt from a poem by a female German civilian poet:

"Dein Blut, o Bruder tief in dir verhüllt

In dir gefangen, drängt empor zum Lichte.

(...)

Es drängt empor; der Tag des Opfers naht

Dein Blut strömt über und dein Blut will fließen." (8)

(Your blood, o brother hidden deep within you, imprisoned within you, thrusts upwards to the light. It thrusts upwards; the day of sacrifice draws near, your blood overflows, your blood streams out willingly.)

Other equally dubious examples are legion both in the French and German patriotic poetry. A few examples will suffice.

" Not till thousands have been slain  
Shall the green wood be green again  
Blood and blood must yet be shed  
To make the roses red. " (9)

" Tant de corps qui, pour toi (France) toutes veines ouvertes  
Saignent à flots pourpres.  
(So many bodies which bleed with wide-open veins for you (France),  
In crimson gushes.) (10)

Lutte affreuse, lutte sauvage  
Les cris, les râles, les sanglots  
Et le sang qui ruisselle à flots  
Se mêlant aux eaux du rivage (etc.)  
(Dreadful struggle, wild struggle  
The cries, the death rattles, the sobs,  
And the blood which streams and gushes  
Mixing with the waters which lap the river-bank.) (11)

The cliché-ridden (12) banality of such offerings was quickly noted by more discerning critics. By 1916, 'heroic' poetry was going out of fashion. Henri Bataille, for instance, a veteran French war poet, had by the summer of that year a much more critical sense of the aberrant sentimentality of much of the patriotic poetry and he was particularly damning about its lack of intellectual basis.

"Le poète national - l'Abominable Appellation ! - est l'un des poncifs, l'un des clichés les plus solides de cette littérature de guerre qui ne compte guère qu'une vingtaine d'accessoires et une bonne cinquantaine d'idées générales." (13).

(The national poet - O execrable name ! - is one of the most ingrained stereotypes or clichés of this war literature which can barely count more than two dozen conventions or a good fifty general ideas.)

Trenchant criticisms and witty parodies of patriotic poetry were particularly common in English reviews such as the Egotist (14) and even in such establishment papers as The Times. More avant-garde publishers and critics like Harold Monro of The Poetry Bookshop and J.C. Squire and John Gould Fletcher refused many of the anthologies which carried titles such as "Poems of the Great War", in case they should be associated with anything that could be seen to glorify war.

The popular press, however, did not share such cynicism or doubt. Indeed, they scorned any innovations which might threaten the status of traditional poetry. The general reading public in England seemed to prefer the comforting echoes of Shakespeare or Tennyson, while their French and German counterparts encouraged imitations in the style of Corneille and Hugo, Goethe and Hölderlin, respectively (15). Popular poetry of the war was, in effect, floundering in the profoundest stagnation whilst believing itself to be a dynamic regenerative force. In England, conservative opinion which found voice in a number of "fatuous articles" by "Professors, near-Professors and literary romantics who detested Realism, Futurism, Blast and Tranquillity (sic)" (16) expressed the confident idea that war would release a stream of pure poetry which would prove the salvation of English letters. Similarly, Maurice Barrès wrote with enthusiasm of "les

forces régénératrices de la guerre" which no doubt, in turn, inspired lesser mortals like the armchair patriotic poet Léon Lahovary to proclaim the creative spirit of war and the reinstatement of the long-lost National Epic (17). Germany, also, was not without its grandiose visions for the birth of a new, heroic poetry. Julius Bab, poet and critic, hoped to see a unified and elevated German poetry arise from the conflict - a "new creative folk-spirit" (ein neuer schöpferischen Volksgeist) which would fulfil both poetic and political aspirations of the nation (18).

In face of the obvious popularity of the patriotic literature, the professional critics were for the most part prophets without influence. The war-time reading public was "not to be deterred from its plunge into bathos" (19) and as a result, anything with a pretence to being poetry was accepted without critical demur. Indeed, the grander its manner and the more inflated its rhetoric, the more did a poem seem to have the style and importantly, the authenticity, of great art and the more it was likely to be accepted as a qualified statement about the war. As Patrick Bridgewater observes in his article German Poetry of the First World War (20), the cultivation of high diction in the patriotic poetry was mainly the responsibility of civilian writers on the Home Front who had no actual experience of the fighting conditions and who were concerned with maintaining the highly "literary" conventions of pre-war literature. Thus, for example, the poet Léon Lahovary mentioned above, found the everyday realities of warfare too mundane, too "simples, banales et quotidiennes" to be expressed in poetry. In order to regain the former eminence of the Classical tradition, the new poetry of the war should not, he advised, "renoncer aux grandes conceptions, aux oeuvres de haute envergure" (give up the great concepts or large-scale works) (21) for its mission was to emblazon in gold

for generations to come "the immortally heroic side" (le côté immortellement héroïque) of war.

Fortunately for the development of War Poetry as a genre, the physical reality of war militated against the continued use of epic diction, as J.H. Johnston's reviewer in The Listener of July 30th., 1964, reminds us :-

"One of the things that makes the poets of the First World War (22) significant is their realization that in the changed conditions of technological warfare, the epic manner and attitudes were no longer viable."

Even despite the realization of the inadequacy of an elevated style to portray the particular horrors of war (23), it was nevertheless a style for which many poets showed the greatest attachment. After Henri Bataille's apparent rejection of inflated rhetoric and flatulent sentimentality in his introduction to Henri Dérioux's poems, it is difficult to see any new elements in the latter poet's work. Indeed, Dérioux offers his anthology as the product of a man "seasoned by suffering and sincerity" and of one who hopes to reveal to all the terrible truth of war, but he does so in elegant classical allusions which do more justice to the soundness of his education in Greek and Latin verse, than to the accuracy of his perception.

"Comme un thyrsé arraché de la main des Bacchantes,

Je veux brandir ces âpres vers

Où l'on voit des serpents, de leurs langues sifflantes,

Ceindre une tête aux yeux ouverts" (24)

(Like a Bacchic staff torn from the hands of the priestesses of Bacchus,

I will brandish these bitter verses

Where one sees the hissing tongues of snakes

Encircle a head whose eyes are open.)

Emile Villard, in his book Guerre et Poésie 1914 - 18 (25) makes an entertainingly devastating analysis of the facile rhetoric and false values of the French patriotic poetry of the period, which in common with the poetry of other countries at this time, owed its artistic failure largely to the use of just this kind of démodé literary convention. The eloquent exhortations: - "Ne pleure pas ! Courage, o pauvre âme meurtrie." (Weep not ! Have courage, o poor bruised soul), the protestations: - "Lovers of Life, dreamers with lifted eyes / O Liberty, at thy command we challenge Death !", the apocalyptic visions: - "Ein Phönix steigt, so schön wie Morgenrot / Der deutsche Geist und dieses Weltbrands Flammen" (A Phoenix arises, beautiful as the rosy dawn / The German spirit and the flames from this burning world) which poured through the presses, had little connection with the ordinary experience of the soldiers in the trenches. Rhetorical gestures could do nothing to help them face the constant threat of death - as Villard remarks - "L'éloquence et la littérature ne les y ont pas aidés."

Even established poets who might have known better seemed to be drawn by the superficial grandeur of the epic style. Apollinaire, for example, who already by 1912 had established for himself a reputation for being not only extremely avant-garde (26) but also for possessing a curious and experimental talent (27), nevertheless was capable of producing patriotic poetry of the most banal kind. The "jejune patriotism" (28) of the poem Chante de l'Honneur (29) shows the definite influence of public opinion, whereas the rather stilted use of alexandrines reflects the strong link between high diction and lofty sentiment always made in conventional patriotic poetry. In this poem Apollinaire is obviously responding to a corporate image of



himself as poet and patriot, whilst his political consciousness dictates his better judgement. Here, as elsewhere (30), he is eager to show "l'enthousiasme, le patriotisme simple et parfait" (Lettre à Lou)

"Prends mes vers o ma France Avenir Multitude

Chantez ce que je chante un chant pur le prélude .

Des chants sacrés que la beauté de notre temps

Saura vous inspirer plus purs plus éclatants

Que ceux que je m'efforce à moduler ce soir

En l'honneur de l'Honneur la beauté du Devoir."

(Take these my verses O my France Future Multitude

Sing as I sing song pure the prelude

Of sacred songs which the beauty of our times

Shall inspire you purer and more glorious

Than those I strain to modulate this evening

In the honour of Honour the nobleness of duty.)

It is, in part, the political aspect of the patriotic verse which ensured their success with the public. The official poets were often chosen as spokesmen of their respective sides, thus making a clear connection between poetry and political propaganda.

Riegel, for instance speaks of "la vogue de Charles Maurras et de Charles Péguy", the latter being particularly responsible for spreading the idea among the eager youth of the day that to die young for one's country was the greatest honour (31). Apollinaire, in a letter to Madeleine of the 23rd. August, 1915, speaks of Botrel as "quasi poète officiel de France, avec Jean Aicard, quand l'Angleterre a Kipling et L'Italie d'Annunzio." Kipling and Hardy, however, were of

an older generation and did not receive anything like the attention of Rupert Brooke (32) or Robert Nichols whose poetry sold just as much for its sentimental appeal as for its good marketing of the British colonial spirit (33). Similarly, the German poet, Walter Flex appealed to the middle-class pride of caste and the growing nationalist sentiment of the bourgeoisie:-

"Das Volk in Eisen, seine ersten Kriegsgedichte kamen in fünf Auflagen bei Oskar Kulitz in Posen heraus und haben in vielen Tausenden von Stücken im Heere und in der Heimat Verbreitung gefunden" (34)

( People of Iron, his first anthology of war poems was published in Posen in five editions by Oskar Kulitz and many thousands of copies were circulated round the Army and the Home Front.)

It is not surprising therefore, that given such public and institutional approval, the epic diction should survive until the end of the war. Despite all the possible moral objections of which the patriotic poets must undoubtedly themselves have been aware (35), despite the disapproval of contemporary critics (36), despite even the ultimate negation of their heroic ideals by the horror of war itself, the use of epic conventions continued as a major expression till 1918 and beyond. This fact alone is one of the most striking literary phenomena of the war, as Paul Fussell (37) comments :-

"The system of high diction was not the least of the ultimate casualties of the war. But its staying power was astonishing. As late as 1918 it was still possible for some men who had actually fought to sustain the old rhetoric."

Apollinaire himself, despite his experimental background, hoped for an essentially 'epic' inspiration in his war poetry, as he wrote to a friend, André Rouveyre, in a letter-poem (38) - "Je fais ce que

je peux et c'est plutôt l'épopée." (I do what I can and preferably in the epic vein.) The role of bard and prophet which he assumes in such poems as Chant de l'Honneur held a great attraction for those much more naïve in spirit, such as, for instance, the German worker poet Heinrich Lersch, who rejoiced in his title of "Der S<sup>a</sup>nger des deutschen Krieges" (the bard of the German war). It seems that very few poets or critics were able all of the time to resist the lure of grandeur and the fine-sounding rhythms of classical metre, or the concomitant self-aggrandizement which came from the title "Epic Poet".

Henri Bataille, as we have seen, after promising the reader a sober and measured realism in the poems of Henri D<sup>e</sup>rieux swells with enthusiasm at the glorious mission of the poet who, alone, is able to uncover the 'divine reality' of human sacrifice in war.

"Mais par exemple - de quel emoi le poète pourra frémir s'il étend ses mains vers la douleur terrestre. Il sentira son âme se gonfler d'autres sanglots que de simples sanglots de gloire - et s'il découvre une beauté magique, divine à ces tragédies, c'est uniquement celle qui se dégage du sacrifice merveilleux que l'homme fait sans répit de son bonheur et de sa vie."

(But for instance - how the poet will shudder and be moved if he but stretch out his hands to earthly pain. He will feel his soul swell with sobs of a different kind from the simple sobs of glory - and if he discovers a magical, even divine beauty in these tragedies, it will be solely that which comes from the marvellous and enduring human sacrifice of happiness and life.)

Similarly, the editor of Soldier Poets, Songs of the Fighting Men, after characterizing the 'new' war poetry as "this new verse - vivid,

definite, concentrated and not a mechanical echo (which leaves behind) the maudlin and the mock-heroic (...) to the neurotic civilian", then refers to the soldier-poets as "(Archangel) Michaels and Rolands of civilization who face battle with a song" (39). This editorial comment was written after the horrors of the Somme and is an example of what Silkin terms the "ruthless idealism" which manifested itself in a wilful and blind refusal to face up to the realities of war. The 'stiff upper lip' attitude found its natural expression in high diction because, as Paul Fussell reminds us, it was "the language which two generations of readers had been accustomed to associate with the quiet action of personal control and Christian self-abnegation, as well as with more violent actions of aggression and defence."

Yet the manful acceptance of duty could often as not turn into a literary pose and become the flippant bravado of one poet fishing for the approval of another. Thus Apollinaire writes, in 1918, with incredible swagger to Marinetti, congratulating him on having found a new source of stimuli for his (presumably) great innovative genius:

"Je te félicite de connaître et de goûter ainsi tour à tour toutes les sensations les plus nouvelles de cette grande et puissante guerre" (Lettre à Marinetti, le 12.8.1918)

(Congratulations on being able to know and to taste one at a time in this way all the most novel sensations of this great and powerful war.)

An example of where "the language of self-abnegation" is exploited simply for sentimental effect and becomes pure literary pose, is to be found in the poem Boy by Robert Nichols (40)

"The soldier is the Martyr of a nation

(...)

Lonely he is : he has nor friend nor lover,

Sith in his body he is dedicate ...

His comrades only share his life, or offer

Their further deeds to one more heart oblate.

Dying, his mangled body, to inter it

He doth bequeath him into comrades' hands;

His soul he renders to some Captain Spirit

That knows, admires, pities and understands ! "

This appeal to sentimental religiosity, to public-school ethics with its undertones of homosexual eroticism, is a monument to the falsity (41) of sentimental literature in general. The poem shares in part with most other patriotic offerings of its kind, the exploitation to exaggerated effect of nearly every possible refinement of feeling (42) from a sense of patriotic or religious duty, to appeals to honour, admiration and pity and even to a love of nature, the whole usually spiced with oblique eroticism. One final example of even grosser bathetic sentimentality than the Nichols poem is to be found in an offering by the previously mentioned Leon Lahovary, entitled Xavier de Curières de Castelnau (43) which has as its theme the death of a noble youth. Over his body preside "the weeping shade of the homeland" and "the silent ghost" of youth which throws flowers on his shroud. The solemn rhythms of the ubiquitous Cornelian diction are intended to underline the sublimity of this sacrifice of the "grace of youth" and the "sweetness of life". Yet the same rhythms contain coy allusions to the loss of marital bliss - "chastes amours, bonheurs permis" and the poet deliberates more fully on his erotic fancies in the final stanza, where he pictures the young man's

beloved sacrificing her tender years to the asceticism of convent life.

"Peut-être qu'une belle et noble jeune fille  
En larmes aujourd'hui, songe au cloître à jamais  
Découvre que pour elle il n'est plus de famille  
Dit en pleurant; "c'est lui, c'est lui seul que j'aimais!"

(Perhaps a beautiful and noble girl, today in tears, is thinking of convent life forever and, realizing that she has now no other family, says, weeping "It is him, him alone I loved")  
Nothing could, of course, be more removed from reality. That the public could have accepted this image is indicative, not perhaps only of their low critical standards, but also of the highly 'literary' temper of the age in general (44).

Jean Guehenno in his book La Mort des Autres (45) illustrates this peculiar prevalence of 'literariness' in the anecdote of a father, who, in real life, when informed of his son's death, reacted by reciting classical alexandrines on the theme of Man's 'common fate'.

"J'ai connu tel poète, dans le plein de son âge, ayant appris la mort du fils - qui entra en transe et gémit en alexandrins sur 'le sort vulgaire'."

How much such attitudes can be held responsible for the thousands of young deaths, is a moot point raised in Owen's poem The Parade of the Old Men and the Young (46). Certainly, the extreme right-wing ideology of the Action Française steeped in the dogma of Church and Army, was significant in influencing a young generation of "insatiable idealists, disillusioned with the decadence of a worn-out century" ('avide d'idéal et lasse du décadentisme du siècle finissant'). Thus many of the French youth of 1914 were inculcated with a desire for revenge for defeat in a war which had occurred before they were born, and, fired with borrowed enthusiasms, they went to a distinctly

unheroic death with the poetic refrain on their lips :

"Demain sur nos tombeaux

Les Blés seront plus beaux" (47)

(Tomorrow the corn will grow more beautiful on our graves.)

Their reward, they had been lead to believe was

"de fiers rubans de sang à leur sein épinglés" (48)

(proud ribbons of blood pinned to their chests)

It took a poet with the power of the English Owen to shatter this particular heroic cliché -

"My glorious ribbons ? - Ripped from my own back

In scarlet shreds. (That's for your poetry book.)" (49)

Yet the horrific gap between word and reality which Owen is pointing out here, was not immediately recognized even by those who were later to become the more significant poets of the war. Owen's own immediate poetic response, for example,

"O meet it is and passing sweet

To live in peace with others

But sweeter still and far more meet

To die in war for brothers "

is a good illustration of how conventional patriotism found instinctive expression in empty poeticisms ('passing') and intolerably facile rhythm and rhyme. The effect is like melting butter and with as little substance. Siegfried Sassoon, one of the major satirical poets to emerge from the war, was similarly side-tracked by the early enthusiasms. In 1915 he was still talking of the "woeful crimson of men slain" and was told by Robert Graves in his 'old soldier' manner that he would soon change his tune. Despite later experience in the trenches

and his own deeply personal pacifist convictions, Sassoon was still to feel the pull of what J.H. Johnston refers to as "the epic response" (50) which he (Sassoon) felt would give his art a broader perspective with increased aesthetic distance. In his autobiography Siegfried's Journey, Sassoon remarks of his feelings as late as July 1918 - "In spite of my hatred of war and 'Empery's insatiate lust of power', there was an awful attraction in its hold over my mind, which since childhood has shown a tendency towards tragic emotions about human existence" (51).

Here, the conflicting role of the soldier-poet makes itself felt in the tension between the demands of experience and the restless need for a grander poetic vision.<sup>4</sup> The work of many poets of the period 1914 - 15 shows a similar tension between the literary attitudes and style of pre-war society and the recognition that a new language was needed to deal with the new experience (see p. 20). It was difficult, particularly for those maturer poets, to reject what they had always been taught to admire. Indeed, the 'Epic' as a genre in poetry has enjoyed high status among critics well past the half-century, despite the fact that the moral and social assumptions on which it is based are no longer held as valid. Karl August Horst, a German literary critic writing in 1964 was, however, showing a more cautious approach to the Epic, while in England at the same time J.H. Johnston was praising the balance and vision of the heroic narrative form in the same vein as C.M. Bowra's scholarly exegesis of the genre (51a). Horst's comment may now seem common-place :

"If we honour a poet by designating his work as an Epic, it is always intended as praise. The possibility that an epic poet might not necessarily be a great poet is simply not considered." (52)



Certain aspects, synonymous with the much-praised virtues of the Epic Genre, such as, for instance 'broadness' and 'independence' of vision, 'balance' and 'harmony', are qualities which modern critics still look for in a poet.

Indeed, the preoccupation of some critics with the concept of 'wholeness' can be tantamount to an obsession. Norma Rinsler, for example, in her article on the War Poetry of Apollinaire (53) insists that he has achieved here a re-creation of life "in all its truth" and that he has produced "harmonies of life and death" and other like "mysterious fusions". Giedion-Welcker (54), a German critic speaking of the same poet, refers to his "generous and universal validity" (jene grosszügige Allgemeingültigkeit). It is clearly impossible to expect such wide demands to be fulfilled so unequivocally by any one poet. Nevertheless, despite the formal debate about the validity of the epic genre which has led to some excellent critical argument, its political and social relevance (54a) during the war years must not be overlooked. As a bastion of the Establishment, its weighty rhythms and elevated sentiments gave a sense of solidity and confidence (55), while its seeming imperviousness to the destructiveness of change provided a major source of consolation at a time when the very foundations of society seemed threatened with collapse (56). For those burdened with a sense of impending doom, the resounding phrases of classical poetry were a haven of order in the midst of chaos. This conserving, this ordering function was, and perhaps still is, the main strength of the Epic; as J.H. Johnston convincingly emphasizes, it "both orders and stabilizes the events of the present and unites them with a significant historical continuity" (57). The Epic genre can, however, only function successfully within a particularly stable view of the inherent continuity and purposefulness of history and tradition. The pre-war society offered just the environment where

"the meanings of abstractions seemed permanent and reliable". Yet it was inevitable that this idea of a "seamless, purposeful history (with) a coherent stream of time running from past through present to future" (58) should be radically undermined by the physical, social, political and psychological upheaval that constitutes war (58a).

The change that came primarily in a shift of moral attitudes, soon extended to the way in which language itself was used to express that change. In face of the new realities, poets came to realize that the task of any valid poetry about the war was to reveal the new relationships between word and event, between subjective and objective worlds. This is how Franz Pfemfert perceived the new direction in which war poetry had to go.

"eine Literatur, die sich den Krieg zum Gegenstand wählt, muss, um ihn zu bekämpfen, Dimensionen der Aussage eröffnen, die sich der neuen Qualität des Verhältnisses von Subjekt und Objekt amessen, wie es die Kriegswirklichkeit aus sich entliess!"

(a literature, which choses war as its object, must, in order to combat (this war), open up dimensions of statement which are suited to the new quality of the relationship between subject and object, which has come out of the reality of war) (59).

The "new quality of the relationship between subject and object", meant, of course, the change in the poet's perception of the reality of war. How a poet recorded this reality and to what extent his poetry recaptured the 'truth' of the war, became an increasingly important condition of his acceptance by the public. The 'documentary' facts of the war, or at least, those conceived as such by the public, became of overriding importance, because they constituted an immediately verifiable "factual correlative of which millions were intensely aware" (60). Those who wrote about the war were perforce much preoccupied

with persuading the public of the authenticity of their accounts. Thus, for instance, Henri Malherbe, author of La Flamme au Poing (1917) (61), which knew considerable success at the time of publishing in 1917, is at pains to impress on his readers how he strove to improve on Truth itself in order to make it (la vérité) "plus impérative et plus accessible". Again, Charles Tardieu, author of Sous la Pluie de Fer (1917) (62) places the same importance on accuracy. For him the mark of value of a piece of war literature lay in the degree of acceptance it gained from a 'real' soldier.

"Ma plus douce récompense serait qu'un vrai poilu, ouvrant par hasard ce livre, laissât échapper, en le refermant ces simples mots : 'C'est bien ça' ."

(My sweetest reward would be that a 'real soldier' opening by chance this book, should close it again with the words 'Yes, that's just how it was.')

It was a natural critical procedure to regard the degree of historical accuracy of a particular author or poet as being closely indicative of his general literary merit. This is, after all, the force of Owen's ambiguous maxim "True poets must be truthful". A second moral dimension was also indissolubly linked with the concept of truth in any assessment of a poet's work. For a poet or writer to ignore the realities of war was to put himself in the position where he could be accused of being not only inhuman but also a bad poet (63). The war poet is therefore unusually open to moral as well as aesthetic criticism (although critics such as J.H. Johnston (64) and Roger Little (65) would deny the relevance of moral judgement) as J.G. Clark (66) quite clearly reminds us :-

"C'est finalement là que le poète est le plus tenu à respecter la vérité historique, car la postérité le jugera en premier lieu sur sa lucidité morale."

(It's ultimately for this reason that the poet is constrained to respect historical truth, for it will be first and foremost on the lucidity of his moral viewpoint that posterity will judge him.)

The question of truth, morality and art and their interdependence is a legitimate aesthetic problem (67) which will continue to occupy particularly those who concern themselves with war literature. Patrick Bridgewater, in German Poetry of the First World War, discusses just this problem which he considers central to the failure of German nationalist war poetry as art. Lack of reference to reality, failure to register any appreciation of the individual, human problems brought by war (67a), impersonality and a lack of deep and genuine emotion are the major weaknesses which he attributes to the German poetry of this period, whether it be the product of the Christian idealists, the socialist visionaries or the Pan German mystics. "The chauvinist variety of war poetry" he concludes very persuasively, "is a denial of the individual and therefore of art." (68)

.....

#### Poetry of Transition.

Yeats's opinion that "people much occupied with morality always lose heroic ecstasy" is true in a positive sense he did not intend, when applied to the development of war poetry from 1915-16 onwards. As we have seen, the heroic clichés of an outmoded poetic convention were increasingly rejected, as the distinctly unheroic nature of war came to be recognized. The tone of the later war poetry became inevitably more solemn but it was not any easy task for the poet to find an appropriate mode of expression for the new realities, as the following examples testify.

"O horrible. How can the pen describe  
The ghastliness of that which meets the eye  
The devastation and the frightfulness?" (69)

"Oh! le bruit terrible que mène la guerre parmi  
le monde et autour de nous! Oh! le bruit terrible  
de la guerre !  
(O the terrible noise that war makes in the world and around  
us! O the terrible noise!) (70)

"Hier ist ein Ding.  
Dort ist ein Ding.  
Etwas sieht so aus.  
Etwas sieht anders aus."  
(Here is a thing/ There is a thing.  
Something looks like this/ Something looks different.) (71)

While Lichtenstein's approach is more experimental and Eluard's decidedly lackadaisical, the first poem, written by an English soldier poet of minor talent illustrates aptly the inability of conventional poetic language to adapt to circumstance. After an expression of loathing reminiscent of Shakespearean tragedy, followed by a few polysyllabic reiterations of the same idea, the poet tries a more exact interpretation of the reality before him.

" It seems as if some superhuman force  
Vast and malevolent had passed this way  
Tormented by the furies till its hate  
Became insensate and demoniac."

Yet instead of bringing the experience closer to the reader, which is

presumably the intent of the poem, the accumulation of latinized adjectives serves only to emphasize further the loss of descriptive authority of classical imagery. A mythical interpretation of mass technological destruction is no longer viable. In this poem there is a distinct tension between the attempts of the poet to make the truth more 'imperative' and 'direct' and the non-compliance of vague 'poetical' modes of expression. A similar tension (between the two modes of perception) is apparent in the patriotic poems of Apollinaire (see, for example, : Chant de l'Honneur ) where a conscious dissatisfaction with the limitations of conventional poetry (in this case the classical alexandrine) on the part of the poet leads to the introduction of certain innovative semi-syntactical structures - "je chante un chant pur le prélude des chants", which militate against the smooth flow of the traditional metre.

These tensions , that is, between the more 'modern, direct' style and the 'poeticism' of conventional poetry are detected in the English war poets such as Graves and Blunden by Michael Hamburger, who characterizes a certain unevenness of style as the "conflict between tendencies towards the pre-war nature idyll or faery romanticism and the new starkness" (72). Certainly the lighter side of Georgian poetical fancy is to be seen in Robert Graves' quaint anthology Fairies and Fusiliers whose title involves a similar pun to that of Apollinaire's 'L'Art et L'Artilleur'. The arresting association of the two opposite worlds of art and war in the two titles, makes an interesting link between the related ideas of tradition and experiment, fantasy and realism, all of which are themes treated in the works of Graves and Apollinaire. Whereas Graves is content with the rather gimmicky impact of stark contrast between the two styles - for instance, his poems alternate

between the quiet pastel pastoralism of Under this loop of honeysuckle and the brutal colour of To a Dead Boche (perhaps one of the most gruesomely realistic of any war poem written) Apollinaire's poetry hovers less distinctly between the reality of the observable world and fantasy (73). His moral view of the war did not lead him to such an absolute polarization of themes as those found in English poetry, neither to the particular English embrace of drastic realism. And perhaps because of his lack of humanitarian reaction, (but see Chp. 4 on this point) his style does not display the kind of development away from pre-war poeticism as does the poetry of Owen and Sassoon. He has nothing new to say and did not need to adapt his style to say it. Furthermore, his experimentation with new forms had long predated the outbreak of war and by 1918 he had gone a long way to solving, in his own independent fashion, the old quarrel between tradition and innovation - "la longue querelle de la tradition et de l'innovation" (74). The solution of this particular problem still faced Owen, Sassoon and Rosenberg when they begin writing their real poetry of the war.

.....

(1) For the rift between soldier and civilian see, for example, Eric Maria Remarque, Im Westen Nichts Neues (Propylaen-Verlag, Berlin 1929, p.163 ff) which describes Paul Bäumer's feelings of isolation when he returns from the front line for a short spell of leave. "Ich finde mich hier nicht mehr zurecht, es ist eine fremde Welt" (I don't feel right here anymore, it's an alien world).

See also Jean Guhenno, La Mort des Autres (ed. Bernard Grasset, Paris 1968, p.88 ff) - "Il y a deux guerres (...) celle qu'on fait et celle qu'on dit" (Alain).

Sassoon's poem Blighters (Selected Poems, p.17) is a bitter indictment of civilian ignorance and complacency and of the material comfort enjoyed by war-profiteers. Apollinaire (Lettre à Lou, le 26 avril, 1915) is equally critical of the easy civilian life in Paris:-

"Vue de loin la vie que tu mènes a quelque chose d'insane. Pendant que nous trimons ici et attrapons peut-être la crève, on bamboche à Paris!" (Seen from a distance the life you lead seems almost insane. While we are working like blacks here and perhaps even getting killed, it's just one long orgy in Paris).

See also Marc Ferro, La Grande Guerre 1914-18 (Collection Idées, 1969 p.256 ff and p.271 ff) on the social conflicts arising from the separation of the French nation into combatants and non-combatants.

"La prolongation de la guerre faisait surgir des tensions inconnues. Une société se transformait?"

(The continuation of the war brought unknown tensions to the surface. Was this a society in the process of change?).

(2) Jon Silkin, Out of Battle (Oxford Univ. Press, 1978 p.155)

(3) D.S.R. Welland, Wilfred Owen: A critical Study (Chatto and Windus, London, 1978, p.29)

Julius Bab, in Der deutsche Krieg im Deutschen Gedicht (Verlag Morawe und Schesselt, Berlin, 1914, Vorwort, p.3) refers, perhaps a little



prematurely, to the greater realism and authenticity of the 'new' kind of German war poetry, and rejoices in its "firm, blessedly new and natural form". - "die feste, beglückend neue und selbstverständliche Form."

(3b) The violent language of Futurism and Vorticism was regarded as a fringe aberration by many of the Georgians and Marinetti himself was considered a naive windbag. The iconoclastic, apoplectic nature of the Futurist style rang hollow in face of the real thing. (See Bergonzi, Introduction. See also Chapter 1, Footnote 50.)

(4) Rudolf Binding in Dies war das Mass (Rutten and Loening Verlag, 1940) questioned the ability of poetry to assimilate the theme of war at all (see, Chp. 1 p. 1ff)

"Durch grosser Kriege Irtsaal bin ich gegangen

Alle Dichter hatten ihr Recht verloren.

Anderes Mass der Dinge wurde geboren."

(I have been through the chaos of great wars,

All poets had lost their sway

A new measure of things was born.)

In order to express this new order, he saw that impossibly radical changes would have to be brought about not only in the language of poetry, but in language itself - "To do justice to this other world (of war) a new speech would have to be born". (A Fatalist at War, trans. Ian F.D. Marrow, quoted in Arthur E. Lane, An Adequate Response, p. 52) This, of course, is an extreme view of the ineffability of experience.

(5) These movements, particularly in England and France, stemmed from literary disillusion and much of the pre-war poetry represented a youthful rebellion against existing conventions such as Romanticism (see, for example, Brooke's 'sea-sick' poem), Academism (see Apollinaire's article on 'Les Pompiers' in Les Peintres Cubistes) and the Representational in art (see Lichtenstein's famous 'surreal' images in Die Dämmerung) (There were of course social overtones to the revolt - for example, the Imagists' dislike of 'Victorianism'; the utopianism, anti-militarism and anti-authoritarianism of some of the younger Expressionists, the bohemianism of poets like Alfred Jarry and the desire of Apollinaire to 'épater la

bourgeoisie'). Yet inspite of their aggressive, even anarchistic, tendencies (see such reviews as Blast, La Revue Blanche, die Aktion; see also Roger Shattuck, The Banquet Years, (p.20 ff), their energetic idealism was largely kept within the sphere of an apolitical aesthetic criticism (see Uwe Wandrey, p.8) and manifested itself in a rejection of existing poetic forms (see Johannes R. Becher, Die Dämmerung in Lyrik des expressionistischen Jahrzehnts, p.102)

"Der Dichter meidet strahlende Akkorde

Er stösst durch Tuben, peitscht die Trommel schrill

Er reißt das Volk auf mit gehackten Sätzen."

(The poet avoids radiant harmonies

He blasts on the tubes, bangs shrilly on the drum

He splits the nation open with his hacked up phrases.)

Ezra Pound in a less extreme, but equally vehement manner, criticizes the work of contemporary pre-war poets:

"Good God! Isn't there one of them that can write natural speech without copying clichés out of every poet still in the public libraries? God knows, I wallowed in archaisms in my vealish years, but these imbeciles don't even take the trouble to get archaisms which might be silly and picturesque, but they get phrases out of just the stupidest and worst-dressed periods." (quoted in Ross, The Georgian Revolt, p.48)

The destructive iconoclasm of the Futurist manifestoes (Feb. 1909 - 1918) and their English counterparts in Blast (June 1914, July 1915, ed. Wyndham Lewis) - reflected also in Apollinaire's rather aggressive article on the destructive/re-creative powers of Art in La Phalange (Aug. 1908) and his concept of a poetry at this time which could 'make and unmake' the universe ('les paroles qui forment et defont l'univers', Oe. P. p.84) (See Chp. 4 p.193) was largely trivialized by the actual destructive capacity of war itself. The realization of the extent of the devastation

brought with it a disillusion far profounder than anything hitherto (cf. Vera Brittain, Testament of Youth, Victor Gollancz, London, 1935 p.170 ff).

See also Ezra Pound, E.P. Ode pour l'Election de Son Sepulchre in Selected Poems (ed. T.S. Eliot, Faber, London, Reprint 1973 pp. 173-6) for an account of the progress of the poet's disillusion. It is this disillusion which most critics have seen as the major but not always positive motivation of the later literature of the war. See, for instance, J.P. Stern's rather unfair view of pacifist poetry as failed products of a "wistful humanism" in (Ernst Jünger, A Writer of our Time, Studies in Modern European Literature and Thought, Bowes and Bowes, Cambridge, 1953, p.21). Similarly, Owen's poetry has been referred to as the result of a 'disappointed' humanism' (quoted in Silkin, Out of Battle, op.cit.) Henri Bataille, in En ces Tours Déchirants (see below) also speaks of the war as having surprised a generation of intellectuals in the midst of a humanitarian dream - "L'appel aux armes nous a surpris en plein rêve humanitaire, en plein idéal de progrès."

For the effect of this disillusionment in the art and life of the post-war generation see Paul Valéry, La Crise de l'Esprit (1919), which presents the European intellectual as a Hamlet of the modern Age. See also Robert Wohl, Generation of 1914, Introduction.

(6) Paul Fussell, The Great War and Modern Memory (Oxford University Press, 1979, p.22).

(7) See for instance Reinhard Olt, Krieg und Sprache: Untersuchungen zu deutschen Soldatenliedern des Ersten Weltkriegs. (Wilhelm Schmitz Verlag in Giessen, 1981, p.197)

"Insofern stellt der gesamte Vorgang eine Flucht aus dem realen Dasein in eine Scheinwelt dar, die es ermöglicht, sich über die grauenvollen Eindrücke hinwegzusetzen und sie letztlich zu verdrängen."

(Thus the whole procedure (of the soldiers' songs) represented a flight from real existence into a world of illusions, which made it possible to cope with the horrifying impressions of war and finally to suppress them completely).

See also Uwe Wandrey, op.cit. p.62 ff, of the Expressionist war poets:-

"Krieg wird in seiner realen Erfahrung von den meisten Autoren allgemein abgelehnt."

(War, as it was experienced in real life, was generally denied by the greater part of writers).

As a typical example of the kind of outrageous euphemisms for war churned out by patriotic poets, he quotes (p.420) a passage from the worker-poet, Engelke, which is as follows:-

"Verfinsternd qualmerndes Schicksalgewitter  
Und mächtiges Mähen des Todes."

(Looming black vapours of the storm of Destiny  
and Death's powerful reaping)

Almost exactly parallel images abound in the corresponding French (cf. Eléonor Daubrée) and English poetry.

(8) Soldier Poets, Songs of the Fighting Men, (Erskine Macdonald, London, 1916, p.45).

(10) Henri Dérioux, En ces jours déchirants (Payot et Cie, Paris, 1916, p.28).

(11) Eléonor Daubrée, A Tous Nos Morts Sublimes (Jouve, Paris, 1915, p.35)

(12) See Elzbieta Grabska, <sup>1</sup>Les Poèmes de Guerre d'Apollinaire et L'Imagerie Populaire, in Que Vlo-ve?, Juillet/Oct, 1979, p.2.

"La majorité des mémoires nés sous les lignes de front, témoignages iconiques ou verbaux et leurs échos diffusés par la presse, utilisent toutes sortes de clichés et de stéréotypes."

(The majority of the 'memoirs' coming from the front lines, whether they be iconographic or verbal records and echoes thereof, broadcast

through the press, all use every possible kind of cliché and stereotype)

(13) Henri Bataille, En ces jours déchirants, (op.cit., Preface, p.9).

(14) The Egoist (Dec. 1914) produced what is probably one of the earliest satirical poems to come out of the war.

"At the sound of the drum

O Tommy, they've all begun to strum

(...)

And they give you a pain in your tumty-tum

At the sound of the drum, of the drum, drum, drum."

(Quoted in Ross, The Georgian Revolt, p.164)

Robert Nichols was still publishing in June 1917 poems which were not far removed in flavour from such parodies, for example - Out of Trenches : The Barn Twilight in Ardours and Endurances, p.30.

"In the raftered barn we lie

(...)

'Gi'us a tune mate' 'well, wot say ?'

'Swipe 'The Policeman's 'Oliday'...'

'Tiddle - iddle - um - tum,

Tum - TUM'.

(15) The 'war' poems of Alfred Henschke, (alias Klabund), for example, were popular for their catchy folk-song ~~myths~~ **which a Leipzig literary** paper (Literarisches Zentralblatt, Leipzig) reviewed as being "almost like the strains of a Goethian choral society" ("In beinahe goetheschem Liedertafeltöne"). His poem Siegeslied (Song of Victory) was praised by the same editorial for its "solemn and passionate joyfulness".

Klabund's war anthology Dragoner und Husaren was mostly written before the war. Klabund himself was never fit enough to see active service.

Léon Riegel in Guerre et Littérature, (p.86) refers to the popularity of the epic-heroic style in French patriotic poetry in the early years of the war. "La conception de la guerre comme une épopée triomphale

semble avoir eu un cours élevé à l'époque. Le style (était) proche de celui de la Chanson de Geste".

(The idea of the war as a triumphant epic seems to have had a great popularity at that time. The style was near to that in the medieval verse-chronicle ).

This 'romantic' approach to war derived in part from the application of literature to war. cf. E.J. Dent, in The Cambridge Magazine quoted in A.E. Lane, An Adequate Response, p.73.

"No Englishman can ever quite eradicate the national tendency to romanticism, just as there is, according to Romain Rolland, an essential Massenet that slumbers in the heart of every true Frenchman. It was the first shock of the moment that the romanticism Sassoon so hated came uppermost".

(16) Frank Swinnerton, Background with Chorus, quoted in R.H. Ross, p.163. See also Frank Swinnerton, The Georgian Literary Scene, (Dent and Sons, London, 1938, p.204).

(17) Léon Lahovary, La Jonchée, Poèmes de l'Année Glorieuse 1914-15, (ed. Perrin, 1916, Avant-Propos, p.xxv).

(18) Julius Bab, Die deutsche Revolutionslyrik (Verlag Strache, Wien und Leipzig, 1919, Einführung, p.15)

(19) R.H. Ross, The Georgian Revolt, Rise and Fall of a Poetic Ideal 1910-22 (Southern Illinois University Press, 1967, p.165).

(20) Patrick Bridgewater in European Studies Review (Vol. 1 No. 2 1971, p.149)

(21) Léon Lahovary, op. cit. p.xiv.

(22) The reviewer is talking of the later English poetry of Owen, Sassoon, Rosenberg, etc. The German poetry, remained on the whole fixed in an abstract poetic style. (See Uwe Wandrey, Das Motiv des Krieges in der Expressionistischen Lyrik, Footnote 7 above) although the unheroic nature of war was all too apparent, even to non-combatants,

as the civilian poet Klabund in a poem Die Ballade des Vergessens in Gesammelte Gedichte (Phaidon-Verlag, Wien, 1930, p.270) clearly reminded his readers :

" Einst war der Krieg noch ritterlich

(.....)

Einst galt noch im Kampfe Kopf gegen Kopf

Heute drückt der Chemiker auf den Knopf

Und der Held ist vergessen, vergessen.

(Once war was chivalrous, once it was head to head in battle

Today the chemist presses the button and the hero is forgotten,  
quite forgotten)

(23) Henri Bataille, in En ces Jours Déchirants, op. cit. (Introduction p.13).

"La terrible monotonie quotidienne de la guerre moderne fait son oeuvre et ensevelit injustement la splendeur d'un héroïsme obscur, sans cesse renouvelé (...) Et puis, à l'apparition d'un poète épique, il y a un obstacle plus considérable encore. C'est que cette guerre, (..) n'est pour nous qu'une guerre de défense, une guerre haïe de l'esprit, méprisée du coeur"

(The terrible daily monotony of modern warfare takes its toll and unjustly buries the splendour of obscure, but endlessly renewed heroic acts (...) And furthermore, there is even a greater obstacle to the appearance of a war-time epic poet, namely, that this war is for us only a war of defence, a war hated by the intellect and despised by the heart).

(24) Henri Dérieux, op.cit. p.50.

(25) Emile Villard, Guerre et Poésie 1914-18 (La Baconnière, Neuchâtel, 1949).

(26) Cf. His publication of L'Antitradition Futuriste (29 June 1913).  
written with the approval of Marinetti, violent both in form and  
content, it gave him the reputation for belonging to a lunatic fringe  
of anarchists.

(27). Georges Duhamel, in a rather ungenerous article, Les Poètes et  
le Poésie (Mercure de France MCMXIV p.315 ff) placed him squarely among  
the 'fantaisiste' poets, which was not surprising as he had already  
appeared in Vers et Prose (Dec. 1913) under that title. Duhamel, how-  
ever, later retracted his harsher observations.

(28) Roger Little, Guillaume Apollinaire, (Athlone French Poets, 1976)

(29) Oe.P p.304.

(30) In, for instance, the poem 2<sup>e</sup> Canonnier Conducteur, Oe.P., p.214  
(appeared March 1915). Of this poem he writes to Madeleine, le 18 Juillet  
1915 - (T.S.Gallimard, 1952, p.64)

"(le poème) ne laissait aucun doute sur mes sentiments anti-boches,  
sentiments qui n'étaient pas nouveaux chez moi".

((the poem) left no doubt as to my anti-boche feelings, feelings  
moreover which were not new to me).

(31) For instance, he wrote in Clio (Gallimard, 1932, p,218)

"Ce qu'il y a peut-être de plus grand dans le monde: d'être tranché  
dans sa fleur, de périr inachevé; de mourir jeune dans un combat militaire".

(32) Edmund Gosse in Some Soldier Poets in The Edinburgh Review (Oct.  
1917 pp.296-316) likens Brooke in reputation to the French Charles Péguy  
- "(Brooke) is to English sentiment what Charles Péguy is to France,  
an oriflamme of the chivalry of his country".

(33) Geoffrey Matthews in Stand (Vol. IV, No.3) speaks of such poems  
which "celebrate the export of English goods". (quoted in Silkin,  
Out of Battle, op.cit., p.67).

(34) Walter Flex, Gesammelte Werke (Erster Band, Beck'sche Verlag,  
München, no date, Einleitung).



(35) See, for example, Léon Lahovary, op.cit., Introduction.

"Me pardonnera-t-on aussi d'avoir un peu trop souvent peut-être décrit et chanté de préférence dans ces poèmes, le côté sentimental et idyllique de la guerre? J'ose l'espérer" (And will I be pardoned my preference for having perhaps too often described and sung the sentimental and idyllic side of war in these poems? I dare hope so).

(36) cf. Ross, op.cit. p.163, "only a handful of poets and reviewers (of the less popular press perhaps?) were taken in by the deluge of patriotic verse which the war loosed upon England"

(37) Paul Fussell, op.cit. pp.22-3. Reinhard Olt, op.cit. p.196, comments on the same phenomenon which occurs in German Soldiers' Songs, which used classical conventions to describe death and generally followed the literary traditions of the 19th Century in their representation of the squalor and horror of war. This, despite the fact that these songs came from the section of the German army where one might most expect a down-to-earth realism:-

"Angesichts der veränderten Kampfbedingungen (...) ist der heutige Betrachter doch einigermaßen verblüfft, dass die sprachliche Verarbeitung des Grauens eines modernen Krieges in den Kriegsliedern nicht entsprechend bemerkbar ist. Die Euphemismen wie:-

Auf dem Rasen ruht so mancher Kamerad

Auf fremder Erde schlafen wir

Aus der tiefen Todeswunde entquoll der letzte Tropfen Blut.

(zeigen daß) die Symbolik und Metaphorik sich denn offenbar auch sehr stark an den Todesvorstellungen und-darstellungen, wie sie seit der Antike bekannt waren und im 19 Jhdt, im Gefolge der Befreiungskriege, in nahezu übertriebenem Maße zum Ausdruck kamen: Dulce et Decorum Est Pro Patria Mori."

(In view of the altered conditions of war, today's observer is somewhat astounded to see that the linguistic treatment of the horror of modern warfare is not correspondingly prominent in the war songs. Such euphemisms as:

In the green grass many a comrade rests

In foreign fields we sleep

From the deep death wound the last drop of blood sprang

show that the symbolic and metaphoric systems obviously deriving so strongly from the representations and imaginative recreations of death as known from Antiquity and in the 19th Century, in the wake of the war of independence, were revealed to an exaggerated degree in the phrase: "Dulce et Decorum Est Pro Patria Mori." )

(38) Oe.P. p.786 Poème Epistolaire - Ne Te Moque donc pas.

(39) Soldier Poets, Songs of the Fighting Men, op.cit. p.8.

Lahovary speaks of the soldier in almost exactly the same terms -

"Je lui donne la bravoure d'un César, d'un Roland sur le champ de bataille".

(40) Robert Nichols, Ardours and Endurances, p.48.

(41) Hermann Broch, Dichten und Erkennen, (Essays I) (Zürich, 1955, p.307) quoted in Literarischer Kitsch, (hrsg. Schulte-Sausse, Tübingen, 1979 p.56) speaks of the "evil nature" of sentimental literature, which he sees as deriving from a "general hyprocrisy about life, lost in a monstrous undergrowth of sentiment and cliché". (Der Kitsch ist das Böse im Wertsystem der Kunst. Es ist die Bösartigkeit einer allgemeinen Lebensheuchelei, verirrt in einem ungeheuren Gefühls-und Konvenügestrüpp.)

Schulte-Sasse denies any such intent to deceive on the part of the writers of sentimental literature because, he maintains, the conventions of its imaginary world are so transparent. ("Allein das Dickicht der Gefühle ist nicht dicht und die Konventionen sind so übersehbar, dass man sie kaum der Lüge zeihen kann"). However, the conventions were not so self-evident during the war, as the public had little first-hand knowledge of the real conditions against which they could measure the image of war presented in the literature. This is why sentimental cliché in the vein of "And danger and Death were as wine/ o mother of mine" made such acceptable fodder for the Home Front. In some ways, the

sentimental patriotic literature was a dimension of official censorship, for the poetry of Brooke, Nichols, Verhaeren and Lersch was as equally misleading as the media, whose responsibility it was to produce consolatory fictions.

Apollinaire wrote to Lou in April 1915 complaining of the falsity of newspaper reports - "les journaux ne reflètent nullement ce qu'est la guerre. C'est que les journalistes qui la décrivent ne la connaissent point ...". (The papers in no way give a correct image of the war, because the journalists who describe it, have no idea what it is all about). Military dispatches would also speak of "admirable dévouement, conduite héroïque, entrain, crânerie la plus absolue, endurance remarquable (etc)" (quoted in Riegel, p.172). The basic lie promulgated by the media and the patriotic literature - that death in battle was more glorious than life - ("la gloire fait la mort plus belle que la vie" Henri de Régnier) so thoroughly exposed in Owen's Dulce et Decorum Est must have been swallowed whole by thousands of gullible 18 year olds. (see Footnote 31 also). Only the very young could have been deceived by the blatant mendacity of such 'poems' as the following :-

Le Sourire des Blessés (1e 24 Oct. 1914)

"Ils sourient. Ils ont vu la mitraille et les balles  
(.....)

L'un a perdu sa jambe.- Il sourit, bénévole.

L'un eut un nerf coupé, l'autre un oeil crevé

(.....)

Tel est aveuglé et sourit!

Quel souvenir heureux hante donc son esprit?

Tel autre (...) semble chercher son petit doigt

Mais il n'a pas perdu la raison par surcroît!

(The Smiling Wounded

They smile. They have seen machine guns, seen bullets.

One has lost his leg. He smiles benevolently.

One has a cut tendon, the other a punctured eye.

Another is blind and smiles.

What happy memory haunts his mind?

And yet another looks in vain for his little finger

But he hasn't lost his senses into the bargain! ) (Lahovary op.cit.)

(42) The younger generation of English pre-war poets (Pound by character, Brooke in theory, Owen by experience) were sensitized against poetic romanticism in much the same way as the young futurists. (See also p. 47 Footnote 44.)

Thus, for example, Ezra Pound's scathing definition of sentimentality which so neatly applies to a great deal of the patriotic war-poetry:

"Everything absent, remote, requiring projection in the veiled weakness of the mind is sentimental".

and to the inaptness of its descriptions - for example - the following image of a nurse:

"Suave vision de blancheurs éthérées, (Sweet vision of airy whiteness

Pur symbole de la Charité, de la Foi" Pure symbol of Charity and of Faith

(43) Xavier de Curières de Castelnau, Leon Lahovary, op.cit. p.40.

(44) See Paul Fussell, op. cit. Chapter O what a Literary War!

(45) Jean Guehenno, op.cit. p.88.

(46) The Poems of Wilfred Owen, ed. Edmund Blunden, 1961, p.57.

(47) Quoted in Havard de la Montagne, Histoire de l'Action Française (Dumont, Paris, 1950, p.70). Nationalist and Catholic revivals in France, Expressionism in Germany shared a burning desire for heroism, brotherhood and self-sacrifice. See Frank Field, op.cit., p. 6 )

(48) Henri de Régnier, Les Sonnets de la Guerre (Emile-Paul, 1915, p.20).

(49) Wilfred Owen, A Terre, op.cit. p.87.

(50) For J.H. Johnston's view of the superiority of the epic versus the lyric form, see English Poetry of the 1st World War (Princeton University Press, 1964).

His views were soon held to be contentious (cf. The Listener, July 30 1964).

See also A.E. Lane's masterly refutation of Johnston's original thesis in An Adequate Response.

Patrick Bridgewater, op.cit. p.163 provides a quick summary of the controversy. See also Marcel Raymond, De Baudelaire au Surréalisme

(Libraire José Corté, 1947, p.207 *passim*) on the inadequacy of the epic genre as an expression of the theme of war.

For a general introduction to the epic genre see M. Bowra, Heroic Poetry.

(51) from Sassoon's Journey (New York 1946, p.104, quoted in Johnston *op.cit.*, p.109).

(51a) C.M. Bowra, Heroic Poetry, ( London, 1952) .

(52) Karl August Horst: Anatomy and Trends of 20th Century German Literature. (Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, München. Trans. Eliz. Thompson 1964, p.83).

(53) Norma Rinsler, The War Poems of Apollinaire, p.307. See also Chp. 3 Footnote.

(54) Giedion-Welcker, Die neue Realität bei Guillaume Apollinaire (Verlag Benteli, Bümpliz, 1945, p.36).

(55) There was great consolation to be derived from "reassuring catchwords" according to Frank Swinnerton (The Georgian Literary Scene, *op.cit.* p.257) "The elders hung upon the words of statesmen (and prophet-journalists such as Horatio Bottomley) who solemnly declared that "we shall not sheathe the sword" and thereby I am sure, created unconsciously a new test of sobriety".

Powerful words such as Clemenceau's magnificent ministerial address seemed to give a comfortable impression of control in face of the overwhelming menace of death and destruction!~

"Un jour, de Paris au plus humble village, des rafales d'acclamations accueilleront nos étendards vainqueurs, tordus dans le sang, dans les larmes, déchirés des obus, magnifique apparition de nos grands morts".

(Daudet: La Vie Orageuse de Clemenceau, p.207)

See also M. Bowra, Heroic Poetry, p.4, on the general influence of elevated diction and high sentiment.

"The admiration for great things lies deep in the human heart and comforts and cheers even when it does not stir to emulation".

(56) For an account of the disruption of life during the war, from

the point of view of a young woman undergraduate, see Vera Brittain, Testament of Youth (Victor Gollancz, London 1935).

For pre-war premonitions of collapse, See E.M. Forster, Howards End, (Penguin 1972 p.33 - "Panic and Emptiness! Panic and Emptiness! Even the flaming ramparts of the world might fall").

Many of the young Expressionist Poets tended to use imagery of twisted and toppling buildings. Alfred Lichtenstein's poetry expressed this new concern with modern industrial civilization, which to many seemed on the brink of destruction - "Possessed, you only needed the slightest wind to hear the world's whole structure cracking". (quoted in J.W.M. Willett, Expressionism p.89)

cf. Punkt in (Lyrik des expressionistischen Jahrhunderts, p.93) "Das Herz ist wie ein Sack. / Das Blut erfriert. / Die Welt fällt um. / Die Augen stürzen ein." (My heart is like a collapsed sack. My blood is freezing to death. The world is toppling. My eyes are caving in).

(57) J.H. Johnston, op.cit., p.13.

(58) Paul Fussell, op.cit., p.21.

(58a) See Frank Field, op.cit., pp.6-7, on the decline of European Liberalism, Humanitarianism, Internationalism, Rationalism and 19th Century ideas on Progress and Science.

(59) Franz Pfemfert, Die Aktion Lyrik, (1916) Intro<sup>o</sup>.

(60) Holger Klein, The First World War in Fiction (Macmillan, 1976, p.4)

(61) Henri Malherbe, La Flamme au Poing (Albin Michel, Paris, 1917, Avant-propos).

(62) Charles Tardieu, Sous la pluie de fer, Premiers moments de la guerre des tranchées, (Alfred Capus, Paris, 1917, Avant-Propos)

(63) Apollinaire's war poetry has been consistently criticized for being 'immoral' and 'inhuman' and therefore bad. See for example, Aragon, Beautés de la Guerre et leurs Reflets dans la Littérature

"Il manque vraiment la voix humaine et ainsi le comportement des vrais poètes devant la guerre"

(He is totally lacking humanity and therefore does not behave as a real poet should in face of war;

It is difficult to refute that where, for example, Owen's pursuit of truth came from a moral instinct, central to his compassionate vision, Apollinaire's attitude to war seems cynical, abstracted and even perverse.

The French writer Giraudoux has been, for much the same reasons as Apollinaire, criticized for his apparent lack of moral involvement in his novel Lectures pour Une Ombre (1918) (See Albert Schinz, p.106) Schinz finds it remarkable that Giraudoux has been able to go through the experience of war without becoming "infuriated or mad or melancholy or sick with disgust or even heroic in the usual sense of the term, so that, while the book produces on the reader a sensation which is absolutely 'sui generis' and while it affords curious reading, it must be confessed that it is in no wise moving".

See also Debon, op.cit. p.126, for the adverse criticism of André Breton.

(64) J.H. Johnston, op.cit. p.388

"Unfortunately, the phrases 'war poetry' and the 'war novel' have come to connote literary efforts strenuously devoted to an exposure of the 'truth' of modern war, as if this truth were different from any other kind of truth".

(65) Roger Little, op.cit. p. 46-47.

(66) J.G. Clark, "La Poésie, La Politique, La Guerre" (La Revue des Lettres Modernes, No, 13, Minard, 1976, p.18)

(67) See Holger Klein, op.cit. p.5.

Truth "may have a useful role to play in criticism"

See also A.B. Lane, op.cit., p.144.

"There is no necessary contradiction between the aesthetic value of a poem and its ability to evoke a moral or emotional response".

(67a) See Chapter 3, p. 138ff.

(68) Patrick Bridgewater, op.cit.p.170.

(69) Song of the Marching Men, op.cit. p.8.

(70) Paul Eluard, Poésies 1913 - 1916, (Gallimard, 1971).

(71) Alfred Lichtenstein (killed at Vermandavillers Sept. 1914) in Gedichte und Geschichten, (ed. K. Lubasch, Vol I, Munich 1919).

(72) Michael Hamburger, The Truth of Poetry (Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1969, p.152).

(73) See the discussion of Le Palais du Tonnerre, Chapter 1, p. 26ff.

(74) Poème Lu au Mariage d'André Salmon. (O.P. p.83)



## CHAPTER 3

### POETRY OF PROTEST : AN ENGLISH PHENOMENON ?

Recurrent critical terms like "blistering realism", "bitter satire", "pity and anger" have by now well established the English War Poetry (1) as pacifist and humanitarian in its concern with the themes of individual suffering and the futility of war. It is this ethical aspect for which the work of the English poets was soon noted abroad (2) and which is undoubtably responsible for the continued validity of the poetry of Owen, Blunden and Sassoon.

On the other hand (as we have seen in Chp. 2, p. 65ff) neither the major poets of the war who wrote in the French language, such as Guillaume Apollinaire, the right wing Drieu la Rochelle, the Catholic poets Charles Péguy (2a) and Francis Jammes and the Belgian Emile Verhaeren, nor their German contemporaries Walter Flex, Heinrich Lersch and the combatant Expressionist poets concerned themselves with the primary reality of war (3); neither did their work evidence the kind of angry rejection so characteristic of the English.

The absence both of realism and of the element of protest in the continental poets seems to bring as an inevitable corollary almost total artistic failure (4). The reputation of French and German poetry has suffered badly as a result (5). The poet and critic Jon Silkin, for example, in his anthology First World War Poetry, points to the "variety of response in the English poetry of the period" compared to the section in translation. Indeed much of his choice of foreign poetry seems to fall somewhere between rhetoric and resignation as in Charles Vildrac's offering 'But the man who has tripped / Between death's legs and then Recovers himself and breathes again, / Can only laugh or only weep. He has not the Heart to mourn.' (p. 235)

It is difficult to find the sensuousness of language or tenderness of tone which are the characteristic strengths of Owen's poetry, except perhaps in the transient delicacy of the German Kurd Adler (6). Very rarely can one discover either in the French or German poetry the emotional depth which Owen at his best achieves (7), whether it be the powerful metaphysical imagery of Fragment; A Farewell conveying the "chilling vision of a doomed world" (Welland)

"I saw his round mouth's crimson deepen as it fell

(...)

And in his eyes

The cold stars lighting"

or the cruel simile

"Your slender attitude / Trembles not exquisite like limbs  
knife-skewed".

Sorley achieves a similar sharp fusion of poetic language and reality in his extended metaphor of the flower in Sonnet II (8), which departs from romanticism in the wryness of his tone.

"And your bright Promise, withered long and sped,  
Is touched, stirs, rises, opens and grows sweet  
And blossoms and is you, when you are dead".

Apollinaire on the other hand, adopts a deliberately aesthetic stance which derives from his determination to defend poetry, beauty and love, (See Chp. 4), whilst the German war lyric moves in a meta-reality of rhetorical fulmination or grotesque chiliastic visions. (For an extended discussion of the metaphor in war poetry see Chp. 4). On the whole, it is the English poets' avoidance of poetical attitude-inizing and the subsequent focus of their moral concern, so accurately defined in Owen's now much over-quoted statement 'The Poetry is in the Pity' which has assured them a lasting literary reputation (9). The unparalleled blend of didacticism and art, that element of compassion

which raises their poetry above mere polemic, is the chief quality which distinguishes the work of Owen, Sassoon, Sorley and Blunden from their fellow poets across the Channel.

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the nature of the later English poetic response to war, which can be roughly designated under the title "Poetry of Protest" and to examine the corresponding French and German attitude which in broad terms can be seen as one of resignation. A further section will attempt to explain against a political and social background the various reasons for the difference in attitudes, while Chapter 4 will aim at a purely technical analysis of the differences in style. While socio-historical analysis is an approach fraught with difficulty (10) some critics have pointed to a need for just such a discussion, as for instance D.S.R. Welland (11) whilst others have made a cursory attempt at relating the mood of the times to the individual work (12).

Arthur Marwick (13) notes in a discussion of the English artist Paul Nash "It says something about the different impact of the war on different countries and about the different reaction to the war, that the greatest number of direct statements in paint emanated from Britain and the least from Germany."

This chapter will attempt to account for and explain the "something" which had dictated such an astonishing difference of reaction to what is essentially the same historical experience (14).

.....

It is the sometimes harsh note of protest and accusation as in the poem Apologia Pro Poemate Meo (p.35) or The Chance (p.68) which may have led Yeats to refer to Owen in a letter to Lady Wellesley as the "revered Sandwich-board man of the revolution." (15) A kinder critic (16) in a rather overblown reference to Owen as "the Fiery-Tongued Elegist of a slaughtered generation" notes the anger with

approval, recognizing the sharpness of focus it gives to compassion, which could otherwise slide into sentimentality. Although it has been pointed out that the largest number of Owen's poems can be categorized under the heading of anger and satire and that this fact must consequently "refute the commonplace assertion that Owen was overwhelmingly the poet of compassion", (17) he did, undoubtedly, concern himself almost exclusively with the sufferings of the common soldier. Despite the fact that he was able to find some positive aspects to the war, (for example, the comradeship he describes in Apologia Pro Poemate Meo) on the whole he regards it as an unnecessary evil. The nature of Owen's protest was not as Yeats' appraisal of him may lead us to believe - that of a revolutionary pacifist. Although Sassoon took on a much more anti-military stance (18), Owen's plea for the ending of the war was less actively political. It is true to say that he possessed a very sensitive social conscience, but it was of a similar kind to that shared by Charles Sorley, who had vague aspirations of teaching at a Working Mens' College after Oxford. His "political recognition of the need for civilian agitation such as would help to bring a negotiated peace " ( Silkin p. 202 ) goes no further than a letter to his mother of Jan. 19, 1917, where he wrote: "the people of England needn't hope, they must agitate. But they are not yet agitated even". It was Sassoon who independently took the risk of running overtly against public opinion, even though he may have been rather callously used by the pacifist intellectuals who had gathered round Lady Ottoline Morrell at her country house in Garsington near Oxford. Whatever his relationship with these people, he nevertheless shared a real sympathy with their group and Sir Osbert Sitwell recounts in his book Noble Essences how his

friendship with Sassoon developed rapidly, because of the "link of non-conformity that in those years (1917 - 18) bound together the disbelievers with almost the same force with which faith knitted together the early Christians" (19). Indeed the war poets of 1916 - 18 recognized that their image of war was not generally accepted. As early as November 1914, Charles Sorley had recognized the strength of public resistance to pacifist ideas.

"Indeed I think that after the war all brave men will renounce their country and confess that they are strangers and pilgrims on earth. But all these convictions are useless for me to state since I have not had the courage for them. What a worm one is under the cartwheels - big clumsy careless lumbering cartwheels - of public opinion." (20)

That Sorley towards the end of his career took the line of a peculiarly wilful conformism is perhaps an indication of incipient rebellion. Owen, on the other hand, was a good five years older and his anti-war feelings were much more well-defined. His plea for the ending of the war may not have been political in Sassoon's sense but he was close to Sassoon's concern about the sacrifice of the fighting men and it was humanitarian reasons which motivated his open statements in poetry as D.S.R. Welland remarks:-

"There is no evidence that he (Owen) saw it (the ceasing of hostilities) as politically desirable or expedient as a means to an ulterior end. This is why Blunden's phrases seem to me so right : it is the conscience of England to which Owen appeals not its sense of political advantage or self-interest." (21)

One of his acquaintances during his period at Craiglockhart leaves a perhaps rather nostalgically sentimental picture of his ability to feel for others.

"The bond which drew us together was an intense pity for suffering humanity - a need to alleviate it, whenever possible and an inability to shirk the sharing of it, even when this seemed useless. This was the keynote of Wilfred's character, indeed it was, simply, Wilfred." (22)

The essentially apolitical nature of Owen's protest is evident in his poem The Next War (23). His is not a flag-waving patriotism but a belief in life and all its spiritual beauty-

"When each proud fighter brags

He brags on Death - for Life; not men - for flags."

His condemnation of war at any price is total and he leaves us in such poems as The Parable of the Old Man and the Young or Dulce et Decorum est with a clear sense both of the unmitigated guilt of the older generation and the unremittent vileness of taking life (24). Owen was to develop strong views on the mass slaughter which was now synonymous with trench warfare:

"Passivity at any price! Suffer dishonour and disgrace, but never resort to arms. Be bullied, be outraged, be killed; but do not kill. It may be a chimerical and ignominious principle, but there it is. It can only be ignored; and I think pulpit professionals are ignoring it very skillfully and successfully indeed (25).. And am I not myself a conscientious objector with a very seared conscience?.... Christ is literally in 'no man's land'. There men often hear his voice : Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for a friend. Is it spoken in English only and French? I do not believe so. Thus you see how pure Christianity will not fit in with pure patriotism." (26)

Two points become clear from this extract - the nature of his religious beliefs and the nature of the inner conflicts which D.S.R. Welland characterizes as that "inner quarrel with himself"

(27) which he considers as forming the basic impetus and motivation of Owen's war poetry. That his religious beliefs were more instinctive than orthodox is hinted at in such poems as Le Christianisme (p.109) where he depicts the tyrannical and irrelevant purity of the plaster Virgin which has retained its 'immaculate' spirituality and unworldliness at the price of inhumanity. His recognition that Christianity would ultimately have to adopt to the new morality created by war is nowhere clearer, but he realized that this would be a hard principle to fight for and one which would run against both conventional dogma and the received public code of ethics. Moreover, the dictates of his own conscience, the troublesome "very censorious self" which Sorley was just beginning to discover (28) added to the already very severe tensions caused by the exigencies of "pure patriotism" and one feels that the harsh accusations directed against those on the home front - "You are not worth their merriment" in his poem Apologia Pro Poemate Meo - may be the inverted guilt of one with the power not only "to slash bones bare" but also to repress what Sorley called in a hard moment the "false pity", but which was so very real to Owen as a man and as a poet (29). His major moral commitment was his strong allegiance to life - "the wildest beauty in the world" to which he refers in Strange Meeting (p.116) and which is second only to his love for his fellow men. The biblical phrasing of

"But they who love the greater love

Lay down their life; they do not hate"

(At A Calvary Near the Ancre, p.108)

stresses how closely akin his respect for humanity is to the love of Christ. There is nothing of this spiritual empathy (30) in the poet Guillaume Apollinaire, who serves as an interesting comparison to the

English poets. Apollinaire's concern for others never goes beyond what Professor Bowra (31) rather generously refers to as "solicitous understatement". As we have seen in Chapter 1 (p. 15), Apollinaire's poetry pays only superficial attention to the human implications of war (32) and it seems rather to overestimate his involvement with the welfare of others to view him as a spokesman for those less able to speak out their misery, as Professor Bowra suggests- "Apollinaire's art speaks for a whole order of human beings of whom he is the representative and presents (the casual deaths of his fellow soldiers) in the spirit in which any soldier would, in his inarticulate way, feel about them". At the risk of making an easy comparison, it is Owen who speaks for the common soldier, sometimes using his own language as in The Chances (p. 68) ("I mind as 'ow the night afore that show/ Us five got talking"), sometimes presenting us with the inner perspective of a man about to die from wounds. The sort of close identification Owen achieves in A Terre (Being the philosophy of many soldiers), Apollinaire only barely achieves in Les Soupairs du Servant de Dakar (p. 235), despite Norma Rinsler's persuasive arguments as to his empathetic talents (33). In this poem, any concentration on the plight of the expatriate "bleuet" is blurred by exotic, esoteric and erotic allusions which destroy any real connection with the war. The quite detailed references to trench life, in this, as in other poems, does not spring from a desire to change the plight of the men, or to criticize conditions but to find more material on which to feed his poetic imagination (34). The daily accoutrements of his fellow soldiers' life pass before him like a coloured pageant of which he is a spectator, rather than participator, as in the poem Il y a (p.280) or Simultanéites (p.285). His zest for life, so often acknowledged by his friends (35), is less spiritual, less vaguely romantic than Owen's and manifests itself rather in the enjoyment which comes from



material and sensual pleasures (36). It is this side of his character which made him reject the often totally negative reaction of the pacifist writers (37), which in line with public opinion of the time (see Chapter 2, p. 69) he saw as bad for the morale of the nation. Indeed, his quite conventional patriotism (38), unlike that of Owen or Sassoon, essentially precluded any protest, as P. Caizergues in his article Apollinaire et la Politique pendant la guerre (39) points out:-

"à aucun moment Apollinaire ne songera à remettre en question le gouvernement en place ni les structures sociales et dans aucun de ses écrits publics il ne portera la moindre critique ouverte sur la conduite de l'action militaire ni sur ses responsables."

(At no point will Apollinaire think of questioning either the current government or the existing social structure and in none of his public writings does he make any open criticism of either the conduct of military action or those responsible for it.)

Again, it is his openness to life (40) which provokes him to a Whitmanesque exaltation of man - "Il faut exalter l'homme et non pas le diminuer, le déprimer, le démoraliser" (41) and which leads him to such uninhibited lines as "la joix adorable de la paix solaire" (The adorable joy of the solar peace.) This unbounded optimism seems almost a wilful refusal to be overwhelmed by the negative side of war and the playfulness (42) of the much criticized poems such as Fête (p.238) and Merveille de la Guerre (p.271) is presumably as calculated as Owen's programmatic determination not to see any possibility of consolation in the experience of war (43). Both men were to some extent conscious of riding against the current of the times. Owen in his open condemnation of authority, Apollinaire in his more "fantaisiste" poems about war. (For further discussion of

Fête, See Chp. 4. p.212ff). Apollinaire, however, was closer to the public mood of his times than Owen. The conventional patriotism of Chant de l'Honneur gives way to the equally conventional view of war as the harbinger of positive change (Guerre, p.228) which was an ideal often expressed in the chauvinist writings of the time, as we have already seen in Chapter Two. (For further discussions of German chauvinist idealism see below p.139ff). Any possibility of protest in Apollinaire's case is essentially excluded by his view of war as a regenerative force and his participation in "le sentiment de renouvellement" (J.G. Clark) which satisfied both his artistic aspirations and his fascination with the possibilities of a new technology and a new age. In his praise of power and speed in the poem Guerre and his anticipation of a glorious technological future, he is rather naively following the amoral stance of the Futurists (44). For some, the advice - "Ne pleurez donc pas sur les horreurs de la guerre" constitutes a provocative neglect of the human suffering caused by war, but such a view of poems like Guerre overlooks the fact that Apollinaire is not primarily concerned with the physical or historical reality of war, as are Owen and Sassoon, but with alternative worlds which transcend it. Thus, the poem Guerre barely touches upon the theme of war in any real sense; the title symbolizes a far more abstract conflict from which it is envisaged will emerge not only a better future, but a better poetry. The liberation which Apollinaire hopes for is not the physical freedom of the common soldier, but the unleashing of a higher aesthetic order in which poetry would rank on equal terms with science as one of the highest expressions of human intellect (45). The extravagant claims for the future of Art which he makes in L'Esprit Nouveau and implicitly in Guerre, bear witness not only to his fears about the place of art in a future society, but also to his latent insecurity as a poet (46). His con-

cern for the future status and nature of Art also dominates any fears he may have about the moral survival of humanity, although he does briefly refer to "le plus grand bien de la collectivité" in L'Esprit Nouveau (p.393). War, for Apollinaire, is an inevitable refining process, from which will emerge a better humanity with a finer awareness of Beauty. Thus the war is the catalyst of purer form:-

"Et nous aurions je crois

A l'instant de périr nous poètes nous hommes

Un souci de même ordre à la guerre ou nous sommes" (47)

Owen's Strange Meeting, of course, expresses an entirely opposite view. Here, the essential pity of war is precisely the loss of the nobler attributes of Mankind, that is, courage and wisdom and his sensitivity to Beauty and Truth. Not only is hope for the present destroyed in war, but also the coming years are radically marred, in that having learnt nothing from the war, future generations will either content themselves with their legacy of a morally inferior world or continue their march to destruction in further wars. The yearning regret at the impossibility of spiritual and moral salvation, which underlies Strange Meeting, the sense of loss expressed in the conditional tense "I would have poured my spirit without stint" are Owen's formulation of a barren future.

Though Guerre may appear as a fanciful piece of Science Fiction Romanticism by the side of such doom-laden poems as Strange Meeting, it is nevertheless intended as a serious insight into the dynamics of human progress, where war is seen not only as a decisive step to the full realisation of industrial and technological potential (lines 6-10), but also to a broadening of sensuous and intellectual experience:-

"Nous aurons toutes les joies" (48)

The renewal of poetry is also part of this glorious evolution of Mankind to higher planes of existence (L'au-delà de cette terre) as intimated in the poem Victoire (p.309)

" La Victoire avant tout sera

De bien voir au loin

De tout voir

De près

Et que tout ait un nom nouveau "

(Above all Victory will mean

Being able to see well at a distance

To see everything from close up

And that everything will be named afresh)

The 'victory' alluded to here has gone far beyond the topical reference to war, (although the patriotic implications are intentional); it is the victory of the poet who is perpetually renewing himself and his poetry and it is also a celebration of the past superseded by the future (Et que tout ait un nom nouveau) (See Toujours below). This idea of the superimposition of the future on the past is an echo of the article written for La Phalange in 1908 where Apollinaire writes of the power of poetry to change reality and even suppress the memory of what has gone before (anéantit le souvenir et la réalité même de ce qui existait la veille) in order to create a new reality. A similar idea of the suppression of an old order in favour of a new, is to be found in the strange concept of 'Forgetting' in the poem Toujours (p.237)

" Et tant d'univers s'oublient "

(And so many universes are forgotten)

The act of forgetting is a way of denying the ties of the past and moving towards the future. As such it can be seen as the quint-essential act of discovery, but which takes both an exceptional person:-

"Où est le Christophe Colomb à qui l'on devra l'oubli  
d'un continent ?"

(Where is the Christopher Columbus to whom we shall  
owe the forgetting of a continent?)

and an exceptional will:-

" Perdre

Mais perdre vraiment

Pour laisser place à la trouvaille

Perdre

La vie pour trouver la Victoire."

(To lose

But to really lose

In order to make way for discovery

To lose

Life in order to find Victory)

Although the act of forgetting and losing may be intimately linked with the experience of war (49), the more straightforward 'patriotic' interpretation of the final lines (which implies that the attainment of freedom can only be achieved through death in battle and that the final self-sacrifice is merely a stage on the way to a higher existence for the nation), should be read more as a topical addition meant to add a sense of drama and immediacy to the main argument, which is predominantly an aesthetic one. The main idea in Toujours is that total destruction (in war or death) of the old order or life itself, is part of the creative cycle (50) where a new order (la Trouvaille) follows the old, where one system of ideas is superseded by new knowledge, where the vibrant dynamism of a new innovative poetry (la Trouvaille) threatens the existence of outmoded poetical traditions, as intimated in the poem Victoire (51). Thus intellectual, social and technological evolution follow the same dynamics of renewal (see Meyer, p.11), in which war is seen as one of the influences in the general regenerative process. Here, Apollinaire comes close to the pre-fascist acceptance of war

as a force for positive change. Drieu la Rochelle (52), like the German Ernst Jünger (53) felt war to be a marvellous experience and found in the constant threat of death, a spiritual and physical stimulus which peace-time could not offer. For Drieu la Rochelle the ecstasy of combat was the very confirmation of life, a constant renewal of the life principle :

"Tout ce qui est nouveau est bon, hors du neuf point de salut. L'humanité ne perdure qu'en se reniant sans cesse, en tuant d'âge en âge sa vieillesse".

(Everything that is new is good, beyond the new there is no salvation. Humanity can only endure by ceaselessly disowning itself, by eradicating what is senile from generation to generation .) (p.83) (54).

The English poets could not derive such consolation from death. The sun, in Owen's poem Futility (p.73), has no power to renew life and death for Sorley in Sonnette I has the finality of a slate wiped clean. Death has no positive connotations because neither Sorley's nor Owen's religious convictions would allow them to accept the traditional Christian attitude to suffering. In his essay on Baudelaire, Apollinaire specifically mentions the problem of suffering from which he considered not only consolation, but ultimately joy could be derived.

"Il faut qu'il (l'homme) jouisse de tout, même de ses souffrances."

(Man should enjoy everything, even his miseries.) (55)

This conventionally Christian stance is sustained in the imagery of the untitled poem La Nuit Descend (p.741) (Night Falls) where night comes with the quick movement of a genuflection and men pray humbly on the eve of their death:-

"La Nuit descend comme un agenouillement  
Et ceux qui vont mourir demain s'agenouillent  
Humblement"

From within this conventional Christian tradition of passive acceptance, Norma Rinsler concludes with André Breton (56) that Apollinaire succeeds in giving a certain dignity to death and a certain beauty to the spiritual simplicity of the soldiers in the trenches. Moreover, Rinsler sees that "attentive, patient submission" (p.182) is the actual poetic technique of observation used by the poet, particularly in his "simultaneous" poems, where by a purely objective recording of events he avoids the imposition of his own moral interpretation on the reader. Certainly he can never be accused of the rather obtrusive "censorious didacticism" (Silkin) which occasionally mars the poetry of Owen and Sassoon (cf. Owen Inspection p.105, Sassoon Fight to a Finish p.27).

However, one feels that Rinsler overstresses both the humility and the seriousness with which Apollinaire approaches this major theme of death, and Roger Shattuck's remark (57) that "Suffering and humiliation, tragedy and comedy in the classical sense are not the themes of his prose works", would apply equally well to Calligrammes.

Apollinaire's solemn praise of the simple and beautiful courage of the soldiers in La Nuit Descend, "J'attends que monte en moi la simplicité de mes grenadiers" (I wait for the simplicity of my grenadiers" to rise in me) and his further equation of simplicity with beauty in Chant de l'Honneur (p.304) " Je sais que la beauté n'est la plupart du temps que la simplicité " ( I know that Beauty is for the most part only simplicity) smacks not only of sentimental propaganda but also of that well-meaning condescension with regard to the "simple soldier", of which even Owen was sometimes capable (58). "Simple" tends to be therefore a shallow term of approval (used much in the same way as Brooke's "rich") and mars a potentially far more serious aesthetic (and moral) ideal (See below p.120) with a rather simpering attitude. This discovery of the simplicity of death in Chant de l'Honneur

- so at odds with the images of Graves' A Dead Echo:-

"Et combien j'en ai vu qui morts dans la tranchée

Étaient restés debout et la tête penchée

S'appuyant simplement contre le parapet"

(and how many of the dead in the trenches I have seen,  
standing, with their heads simply leaning  
against the parapet)

does not achieve an understanding of "pure tragedy" (whatever that is) "as distinct from pathos" as Rinsler maintains (59), because of the debunking and incongruous humour of the comparison ("Tours pisanes" - Leaning Towers of Pisa). Any sense of tragedy is expressed only on the superficial level of patriotic cliché, (o blessés à mourir), and personal compassion is withheld in favour of a more flamboyant and public declaration of sympathy:-

("Vos coeurs sont tous en moi je sens chaque blessure" / Your hearts are all mine I feel every wound). Elsewhere, in Il y a (p.280)

for example, Apollinaire similarly omits any personal comment. The long list of the horrors of war has no didactic point; he simply continues to equate the most trivial of perceptions - "il y a ma selle exposée à la pluie" (there is my saddle exposed to the rain) with the most horrific consequences of trench technology - "Il y a un fantassin qui passe aveuglé par les gaz asphyxiants" (There is an infantry soldier who passes by blinded by gas). This kind of indiscriminating commentary, when compared with Owen's treatment of the same theme in Dulce et Decorum Est, reveals in Apollinaire a curious suspension of compassion, suggesting even disinterest in the circumstances of individual death. As Jon Silkin so rightly argues in his book Out of Battle (p.209) "to be angry at destruction is to put a value on what is destroyed". As Apollinaire shows no regret, no anger and no compassion, one could assume, if not that



he places little value on human life, then that dying was for him a necessary outcome of war-the ultimate patriotic duty for which the soldier needed no pity. (See Toujours, above) The very fact that he places the extremities of human experience side by side with his own petty inconveniences - "Il y a que je languis après une lettre qui tarde" (There am I waiting for a letter late in coming) shows that he felt no need to establish an order of priorities. Curiously, Norma Rinsler finds a moral order in this very suspension of judgement (60). Obviously, Apollinaire believed the cubist technique 'simultanéisme' which he uses in Il y a to be a very important poetic discovery (see below and Chp. 4). Yet rather than recreating the life that he experienced with all its inherent distinctions between good and bad, the technique, in its equalizing of the trivial and the serious, of death and desire, rather tends towards formlessness, confusion and general blurring of values (61). Norma Rinsler, however, takes the opposite view that this loss of distinction between what she terms "the dreadful and the beautiful" not only reflects more closely the reality of war (for are they not, she argues, "in life sometimes one and the same?" (p.182)) but also, and more importantly, reflects his calibre as a poet, and the balance and wholeness of his vision. His refusal to establish a meaningful pattern in such poems as Il y a and Qu'est-ce qui se passe (p.739) becomes for her a "mysterious fusion" (p.179), "a harmony of life and death" and evidences a "wholeness" which gives "peculiar strength" to his "imaginative sympathy". One tends to approach with caution such an accumulation of superlatives. It is clear that Apollinaire focusses only on some of the observable realities of war. His vision, in this sense, is therefore partial (as Owen's vision could be said to be partial in his almost exclusive concern with the horror). The grandiose epic qualities that critics like Rinsler and Johnston expect of modern poets such as Apollinaire and

Owen is a contradiction in terms. As for Apollinaire's "imaginative sympathy" one could possibly agree, but Rinsler's contention that his work shows "a pity turned towards others" is far more difficult to accept. Self-centredness is a noticeable feature of all of Apollinaire's poetry and is a particularly embarrassing weakness which some critics try to ignore (62). Instead of constituting a statement about war, much of Apollinaire's war poetry is a continuation of earlier statements about himself. His collected images of the war serve as a background against which he can illuminate both his own experience as a soldier (63) and, more importantly, his own poetic ability. Self-concern is not a characteristic of a good war poet, although this is not to say that he was not a good poet in the war, which is something else. Apollinaire wrote some striking love poetry which arose indirectly from his experience of war. However, the fact that his best "war" poetry is concerned with so personal a theme as erotic love and, moreover, with a love which is a self-confessed fiction of his imagination (cf. Dans L'Abri Caverne p.259) points to the generally inward-turned, self-orientated nature of Apollinaire's response to war rather than to one, as Rinsler argues, which turns towards the concerns of others. (64) Certainly his poetry does not derive from the same source of humanism from which the English poets drew and the sense of moral order, which Rinsler detects as a steady constant throughout, springs not from external social concern as with Owen, but emerges from the slow development of his aesthetic ideas about the nature of poetry and the role of the poet (See Chp. 4) towards the inclusion of a certain moral dimension, which they previously lacked. As the war progressed, certain key concepts of a seemingly purely aesthetic relevance in his poetry, take on an additional moral significance. As Margaret Davies points out, "his creative self takes upon it certain moral assignments which have not come before within

its scope" (65). His attitude to war and his "politics" combine, therefore, both the moral element of patriotism and the aesthetic considerations of Art, as Caizergues (66) so rightly remarks. "La politique d'Apollinaire au combat est en même temps au service de la France et de la Beauté."

In Chant de l' Honneur he speaks of the same sense of Beauty - ' souci de même ordre ' - which sustains both soldier and poet at the point of death. This idea of Beauty he conceived as being the classical spirit of harmony and balance - "la beauté qu'on appelle antique" - of which he speaks in the poem Le Palais Du Tonnerre (p.254), yet which is, nevertheless, infused with the spirit of the present. This poem like La Victoire is a continuation of the discussion of the "old quarrel between tradition and invention, order and adventure" which he sees as a central stimulus for the poetry of his time (67). The dug-out, which has the look of antiquity, yet has only recently been built, is both artefact of war and symbol of the new poetry. The destructive capacity of war allows a new metamorphosis, a fusion of old and new where both have equal sway. This new concept of 'Beauté' is the central pivot of his poetry and includes not only the classical ideas of "Grâce, Vertu, Courage et Honneur," as depicted in Chant de l'Honneur, but also the modern attributes of " Noblesse, Force, Ame, Ardeur, Usure." (Nobility, Power, Soul, Ardour, Durability). ( Le Palais Du Tonnerre ). Beauty, therefore, has solid links with both past and present (68) and partakes of both a moral and creative strength, as described in Les Collines (p.176) - "C'est de souffrance et de bonté / Que sera fait la beauté" (Beauty will be made of suffering and excellence). It is the positive principle to which he aspires, which forms the vibrant core of his vision of the future. It is the luminous heart of his poetry, the white fire of creation which transforms and subjugates even death. Viewed as such it was the

most personally effective antidote against war and the reason why he tended to 'beautify' the horror. In Les Peintres Cubistes (70) he explains the purpose of the innovative technique of simultaneity as being to achieve a wholeness which should embrace all of life (trinité) and exclude sterility and death:-

"L'artiste s'est trop longtemps efforcé vers la mort en assemblant des éléments stériles de l'art et il est temps qu'il arrive à la fécondité, à la trinité, à la simultanéité".

This personal war against time and death through poetry which was a dominant theme in Alcools is thus continued in his war poetry. However, his metamorphosis of the fear and horror of death in the trenches, as in La Nuit D'Avril (p.243), can be seen at a different level, to have a sanative as well as a metaphoric function. Escape into the open arms of Beauty was a device which all the poets tended to use at some point during the war, even Owen, who was so adamantly against Poetry for its own sake:-

"Escape? There is one unwatched way: Your eyes,

O Beauty! Keep me good that secret gate".

(The Fates p. 79)

Apollinaire, like most other war poets, looked to the gentle beauty and apparent permanence of Nature (71) as a source of consolation and as a refuge in the midst of the horror. In two letters to Lou, he speaks of the presence of Nature - "les fleurs ça console de tout" (le 17 mai, 1915) and "Il n'y a pas que la guerre. La Nature est là comme auparavant." (There isn't just war, Nature is there as before) in much the same way as a young English soldier/poet instinctively turns away from a reality too dreadful for his mind to encompass: "In general, the whole of the war-zone is so un-Christian in its aspect and so horrible in its antithesis to all that is beautiful and good that I would rather not write about it. I do my best to forget and, in a measure, to forgive it by reading Keats, Blake and Swinburne, and

even by attempts to write poems on the things of life, not the sins of it." (72).

Apollinaire finds a similar refuge in literature and his war poetry certainly concentrates on the physical rather than the moral aspects of war (73). In contrast to the later English poets, Apollinaire does not use the theme of nature for any didactic or ironic purpose (74). The ironic use of the nature theme was one of the most powerful tools of protest possessed by the English poets, particularly Edmund Blunden, who was most sensitive of all perhaps to the disruption of the natural order. A blighted and twisted tree or a befouled stream was for him a most potent indication of the imminent collapse of civilization. Apollinaire is much more objective about the destruction of nature than Blunden. In Côte 146 (p.484) a bare statement records the fact that there are no more flowers, but, instead, strange signs in the sky made by the flash of guns:-

"Plus de fleurs mais d'étranges signes."

A stunted tree is an isolated observation, a single image on its own typographical space.

"Un arbre dépouillé sur un butte.

.....

Le bruit des tracteurs qui grimpent dans la vallée." (Fusée, p.261)

The particular emphasis which the image receives by virtue of the spatial arrangement within the poem, gives it apparent symbolic force - as the poet rather clumsily reminds us a few lines before - "Ça signifie qu'il faut prendre garde à bien des choses" (That means one has to beware of many things)

However, Apollinaire does not exploit the image further, as a comment on the general destruction and as a judgement on Man, as do the English poets. Instead, the image has to reply on the adjoining erotic and classical references for any meaning which the reader may choose to impose on it. Thus the ironic contrast between the natural order of Nature and the chaos of Warfare is left unexplored. Blunden never loses such an opportunity. Nearly always he stresses Nature

as the normative standard by which the madness of war is pointed out. Yet in many of his poems, in the very act of contrast, the destructive principle threatens to overwhelm the regenerative powers of Nature. Nature is made to contain War, but only just and the poet is aware of his self-delusion -

"Look here are gardens, there mossed boughs are hung  
With apples whose bright cheeks none might excel;  
And there's a house as yet unshattered by a shell.  
I'll do my best, the soul makes sad reply."

(Preparations for Victory p. 98) (75)

This may not be great poetry, but it shows the havoc wreaked in a fine sensibility by the violation of Nature. In the English poets, the pastoral image is seldom a safe refuge for battered minds; it is usually a poor source of solace, serving merely to heighten the feelings of loss and futility. Moreover, the beauty which is Nature's may often appear as a paradoxically deceptive and unreal vision, mocking the human reality of warfare in its gaudy irrelevance:-

"O rosy red, O torrent splendour  
Staining all the Orient gloom  
O celestial work of wonder  
A million mornings in one bloom  
(.....)  
What is this artist's joy to me ?"

(Come on, My lucky Lads p.99)

Man and Nature are no longer in tune and with the breaking of the pathetic fallacy, the last source of solace seems to be removed. For Apollinaire, the Beauty of Nature is the magic spell which disperses the horrors of war. He delights in the tricks of a hideous technology which can produce something to mimic, rival and even surpass the natural splendours of the night sky. In a letter to Lou on the

11th July 1915, he records his impressions of a dazzling 'firework display' - "la nuit - feu d'artifice extravagant et continu, du vert, du rouge, du blanc, des chandelles romaines, que sais-je encore?". Earlier, he had discussed with her the Art/Nature paradox. "Ma foi, un feu d'artifice est à première vue, bien plus beau que la guerre. C'est là non point une apparence vaine, mais un fait de plaisir immédiat pour nos sens blasés d'hommes, qui de fils en pères, sont un peu habitués à la nature." ( A firework is indeed much more beautiful at first glance than the war. This is not a vain illusion but a source of immediate pleasure to our rather blasé human senses, which from father to son have become somewhat used to nature. )

Both Blunden and Apollinaire are thus momentarily entranced by an illusion of Beauty - one produced by the "artist of creation" (Blunden)-one manufactured by 'L'Art de l'Artilleur'. Both technological and natural Beauty seem, however, to have either an element of falsehood "Et des astres passaient que singeaient les obus" (the missiles of death counterfeit stars) or of inauthenticity - ("The dawn but hangs behind the goal / What is this artist's joy to me?" Blunden angrily refuses the lure of fascination as he looks at the dawn and temporarily loses faith both in nature and the relevance of Art. His poem ends on a note of desperate anger at the killing. Apollinaire, on the other hand, avoids any comment. The poem La Nuit d'Avril, does seem to be bringing us to the brink of an ironic contrast between Nature and War in the image of the star dislodged from its natural orbit -

"Comme un astre éperdu qui cherche ses saisons"  
but the ominous signs are disregarded and we progress to the metaphor of the shell-blasted heart -

"Coeur obus éclaté tu sifflais ta romance."

We realize that the poet is talking about himself as the rejected lover/poet whose heart is mournful and 'great with shot', but not in the physical sense that Owen means. One feels that the alignment 'coeurs/obus' is just a passing comparison, as is the rather strained identification of the whistling of the shell with the singing of the poet. In this way, the artefacts of war become so many decorative adjuncts to his poetry. This essentially decorative, as opposed to didactic function of Apollinaire's nature imagery can be shown quite clearly in a comparison of his Chevaux de Frise (p.302) with Owen's Exposure (p.53) and Georg Trakl's Grodek (76).

The Owen and Apollinaire poems are set against a background of nature devastated by winter; the Trakl poem in the cold autumn of the Eastern front, where the landscape is contaminated by war - "Am Abend tönen die herbstlichen Wälder / von tödlichen Waffen" (In the evening the autumn woods ring with the sound of deadly weapons)

In all three poems the theme of nature has a contrastive function, but in Exposure a ravaged nature ("mad gusts, poignant misery") is not just symbolic of man's suffering in war (although the analogy is nevertheless clearly made:-

"Watching, we hear the mad gusts tugging on the wire,

Like twitching agonies of men among its brambles.")

but it is also a severe and hostile judgement upon man as long as he makes war:-

"Dawn massing in the east her melancholy army

Attacks once more in ranks on shivering ranks of grey."

Here, Nature completely loses its idyllic associations and is absorbed into the theme of war, so that the two are temporarily indistinguishable. A similar fusion, although in the opposite



direction, occurs in the poetry of Apollinaire, where war is made to take on the positive attributes of Nature -

"Cette nuit est si belle où la balle roucoule

Tout un fleuve d'obus sur nos têtes s'écoule

Parfois une fusée illumine la nuit

C'est une fleur qui s'ouvre et puis s'évanouit (...)"

(this night is so beautiful where the bullet coos / A whole river of shells flows above our heads / Sometimes a rocket lights up the night / It's a flower which opens and then fades.)

( Méditation p. 857)

A similar process occurs in Chevaux de Frise where the portable wire entanglements are transformed by the pun 'barbes/barbelés' into Barbary horses. The metamorphosis is an indication of the strength of the poet's desire to escape from war, but it carries no wider moral implications as does the Owen image. Trakl similarly effects a fusion of opposites, of the idyll of Nature and the horror of war, but both become ambiguous and strangely contaminated - the golden plains are lit by a darkened sun - "die goldenen Ebenen (...) darüber die Sonne düstrer hinrollt"; the night embraces the dying warriors (but to console or to suffocate?) the wild cries from their broken mouths. (77). In a world devastated by the sins of men, both the gold of the sun and the blackness of night become guilt-laden symbols and point towards decay - "Alle Strassen münden in schwarze Verwesung." Indeed, Mankind seems forsaken by God, for the image in the sky is not of Christ's serene radiance but of the bloodthirsty anger of some ancient god of war - "darin ein zürnender Gott wohnt." Similarly, in the Owen poem, the influence of God seems to be retreating - "For love of God seems dying". Both Trakl and Owen suggest that the Soldier/Man is excluded not only from God's love, but also from human love - "On us the doors are closed", although it is the soldier's duty which

temporarily excludes him in Exposure and not his innate sinfulness as in Grodek. Love, whether for God and peace or for one's fellow beings is tainted by fear and/or guilt (Our love is made afraid/ For love of God seems dying) both in Exposure and in Grodek, where the normal relationship of brother to sister is haunted by incest. However, Owen's poem is innocent of the personal implications of guilt in Trakl's work and his faith in the inherent goodness of life and of God is still strong. One feels this is the one certainty he just manages to cling to. In Trakl's poem, personal guilt is extrapolated to universal condemnation and the fallen heroes are not welcomed to paradise. The reward of both the living and the dead is the violent and painful remorse of the unborn. - "Die heisse Flamme des Geistes nährt heute ein gewaltiger, Schmerz / Die ungeborenen Enkel". (A violent pain feeds the hot flame of the Spirit. The unborn grandchildren),

Both Owen and Trakl sound the depths of human misery, but Trakl explores the deeper levels of meaning (78) to produce a work of greater mythical dimension. For this reason his work is in not as realistic as Owen, moving as it does within the gravity of its own symbolism (as does the poetry of Apollinaire). The poem consequently never touches upon the real phenomenon of war; the 'severed heads' refer not to the suffering of the soldiers but to a much more private agony. In Apollinaire's poem there is similarly no mention of the individual as the central victim of war. The dominant image of the opening lines is the slow decay of nature under a shroud of snow - "les arbres déchiquetés par l'artillerie / vieillissaient encore sous la neige". Any reference to death is made at several removes through second-hand borrowings from neo-symbolist imagery, as in the decadent limpness of the play on "mortes / mortelles". Whereas Owen continues to develop the theme of the hostility of Nature - the "pale flakes" of snow seem almost malevolently to torment the men - the equivalent

reference to snow in the Apollinaire poem : "Pales fleurs" emphasizes the idyllic aspect of a landscape fleecy with the whiteness of ermine and decked with pale flowers. The significance of 'pale' in the two poets is of course radically different. Apollinaire is already drifting into erotic rêverie where the paleness of the snow is reminiscent of fin-de-siècle sensuality; the paleness in the Owen image is that of death. The slow slide into idyllic rêverie "of grassier ditches, littered with blossoms" is far more ominous here. The power of the desire for the consolation of Nature (expressed in a cluster of his own clichés by Apollinaire) is concentrated in the para-rhyme "snow-dazed/sun-dozed". Yet the force of the confrontation between idyll and war does not lie in the poetic comparison alone, for the realization is that the close association between the two is a real one, coming from the confused senses of dulled and possibly dying minds. There is something horribly wrong in this collision between fancy and reality, idyll and horror. No such disjunction exists in Apollinaire's poems, for the subject is not protest. The fact that for most of the time, he felt in harmony with the military life - "Je fais ce que je peux pour être un parfait militaire" - (A Louis de Gonzague Frick, le 11. nov., 1915, p.803) coupled with what we have seen as an almost complete absence of "intellectual protest" (79) could have lead to a completely bland and tensionless poetry. Calligrammes is not, however, devoid of passions that prompt Apollinaire to protest, yet they are the old laments of Alcools, the old remorse felt at the passing of time and the old pain of unrequited love. It is in the expression of these personal tensions that he is at his best (80) and they re-occur not in the war poetry, but in his love poems to Lou and Madeleine, where the poem Si je mourais là-bas picks up again the old nostalgic

resonances. A minor poem in this elegiac vein is Vers le Sud (p.234) where he seems to be touching the same mournful chords as in Rhénanes. At first glance, the poem seems little more than a clutter of Romantic clichés, with roses and nightingales and the predictable garden full of symbolic flowers. Yet there is an ironic dimension to the poem given by the various ambiguous references to war. The "endless gardens" (81) where the toad sings its plaintive song are not just a vague landscape of thwarted desire, but also No-Man's Land where the shell (crapaud) (82) sings its lethal song. The deadly associations of "Grenade" and the falling of the shrapnel/petals are also very near to the surface. Thus the theme of war is insidiously woven into the poem, strengthening the undertones of sadness and foreboding. It functions, however, only as a support to the principal theme of love. The images are not violent enough to suggest any disharmony between the two themes which are usually closely associated (83). However, in the poem A Madeleine (p.615) his personal yearning for love brings him closer to a direct condemnation of war. The sweet music of his beloved's voice is a symbol of a harmony and order directly opposed to war, the effects of which are described in unusually violent imagery.

"(.....) seule votre voix pure me répond  
Qu'il serait temps que s'élève cette harmonie  
Sur l'océan sanglant de ces pauvres années  
Où le jour est atroce où le soleil est la blessure  
Par où s'écoule en vain la vie de l'univers "

(Alone your voice replies to me that it is time for this music to  
rise over the bloody ocean of these wretched years/ Where the day  
brings horror and the sun is a wound from which the life-blood of  
the universe pours and for nothing.)

Although the image of the sun draining the universe was already a well-prepared one (Zone, "Soleil Cou Coupé") its contextual surprise

is striking. Elsewhere, as in the poem J'espère une lettre de toi (p.629), the rejection of war is not so convincing, where Apollinaire somewhat histrionically likens the boom of the guns to cries of defiance:- "Tandis qu'il chante le canon

Répète le non taciturne

Éclat et non parole Non

Que répète l'écho nocturne."

( While it ( the bird of love ) sings the guns

Repeat the taciturn no

Flash and no word No

Repeated by the night echo)

Although this rejection of war is expressed in terms of conventional patriotism (No, enemy you will not have the towns or the countryside), the main gesture of defiance is on behalf of himself - (Neither my life, love has need of it)

Apollinaire's response to war is thus undoubtedly less humanitarian than that of the English poets and as we have seen, does not seem to be framed in terms of protest in the real sense, apart from recording the passing depressions and irritations of the active soldier. The subject of his 'war poetry' is not really war at all (84), in the external sense, but the history of himself and his loves. Without Lou, without Madeleine, his poetry of this time would have lost its focus, as it did after the wound in 1916 (85). Already by February of that year, the tone of his letters (86) and of his poetry was increasingly uneasy. Yet even after his own dreadful experiences, there is still no real anger, no criticism of official policy or concern for the loss of life. His target is the men who had managed to avoid enlistment. In the poem Paris dated 3rd February, 1916 he speaks of the ugliness of civilian suits:- " Laideur des costumes civils des hommes qui ne sont pas partis ". In the same month two years later, his personal resentment

is even more apparent in a rather petty poem (p.689) written in answer to the question 'What do you think of the creation of a Minister of Fine Art? It is not the obscene irrelevance of this piece of bureaucracy which annoys him specifically (as it would do Sassoon) but the fact that there are, to his mind, too many men who have shirked their responsibilities and who because of their great number, deserve their own 'ministère des Embusqués'. Such narrow-minded protest is essentially as far as his sense of injustice leads him.

This neglect of the concerns of the private individual, in face of the needs of the community at war, is symptomatic of a wider decline in liberal ideas which resulted from the growth of Nationalist and indeed, Fascist thought in France from the beginning of the century. The perhaps unexpectedly right-wing patriotism of Apollinaire, however, is but a pale echo of the strident Nationalism of, for instance, Drieu La Rochelle. Yet even this extreme example of French Fascism is a faint imitation of forces that were beginning to achieve their most ruthless and dynamic expression in Germany - forces which, by definition, suppressed even the possibility of the kind of humanitarian protest which was making itself heard in Britain through the work of Owen, Sassoon, Graves and the like. The next section looks at some of the political and social reasons behind this singular lack of protest in German war literature as a whole and in German war poetry in particular.

### The German Imperialist Response and Socialist Reaction

At the beginning of the war, despite a small minority of pacifists centred round Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxembourgh and some pacifist writers such as Heinrich Mann (87) and Hermann Hesse (88), both left and right decided to sink any ideological differences and establish a temporary pact (Burgfrieden) in deference to the needs of the nation. The country was seized by a frenzy of nationalist sentiment (referred to in modern histories of the period as 'Hurrapatriotismus' (89)) which amounted almost to war psychosis. Extreme conservatives and socialists alike were engulfed by the same patriotic storm (90). Hugo Haase, the socialist spokesman in the Reichstag, showed in a speech at that time that the official socialist reaction to the war was as essentially nationalist and militarist as any of their right-wing opponents "The decision to be made," he announced (91) "is not whether to take sides for or against war, but rather as the means necessary for the defence of our country".

Thus, at the moment of reckoning, there was no opposition from that very section of society from which a confirmed anti-war attitude might most have been expected, both on political and social grounds (92). The worker-poet representatives of a heavily exploited proletariat such as Heinrich Lersch, who had hitherto denounced the inhumanity of a mechanized, capitalist society (93) were now as susceptible to nationalist fervour as any Pan-German mystic. A typical case is that of the worker-poet Gerrit Engelke (born 21st Oct. 1890), who in the first flush of enthusiasm welcomed the war as a "holy necessity" which would bring spiritual regeneration to a nation made corrupt by materialism. Underneath the religious fervour and the visionary idealism, is the simple hope shared by many workers that the war would be a means of escape from the degradation of mechanized labour into a newer, brighter, more humane world.

"O heilige Notwendigkeit, Notwendigkeit auch dieser Schlachten 1914. Wir waren in Gefahr, unsern innersten Menschen zu verlieren; wir waren in Gefahr in Materialismus zu erstarren. Feuer und Metall waren uns nichts, gewaltige Maschinen wurden uns Spielzeuge. Aber auch unsere Nerven wurden Drähte. Wir verloren die Welt und die Seele. Aber in diesem segnenden Kampf wollen wir wiedergewinnen die Welt und die Seele."

(O holy necessity, necessity even of these battles of 1914. We were in danger of losing our innermost selves; we were in danger of becoming rigid with materialism. Fire and metal were as to us nothing, powerful machines became our playthings. But our very sinews were also becoming as wire. We were losing the world and our souls. In this blessed struggle, however, our will shall be to regain the world and our souls).

This kind of politically innocent rhetoric was very close both in style (94) and content (95) to right-wing propaganda, and as such was easily exploited by the government as a cover for its expansionist aims - "als schmückender Teil des Überbaus über der imperialistischen Basis" (96). The surge of fervent idealism voiced by many of the left-wing worker poets who came from stout Christian (mainly Catholic) stock reflected the high-tide of working-class support which helped to carry government policy along for the first few months of the war. Bethmann Hollweg was quick to see the propaganda potential in the naive patriotism of the workers and in a speech to the Reichstag just after the outbreak of hostilities, he used the two now famous lines of Karl Broger's poem Bekenntnis (Avowal) as an indication of left-wing solidarity with official war aims:-

"herrlich zeigte es aber deine grösste Gefahr,  
daß dein armster Sohn auch dein getreuester war.

Dank es, o Deutschland."

(Your (Germany's) greatest danger showed itself to be magnificent



in that your poorest son was yet your most loyal. Think upon it, o Germany)

Similarly, Heinrich Lersch's then almost axiomatic line "Deutschland muss leben und wenn wir sterben müssen" (Germany must live even though we must die) (97) would have done well on any government recruitment poster. The support of the workers did not last much beyond the early euphoria, however. As the war dragged on and the territorially aggressive nature of the government's war aims became more evident, the disillusionment of many idealists was subsequently "enormous" (98). These poets of a marxist-socialist inclination produced, as a result, works of a politically radical nature which advocated the end of the war by means of total Revolution (die endgültige Schlacht - the final slaughter) which would create a new and unified Europe, built on the foundation of "simple brotherly, natural love" (Becher). This is the message of Gerrit Engelke's violent denunciation (99) of capitalist materialism, particularly the competitive industrialism of Germany, which he saw as one of the main causes of the war. Gone is the radiant rhetoric of his earlier patriotic eulogies:-

"Der in den ersten Jahrzehnten in allen Ländern Europas riesenhaft aufgestandene Industrie-Materialismus stürzt in blinder Tierheit gegenseitig aufeinander los und zertrümmert sich selbst. Möge dieser Seldstmord vollkommen sein, damit der reinen Vernunft zum Siege verholfen werde und ein neues Leben der Menschen auf den Ruinen Europas entstehe"

(The industrially-based Materialism which has reached gigantic proportions over the past decades in all the nations of Europe has now in a fit of blind bestiality turned upon them and is destroying itself. May this suicide of nations be complete, so that Pure Reason can be helped to Victory and so that a new life for humanity may arise from the ruins of Europe).

A fellow worker-poet, Johannes Becher, was equally hostile to the German war aims and the acute feeling of betrayal which he shared with many others expressed itself in strident accusations and clumsy admonitions which go beyond a simple rejection of war, to a blanket political and social condemnation of his age. A typical example of his style, with its characteristically high incidence of invective is to be found in the poem Dex Mensch Steht auf (100) (Mankind arises)

Verfluchter Jahrhundert!  
Chaotisch! Gesanglos!-  
Ausgehängt du Mensch, magerster  
der Koder, zwischen  
Qual Nebel-Wahn-Blitz.  
Du Soldat!  
Du Henker und Rauber.

Accursed century!  
Chaos! Discord!  
You, Mankind, meanest  
of bait, strung out between  
Torment-Fog-Madness-Flash  
You, Soldier!  
You, hangman, thief.

Noch ist's Zeit!  
Zur Sammlung! Zum Aufbruch!  
Zum Marsch!  
Zum Schritt zum Flug zum Sprung  
aus Kananitischer Nacht!  
Noch ist's Zeit  
Mensch Mensch Mensch stehe  
auf stehe auf!

There is still time  
To the Assembly! to the Revolution!  
To the March Forward!  
To the step, flight, leap from  
the darkness of Canaan  
There is still time  
Mankind, Mankind, Mankind,  
Arise, Arise!

Hamburger and Middleton (101) attribute the crudeness ("hardly more subtle than a sandbag") of such reactions not only to the revolutionary ardour of marxist inspired poetry, but to the fact that many of the worker poets had themselves (viz Engelke) contributed in great part to the hollow idealism of German society at that time and were themselves largely "responsible for the idealistic humbug of the materialistic society then involved in the war" (102). Consequently, they were unable to adopt the objectivity necessary to a more tempered and reflective criticism. Moreover, despite the vehemence of Becher's protest against those sections of German society responsible for the war and despite his obvious passion for social change, his poetry is basically unconcerned with the particularized human problems of a society at war. His pacifism is fired by political, not humanitarian, idealism and

is directed at some radiant vision of "the ultimate magnificent victory of the idea of Good - ("zum überherrlichen Endsieg der guten Idee (103)) and not used to plea for the immediate cessation of human sacrifice, as in the case of the English pacifist poets. Indeed, as the war progressed and with the growth of the anti-war movement aimed directly at the government (strikes among the workers, protests from June 1916 against the condemnation of Karl Liebknecht), the pacifism of left-wing writers such as Becher and Ivan Goll became increasingly revolutionary. Many writers began to realize that the previous political distinction of those factions simply 'for' or 'against' the war was now in itself insufficient and that ideological pacifism per se was politically ineffective. The problem of how to bring about social change now lay in the degree of revolutionary action they were prepared to take (104). Debate over ethical problems, such as that of the moral responsibility for the war (a common theme in the English poetry) waned before the wider conflict of Imperialism versus Socialism - "Die Frage der Kriegsschuld verblasst vor der Schuld des Kapitalismus" (105).

Although the worker-poet Ivan Goll adopted a consciously humanitarian stance to social problems - "Wer ein Herz hat, der stellt sich vor die Menschen hin, der reisst sich auf, und sagt den Schmerz der Millionen" (Whoever has a heart places himself before Mankind, he gathers himself up and speaks out the pain of millions) (106), his programmatic declaration of the social function of art is still characterized by vague Utopianism which deflects his awareness from the human implications of change in a society at war. "Licht brauchen wir. Licht. Wahrheit. Idee. Liebe. Gute. Geist. (We need Light. Light. Truth. Idea. Love. Goodness. Spirituality) (Appell an die Kunst. Die Aktion, 1917). Other left-wing poets who published in Die Aktion (see later p.144) who lacked the sense of political mission of their more revolutionary counterparts, tended to write anti-war

poetry, which while often realistic in perspective, nevertheless functioned more as a counter to the chauvinist glorification of war and as such tended to founder in the pathos of calls to brotherhood and to love. The critic, Bernhard Diebolds, writing in the Frankfurter Zeitung of June 1918 (107) criticized the generally abstract and ill-focussed nature of much of the Expressionist anti-war poetry which relied on the simple negation of war for its impact (blösser Antikriegseffekt (108)):- "Werke erstanden, die, ohne den Krieg auch nur zu nennen, die grosse Traurigkeit der Zeit ausklagten und ein vielfaches Nein gegen die menschliche Wirrnis gelten; jedoch ohne Erhebung über das Getümmel, ohne Klarheit über dem Wahngewebe". (Works appeared, which, without even mentioning the war, spoke out their grievances against the sadness of the times, shrilly repeating 'No' to the human chaos, yet without rising above the tumult, without sounding clearly above the web of madness.")

#### Middle-Class Reaction

The position of the bourgeois intellectuals, whether of right-wing or liberal inclination, was, at the beginning of the war equally unlikely to lead to active protest, despite the fact that their political exclusion under the regime (109) and the general malcontentedness, hostility and aggression of the younger Expressionists (110) could have provided ideal ground for opposition to the government and its war aims (111). However, the very fact of the middle-class writer's exclusion from political and social life had thrown him into a self-defensive and often vague aestheticism which stressed the power of the exceptional individual (usually the artist) (112) and the ennobling influence of art (113). The literature of around 1890-1914 therefore tended to be anti-democratic and anti-humanitarian in conception (114). This gradual predominance of anti-democratic ideas in the literature and the poetry of the pre-war decades (115)

is crucial to the later development not only of nationalist-chauvinist war poetry, but also explains to a great extent, firstly, the general anti-individualistic and non-humanitarian nature of all the initial war poetry, even that of Pacifist leaning (116), and secondly, the basic lack of active opposition to the war (Der fehlende Widerspruch) which Wandrey observes right up to 1918 even in the Expressionist pacifist poetry of Die Aktion (117). Furthermore, the middle-class intellectuals tendency to 'mythologize' and to create alternative Utopias to the existing Wilhelmine society, rather than being a harmless unpolitical activity, as it appeared on the surface, was in fact, an extremely important contribution to political reactionism, for their visionary ideologies were often, as those of the socialist writers, completely indistinguishable from extreme right-wing pro-imperialist idealism (118). Writers with 'Utopian' tendencies, merely adapted their ideas to the war situation to show their patriotism and proclaimed the conflict as a necessary and welcome period of transition to a higher plane of German spirituality (See the corresponding French idealism in Apollinaire's Toujours). Nationalist sentiment was never very far from the surface of such utterances as Alfred Wolfenstein's poem Der gute Kampf (The good fight) in which he proclaims the salvation of Mankind through conflict. The war is seen as a national crusade to the holy lands of eternal progress:-

"Erneuerung durch Kampf	( Regeneration through conflict
Kreuzzug	Crusade
O Vormarsch der Menschheit Kreuzzug	O Advance of Mankind Crusade
nach heiligen Ländern ! " (119)	to the Holy Lands!)

or indeed, as a beautiful, unfathomable spirit :

"O du grosses Ereignis,	( O you great event
unausdenkbarer Krieg.	imponderable War.
Ich sehe dich vorüberziehen,	I see you pass by
gespensterhaft schön." (120)	in your ghostly beauty. )

A close identification of ideas aligned many middle-class writers and poets with the imperialist ideology of the ruling class: the social snobbery of an elite, the fear of the 'proletariat' social democrats, the love of power and of monarchism, the alienation from democratic ideals and a growing nationalism (121). From such proximity it was not surprising therefore that many writers were unable to take up a critical stance against the war aims of the government when the time came (122). Neither did the essentially apolitical, asocial conception of art and the artist help them to come to terms with the social and human problems of an industrialized society at war. Furthermore, the essentially 'inward-turned' nature of their writing, the theorizing about the self and about society, their concern with the private moral and metaphysical agonies of the exceptional individual (as in Tonio Kröger) did not equip them with the necessary sympathy and understanding for the common individual. Yvan Goll (123) was particularly critical of the narrowness and essential inhumanity of the lyric poetry of the time - "Der Ich-Lyriker lügt, der sich von der Menschheit abtrennt und seinen imaginären Schmerz mit Rosenöl beträuft" (The self-centred lyric poet is a liar, who cuts himself off from humanity and sprinkles his imaginary pain with rose-water). Contact between writer and society had to some extent been severed, indeed, some more socially-minded and radical writers even thought that it was state policy to maintain this estrangement (124).

### Innerlichkeit

Whether or not the isolation of the bourgeois writer was politically contrived, the inward-turned nature of much of the pre-war German literature was nevertheless an undeniable fact, which distinguished it from Western literature as a whole. The loss of contact

with society of which Erich Mühsam complained, lead inevitably to a general loss of perspective most acutely obvious in the dislocated often grotesque visions of the Expressionists. The result of this loss of perspective, was, as we have seen, a mythologizing tendency ( *Kosmogonie der Lyrik* (125)) which expressed itself either in extremely grotesque imagery or vaguely euphoric abstractions (see for example the early poetry of Georg Heym, particularly Das Fieberspital or Werfel's Wir Sind). The effect of such poetry can be particularly disorientating for an English reader whose literary traditions are so dissimilar. The visionary proclivities of German pre-war poetry naturally continued in the poetry of 1914-18, through the Pan-German mysticism of the extreme nationalists, through the visionary idealism of the patriotic christian or marxist poets, to the general paradisiacal or chiliastic prophecies of those poets with no particularly radical political message, other than an anti-war stance (126). In order to understand the motivation of a great deal of the German war poetry of the period, it is necessary to keep in mind Michael Hamburger's general explanation of the socio-literary concept of "Innerlichkeit", in his book From Prophecy to Exorcism (127) and his opinion that "a greater readiness (is needed) to understand the very different premisses of the German imaginative writers: above all, the primacy so often accorded to the inner life of individuals rather than to social life, social tensions and social morality". Hamburger also explains the phenomenon of extreme chauvinism as being one of the effects of 'Innerlichkeit':- "fanatical nationalism is the reverse side of the isolation that was bound to result from the exclusive cultivation of private spiritual worlds" (128). Similarly, he considers Utopianism (the mythologizing tendency) as a natural

result of the same phenomenon, characterizing it as "the desperate ressort of that inwardness that longs to impose itself as a social norm (and to project) the ideal self-image of the individual onto an ideal society". (129).

As the war progressed, the Utopianism tended to develop into gloomier premonitions of collapse and dark chiliastic visions (which had, of course, existed before the war c.f. Georg Heym's Der Krieg). A certain cultural pessimism expressed itself in doom-laden prophesies, and in a perverse will to self-destruction. A much later poem than Heym's Der Krieg, written by Kurt Schwitters between March and June 1917 (130) continues the same nihilistic tradition. Other poems written by Schwitters with such doom-laden or visionary titles as Schicksal (Fate), Erhabenheit (Sublimity) further illustrate the later mood of pessimism.

Häuser Fallen, Himmel stürzen ein  
Bäume ragen über Bäume  
Himmel grünt rot  
Silberne Fische schwimmen in der Luft  
Sie verbrennen sich nicht  
Sie sind ja so innig  
Im ewigen Silber glänzt ihre Frühe  
Und der Wahn Schwillt heran und  
brüstet sich über die Himmel  
Millionen silberner Fische zittern  
über die Weite  
Doch singen sie nicht ihre silbernen  
Flügel  
Sanft weht die Luft vom silbernen  
Flügelschlag  
Brüsten sich Menschen  
Knien Seelen  
Riesengross wächst der Wahn über  
die Weite

Houses fall, heavens collapse  
Trees tower above trees  
The sky sprouts red  
Silver fish swim in the air  
They don't burn  
They are so indissoluble  
Their dawn gleams eternally silver  
And madness waxes large and  
puffs itself out over the sky  
Millions of silver fish tremble  
in the vastness  
Yet they do not singe their  
silver wings  
The air wafts gently in the  
silver wing beat  
people puff themselves out  
Souls kneel  
Madness grows, colossal,  
over the vast space.

The irrational perspective (Bäume ragen über Bäume) and the grotesque distortion of reality (Himmel grünt rot), the threat of apocalypse (Himmel stürzen ein) are all characteristically Expressionist, yet there is also a noticeable, almost trance-like passivity where the poet watches the growth of the horror of war, as if from a great dis-



tance. A dull fascination with the inevitability of war seems to have suppressed any potential for protest in this poem, and is evidence of the 'non-political passivity' of which Hamburger speaks in connection with the phenomenon of 'Innerlichkeit' (131). Uwe Wandrey (132) also notes a similar psychological as well as political passivity in many of the Aktion poets who had had actual experience of trench fighting and concludes that it is this element of passivity which leads not only to the high degree of abstraction and 'context unrelatedness' (as in the poem above) but also to the lack of clear protest in the sense of "open anger and decisive rejection" (offene Empörung und entschlossene Ablehnung). Wandrey is very emphatic on this point (133). Neither the pacifist movement, nor the comparative relaxation of censorship after 1917 seemed to alter the main attitudes of the Aktion lyric poets, who remained as before, divided between Nietzschean idealism or passive resignation. Wandrey, does, however, record a new note of 'despair and decay' following the experiences of 1916, but this new attitude can be seen more as a reply to the pro-war militarist factions (134) and as a reaction to the general misery of the situation, than as an independent and committed reaction against the war. Any protest tends to be passively complaining (135) rather than harshly accusatory as in the vein of the poetry of Owen or Sassoon, as Wandrey concludes - "Die Ablehnung war passiv, klagend anstatt anklagend" (Rejection was passive, complaining rather than accusatory) (136). A typical example of the kind of war poetry described, is to be found in the following contribution to Die Aktion (137) which does not refer to the war at all, but to the dark powers of death which threaten the flowering of a generation and which are about to kill it at the point of maturity. The general atmosphere is one of sadness, disorientation and helplessness, dominated by an

unmistakable acceptance of approaching fate:

Mit weh im Herzen durch die fremden Strassen laufen  
Und ein Glockenlauten lang  
Nur Stillhalten  
Das ist mein Sein  
Seit so vielen Tagen

Der Sommer kam  
Und grössere Fülle wand dir, Natur  
Nun reifte langsam die Frucht  
der Gebärdung entgegen  
und wandte sich quillend zum Licht  
Wir träumten kaum erst unter Blütenbäumen  
Vom Leichen des Daseins  
Da überkam uns schon  
Schwerdunkle Fülle des Grabes.

(Running  
With melancholy in my heart through strange streets  
Stopping  
Only the space of a bell's chime:  
This has been my existence  
For so many days

Summer came  
And greater richness was yours, Nature  
Now the fertile fruit matured slowly  
Turned swelling to the light  
Yet under the blossom trees we had hardly dreamt  
Of the corpse of destiny  
But the dark and heavy fullness of the grave  
Was upon us)

Another similar example is to be found in Verhaeren's poem Ma Chambre from his anthology Les Ailes Rouges de la Guerre which undoubtedly expresses horror at the war, but it is horror expressed in a stylized statement which amounts almost to acceptance, in that the poet makes no attempt to explore the implications of the suffering or to narrow his generalized rejection of war to the real object of concern - the individual soldier:-

"O guerre dans le sol, O guerre dans les rues.

La fureur s'y condense et l'horreur s'y accroît

Et des prairies aux monts, et des fleuves aux bois

Tout est sombre et terrible et sanglant à la fois." (p. 46)

(O war on the ground, O war in the clouds

Fury gathers there and horror augments

And from the plains to the mountains and from the rivers to  
the woods

All is at once dark and terrible and bloody.)

These four lines are concentrated with terms of disapproval and rejection (horreur, sombre, terrible, sanglant) but their very abstraction reveals the non-specific aspect of the protest. The use of abstract nouns and plurals (plaines, monts, fleuves, etc.), the introduction of 'à la fois' for the sake of rhyme, the exclamation marks, suggest carelessness and even lack of control of the medium. These technical and stylistic weaknesses imply that the poet's critical energies were employed elsewhere - not in considered protest, or in the renewal of poetic language, but in an almost morbid exploitation of the sensationalism of the moment. Morbidity is a strong characteristic of the German reaction to the death and destruction.

The acceptance of death as the soldier's fate is nowhere more clearly stated than in the poem Vor der Schlacht (Before Battle) by Max Barthel (138):

Aber das Schicksal ist mächtiger  
als Sehnsucht und Wille  
Tragisch ist unser Sterben  
Wir kennen den Einsatz  
Keiner das Ziel

(But destiny is more powerful than either longing or will  
Our death is tragic  
We know the beginning  
But no-one the goal)

### Conformism

Closely allied to the idea of "non-political passivity" is the concept of conformism (139) which also has far-reaching effects for the German War poetry of the period under consideration. The political

and social manifestations of conformism are linked with the growth of militarism (140), and nationalism (141) in the Prussian State (142) which moved Germany further away from Western democratic ideas and Western concern with individual liberty (143). Romantic theories concerning the supremacy of the State above the individual (144) and the subsequent stress on the importance of the community, merely served to reinforce the idea of the separate German nation. at the outbreak of the war, as Robert Musil observed in his essay Europäertum, Krieg, Deutschtum (1914) (145) -

"die Welt klaffte in Deutsch und Widerdeutsch, und eine betäubende Zugehörigkeit riss uns das Herz aus den Händen."

(A gaping chasm divided the world into Germans and Anti-Germans and a stupefying sense of belonging tore our hearts from our hands) This irrational, elemental feeling of belonging developed through the war into a quasi-mystical concept of community, often with religious overtones as in Fritz von Unruh's idea of the 'holy community' of the German fighting spirit (146)... It is this stress on the community, on the corporate 'we', as opposed to the individual conscience, which has traditionally separated German from English political thought, with its "vital, moral, sense of individual liberty" (Romain Rolland) (147). Whereas, according to Michael Hamburger (148), English individualism took the form of "outward independence and non-conformism" (149) (and thus provided a suitable moral climate for criticism of and protest against the war and for the expression of humanitarian concern with the suffering of the individual in the real world (150)), German society tended "to turn towards a rigid conformism of outward behaviour to accommodate the exceptional or merely vital individual who is driven back into the isolation of his embattled spiritual world". (151) The resultant literature was inclined to be concerned with abstract states of human existence, as we have seen, and to view the individual as a

type, or as a part of a wider community:-

"Daraus entsprangen eine Neigung metaphysischer Verstiegtheit  
und eine Menschensicht, die das Einzelwesen nur als  
Verkörperung allgemeiner Prinzipien, den Menschen nur  
als, "Singular von Menschheit" (Brecht) zeigte" (152)

( From this came a tendency towards metaphysical extravagance and a  
view of humanity which saw the individual only as an embodiment of  
general principles, the human being only as the "singular of humanity"  
(Brecht))

It is thus the absence of humanitarian concern with the individual  
which distinguishes most of the German war poetry from the English poetry  
of the same period (153) and indeed any chauvinist poetry in general  
(154).

The following excerpt from a French patriotic poem serves to  
illustrate the degree of abstraction attained by poetry which dealt  
with types rather than with individuals. The 'individual' (here an  
officer) in his complete subordination to a greater cause (the well-  
being and defence of the community) is totally dehumanized, so that  
it becomes impossible to imagine him touched by the reality of  
physical death:-

Un Officier Blessé (155)

Oh, l'ineffable, insigne et magnifique chose  
Marcher, frapper, faucher  
Se battre comme un preux  
Voir un peu de son sang vivace et généreux  
Couler pour une sainte et surhumaine cause.

(Oh, the inexpressible, remarkable and magnificent thing.  
To march, to strike, to slay, to fight like the best of them,  
to see a little of one's lively and noble blood spilt in a  
sacred and superhuman cause).

The following comparison between firstly, two pieces on the  
theme of death and secondly, two pieces on the theme of suffering,  
will serve to illustrate the essential difference in the value placed  
on the individual in German 'imperialist' and French 'chauvinist'  
poetry on the one hand and the more 'humanitarian' English product  
on the other.

The first comparison is between an excerpt from a German novel

Der Tod vor Ypem by Wilhelm Schreiner (156) describing the effect upon a soldier of the death of his brother and the poem Lamentations by Siegfried Sassoon on the same theme (discussed previously in Chapter 1 pp.24-26). The extract is as follows:-

"Kaum gab der Morgen des 25 Oktobers gutes Buchsenlicht als Karl Deusses aufschreiend: "Ich bin getroffen" seinem Bruder in die Arme sank. Sanft liess ihn der zur Erde gleiten; schon brach seine Auge. Mit zitternder Hand suchte sein Bruder nach einer Verletzung. Nichts! - Doch, hier, hinten in der linken Schulter ein ganz kleines, glattes Loch. Wie es durch die Reihe ging- "Karl Deussen ist tot", brach schon der nächste zusammen, ein Oberjäger, Schuss im Rücken. Alle starrten nach hinter. Das kann doch nicht sein! Das wieder! Jetzt war's deutlich zu hören. Die Schüsse kamen aus dem Gehöft, rechts rückwärts. Rätsel! Patrouille hin! Meldung: aus dem Hause wurde auf uns geschossen".

(Hardly had the morning light of 25th October begun to glimmer, than Karl Deussen cried out, "I'm hit" and sank into his brother's arms. The latter let him slip gently to earth, but death had already glazed his eye. With trembling hand his brother felt for a wound. Not a sign of anything! Yes, there was, a small, smooth hole in the back of his left shoulder. As the news that Karl Duessen was dead, was being passed on, another one collapsed, this time a corporal. Bullet in the back. Everyone stared behind them. It couldn't be! There it was again! Now it was clear for all to hear. Shots were coming out of the farm behind us on the right. Curious! Send out a patrol! Report: we were being shot at from the house)

Whereas Sassoon focusses primarily on the human implications of bereavement in order to point up the callousness of official war policy,

the emphasis in the German extract is neither on the moral implications of the individual's death, nor on the ascription of wider moral responsibility for the war, but on the significance of the specific event of death (here as an alarm signal) for the continued well-being of the military unit. The whole scene merely serves as a somewhat stereotyped illustration of the general theme - 'soldier's death' or 'death in the group' (157) with the traditional conventions of 'sinking into comrade's arms' (etc) and the traditional pseudo-epic description of the moment of death (death glazed his eyes (etc)). The hurried, intentionally matter-of-fact style gives little opportunity for a sentimental consideration of the emotional effect of death (although the theme 'brother's death' already has some additional emotional interest), as in the Sassoon poem. The crisp impartiality on the part of the German writer seems to imply an acceptance of self-sacrifice as a necessary effect of war, whereas Sassoon's controlled objectivity has the opposite emotive effect (See Chp. 1. p 25).

Another example of the subordination of the individual to the group with its concomitant lack of humanitarian concern, is to be found in Apollinaire's treatment of the plight of infantrymen in the mud of the trenches in the poem 2<sup>e</sup> Canonnier Conducteur (158). The lack of focus on the experience of the individual is particularly evident if the Apollinaire excerpt is compared with a passage on the same theme from Owen's Dulce et Decorum Est Pro Patria Mori (159). Firstly, here are the two texts.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| A) Voici des fantassins aux pas pesants<br>aux pieds boueux<br>La pluie les pique de ses aiguilles<br><br>La sac les suit<br>Marchantes mottes de terre<br>Vous êtes la puissance<br>Du sol qui vous a faits<br>Et c'est le sol qui va<br>Lorsque vous avancez | (Here are some infantrymen dragging<br>their muddy feet;<br>The rain pricks them with its<br>needles<br>They carry their packs behind them<br>Walking clods of earth<br>You are the power<br>Of the earth which made you<br>And it is the earth which moves<br>As you advance) |
|--|--|

- b) Bent double, like old beggars under sacks  
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,  
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs  
And towards our distant rest began to trudge  
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots,  
But limped on, blood-shod. (etc)

The patriotic tone of Apollinaire's poem is marked from the outset by its rather chauvinist emphasis on the proud, free spirit of the warrior. Owen's poem, on the other hand, aims at a thorough-going negation of the "high zest" of patriotic enthusiasm. The one poem elevates, the other depresses. Both are persuasively eloquent to opposite ends. Such is the simple thematic contrast. What is perhaps more interesting, because less immediately obvious, are the general underlying attitudes to the group and the individual in both poems. In the Apollinaire poem, the individual is subordinated to the group, whereas in the Owen poem, the group functions as a background to the suffering of the individual, suffocating in a gas attack. The poem moves from general description of the group, to minutely detailed focus on the "white eyes writhing" of the dying soldier. 2<sup>e</sup> Cannonier Conducteur lacks this narrowing focus, for Apollinaire does not specifically concentrate on any individual fate (other than his own). The resulting vision of war is far more diffuse, scattered in transient, disconnected imagery, which has all the variety of a moving kaleidoscope, but none of the clarity and concentration of Owen's focus. Characteristically, Apollinaire dwells only fleetingly on the physical hardships suffered by the men and when he does so, it is in imprecise formulaic phrases - 'aux pas pesants', 'aux pieds boueux' or in neutral observation - 'le sac les suit'. Accurate description would be an encumbrance to the smooth surface development of the main patriotic 'conceit' which runs through the metaphysical ascendance from the initial "boue" through "terre" to "sol" (160). Born of the earth, the men are invested with her elemental power, they are at one with her in life (and death) and bear her colours (marchantes mottes de terre). No mortal men of clay,



these, for they have power even over the earth (et c'est le sol qui va/ Lorsque vous avancez). The soldiers, as a corporate group overcome the limitations of the mere individual; they are presented as being actively in control of their destinies and are invested with the charismatic influence, of which alone, implicitly, the French Army is capable (161). The constant reference to their plurality (162) as a source of strength, naturally deflects any contemplation of the weakness and helplessness of the individual soldier in war. The use of the plural in Owen's poem does not have this palliative effect but serves rather to reinforce the idea of the extent of physical suffering. The men suffer as one. The intensification of the vocabulary from the rather bland description in 2<sup>e</sup> Cannonier Conducteur to the almost grotesque physicality of Dulce (aux pas pesants → bent double; boue → sludge; le sac les suit → like old beggars under sacks) clearly shows the direction of Owen's moral concern. The men are not charismatic but ugly and oppressed, with the implication of impotence (Contrast Apollinaire's "Vous êtes la puissance" with the "demanned" state of Owen's soldiers, who have lost their boots (the insignia of the warrior) and are almost deprived of their senses with fatigue). Owen presents us with a symbol not only of the suffering, but also of the corruption of Mankind in war.

Although for some, the effect of Owen's poem may be unsubtle and overworked, it is nevertheless one of the most memorable poems of protest to come out of the war. The exaggerated intensity of its realism, its detailed concentration on the physiological horror of death, detract neither from its power as a universal condemnation of war, nor from the appositeness of the language. Max Barthel, the German worker-poet achieved a similar pitch of intense physicality, yet without the quality of Owen's effect, for Barthel's poem sinks to the level of foul-mouthed deprecation stemming from personal disill-

usionment, rather than humanitarian concern for the fate of others

(163):-

"Verdammt, so ein Hund mit schwarzer Mähne  
Schlug mir aufbrüllend den Schädel entzwei!  
Das Blut quoll bitter durch meine Zähne  
Ich gurgelte im wehen Geschrei  
Nun kommt der Tod mit seiner Hacke  
(.....)  
Ich bin wie ein Vieh, das einsam verendet -  
was soll mir der Trost vom Vaterland?"

(Hellfire, a cursed dog with blackmane came howling  
and split my skull in two!  
The blood, bitter-tasting, welled up through my teeth  
I choked and gurgled with a miserable scream  
Now Death comes with his sickle  
I'm like an animal dying alone  
What use is patriotic consolation to me?)

If Owen is not alone in the brutality of his realism, neither is he the only poet to give vent to high-minded moral outrage against war. Fritz von Unruh a German pacifist playwright of the First World War equals him in sincerity and idealism. However, unlike Owen, the consequence of von Unruh's energetic pacifism is often bathos as in the following extract from his play Vor der Entscheidung (where among other things, severed arms and rotting horses' guts appear as dramatic presences on stage)

"Ist es Brüder, auszudenken  
Dass die Gärten unserer Stadt  
In der Frauen Blut ertranken?"

(Can one possibly conceive Brother  
That the gardens of our city  
Should drown in the blood of our wives?)

Neither the degree of realism nor the degree of humanitarian concern dictates the quality of war poetry, as will be discussed in the final chapter of this study. Poetry is not the inevitable precipitate of truth and pity, as Owen would have it, although they are essential catalysts in the process of creation and indispensable elements in good war poetry. For committed art to succeed as art, it must obey certain aesthetic principles as well as the rules of an external

order. Owen's poetry is mostly successful in combining the two, but first and foremost it is true to its own poetic code. It is therefore the internal poetic structures of poetry, as exemplified in the metaphor, that will be the main focus of the next chapter.

### CHAPTER THREE

(1) The later poetry is usually meant by this phrase to be specifically the work of Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon, but it also includes other considerable poets such as Edmund Blunden, Robert Graves and Isaac Rosenberg. The poet Charles Sorley was killed too early in the war for him to be ranked among the great names, but his was a powerful talent in the making and it is possible that he may have inclined to a similar form of protest as the others. (See Jon Silkin Out of Battle (p. 82) for this view that Sorley would have produced "a lean, spare poetry no less condemnatory than Owen's, with perhaps more analytic force." For the opposite view see John Press, "Charles Sorley" Review of Eng. Lit. (Vol.7, No.2, April 1966 p.58) who thought him near to embracing "the joyous, heroic mode which Yeats advocates as the proper temper for poets writing about the war."

For information on Owen, Sassoon and Sorley see the Bibliography.

(2) The German critic G. Lutz writing in 1938 in an article Europas Kriegserlebnis : Ein Überblick über das äusserdeutsche Kriegsschrifttum (The European Experience of War : A survey of non-German war writings) in Euphorion (Vol. 39, p. 133ff.) notes the tone of protest as a dominant characteristic of the English poetry. "In der englischen Kriegsliteratur überwiegt in der Rückschau meist die pazifistisch ethische Deutung. Die dichterischen Bilder werden von individuellen Schicksalen ausgefüllt" (In retrospect, it is the pacifist-ethical interpretation which mostly predominates in the English war literature. The poetic imagery is stuffed full of individual destinies). The continual implication of disapproval is a function of the National Socialist ideology current at the time.

(2a) Charles Péguy was killed just at the beginning of the Battle of the Marne and was therefore in a relatively poor position, much as Rupert Brooke, to foresee the later horrors. Nevertheless both poets adopted an uncompromisingly romantic attitude to death.

(3) Uwe Wandrey in his doctoral thesis, Das Motiv des Krieges in der expressionistischen Lyrik (The Theme of War in Expressionist Poetry) (Hamburg 1972, p. 249) remarks that both the Home Front and soldier poets in Germany "repressed the socio-historical reality of war" ("verdräng(t)en die historisch-gesellschaftliche Realität Krieg").

(4) The failure of both French and German poetry to register the human rather than the ideological or political implications of the war is, as Patrick Bridgewater argues of the German output in his article German Poetry of the 1st. World War in European Studies Review (Vol. 1, No. 2, 1972, p. 170), an artistic failure 'tout court' - "The chauvinistic variety of war poetry is a denial of the individual and therefore of art". Albert Schinz in French Literature of the Great War (New York, 1920, p. 328) in his discussion of the French war poetry, disapproves of the inflated patriotic verse, as does Marcel Raymond nearly 30 years later in De Baudelaire au Surréalisme (Librairie José Corti, 1947 p. 207) preferring the 'plain war songs' - termed by Marcel as "les pièces simplement humaines et douloureuses." Although the French patriotic verse does express despair at the suffering and is blown through by the wind of revolt ("le souffle de révolte de celui qui ne peut pas accepter le crime" (Marcel p. 207)) - the protest is more an epic gesture designed to advertise the virtue and sincerity of the author as a mouthpiece of 'la patrie' or to publicize feelings of solidarity and mutual horror. Much of the poetry of Émile Verhaeren in his anthology Les Ailes Rouges de la Guerre (Mercure de France, Paris MCMXVI) functions at this level, one feels ( See p. 147. )

Poems which combine a more considered (but no less impassioned) attitude of protest with a far greater control of language, such as Heinrich Lersch's Der Tote (The Dead Soldier) and Wilfred Owen's Futility are

successful works of art. Likewise, Guillaume Apollinaire's Si je mourais là-bas (p. 392), although treating the author's own potential death rather than the real death of another, and as such not really a poem of protest in the English sense, nevertheless manages to be poignant without the overblown passion of the French patriotic verse and attains universality without the false buttressing of rhetoric. It achieves human relevance without the maudlin sentimentality to which even established poets like Verhaeren were so oddly vulnerable. (For an explanation of the passion and the rhetoric of the early years see Robert Nichols' Introduction to War Poetry 1914-18 (Nicholson and Nicholson, London 1943) and 'Such was my Singing' ed. Collins, 1942, p. 32.) Si je mourais là-bas, although not a poem of protest as we have seen, is one of the very rare poems written by Apollinaire, where in a manner comparable to the best English poets, he invites us to reflect on the meaning of individual life in war and alerts us to the communality of needs and desires in every human being. The human element is indispensable to art as Patrick Bridgewater so rightly stresses, and it is for its inherent inclusion of this aspect that the real poetry of protest is so successful on an artistic level. Such poetry has its roots in experience and its closeness to the reality of the individual gives it a defining mark of authenticity as both Owen and Sassoon knew. Jon Silkin's remark in The Penguin Book of First World War Poetry (1979, p. 70) that "most good poetry keeps close to the experiential rather than to abstraction" is in close agreement with Leon Riegel's observation in Guerre et Litterature 1910-30 (1978, p. 20) that "the most exciting and the most fertile" ("la plus passionnante et la plus féconde") area of literature is to be found in the "current of protest" ("le courant protestataire").

(5) cf. The opinion of contemporary German critics on the German war poetry of the period. Much of it was adverse. Julius Bab, an early reviewer, was soon painfully aware of the poor quality of the German lyric and of the failure of the poets to provide "an enrichment, direction and increase" ("Bereicherung, Führung, Mehrung") to the experience of war. In explanation, he proffered the divisive influences of the ideological conflict between militarists and pacifists. His remarks, which are of documentary interest, are as follows : "Eine schöpferischen Kraft ersten Ranges hat sich noch nicht zum Wort gemeldet. Es mag zum Teil daran liegen, daß in dieser schwersten deutschen Schicksalsstunde die beiden politischen Grundkräfte, die einander in glücklichen Frankreich einst so herrlich ergänzten, so verhängnisvoll gegen einander arbeiten" (Die deutsche Revolutionslyrik, 1918, p. 15) ("A creative talent of the first order has not yet spoken out. It may be partly due to the fact that, in this most difficult hour of German destiny, the two basic political powers, that once so complemented each other in happy France, are now so fatally working against each other") The critics Mielke and Homann writing in Der deutsche Roman (1920, p.498 ) are equally condemnatory of the German war novel and offer a variety of reasons for the general artistic failure , from the unlikely one that literary humility prevented many from writing- " Die zu Hause blieben, fühlten die Unmöglichkeit, dieses Weltgeschehen zu gestalten, wenn sie das Urerlebnis des Kampfes entbehrten. " ( " Those who remained at home felt it impossible to give shape to such great world events because they had gone without the first hand experience of battle. ") to the more domestic reasons of deprivation and starvation ("körperliche Not " ). Their suggestion that restrictions of censorship ("eine nicht zu unterschätzende Hemnis für die Dichtung : die deutsche Zensur.") did considerable damage to literary production is more likely,

although as Uwe Wandrey, op.cit., p.245, remarks, the considerable relaxation of censorship in 1917 did not affect poetry either way - " (...) die stark gelockerten Zensurbestimmungen haben die Lyrik offenbar nicht wesentlich verändert."

One of the most prosaic but devastating reasons they mention is the effect of heavy mortality on the quality of the literature produced at this time. ("Von den vollendeten Künstlern mögen nicht viele ins Feld hinausgekommen sein," (Not many of the more accomplished artists had the luck to return with their lives from the battle field.) Indeed, some quite major poets were killed early on in the war. Georg Heym died at the age of 24 in 1912. Ernst Stadler was hit by an English shell at Ypres on 30th October, 1914. Kurd Adler died at the age of 24 on 6th July, 1916. Georg Trakl died of an overdose in November 1914.

French poetry suffered similar telling blows:-

Charles Péguy fell in 1914 at the Battle of the Marne. Alain Fournier (one of France's most sensitive writers) was reported missing in a wood in 1914. Guillaume Apollinaire was seriously wounded in the head by a shell splinter on 17th March, 1916. His poetry deteriorated drastically as a result.

Although English poets such as Charles Sorley were cut off before their poetry had time to develop, others such as Wilfred Owen who died five days before the armistice and Isaac Rosenberg who died on 1 April 1918, probably produced some of their finest verse during the war.

Despite the unfortunate external influences which weighed heavily against the production of good German poetry, there are nevertheless no major figures. As Patrick Bridgewater (op.cit., p. 150) points out - there were the talents but the body of their work was not sufficient for them to be remembered. "The real German poetry of the war is the work of a 100 odd poets, many of whom only produced one or two outstanding poems and are now completely forgotten.

( Peter Baum, Richard Fischer, Gerhard Moerner (etc)).



German criticism does seem largely to have forgotten its poetry of the first world war and some writers, for example, the poet and dramatist Fritz von Unruh who was widely acclaimed towards the end of the war, have fallen into an almost total obscurity, from which they are only intermittently revived. Friedrich Rasche noted in 1960 in his book Fritz von Unruh, Rebell und Verkünder (Fritz von Unruh, rebel and Prophet ) the peculiar forgetfulness of the German critics and reading public alike:-

" Es ist nichts Ungewöhnliches, daß die Deutschen einen Dichter haben und sie wissen es nicht, oder sie wollen es nicht wissen und wehren sich gegen ihn" ("It is nothing out of the ordinary for the Germans to have a poet and not be aware of him; or rather they do not want to know him and defend themselves against him.) This seems to be the case for certain eminent critics such as Ernst Rose in A History of German Literature (New York 1960) who devotes a mere page to their First World War poets. On the other hand, Uwe Wandrey (1972) has given detailed consideration to the war poetry of a multiplicity of Expressionist poets, yet has been unable to isolate any particularly outstanding talent, and in fact refuses to make any qualitative appreciation of their output. ("Bewertende Rückschlüsse etwa ob die expressionistische Lyrik "gute" oder "schlechte" Kriegsdichtung hervorgebracht hatte, sind hier nicht in der Frage." p. 68) (Evaluative judgements as to whether the expressionist poetry produced "good" or "bad" war poetry have no place here))

Generally speaking, the war poetry of the Expressionists, despite their avant-garde reputations, was largely written in conventional and stylized language (see Chp.p, 65 + Ft. 7) and was not really concerned with the historical fact of war. Many major writers such as Franz Werfel (1890-45) had their sights elsewhere during the war and concerned themselves more with postwar problems. It is not,

therefore, surprising that interest in Expressionist war poetry, like much of the Expressionist lyrics in general, is an intermittent affair. Some critics still consider that they should be relegated to obscurity - "einer legitimen Vergessenheit" where they belong.

(H.E. Holthuisen in Lyrik des expressionist ischen Jahrhunderts, (DTV 1962 p.199))

French war poetry has fared little better at the hands of French critics such as Emile Villard (see Chp. 2. p. 71), Raymond Marcel or Jean Guhenno, La Mort des Autres (ed. Bernard Grasset, Paris 1968). Apollinaire received hostile criticism early after the war from the young surrealists such as André Breton who were still suffering from the consequences of what Breton termed 'le défaitisme de guerre' (See. Chp. 4. footnote 10). A later article by Aragon (1935) Beautés de la Guerre et leurs reflets dans la littérature in Europe, objected to Apollinaire's flippant attitude to war which had previously incurred the wrath of the surrealists. Such critics as Norma Rinsler (The War Poems of G.A. in French Studies April 1971, no. 2), Margaret Davies (Apollinaire, Edinburgh, 1962) Claude Debon, Guillaume Apollinaire Après Alcools, Paris, 1981) J.C. Chevalier (La Poésie d'Apollinaire et le Calembour, in Europe, (Dec. 1966 56-76) have worked extremely hard to counter this major criticism. Roger Little, (Guillaume Apollinaire, Athlone French Poets, 1976) is not only generally scathing about G.A.'s abilities as a war poet, but (p.46) is unable to find a French equivalent to the English poets. "I know of no poet of the First World War to match them".

Jon Silkin, First World War Poetry (Penguin 1979) and Patrick Bridgewater (20 German Verse) (Penguin Poets, Harmondsworth 1968), Michael Hamburger, German Poetry 1910-75 (Manc. 1977) have now made available some of the more anthologizable continental poetry to a wider reading public.

(6) Kurd Adler (1892-1916) published poems in Die Aktion, 1915.

(7) See J.H. Johnston, English Poetry of the First World War (Princeton Univ. Press, 1964) for an opinion as to the narrowness of English lyrical poetry. "Never before in literature had war been described with this painful compression of action and incident with this narrowing of focus (...)" (p.13). Apollinaire does handle a variety of topics which Owen does not: (trench life, literary matters, politics) and even projects his vision to the future in such poems as Victoire. Nevertheless, he trips lightly over these themes and only in his love poetry is there evidence of a deeper and more continued metaphorical development (see Chp. 4).

(8) Sorley, Charles, in The Poems and Selected Letters of Charles Hamilton Sorley (ed. Hilda Spear, Blackness Press, 1978, p.71)

(9) All criticism of Owen is not favourable. C.H. Sisson English Poetry 1900-1950 (Rupert Hart-Davis, London 1971) is at times extremely harsh. For example, he judges The Dead Beat as follows:- "unpleasant and tasteless. It is the voice of protest, but protesting against an attitude no adequate mind would defend. This is the worst element in Owen's work and is certainly below the level of literature." (p.85) Vernon Scannell, Not without Glory (Woburn Press, London 1976) speaks of "over-sweet sensuousness, flatulent rhetoric" and "mish-mash of fustian and bathos" (p.10).

(10) (Sythoff Leyde, 1961 p.3) - "l'éternel préambule sur les rapports entre littérature et société" (the eternal preamble on the relationships between literature and society) is a feature of certain critical books which the editor considers out of date. Léon Riegel, (op.cit. p.17) sees the socio-historical background as an important influence in any particular national response, but cannot establish the existence of a similar consensus in literature. "Dans chaque pays, nous découvrons une spécificité de l'ordre social et politique qui détermine des réactions propre à chaque peuple (...). Dans le domaine littéraire,

il n'existe pas d'entente préalable."

(11) D.S.R. Welland, Wilfred Owen, A Critical Study, (Revised and enlarged edition, Chatto and Windus, London, 1978, Postscript).

(12) Uwe Waldrey, op.cit. p.253-254. Waldrey acknowledges that a comparison of social and poetic structures can only be a tentative one and can at most highlight structural analogies or perhaps elements which both areas have in common. - "Allerdings wird dieser Vergleich nicht mehr erbringen können, als die Feststellung einer strukturellen Analogie (...) and eventuell eines für beide Strukturbereiche übergreifenden Gemeinsamen"-(p.253). Some of the comparisons he makes are interesting - for instance, the Pan-German drive he sees as reflected in the aggressive exclamatory statements and in the dislocated sentences so typical of the Expressionist "neue Syntax", or he sees the impersonality of an anonymous military hierarchy expressed in the widely used image of war as a threatening but unknown force.

(13) Arthur Marwick, War and Social Change in the 20th Century (London, 1974, p.85).

Marwick's comment applies equally to the English and German poetry of the period. The high degree of realism and the relentless honesty of the English images of war, of course derived from the earlier tradition of Romanticism - (See D.S.R. Welland, op.cit. p.175 - "Romantic theory and practice gave great prominence to the imagination as an image - making faculty") and the increasing demand for poetic realism in the decade before the war. (cf. for example Brooke's 'sea-sick' poems and Robert Bridges' earlier inclusion of such 'shockingly' realistic dialectisms as "you closly put" in his poetry)

The highly abstract nature of the corresponding German poetry is discussed fully below, see p.141 ff.

(14) Robert Wohl, The Generation of 1914 (Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London, 1980) in his 'generational approach' to the years around 1914 in Europe, explores the different national perspectives against what he sees as a unity of "experience, feeling and fate". The secret to the study of European History, Wohl tells us, is, according to a phrase of the historian Ortega, "the same things, but in another way,".

(15) Quoted in D.S.R. Welland, op.cit.

(16) Thomas B. Swann, The Ungirt Runner, C.H. Sorley, Poet of the First World War (Archon Books, Connecticut, 1965, p.110).

(17) Jon Silkin, Out of Battle, The Poetry of the Great War (Oxford Univ. Press, 1978, p.208).

(18) His anti-war statement, which Bertrand Russell helped him to write, appeared in the pacifist review The Nation.

He meant it as an act of "wilful defiance of military authority". An excerpt from it runs as follows:

"I believe that this War, upon which I entered as a war of defence and liberation, has now become a war of aggression and conquest.

(...) I can no longer be a party to prolong these sufferings for ends which I believe to be evil and unjust. I am not protesting against the conduct of the war (sic), but against the political errors and insincerities for which the fighting men are being sacrificed."

This extract would seem to suggest that Sassoon would, under certain circumstances, entertain the notion of a just war, whereas Owen would not.

(19) Quoted in Robert Wohl, op.cit., p.261.

(20) The Poems and Selected Letters of Charles H. Sorley (ed. H.D. Spear, Blackness Press, 1978).

(21) D.S.R. Welland, op.cit., p.169.

(22) (quoted in The Poems of Wilfred Owen, (ed. Edmund Blunden, Chatto and Windus, London, 1961, Memoir, p.29). All poems referred to are in this edition.

(23) Wilfred Owen, *op.cit.*, p.81.

(24) Despite the apparent unimpeachability of Owen's opinion of war as an unnecessary evil, his views have not always been accepted as correct. Immediately after 1918 and up to the end of the 1920's intellectuals of both Left and Right were convinced that England's victory had really been a defeat (the Left having seen their ideals of a new Utopia dashed and the Right having seen the old world demolished beyond all hope of restoration). In spite of the general disillusionment, however, and despite attempts by extreme Right-wing intellectuals like Douglas Jerrold to alter public opinion, the view of war as an unnecessary evil prevailed until the advent of the 2nd World War. This war is still regarded by the generation who lived through it as a basically "good" war (A.J.P. Taylor). Philip Larkin, from a post 2nd World War perspective, when reviewing C. Day Lewis's Collected Poems of Wilfred Owen in The Listener (10th October 1963) notes Lewis's following remark - "Owen's poetry came home deepest to members of my generation, so that we could never again think of war as anything but a vile, if necessary, evil" as evidence of the non-universality of Owen's basic premise about war. Larkin remarks-

"This would not have been there before 1939 (and) shows that on the whole the implications of Owen's poetry have been found unacceptable. We do not honour him the less for this, but it strengthens the historical limitations that attend his work."

Twenty years on from Larkin's article, the 'historical limitations' seem to refer more aptly to his judgement than to Owen's. Old

notions die hard. The apparent recourse to the early idealism of Brooke in some young poets of the 2nd World War, show how far heroic values had been ingrained into the English mentality. (V. Scannell, op. cit., p.16-17).

(25) An example of the way the Church hierarchy turned a blind eye to the killing is to be found in a sermon by the then Bishop of Hereford, which appeared in the Times of August 12, 1914.

"That better and happier day when the people now under militarist rule (Germany) shall regulate their own life is doubtless still so far away that an old man like myself can hardly hope to see it dawning, but amidst all the burden of gloom and sorrow which this dreadful war lays upon us, we can at least thank God that it brings that better day a long step nearer for the generation in front of us."

Quoted in H.D. Lasswell, Propaganda Technique in the World War, (London, 1927, p.74).

(26) Quoted in Blunden's edition of the Collected Poems, op.cit. p.25.

(27) D.S.R. Welland, op.cit., p.61.

(28) Quoted in Charles Sorley, Poems and Letters, (ed. H. Spear) op.cit.

(29) Jon Silkin, in Out of Battle neatly describes the guilt arising from what he terms this 'Victor/Victim' paradox.

(30) Apart from the joyful camaraderie which he shared with 'les simples soldats' (Lettre à Lou, le 15 avril 1915) and the respect he held for the men's courage, (La Nuit Descend, p.741), his feelings for the men did not reach the almost spiritual intensity of Owen's Greater Love.

See also C. Debon, Guillaume Apollinaire après Alcools, (Lettres Modernes Minard, Paris, 1981, p.116) on his failure to make any particular friendships in the front line:- "Il ne paraît pas avoir noué de véritable amitié".

(31) Maurice Bowra, Poetry of the First World War, (Taylorian Lectures, Oxford University Press., 1961 p.21). Following quotation p.21.

(32) Apollinaire was generally reticent about the horror of the trenches and when he does describe them, it is in semi-heroic language as in a letter to Yves Blanc, le 5 dec. 1915:-

"Je suis depuis six jours déjà dans la tranchée de première ligne dont l'horreur ne se peut décrire, encore moins imaginer. De ces abîmes blancs, pleins d'eau, arrosés par la pluie métallique et puante des plus redoutables engins de guerre (etc)"

(I've already been here six days in the front line trenches, the horror of which defies description and defeats the imagination. From these white abysses full of water, sprinkled by the stinking metallic rain of the most fearful engines of war (etc))

or in Alexandrine couplets:-

"Cette boue est atroce aux chemins détrempés

Les yeux des fantassins ont des lueurs navrantes".

(This mud is atrocious on the drenched roads

The eyes of the infantry soldiers have desolate looks.)

(Poemes à Lou p.425)

(33) Norma Rinsler, The War Poems of Guillaume Apollinaire op.cit., p.181. "His imaginative sympathy can be seen in 'Les Soupirs du Servant de Dakar'" (etc).

(34) The limitations of his environment were a direct threat to his inspiration, (Lettre à Lou, 26 mai 1915) and boredom was something he had continually to fight against cf. Lettres à Lou, 2 Aug. and 9 Nov. 1915.

(35) André Rouveyre, Apollinaire (ed. Gallimard, Paris, 1945) - "Il était en toutes choses de l'esprit et des sens un grand magicien du plaisir. C'était un réel bienfait, ne fût-ce que de le voir"  
(He was in all things both in mind and body a great magician of pleasure. It was a real benefit for one just to see him).



(36) Roger Shattuck, The Banquet Years, (Jonathan Cape, 1969, p.275)

"His mental appetite equalled his gastronomic voraciousness."

(37) See his criticism of Romain Rolland in T.C.S. (p.64)

"Romain Rolland fait de désagréables et très déplacées manifestations presque 'en faveur de L'Allemagne."

J.G. Clark in his article, Apollinaire, La Poésie, La Politique et La Guerre, (R.L.M. 1976, No. 13 p.12) points to the patriotic motives of his rejection of pessimism - "le moral de la nation est important" adding "En Littérature il part en guerre contre tout ce qui relève du pessimisme et du malsain et condamne sans ambages le lourd réalisme." Apollinaire naturally felt an aversion to defeatism and pessimism and his dislike of the often exaggerated realism of the pacifist writers is reflected in the style of his poetry. Cf his comments in a Lettre à Lou (1e 21 dec., 1914).

"Il faut être forts ...cependant et résister de toutes ses forces au manque de joie, à la tristesse de l'absence, à tout le chapelet des choses interminablement mélancholiques afin qu'au printemps il puisse refleurir en une belle couronne de fleurs amoureuses et glorieuses." (One must be strong and resist with all one's might the lack of joy, the sadness of absence, and all the long string of interminably melancholy things so that spring can bloom again in a splendid garland of amorous and glorious flowers.")

Again, Philippe Renaud, in his book Lecture d'Apollinaire (Editions L'Age d'Homme, Lausanne, 1916, p.386) attributes his almost unique moral aloofness ("Poète combattant, Apollinaire tint la poésie au-dessus et au-dehors du charnier moral où elle se précipitait avec l'instinct du vautour et les mâchoires de l'hyène"), to just this instinctive faith in life and this desire to uplift and liberate people through poetry. ("Presque seule, (la poésie) d'Apollinaire est exempte d'hystérie, elle reste fidèle à l'instinct de vie, à une humanité jamais rabougrie").

(38) For a quick summary to the background to his patriotism cf. Garnet Rees, Guillaume Apollinaire and the Search for Identity in Order and Adventure in Post-Romantic French Literature (Blackwell, 1973, p.172-3). ; Also T.C.S. p.71-3 for 'l'affaire des statuettes' which made him aware of the precariousness of his status as a foreigner .

(39) P. Caizergues, Apollinaire et la Politique pendant la Guerre (R.L.M. No. 12, 1973, p.70). See also Debon, op.cit., p.154, who stresses the impossibility of seeing any real movement of protest in Apollinaire's poetry, even in such wickedly humorous poems S.P., which could be seen as a criticism of military practice - "Il serait évidemment excessif d'affirmer que le procédé du poète manifeste une quelconque révolte ou une radicale remise en question. Il s'agit plutôt de manifester l'esprit frondeur du soldat (...)"

(40) See chp. 1 for links with the poet/prophet persona and the simultaneous technique, p. 23. .

(41) Quoted in J.G. Clark op.cit., p.40. This is close to Whitman's view of the role of the poet who according to him "hardly knows pettiness or triviality. He breathes into anything (...) the grandeur and life of the universe." Walt Whitman, The Complete Poems (ed. Francis Murphy, 1975, p.742).

(42) Marcel Raymond refers to Apollinaire's poetry ("je pense surtout à Guillaume Apollinaire") as "féerique" and "hallucinatoire" (op.cit., p.207). Apollinaire did not like this label - "poète, c'est vrai mais pas fantasque du tout." (TCS. p.86).

(43) Owen was reproached by Robert Graves (mid. Dec. 1917) for his unadulterated gloominess, who wrote "For God's sake cheer up and write more optimistically - the war's not ended yet but a poet should have a spirit above wars." (Quoted Jon Stallworthy, Wilfred Owen, (Chatto and Windus, 1974 p.250)).

Apollinaire was not always optimistic about the war, particularly after he had been wounded, cf. Orphée (p.683).

(44) See J.G. Clark, op.cit., p.21 on the influence of Marinetti on Apollinaire:- "Apollinaire rejoint dans sa fascination d'autres écrivains comme Marinetti et Drieu La Rochelle, pour qui la guerre signifiait l'avènement de l'action et une nouvelle invasion du Grandiose dans le monde." ("A. joins in his fascination other writers like Marinetti and Drieu La Rochelle for whom the war meant the advent of action and a new eruption of the Grandiose in the world").

Helmut Meter, in his book, Apollinaire und der Futurismus, (Schäuble Verlag, 1977, p.117) stresses however, Apollinaire's departure from the Futurist total glorification of war:- "Apollinaire betreibt keine Rechtfertigung des Krieges. (A. does in no way justify war), seeing his view of war as an inevitable stage to a better world, rather as compensation for a disappointing present, than as confirmation of the positive aspects of war.

(45) L'Esprit Nouveau, p.391.

"C'est au poète d'en imaginer de nouvelles (fables) que les inventeurs puissent à leur tour réaliser."

(46) For a discussion of Apollinaire's insecurity as a poet (and his occasional "crainte de ne pas être assez entendu") see Jean Burgos, Pour Une Approche de l'Univers imaginaire d'Apollinaire (RIM, No.10 1971, p.59).

(47) Chant de l'Honneur, p.304

(48) See Meter, op.cit., p.116-117 for an interpretation of the poem Guerre.

(49) *ibid.* p.119:- "Die Prinzipien moralischen bzw geistig bestimmten Vergessens, die dem Krieg zugrundeliegen."

Meter sees this poem as a pessimistic view of human progress, set on a predetermined course (Guerre), where the paths to real discovery are essentially blocked (p.118). The lines:-

"Toujours

Nous irons plus loin sans avancer jamais"

he interpretes as a depressing 'marching on the spot' (ein bedrückendes Auf-der-Stelle-Treten); the Don Juan theme he sees also as a symbol of the futility of the search after "forces neuves". However, this study takes a much more positive view of the poem. The idea of progress does not necessarily entail physical advance into the universe, (même sans bouger de la terre) or eternal projection into the future, but is capable of being achieved in the here and now, through the intellectual advances of discovery and surprise. This optimistic view of progress is expressed in L'Esprit Nouveau (p.391). Progress is not "un éternel devenir, dans une sorte de messianisme (...) épouvantable" but a present reality (sans être un progrès) to be achieved through "surprise" (ce qu'il y a de plus vivant, de plus neuf).

(50) The creative cycle is a theme which the poet had already used in Les Collines. As Margaret Davies points out in her essay, Poetry as the Reconciliation of Contradictions in Apollinaire, in Order and Adventure in Post-Romantic French Poetry (Blackwell, 1973, p.187) the dominant theme is "the necessity for the poet to accept the inevitable and eternal cycle of nature".

(51) "Et ces vieilles langues sont tellement près de mourir/Que c'est vraiment par habitude et manque d'audace"/Qu'on les fait encore servir à la poésie." (p.310) ("And these old languages are so near to death/ that it is really through habit and lack of boldness/ that they are still allowed to serve as poetry.")

(52) Drieu la Rochelle, Pierre, Interrogation (Edition NRF, Paris 1917, p.86). "La guerre pour nous, nés dans un temps de longue paix

parut une nouveauté merveilleuse, l'accomplissement qui n'était pas éperé de notre jeunesse. Nous voulions épuiser la vie dans un irréparable élan." ("The war was, for those of us born in a time of enduring peace, a marvellous novelty, the fulfillment hoped for by our youth. We wanted to exhaust life with one forward leap which could never be taken back.")

(53) Ernst Jünger, Feuer und Blut (Ernst Klett Verlag, p.35)

"Wer zu sehen versteht, der kann noch im Kriege selbst den Beginn einer Wandlung erkennen-(und die) mit den grossen, lebendigen Kraftströmen im Tiefsten verbunden ist" ("He who knows how to see, can recognize in the very event of war itself, the beginnings of a change profoundly linked with the vital currents of strength and power)."

(54) Robert Wohl, in his book, The Generation of 1914 (1980) offers the following peculiarly inaccurate translation:-

"Everything that is new is good, beyond the new there is no health. Humanity can only endure by constantly renewing itself, by killing with years its old age."

(55) OEC 3 p.939.

(56) Norma Rinsler, op.cit., p.182.

(57) Roger Shattuck, op.cit., p.301.

(58) See Insensibility (p.63) where Owen speaks of the blunt and lashless eyes of a young soldier, adding "Alive, he is not vital overmuch." Owen's inclusion of himself in the category "We wise" reveals essentially the same feeling of the superiority of the poet's vision as Apollinaire, who speaks of the "dieux de mes yeux".

(59) Rinsler, ibid., p.181.

(60) Rinsler, ibid., p.181.

(61) In his article Italian Literature and the Great War, in Journal of European Studies, Sept. 1980., Zygmunt Baranski makes some interesting

observations about the work of the interventionist poet Ardengo Soffici, who used a simultaneous technique similar to that of Apollinaire. Baranski's criticisms of Soffici are of some relevance at this point. He does not see the mingling "of forces of life and death" as evidence of the wholeness of vision of the Italian poet (as presumably Rinsler would) nor does he see it as a sign of Soffici's profound appreciation of the tragedy of war. Rather it reveals in his opinion, a trite, empty and undiscriminating mind. "Soffici jumbles everything together" and is an acute indication of the poet's all-consuming self-involvement. The almost feverish bundling together on an artistic level of disparate elements of experience, which is a technique used by both the French and Italian poets, show, according to Baranski, "the literary-rhetorical, rather than the actual spiritual and discriminating involvement with his material." Although one would not always be so harsh in the case of Apollinaire, Baranski's essential point that the poetry predominates over life is also true for Calligrammes. His secondary condemnation of the simultaneous technique as trite and superficial is also a telling criticism. A further example of the failure of this technique is to be found in the mania for juxtaposition demonstrated by Marinetti's Poem, Bateille/Poids + Odeur.

(62) Jean Burgos, op.cit.pp.50-3.

(63) La Fumée de la Cantine (p.382) is a 17 line poem, 12 lines of which contain a reference to himself.

(64) Margaret Davies, Poetry as the Reconciliation of Opposites, op.cit., p.185, agrees, although rather tentatively with Rinsler on this point.

"The concept of 'eros;passionate, self-centred, subjective, seems to

give way to that of the communal 'agape'".

(65) M. Davies, *op.cit.*, p.185.

(66) Caizergues, *op.cit.*, p.76.

(67) L'Esprit Nouveau, p.385. The new art was to be a combination of 'un solide bon sens' and 'le sens du devoir' and the new spirit of adventure 'une curiosité qui le pousse à explorer tous les domaines (...)'.

(68) Lettre à Sa Marraine, Le 17 Sept. 1915,

"J'ai la volonté d'être un poète nouveau et autant dans la forme que dans le fond, mais au rebours de quelques modernes non fondés en leur art, j'ai le goût profond des grands époques," ("I desire to be a new poet as much of form as of content, but contrary to some moderns who are not well versed in their art, I have a great taste for the classics.")

(69) For the theme of poetry transcending death, see the poem

Le Brasier (p.108) and also Chp. 4, p.194 and p.210 ff.

(70) Les Peintres Cubistes. (*op.cit.*, p.45 ff)

(71) Paul Fussell, The Great War and Modern Memory, (Oxford Univ. Press 1975, Arcadian Recourses p.231ff.)

(72) Harold Parry in For Remembrance (Hodder and Stoughton, 1918 , p.80).

(73) Willard Bohn, Metaphor and Metonymy in Apollinaire's Calligrammes in Romanic Review, (Vol. LXXII No. 2., March 1981, p.173) - "1915 is the decisive year for both visual metaphor and visual metonymy, which are closely associated with the war poetry, (...) The great majority of these poems appear to have been visually generated. For one thing, Apollinaire seems to have wanted a pictorial survey of life at the Front."

(74) Paul Fussell, *op.cit.*, chp. Arcadian Recourses, particularly pp 236-238.

(75) References to Blunden's poems are from Jon Silkin, The Penguin Book of First World War Poetry (1979).

(76) Georg Trakl, Grodek in Die deutsche Literatur in Text und Darstellung (Reclam 14, Stuttgart 1978, p.50)

(77) The line runs - "Die wilde Klage / Ihrer zerbrochenen Mäuler."

For a similar image, see W. Owen, The Kind Ghosts (p.103) - "Nor what red mouths were torn (...)"

(78) It is impossible to discuss here the deeply personal, often psychotic implications of Trakl's imagery. See, however, Bayerthal, Ernst, Georg Trakls Lyrik (Inaugural Dissertation, Frankfurt aM, 1926) Rovini, Robert, Georg Trakl (ed. Seghers, Paris, 1964).

(79) Quoted in Cecily Mackworth, Guillaume Apollinaire and the Cubist Life (John Murray, London, 1961, p.182).

(80) Pont Mirabeau (p.45), La Chanson du Mal-Aimé (p.46), Le Voyageur (p.78) for example.

(81) Horticultural analogies were a source of ironical humour of a sometimes quite hilarious kind in the English trench publications.

(See Paul Fussell, op. cit., p.239, The Wipers Times, "In thy Garden".

(82) Apollinaire was quite well versed in the language of the 'poilu'. For a discussion of the inclusion of 'poilu' vocabulary in the war poems, see Claude Tournadre, (RLM, 1973, p.65).

See also Gaston Esnault Le Français de la Tranchée, Etude Grammaticale in Mercure de France, No. 475 and 476, le 16 avril, 1981).

The likening of the shells to the croaking of frogs was widespread.

See C.H. Sorley, op.cit., Collected Letters and Poems.

(83) See Chp. 4; p.227 ff.

(84) Neither is it the "secret beauty of war" in the silly romantic sense meant by Cecily Mackworth, op.cit., p.134.

(85) His poetic talent degenerated considerably after his trepanation.

(86) T.C.S., p.306 "Je suis las. Je commence à être impatient (...)" (le 19 janvier, 1916).



(87) Heinrich Mann is heavily critical of the corrupt power structure in German society in the pre-war years, in his novel Der Untertan (July 1914) and was subsequently ill-disposed to the imperialist war aims of the Kaiser's War Cabinet.

(88) His essay, O Freunde, nicht diese Töne (September 1914) in which he castigates chauvinist writers, is a real protest, on humanitarian grounds, against the war. However, like many others his good intentions and pleas for "temperance, justice and love of humanity" derive from a largely ineffectual idealism.

(89) Typical poems of an extreme chauvinist nature such as the following, readily show how the term 'Hurrapatriotismus' came about:

"Auf springt ein Volk, es reckt die Glieder  
Und keine Sorge drückt uns nieder.  
Komm, was es sei,  
Von Ungewissheit frei  
Und jetzt - hurra!  
Du Mutter uns - Germania!"

(A nation leaps up, and stretches its limbs.  
No care oppresses us more.  
Let come what may.  
We are free from uncertainty  
And now - hurra!  
You our Mother - Germania! )

quoted in Der erste Weltkrieg (hrsg. von Hans Dollinger, Verlag Kurt Desch, München, 1965).

(90) The same was true of the socialist position in France. Those on the Left threatened a general strike should war be declared, but when the first bugles sounded, they all trooped to the colour and went off to war. In a few hours the Internationalist Cause had foundered ("Lorsque sonna le premier coup de clairon, tous les socialistes répondirent à l'appel et partirent à la guerre. ....) En quelques heures l'Internationale avait sombré dans le néant") (from Marc Ferro, La Grand Guerre (Collections Idées, 1969, p.69).

and had moved towards a positive acceptance of many aspects of German Nationalism (see Pinson p.213 ff) by the beginning of the war. Furthermore, many party socialists were aware that a military defeat could have serious financial effects on the unions and working movements as a whole.

(93) Heinrich Lersch, Wir Werkleute All. (All we workers)

In this poem, Lersch speaks of the oppression of the worker, condemned to a life of slavery, inequality and misery -

"Ich litt Qual und Not/Ungleicher Gegner ich, in den Untergang gedrängt" (I suffered torment and dire necessity, Unequal opponent, I, compelled to my downfall).

Later on Lersch expresses pride in his work and the primitive power of the machinery, which tends to militate against the main theme of the poem. This ambivalent attitude to work was typical of the Arbeiterdichter and was further reflected in the ambiguousness of their feelings towards the middle-class.

(94) Such words as 'heilig' and 'segnend' were the commonest clichés of chauvinist literature and typically those deplored by Franz Pfemfert in Die Aktion.

(95) See, for instance, Imperial Germany by Prince Bernhard von Bülow, (Cassell, London, 1914, Translated by Marie Lewenz) which speaks of 'the maintenance of our position in the world'. (p.51) Although Engelke is on a more 'spiritual' level, it is very difficult to distinguish between his effusive style and the rhetoric of expansionist ideology. Although the rapidly developing economic and industrial interests of Germany lead her to aggressive self-assertion (Behauptungsdrang) in the political sphere in an attempt to gain 'Lebensraum' and her rightful place in Europe (Platz in der Sonne), these concepts gradually assumed a symbolic force which developed into a quasi-mystical idea of Germany's place in the Universe. (See

Europas Kriegserlebnis, in Euphorion, Vol. 39, 1938, p.140). See also Uwe Wandrey, for a tentative but interesting analysis of the influence of political and social factors on the actual style of Expressionist war poetry, p.253-256 particularly. The authoritarian and anti-democratic consciousness of the Wilhelmine state, for example, he sees reflected not only in the tendency of the poet to harangue his readers in long monologues, to establish himself as a leader-figure and to use plurals and collective metaphors, but also in his general failure to oppose the war... (See also Footnote 12).

(96) Geschichte der deutschen Literatur (Band 9, 1974, p.320).

(97) In the poem Soldatenabschied (Soldier's Farewell).

(98) Robert Wohl, The Generation of 1914. Wohl (p.51) remarks on the impracticability of supposing that the strain of war would elevate the character of the people who had to bear it. Yet the war was looked upon by many either as the ultimate salvation of a sick and degenerate nation, (See Thomas Mann, Gedanken im Kriege) or as the rightful expression of Germany's natural superiority (See Aus der Rede Bettmann Hollwegs vor dem Reichstag am 4 Aug. 1914 quoted in Der erste Weltkrieg, op.cit). Such attitudes (which were assimilated by many writers) contained, not unnaturally, the potential for wide-reaching disillusionment, when challenged with the political and physical realities of war.

(99) Gerrit Engelke, Letter to Kneip, May 1918.

(100) in Expressionismus und Dadaismus, (Reclam, 1978, p.57.)

(101) in Modern German Poetry (MacGibbon and Kee, London, 1966, Introduction, p.xcvi).

(102) *ibid*, p.xcvi.

(103) From the Introductory poem to the anthology, Das Neue Gedicht, 1918.

(104) "Sie (die links orientierten Schriftsteller) begannen zu begreifen, dass nicht ein einfaches Pro oder Kontra zum Krieg die politische Scheidelinie bildete, sondern die Frage: Reform oder Revolution". (in Geschichte der deutschen Literatur, op.cit., p.358).

(105) *ibid.*, p.358.

(106) quoted *ibid.*, p.415.

(107) Quoted in Fritz von Unruh, Rebell und Verkünder (hrsg. von Friedrich Rasche, Verlag für Literatur und Zeitgeschehen, Hannover, 1960, p.60). The same critic speaks of the "uncertain and stuttering confessions" of the Expressionist war poets.

(108) Geschichte der deutschen Literatur, *op.cit.*, p.411.

(109) See Geschichte der deutschen Literatur, *op.cit.*, p.66.

Also Uwe Wandrey, *op.cit.* p.14.

(110) The young Expressionist poets were aggressively critical of society, in a way unknown among their English contemporaries, (see for instance, Jakob von Hoddiss', Weltende; Ernst Lotz' Aufbruch der Jugend ("Wir fegen die Macht und stürzen die Throne der Alten"). Edmund Gosse remarks on the comparative political inertness of the young English poets as against their German counterparts, "There was absolutely not a trace in any one of the young poets of that arrogance, that vociferous defiance which marked the German verse during the same years" (Some Soldier Poets, in The Edinburgh Review, Oct. 1917 p.184). Although the lack of political awareness of the Expressionists is continually stressed (see Uwe Wandrey, p.202, see Geschichte der deutschen Literatur, (p.411), their general political orientation is far greater (see for instance, the immediate pre-war poetry of Georg Heym, where his anticipation of the coming war involves a rejection of the society in which he lived) than that of the English poets. The Georgians, for instance, had already earned themselves by 1915, the rather derogatory title of 'lark-lovers' and by 1929 had fixed their reputation for being "facile, sentimental, socially and politically non-significant" (See Georgian Poetry, The Critical Heritage (Ed. Timothy Rogers, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977)).

The political involvement of the English poets before the war was relatively low (See Geoffrey Keynes, Rupert Brooke: 4 Manuscripts (Scolar Press, Ilkley, Yorkshire, Intro') - "The war burst upon Rupert Brooke (as upon most of us) as unexpectedly as a thunderclap"). See also Brooke's last speech as President to the Cambridge University Fabian Society on Dec. 10th 1910 -

"You are in the midst of insoluble problems of temperance, reform and education, and organization. The artist, as artist, is not concerned."

(111) There were, of course, poets who were active pacifists from the start - for example Alfred Wolfenstein (1888-1945), who identified with other pacifists such as Romain Rolland and Wilhelm Klemm (1881-1968) - who wrote some realistic 'trench poetry'. However, these poets also tended to a visionary idealism which had little practical application to the problems of war. See Geschichte der deutschen Literatur, p.407.

(112) See, for example, Thomas Mann's concept of the artist in Tonio Kröger.

(113) Richard Dehmel (1863-1920) and his circle in Berlin formulated a completely apolitical idea of the function of art which should contribute to the general "Verschönerung des Lebens". See also Heinrich Hart, Ausgewählte Aufsätze, Berlin 1907, (quoted Geschichte der deutschen Literatur p.88):- "Die Worte Lebensfreude, Ausleben, Sinnlichkeit, Freiheit, gewonnen neuen Inhalt. Die Werte, die Nietzsche geahnt, sollten sich im Leben und Tod umsetzen. Ein neues Weltempfinden, heller, sonniger, weitherziger als das alte, eine neue Weltanschauung war im Keimen." See also the poetry magazines of the period Pan (1895-1900) and Die Insel which cultivated the exclusive and the esoteric.

(114) "Immer schroffer wurde Sozialismus, Demokratie und Humanismus

angegriffen und verächtlich gemacht" (Socialism, Democracy and Humanism were increasingly harshly attacked and made to seem despicable). (Geschichte, op.cit., p.91). Such was the stage reached by the elitism of Stefan Georg (1868-1933) and his circle of followers. Their aestheticism, their abhorrence of the masses and their withdrawal from the debasing influence of reality, created an impossibly isolated and essentially inhuman art. The influence of Friedrich Nietzsche (1844 - 1900) was here particularly significant, as it was from German literature as a whole during the last decade of the (19) with its criticism of humanism, liberalism, christianity and its rejection of anything plebian of 'weak'. The 'eternal laws of life' according to Nietzsche were "Acquisition, violation, subjugation of the foreign and weak, oppression, rigour, the imposition of particular forms annexation and at the very least, at the very mildest, exploitation."

(Aneignung, Verletzung, Überwältigung des Fremden und Schwächeren, Unterdrückung, Härte, Aufzwingung eigener Formen. Einverleibung und mindestens, mildestens Ausbeutung". (Jenseits von Gut und Böse.

Vorspiel einer Philosophie der Zukunft.) (quoted in Geschichte, p.67).

(115) For instance, Gerhart Hauptmann's allegorical play Festspiel in deutschen Reimen (1913) which was intended by the author as a warning against war and the abuse of power by the military, and which advocated a reconciliation of class-conflict, so offended the nationalists and militarists that they engineered the discontinuance of the performances.

(116) See, Geschichte der deutschen Literatur, p.361.

"Ihr rhetorischer Gestus sprach den einzelnen Leser als nicht sozial bestimmtes, sondern abstrakt humanes Wesen an." (Their rhetorical style (of the works of Yvan Goll; particularly the significant anti-war anthology. Requiem: Für die Gefallenen von Europa, (1917) published in both French and German) addressed the individual reader not as a particular social being, but as an abstract human concept.)

(117) Uwe Wandrey, op.cit., p. 248.

(118) For example Yvan Goll (the left-wing pacifist poet) proclaimed "eine Weltliebe die alle Völker zum 'Volk der Menschheit' zusammen-schweissen würde" (a Universal love, which would mould all countries to one unified 'People of Humanity').

Kurt Hiller, on the other hand, an extreme right-wing reactionary anti-proletarian writer, hoped for 'ein Paradies, das allen seinen Bewohnern erlaubt, nichts denn vital zu sein' (a paradise, which would allow all of its inhabitants to be nothing other than vital). The vagueness of these socially disorientated metaphysical solutions to society's ills naturally tended to blur political distinctions in the literature.

(119) Alfred Wolfenstein, Der gute Kampf quoted in Uwe Wandrey, op. cit., p.103.

(120) Quoted in Uwe Wandrey, op.cit. 108. This is from a poem by Wilhelm Klemm, Anrufung in Gloria! Kriegsgedichte aus dem Feld. The poem later speaks of the 'sacrificial lust' and the 'faithfulness' of war.

(121) With the outbreak of war, the number of pro-war, pro-imperialist writers increased considerably. An indication of how successful the State had become in enlisting the majority of the bourgeois intellectuals, (Gerhart Hauptmann, for instance, in spite of his play Festspiel was responsible for some extremely chauvinist war poetry) can be seen in the declaration signed by 93 scientists and artists in Oct. 1914 (among whom was Gerhart Hauptmann) which not only supported the ruling élite and declared the war as one of self-defence, but more significantly proclaimed the unity of German militarism and German culture:-

"Ohne den deutschen Militarismus wäre die deutsche Kultur längst vom Erdboden getilgt. Zu ihrem Schutz ist er aus ihr hervorgegangen..... Deutsches Heer und deutsches Volk sind eins" (Quoted in Geschichte der deutschen Literatur, op.cit., p.344).

(122) For instance, Thomas Mann's Gedanken im Kriege (1914) in which he tried to equate the patriotic enthusiasm of the first days of the war with the inspiration of the artist, attracted the condemnation of pacifists such as Romain Rolland and Heinrich Mann.

(123) Yvan Goll, Appell an die Kunst, in Die Aktion, 1917.

(124) Erich Mühsam, who was personally involved in combatting State censorship of literature, spoke of the State's intention (of which, there was, of course, no proof) of contributing to "Die Unterbindung einer Verständigung zwischen den geistig Schaffenden und dem Volk".

(Quoted in Geschichte der deutschen Literatur, p.306).

(125) *ibid.*, p. 532.

(126) For example, August Stramm, Franz Werfel, Alfred Wolfenstein, Wilhelm Klemm, who wrote for Die Aktion. This latter poet often escaped from the horror of war by creating a mythical landscape - "a new cosmos, where the natural dimension and laws of cause and effect no longer apply" (Pinthus).

(127) Michael Hamburger, From Prophecy to Exorcism (Michael Peter, Longmanns, London, 1965, p.9)

(128) *ibid.*, p.3.

(129) *ibid.*, p.3.

Walter Flex's idealistic vision of a new Germany was often interpreted as an extreme Nationalist fantasy, not as an "ideal image of society". Flex later angrily rejected being called 'a nationalist fanatic'. As Karl Zuckmayer pointed out, the Utopian enthusiasms which greeted the war were not fired by "aims of conquest, considerations of power - these did not matter to us. We saw the meaning of the war in this inner liberation of the whole nation from its obsolete conventions, in this 'breakthrough' into the unknown, into some heroic venture, no matter whom it devoured". (Quoted in Robert Wohl, *op.cit.*, p.252).

(130) ? Kurt Schwitters, Die Silbergäule (P.Steegemann, Hannover/Berlin, 1922).



(131) Hamburger, op.cit., p.3.

(132) Uwe Wandrey, op.cit., p.133 and 137 speaks of the feelings of individual powerlessness expressed in much of the poetry ("Das 'Ich' steht im Bann der chaotische Kriegsrealität") which reflects a wider social anxiety (Soziale Angst).

(133) ibid., p.246-248, particularly:-

"Hier von Kriegskritik zu reden, ist selbst der gutwilligste Interpret nicht in der Lage". Reinhard Olt in his book Krieg und Sprache: Untersuchungen zu deutschen Soldatenliedern des Ersten Weltkriegs.

(Wilhelm Schmitz Verlag in Giessen, 1981, p.201) on the other hand sees evidence of "offene Kritik an den Verhältnissen" (open criticism of the conditions) in the songs of the soldiers, which takes the form of Irony, as in the following excerpt:-

"Keine Federbetten, Keine Toiletten  
Und des Kriegers täglicher Bedarf  
Wer sich will rasieren, braucht nur gehn spazieren  
Den rasiert der Russe scharf." (p.171)

(No feather mattresses, no toilets,  
And as for the warrior's daily needs  
Whoever wants a shave only has to take a stroll  
And the Russian will give him a close one)

Such moments of criticism, however, Olt admits as being largely defused by the humour of the terms in which they are couched, so that the barbs are largely hidden. (Dabei sind jene Kritische Momente sehr geschickt in sprachliche Wendungen verpackt, die sich bei oberflächlichen Hinsehen gar nicht als solche erkennen lassen). His original "offene Kritik" therefore does not apply.

(134) An example of the rather uncomplicated 'anti-war effect' as a revolt against the militarism of the authorities, is to be found in poems such as Ludwig Bäumer's Impfen (Vaccination) in Die Aktion, (1916 p.23)

"Horch! Erhorchst du - dann stirbst du!"

(Listen! If you obey - then you will die!)

(135) A mawkish and often complaining self-pity is to be found in some

of Heinrich Lersch's religiously inspired war poetry, such as Wir arme Soldaten in Deutsche Arbeiterdichtung, (Reclam, p.85)

Wir arme Soldaten! Wie wir in Kriege verlassen sind!  
Wie auf dem weiteren Meere Schiffstrümmer treiben im Wind  
Wir haben nicht Vater noch Mutter, nicht Schwester und Bruder  
mehr  
Selbst Gott hat uns verlassen. Und das schmerzt uns so sehr"

(We poor soldiers. How forlorn we are in war!  
We are like jetsam pushed hither and thither by the wind on the  
open sea  
We have neither father nor mother, nor brother nor sister  
God himself has forsaken us. And that wounds us deeply.)

(136) Uwe Wandrey, *op.cit.*, p.246.

(137) Die Aktion Lyrik 1916, p.42.

(138) Max Barthel, in Deutsche Arbeiterdichtung, p.57.

(139) Hamburger, *op.cit.*, p.3.

"Conformism and 'non-political' passivity are the reverse side of German 'inwardness', just as fanatical nationalism is the reverse side of the isolation that was bound to result from the exclusive cultivation of private spiritual worlds".

(140) cf. Wickam Steed in The London Times, Jan. 12, 1914. (Quoted in Pinson p.289) "In Prussia, the army is supreme and, through Prussia, the army rules Germany." The army had a strong influence in education, as illustrated by the experiences of Fritz von Unruh, writer of pacifist dramas during the war, who was awakened to early rebellion against the brutal values of the Prussian cadet school where he was a pupil. The school motto was:- "Brett vorm Kopf! Stiefel in die Hand! Mit Gott für König und Vaterland!" (Inflexibility of mind, boots at the ready. God goes with us for King and Country). Charles Sorley, quoted in The Ungifted Runner (Archon Books, 1965 p.77) also spoke of the 'black rotten' arrogance of the Student Societies (Letter to Dr.Wilson) which went far beyond any feeling of superiority which may have been inculcated into students by the English public school system.

(141) Nationalism, with its emphasis on power and the rule of an élite differed little between France and Germany (See Léon Riegel, Guerre et Littérature p.50 ff). Certain sections in French society displayed an extreme right-wing chauvinism equal to anything in Germany. Such nationalist writings as La Renaissance de l'Orgueil Française (1912) and the right-wing anti-democratic Enquête Sur la Monarchie by Charles Maurras (one of his more contentious sections challenged La Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme (1789) with such statements as -

"A society can no more be broken up into the individuals that compose it than a geometrical surface can be broken up into straight lines, or a straight line into points."

See Havard de la Montagne, Histoire de l'Action Française (Amiot Dumont, Paris, 1950)), and the newspaper L'Action Française were extremely influential on public opinion.

An indication of the hold which nationalist ideology had gained in France can be seen from such articles as Claude Laforet's La Mentalité Française à L'Epreuve de la Guerre (Mercure de France, 16.11.1918, p.588) where he feels the need to reassure his readers that, despite appearances to the contrary, French individualism had not died during the war -

"Le trait caractéristique de l'esprit français, l'individualisme, en dépit des apparences, a survécu à la guerre."

For further perspectives on French Nationalism of the period see Eric Cahn, Péguy et le Nationalisme Français (Cahiers de l'Amitié Charles Péguy, Minard, Paris, 1972).

On German Nationalism, see K. Schröter, Chauvinism and its Tradition: German Writers at the outbreak of the 1st World War (Germanic Review, Vol. 43, 1968, pp.120-135.)

(142) The 'Prussianization' of German pre-war society, with its rigid hierarchial power structure was a phenomenon abhorred by those of more liberal tendencies. Karl Liebknecht in his study Militarismus und Anti-Militarismus (See Geschichte, op.cit. p.300) describes the influence of militarist thinking as having 'a pincer-like embrace' on German Society. (Eine Umklammerung der ganzen Gesellschaft durch ein Netz militärischer und halb-militärischer Einrichtungen) which affected every aspect of public and private life.

(143) See Pinson, op.cit. Introduction, particularly p.11.

Anti-democratic ideas were equally prevalent in France from the turn of the century onwards (1899 was the founding of La Ligue de la Patrie Française (with Maurras, Barrès as initial members).

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An article in L'Eclair (19 dec 1898) is scathing of liberal, humanitarian ideas based on Les Droits de l'Homme:

"C'est sur "les droits de l'homme" que s'unissent les libéraux et les anarchistes. C'est de la même formule individualiste, creusé à l'infini, que les uns et les autres tirent leurs variations sentimentales, considérations humanitaires, leurs développements logiques".

(144) See Pinson, p.43-44 on the organismic theory of the State promulgated by Adam Müller.

(145) Quoted in Geschichte, op.cit., p.347.

(146) Fritz von Unruh, Opfergang (1916 pub. 1919)

"Ahnt Ihr nicht endlich, dass wir in heilige Gemeinschaft streben?

In des Geistes, in eines Volkes ernste Verbrüderung?"

(147) Romain Rolland in Le Voyage Intérieur (nouvelle édition, Paris, 1959)

quoted in R.A. Francis, Romain Rolland and some British Intellectuals during the First World War, in Journal of European Studies (Sept.1980 p.191). Romain Rolland in Le Voyage Intérieur (op.cit., p.336) explains the difference in

German and English attitudes to individual liberty, as deriving from the difference between Prussian pietism which overstressed the community and English puritanism, which isolated the individual from the community-

"La foi puritaine, qui a conquis Angleterre et Amérique, relâche et dissout les liens qui unissent l'individu à la collectivité. Seul devant Dieu, la communauté n'a pas à lui demander compte"

(148) Op.cit., p.11,

(149) Rupert Brooke in an Essay, Democracy and the Arts, was particularly scathing about theories of the community, for instance:-

"There is another wrong notion of art that falsifies the opinion of many on this subject. Let us beware of those who talk of 'the art of the people' or of 'expressing the soul of the Community'. You can't voice the soul of the Community any more than you can blow its nose".

(150) For instance, Wilfred Owen sent his brother Harold (Wed. 23rd Sept. 1914) sketches of war wounds which he had seen in a military hospital in Bordeaux:-

"I deliberately tell you all this to educate you to the actualities of the war"

From The Collected Letters of Wilfred Owen (Ed. Harold Owen and J. Bell p.284)

(151) Fritz von Unruh's Utopianism, for example, increased to a frenetic pitch in direct ratio to his rejection by the military régime. See for instance, his play Ein Geschlecht, (1917)

(152) Geschichte, op.cit., p.368-9.

(153) G. Lutz, in Europas Kriegserlebnis! Ein Überblick über das äusserdeutsche Kriegsschriftum (in Euphorion, Vol. 39, 1938, p.143) distinguishes between the French and English Literature on the one hand, and German on the other by the former's concentration on the fate of the individual:-

"Der Blick ist wesentlich auf das Schicksal des Einzelnen gerichtet, nicht auf das der Gemeinschaft, in der der Einzelne steht."

(154) See Patrick Bridgwater, German Poetry of the 1st World War, p.161 ff.

(155) quoted in Léon Lahovary, A Nos Morts Sublimes.

(156) This excerpt is quoted and discussed in an article by Hermann Pongs, Weltkreis und Dichtung, Zu neuen Kriegsbüchern (in Euphorion, Vol. 39, p.193 ff). The article is interesting as an example of national socialist criticism with its anti-humanitarian bias, itself a product of the attitudes deriving from the 1st World War.

(157) See Pongs, op.cit. 'Soldatentod', 'Tod in der Gruppe'.

(158) Oe.P. p.214.

(159) Wilfred Owen, Selected Poems (Ed. Blunden, p.66).

(160) For a discussion of the theme of mud and its symbolic significance in the literature of the war, see Léon Riegel, op.cit., pp. 225-241.

(161) See Léon Riegel, p.32 ff, for the value placed on the French Army by such writers as E. Psichari and others like Emile-August-Cyprien-Driant (the son-in-law of General Boulanger).

(162) See Uwe Wandrey (p.90 ff) for a discussion of the 'imperialist' significance of the "collective metaphor" in German Expressionist war lyric, where plurality of reference excludes focus on the individual, except as a representative type. Just as the individual is generalized to a type, so single events are made to be representative of wider phenomena. An example of the 'de-realization' effect of 'collective metaphors' can be found in the poetry of Karl Bröger, who although he became increasingly concerned with human suffering, nevertheless treated it as the abstract theme of the ruination of humanity. Thus, for example, in the poem Die Schlacht (Deutsche Arbeiterdichtung, p.63), Bröger speaks of dead soldiers as "zerschmettertes Leben" (smashed life).

(163) Max Barthel "Sterbender Soldat" in Deutsche Arbeiterdichtung (p.54.)

(164) Quoted in Fritz von Unruh, Rebell und Verkünder (hrsg. von

Friedrich Rasche. Verlag für Literatur und Zeitgeschehen, Hannover, 1960, p.52).

Fritz von Unruh, in his bitter rejection of war, was essentially a renegade to his class (born into the Prussian military caste he was educated along with the Kaiser's sons). In 1914, when other poets were penning their songs of hate, he was scribbling an anti-war drama "auf die Blätter seines Meldeblocks" for which he was subsequently court-marshalled. Although he does not rival the lyric talent of such poets as Owen or Rosenberg, the intensity of his commitment to humanitarian ideal equals theirs. An early experience at the age of 16 on the shooting range made him acutely aware of the value of individual human life, for he realized he could soon be shooting at a real man, not at a cardboard dummy:-

"statt auf solch ein Scheibengesicht (müsste ich bald) auf ein wirkliches Menschengesicht ziehen, auf ein Menschenherz! (etc)".

CHAPTER FOUR

Metaphorical Usage in the War Poetry of Guillaume Apollinaire  
with reference to the work of Wilfred Owen and August Stramm

"Metaphor remains the life-principle of poetry, the poet's chief test and glory". (C. Day Lewis)

The poetic response of mature, or in the case of Owen, maturing poets with first-hand experience of trench warfare, will reveal, even contrary to the expressed intentions of the poets themselves, ultimately less about the actual reality of war, than it will about their personal vision of it. This will be the starting point of this final chapter - to look at a particular area of poetic style, in this case the metaphor and its analogues, the pun (1) and the simile (2), in order to ask the straightforward question as Roger Little does of the war poetry of Apollinaire - "Does mediate language play a sufficient part in the literary artefact it creates?" (3). This will not, of course, be to disregard totally the poet's attitude to reality (4) which would be impossible given the dependence of this specific genre on external events, as Claude Debon (5) again so rightly and necessarily points out, but rather to keep the physical presence of war as a background framework of reference. Criticism, therefore, will be based on an assessment not of the degree of realism, sincerity or humanitarian concern of the poets under consideration, but on an appraisal of the congruity of the images (6) with the underlying ideas and how sufficiently they function within the context of the whole work. Implied within this will be the perhaps more subjective value judgement as to how 'persuasive' the poets' various perceptions of war are, that is, how far they are able to satisfy our emotional and intellectual curiosity, not only about the specific meaning of their experiences, but also about the larger



life and death issues with which we are all so continuously and intimately concerned (7). Again, it must be emphasized that this is not merely to disinter the ever-recurrent discussion about the degree of correlation between war poetry and historical event. Rather, it is hoped to analyze the poet's reflection of the objective reality of war from the purely aesthetic standpoint adopted by A.C. Bradley (8) =

"If an artist alters a reality (e.g. a well-known scene or historical character) so much that his product clashes violently with our familiar ideas, he may be making a mistake; not because his product is untrue to reality (this is by itself perfectly irrelevant), but because the 'untruth' may make it difficult or impossible for others to appropriate his product, or because his product may be aesthetically inferior to the reality even as it exists in the general imagination".

It has already been seen in Chapter 2 (9) how difficult Apollinaire's often idiosyncratic view of the war has made it for some to "appropriate his product" (10). What is more interesting at this point, however, is Professor Bradley's observation about the possible aesthetic inferiority to perceived reality of a poetic truth. All three of the poets discussed in this chapter, expressed at some stage concern about the aesthetic adequacy of poetry in face of war. August Stramm perhaps most clearly gave voice to the feeling, not only of poetic impotence, which was a constant theme of his letters to Herwarth Walden, editor of Der Sturm:-

"Ich dichte so viel, es wogt alles, und wenn es zum Aufschreiben kommt, eine nichtssagende, schematische Form" (27.6.1915)

(I'm thinking up so much poetry, everything is surging in me, but when it actually comes to writing it down, the form is expressionless, schematic)

but also to the idea that the War somehow embodied all the creative powers of poetry, equalling it in strangeness, so that there was ultimately no

dividing line between the world of poetry and the world of war and therefore no need for the poet - "Ich dichte nicht mehr, alles ist Gedicht umher". (11)

Apollinaire was similarly aware of the same colossal challenge to his art presented by War, the horrendous new analogue of poetry.

"En réalité aucun écrivain ne pourra dire la simple horreur, la mystérieuse vie de la tranchée"(In reality no writer will ever be able to express the simple horror, the mysterious life of the trenches)(12). In an article written for La Phalange in August 1908, Apollinaire essentially anticipated the similarities between the all-powerful genius of poetry, creator of alternative realities and the demoniac power of war, potential creator (and destroyer) of new worlds. The applicability to war of his definition of poetry (13) is too powerful to be overlooked.

"La volonté toute-puissante (de la poésie) change l'ordre des choses, contrarie les causes et les effets et anéantit le souvenir et la réalité même de ce qui existait la veille pour créer une succession d'événements établissant une nouvelle réalité. Et ces nouveautés sont le mensonge de l'ancienne vérité".

(The all-powerful will (of poetry) changes the order of things, goes against the law of cause and effect and annihilates the memory and even the reality itself of that which existed the day before, in order to create a succession of events which will establish a new reality. And these novelties give the lie to the old truth). (14)

In the midst of the bewildering environment of war, with its disparate and incongruous images, the poet could well feel that his powers for creating a new order and discovering new analogies had been surpassed and that the burning syntheses of his metaphors were lost in the sweeping fires of the holocaust. (15)

For such poets as Apollinaire and Stramm and Owen, the war thus presented a double threat, not only to their persons, but also to their poetry which was for them the very form and spirit of their resistance to death. In a letter to Madeleine (16), Apollinaire explains as his reasons for wishing France victorious, his desire to see the continuance of his poetry and the beauty of Madeleine, synonym of love and life.

"Et si je souhaite la victoire, (c'est qu'il) faut que ce qui m'a animé, que le langage avec quoi je chante, que la beauté de Madeleine (...) soit victorieuse!"

Stramm also writes in a similar vein to his friend Walden, telling him of his worries for his art in the event of his possible death. The interesting point of Stramm's letter lies in the direct opposition of poetry (Form, order, life) and the negative forces of death.

"Nur für meine noch gährenden Werke bange ich vorm Tode. Oder ich bange nicht, ich würde mich ärgern (...) Um die Form in Trümmern würde ich mich - na ja, ärgern".

(I only fear death because of my works still incubating inside me. Or rather I am not afraid, but I would be annoyed. Because of the ruined form I would - well yes, be annoyed" (17),

It is this kind of confrontation with death which is seen by Claude Debou (18) as the central motivation of Apollinaire's war poetry:-

"le problème reste fondamental: c'est celui de la littérature aux prises avec la mort et qui n'en finit pas de se battre avec elle" (The problem remains a fundamental one: that of literature at grips with death in a never-ending struggle).

This is the sort of critical comment one normally expects in reference to the fierce independent spirit of the best of the English war poets and it is certainly an interesting interpretation and validation of Apollinaire's poetry of this period, for which there is considerable internal evidence (19). In his discussion of Owen's poetry, Sven Bäckman

(20) makes a similar reference to his fight against death and Owen's "double duty - to forge a language which will somehow absolve from or validate absurd death and to accept the experiential risks involved in so doing". The critic Alvarez, whose thinking in his book The Savage God, Bäckman closely follows, extrapolates from the individual case of Owen to the whole of twentieth century poetry. The "curious sense of strain" which he finds in "nearly all the best and most ambitious work of this century" he attributes precisely to the pressure of discovering a language adequate to the apparently impossible task of resisting death with all its implications for human happiness. Considered in this light, the much criticized poems Fête and Merveille de la Guerre by Apollinaire, may be seen not as a shallow act of bravado, but as an example of resistance essentially as courageous, if not ultimately as humanitarian (21) as the impassioned protest of a poet like Owen. Apollinaire's declaration in La Femme Assise, for example, that the war had actually stimulated his poetic creativity (22) comes from the same intention to transcend the war, the same sheer will-power which is given new moral significance in Les Collines (23) and which is expressed in the fanciful transformations of Chevaux de Frise (24). In such poems as this, Apollinaire does manage to create a "new reality" utterly distinct from that of the war, and retreats into a kind of "espace sacrée" (Renaud) in the inner recesses of the poetic imagination. Once locked into the safety of his own soul (25) he has complete mastery and is able to deny the reality of war and its essential horror. Not only is he able to re-define war in his own terms as in Merveille de la Guerre, but he is also at liberty to tamper with the normal laws of cause and effect or any of our more rational associations. This first he does in a particularly 'striking' metaphor in the poem A L'Italie (p. 277) which is as follows:-

"Et les obus en tombant sont des chiens qui jettent de la terre  
avec leurs pattes après avoir fait leurs besoins (And the  
falling shells are dogs which scratch earth over their business  
with their paws)

This is an example of what Wellek and Warren (26) term the 'diminishing' or 'domesticating' metaphor, which translates the greater, in this case, the devastating effects of the exploding shells (27), into the humbler, that is the scraping of earth by dogs. Such metaphors have the advantage of wider inclusiveness and the brief titillation of surprise and perhaps shock, but on the whole theirs is a tawdry effect because of the shallowness of the comparison (28). One feels that Apollinaire included it (and others of equally dubious stature) in the poem, to redeem the consciously felt banality of the rhetorical stance and the unsatisfactory quality of patriotic clichés such as "Entends crier Louvain vois Reims tordre ses bras". Another rather strained image appears in the poem L'Attente (p.417)

O tranchée blanche ouvert comme un oeuf à la coque.

(O white trench cracked open like a boiled egg)

which is not so incongruous in the general mish-mash of disparate observations on which the poem is based, but which has far less resonance than a subsequent metaphor (albeit itself somewhat superficial and sensationalist) which fuses the themes of love and war:-

"Elle a des poils en fils de fer barbelés"

(She has (pubic) hair like barbed-wire.)

(The love lyric was an area in which Apollinaire was particularly successful at this time (See below p.227) because of a greater sureness of aesthetic stance.) However, even these more dubious experiments in what Apollinaire termed in L'Esprit Nouveau "novel combinations" (29) are still evidence of a great creative energy and resistance to nervous

depression, to which Owen and Stramm were particularly prone (30). Despite Apollinaire's resilience and the general buoyancy of much of his writing, Debon's analysis of his war poetry sees a gradual decline in the will-power of the poet and his ability to overcome the horror of war and to assert the positive life principles of his art which he had continually been proclaiming to friends (31). His view of Calligrammes is of a human and poetic chronicle which bears witness to the simple and tragic decline of the poet's zest for life:-

"L'Histoire d'Apollinaire combattant n'est peut-être d'ailleurs rien d'autre que la perte progressive de cette joie et du simple goût de vivre" (32).

The slow decline can be traced according to Debon, from the joyous affirmation of A L'Italie or Visée to the "constatation d'impuissance" (33) of the Il y a poems (34). Greet and Lockerbie are equally sensitive to the human aspects of Apollinaire's war poetry, particularly the love lyrics, whose whole conception they see as intended to "humanize and make sense of the violence". (35) This search for 'human significance', perhaps makes a rather poor substitute for the humanitarian concern which is nevertheless largely lacking from Apollinaire's response to war. However, such considerations deflect from the main argument of this Chapter, which is concerned with the aesthetic and not the human or moral response of a poet at war. The next section will attempt to analyze the metaphoric transcendence of war of the three poets concerned, with particular emphasis on Apollinaire, in order to discover some of the "secret alchemy" which in Shelley's words "turns to potable gold the poisonous waters which flow from death to life" (36).

Metaphor - The Urge to Order

"La France répugne au désordre. On a horreur  
du chaos" (Apollinaire)

Although a technical analysis of metaphor cannot be undertaken at this point (37), there will follow a brief discussion of its nature and function as applicable to the work of the war poets under consideration.

As is well-known, the metaphor is an extremely successful creator of analogies, containing within a single synthesis, not only the poet's particular perception of an object or state of affairs, but also (and this does not seem an overstatement) an intuition of the underlying unity behind all things. A good metaphor will therefore combine the specific and the general, and will vibrate with the continued resonance of, in C. Day Lewis' own words, "something evermore about to be". If the metaphor halts at the particular, as we have just seen in some of Apollinaire's more facile figures, it can only be a partial metaphor, cut off from the deeper sources of significance. Despite Apollinaire's awareness of these deeper uncharted areas of human cognition and perception, as revealed in L'Esprit Nouveau (38) -

"Le moindre fait est pour le poète le postulat des significations multiples"

(the most trivial fact is for the poet the springboard of multiple significance),

it is precisely his awe of and uncritical enthusiasm for what he perceived as the infinite potential of the imagination that lead him to follow, seemingly unchecked, every creative impulse. This is certainly the impression given by poems which follow the structural pattern of the Il y a poems. The very discovery of similarity for its own sake, recorded in simile, metaphor and pun, no matter how incongruous, seems

to be presented as the quintessential poetic act, which automatically focuses at one point the diverging universes of the unknown (39) and resolves all disparities in one great truth. Apollinaire was not a metaphysical poet in the sense that Stramm was, for instance (40), despite his apparent enjoyment of the vocabulary of mysticism in some of the more purple passages in L'Esprit Nouveau and particularly, in Les Peintres Cubistes. He simply accepted that there was one great end to poetry - the search for eternal and universal significance (41). The experience of war merely increased the pressures to find some overall meaning in the absurd chaos of inverted reason, perverted nature and negated humanity. Hence the adoption of the persona of the horizon-poet in Chant de l'Horizon, which could endow him with the ultimate knowledge of all things (42). Like the poet Stramm (43), he found the centre of all meaning both in himself -

"Moi l'horizon je combattrai pour la Victoire /..../"

Je suis l'invisible qui ne peut disparaître (p.267) "

and in his poetry, which could make possible the impossible, immortal the mortal, order where there was none.

"Caméléon des autos-canon" (p.266)

(Car-cannon chameleon)

In this metaphor, the poet both expresses the constant flux of events signified by the endless procession of troops and gun-carriages and captures the feeling of senselessness and absurdity embodied in the ludicrous yet threatening chimera of the auto-canon. There is a controlling vision here, an objective interpretation of events which implies external standards of judgement and a framework of immutable significance. In the poem Chant de l'Horizon, Apollinaire does seem to come near to a unified vision of war, as Renaud so rightly points out (44):



"Un instant (mais un instant seulement) on a le pressentiment que toute cette fantasmagorie pourrait se constituer en un univers cohérent, en un autre réel ou recevraient enfin un sens toutes les négations de la vie, (...) (~~toutes~~) les contradictions imposées par la (...) guerre"

(For a moment, but it is only a moment, one has the feeling that all this phantasmagoria could make up a coherent universe, another reality where all the negations of life, all the contradictions imposed by the war would at last be invested with one meaning). A similar search for identity between different objects is attempted in the line -

"Couteaux tonneaux d'eaux" (Knives barrels of water) where the unifying element is the assonantal emphasis on the syllable 'eaux'. The trick, however, is too facile. Yet despite the ephemeral impact of such devices they were obviously much favoured by Apollinaire. The poem Echelon (p.233) is a case in point, where he delights in alliteration, assonantal rhyme, and punning seemingly for its own sake:-

" Grenouilles et rainettes

Crapauds et crapoussins

Ascèse sous les peupliers et les frênes

La reine des près va fleurir " (etc) .

Despite what one may think of this rather cluttered poem (and Debon is perhaps overly serious in his assessment when he describes it as demonstrating "la liberté du lecteur à se mouvoir dans l'espace du texte" (the freedom of the reader to move about within the textual space) (45), Apollinaire is obviously fully exploring his poetic repertoire (typographical arrangement, variation of styles through neo-symbolism to soldiers' argot, the use of the pun, the arcane symbol etc), but with a poor degree of success. His use of internal assonance does not have the metaphoric weight of Owen's parallel use of pararhyme, for instance, as in

the lines -

"The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall"

or

"All their eyes are ice"

where the rhyme links two separate objects under a single meaning.

There seems no similar unity in the examples from Apollinaire and consequently it is difficult to discover an underlying structure or direction to such poems as Echelon. As a result, the reader is left to draw his own analogies and to create his own metaphoric insights. For instance, what is the significance of the reference to "gilded breasts of death"? Is the association a purely gratuitous one or is the reference a (diminishing) metaphoric allusion to the metal of shell-cases, as in the description - "des fusées détonateurs joyaux dorés à tête émaillée" (explosive rockets gilded jewels tipped with enamel) (p.255). The guess-work in which one is involved in poems such as Echelon is largely due to Apollinaire's metaphoric reticence (See below p.206ff) but the hard labour of reconstitution to which one is left in poems such as Il y a un vaisseau qui a emporté ma bien-aimée (p.280) derives from a more serious weakness - the earlier mentioned reliance on the simple uncovering of similarities. In this poem, Apollinaire merely produces a kind of 'self-assembly kit' from the basic materials required for metaphor. He simply unrolls the observations in the hope that the sheer attraction of juxtaposition will draw the comparisons for us. For instance:

" Il y a mille petits sapins brisés par les éclats d'obus  
autour de moi

Il y a un fantassin qui passe aveuglé par les gaz asphyxiants.

Il y a que nous avons tout haché dans les boyaux de Nietzsche  
de Goethe et de Cologne "

(There are a thousand little fir trees broken by shell splinters  
around me.

There is an infantry-man passing blinded by asphyxiating gases.

There is the fact that we have smashed everything up in the  
Nietzsche and Goethe and Cologne trenches).

The contiguity of these lines within the text presumably has significance, in that we are somehow meant to associate the devastation of nature with that of man and of civilization. The raw associations themselves tell us little of Apollinaire's intentions, but are left as spectacles for our pity or wonder. The English poets rarely leave us so fancy free; Blunden for instance burdens his descriptions of nature with accusations of man's depravity and lust for violence and destruction.

" Why lead me then

Through the foul-gorged, the cemeterial fen

To fear sharp sentries?

(....)

Why glare these startling suns

And topple to the wet and crawling grass

Where the shrill briars in taloned hedges twine? <sup>81</sup>(46)

Despite, therefore the creation of fixed poetic personae such as the 'horizon' or 'infantryman' poet, there is often the feeling in Apollinaire's war poetry of a certain lack of order and control. Symptomatic of this poetic disorientation are the 'dismantled' metaphors of the Il y a poems, the 'partial' metaphors, the repetitive self-borrowings - (Fleurs de feu/phare fleur/une bataille de fleurs, etc) as well as a certain reliance on 'conventional' metaphors such as were to be found in any run-of-the-mill patriotic poet - (Nos fleuves sont brandis comme des sabres <sup>82</sup>(A L'Italie) (Our rivers are waved like sabres); Les Balles: de nos ruches d'acier sortons à tire-d'aile <sup>83</sup>(Chant de l'Honneur))  
( The Bullets: Let us fly swiftly from our hives of steel ) )

A much tighter control of metaphor is to be found in the love poetry of Apollinaire's last period (July 1915 - March 1916) and it is to these relative successes that we shall turn in a later section.

### The Metaphor - Mask or Revelation?

There are basically two views about the function of metaphor. Either it illumines experience or it draws a veil over reality. The latter interpretation is favoured by the German critic, Uwe Wandrey, who bases this view of the metaphor on the highly idealistic "realitätsignorierend" Expressionist war lyric (See Chapter 2 p.66 and footnote 7 ). His definition is as follows:-

"Die Metapher bevorzugt Teilinhalte, indem sie zugleich andere unterdrückt. Selektion und Repression sind somit die polaren Hauptfunktionen der Metapher (....) Der gewohnte Zusammenhang wird zerstört. Darin liegt offenbar die ästhetische Wirkung dieser Bildform" (47).

(The metaphor favours partial meaning by virtue of the fact that it simultaneously suppresses other meanings. Selection and repression are thereby the main polar functions of the metaphors. (...) The normal associations are destroyed. This plainly is where the aesthetic effect of this figure lies).

Wandrey's final conclusion is that the metaphor has a 'masking' function

- "Die Metapher hat verschleiende Funktion". (48)

Charles Hartmann expresses a diametrically opposed view:-

"The metaphor detaches the action from the things and applies it to or embodies it in new things. If its precision is limited, so is the accuracy of all means of knowing. Its limits are those of language. We need not charge metaphor with falsity". (49)

Other critics take the idea of 'illumination' even further. C. Day Lewis, for example, speaks of the metaphor as an extension of the 'divine spark', whose brilliant luminosity or 'magnesium flash' (50) not only

spreads light over the inchoate darkness of incomprehension, but also dazzles and surprises with the novelty of its new-found combinations. (This last idea echoes the emphasis on surprise in poetry, "Il est tout dans la surprise" which Apollinaire makes in L'Esprit Nouveau).

Middleton Murry (51) places a similar importance on the 'revelatory' powers of the metaphor.

"What we primarily demand is that the similarity (analogy drawn by the metaphor) (...) should have lain hitherto unperceived, or but rarely perceived by us, so that it comes to us with an effect of revelation".

Where between these two extremes does the practice of Apollinaire, Owen and Stramm fall? Stramm relied heavily on the power of revelation of even single words (see later p.233) through whose concentrated energy direct penetration of the unknown could be achieved. Critics tend to prefer the analogy of explosions rather than light, however, when discussing Stramm's aesthetic theory (52). Apollinaire stresses the aspect of revelation in his general discussion of poetry in L'Esprit Nouveau.

"(L'Esprit Nouveau) lutte pour la claire compréhension de son temps et pour ouvrir des vues nouvelles (....) etc" (53).

As for Owen, although he made no formal aesthetic declarations, his poetic intentions are made very clear from his letters, which contain insistent expressions of his determination to 'uncover' the truth about war (See also Chapter 3) and to 'cry his outcry' (54). The ruthless intensity of his metaphors, the swiftness with which he cuts the flesh away from the old assumptions and lays bare the "slashed bones" of comfortable lies, is well-known. Here the shocking reversal of romantic conventions concerning friendship has its effect:-

" I have made fellowships  
(...) wound with war's hard wire whose stakes are strong;  
Bound with the bandage of the arm that drips;  
Knit in the webbing of the rifle-throng. " (55)

There is, of course, a less well-known side to him, as in the strange poem The Kind Ghosts (p. 103) where the lines:-

" She dreams of golden gardens and sweet glooms,

Not marvelling why her roses never fall

Nor what red mouths were torn to make their blooms "

seem to partake of the same strain of fantasy as Apollinaire's "roses guerrières". (56) Similarly, the exquisite Romantic melancholy of Fragment : a Farewell (p.106) with its beautiful comparison between sunset and death

" I saw his round mouth's crimson deepen as it fell,

Like a sun, in his last deep hour;

Watched the magnificent recession of farewell,

Clouding, half gleam, half glower,

And a last splendour burn the heavens of his cheek,

And in his eyes

The cold stars lighting, very old and bleak,

In different skies. "

seems far from the directness of the physiological comparison in Mental Cases (p. 72) -

" Sunlight seems a blood-smear; night comes blood-black;

Dawn breaks open like a wound that bleeds afresh. "

where all nature is seen in terms of blood, thereby reversing the conventional direction of the comparison in Fragment, where the draining of the blood from the dead boy's face is more euphemistically presented in terms of nature (the movements of the sun) (57). Despite these occurrences of an earlier Romantic phase (58), Owen's use of metaphor is revelatory, not only by virtue of its roots in realism, (as Owen wrote in a letter to Sassoon "I think every poem and every figure of speech should be a matter of experience") but also by its uncovering of moral

truths beyond the immediate reality of war. Apollinaire, on rare occasions, can speak to us with the power of Owen, as in the poem La Tranchée (The Trench) where the trench is portrayed as a voracious female man-killer - the evil fairy Morgane hungry for young blood (59).

"Viens avec moi jeune dans mon sexe qui est tout mon corps  
Viens avec moi pénétre-moi pour que je sois heureuse  
de volupté sanglante".

The grotesque metaphor which links the physical organs of the woman (normally associated with pleasure and love cf. Les Neuf Portes de Ton Corps, p.619) with the crumbling chalk parapets and winding tunnels of the trench (cf. Le Palais du Tonnerre, p.254), integrates the repulsion and fascination exerted by the imminent presence of death. The whole poem portrays the young men as victims of the basest deception and their sacrifice as the result of an evil and sadistic will. This is one of the meanings (60) of "le terrible amour des peuples" in Le Chant de l'Amour (p.283), a significance made all the more horrible by its ironic contrast with all the lighter associations of love in Apollinaire's war poetry as a whole.

Generally speaking however, Apollinaire's images of death are far more reticent. The same image occurs elsewhere (p.599) in a much attenuated form, completely deprived of the referential complexity which it enjoys in La Tranchée.

"Des braves fantassins je connais les tranchées  
Où les Gloires de pourpre aux créneaux attachées  
Attendent que nos bleus les violent enfin."

(Of the brave infantrymen I know the trenches  
Where the purple Glories attached to the parapets  
Wait for our blue-coats to rape them at last)

Here the association of sex with violence has the effect of a gratuitous piece of bravado meant to impress the recipient of the poem (a fellow

poet and soldier) - reinforced by the self-congratulatory line - "J'ai l'air mâle et fier" (I have a proud, virile look). Instead of being victims, it is now the soldiers who are the instigators of violence, the dominant, rapacious heroes. The allusion to sex has neither the regenerative value attributed to it in the Poèmes à Lou nor the sharpening focus of the moral comment which seems to motivate it in La Tranchée. The basic incoherence and attenuation of the image (Are the "purple glories" associated with the "pourpre amour salué par ceux qui vont périr" of Nuit d'Avril (p.243), for instance?) relegates it to the level of rhetoric which fails to persuade (See chapter 2). The obscurity of such references to the physical realities of trench warfare, show how imprecise an instrument the metaphor can be, how clever a lure away from meaning, how delicate yet opaque a mask. This "sense of modesty" ("pudeur") which is characteristic of much of Apollinaire's metaphoric usage, Debon sees as the inclination to "all forms of attenuation" (61) (euphemisms, metonyms, consolatory images, anti-phrasis, humour, argot) naturally used by many combatant writers. The recourse to mystification is therefore a common psychological defence mechanism (62). Be this as it may, the more 'fantaisiste', 'surreal' or just 'obscure' metaphors are not simply the result of his wish to avoid reality because 'he could not stand too much' (Roger Little) of it, indeed his metaphorical usage in his love lyrics functions precisely to discover the reality of the woman he loves (See later p.227f), but rather these metaphors are the product of his deepest beliefs about the nature of poetry and his role as a poet.

#### The Metaphor as Mask

References to masks (masques) and their analogues, helmets and gas-masks (casques, cagoules) occur quite frequently in Calligrammes, for example in the poem Visée ("Le masque bleu comme met Dieu son ciel")



and in the poem Chant de l'Horizon, where the young infantryman puts on his gas-mask and sings in dream-like tones:-

" Un fantassin presque un enfant	(An infantryman still almost a child
Bleu comme le jour qui s'écoule	Blue as the waning day
Bleu comme mon cœur triomphant	Blue as my triumphant heart
Disait en mettant sa cagoule....	Said as he put on his gas-mask
Tandis que nous n'y sommes pas (etc)" (Whilst we are not there (etc)) (p.267)	

Similarly, in the poem Simultanéités (p.285) there is a double reference to mask and gas-mask:-

" Et sous la cagoule masqué	(And beneath the veiled gas-mask
Il pense à des cheveux si sombres."	He thinks of hair so dark.)

The insistent recurrence of the 'mask' image would seem to indicate that Apollinaire has created yet another poetic persona through which he can express his most intimate thoughts about poetry. This time the persona is not borrowed from fable as are the Icarus, Orpheus and Merlin figures in Alcools, but belongs to the landscape of war. The 'masked infantryman' becomes an archetypal, mythical soldier-figure, yet who is endowed with the poetic powers of Orpheus. The persona is not complete in itself, however, and in the poem Chant de l'Horizon where the 'fantassin masqué' is most completely introduced, it is placed in opposition to the figure of the "horizon-poète" who has the powers not only of Orpheus, but also of Merlin the magician - "the clever manipulator of metaphors and puns" (63) and the bold inventiveness of Icarus. Renaud sees the confrontation of the two poetic personae in Chant de l'Horizon as "l'affrontement de deux Moi rivaux", that is, as the opposition between the earth-bound soldier-self and the self of the semi-divine poet (64), both of whom together form but different aspects of the same masked figure, threatened with the same existential void from which the 'horizon-poet' self continually tries to escape.

"Allons ouvrez les écluses que je me précipite et renverse tout."

(Go on, open the sluice-gates so that I can rush forth and overturn everything) (p.267)

The ensuing destruction of the self, Renaud sees as having its counterpart in the destruction of the world (65) which he finds so vividly portrayed in the poem Du Coton dans les Oreilles. However, in his war poetry, Apollinaire seems to incline away from the idea of destruction of self and towards expressions of preservation of self, of the 'invisible self which cannot disappear' of self as the still centre from which all time begins, and as an infinite extension into the future.

"C'est moi qui commence cette chose des siècles à venir." (p.272)

(It is I who initiate this story of the centuries to come)

Furthermore, the two personae represent a continuation (as opposed to Renaud's fragmentation) of the former poetic selves to be found in Alcools and Ondes - the 'fantassin-poète' being an analogue of the 'old' Orpheus-figure of La Chanson du Mal-Aimé, who sings of the past and of ancient loves, and 'l'horizon-poète' being an extension of the 'virile new' Orpheus (66) which appears for example in Le Musicien de St. Merry (p.188). The 'fantassin' in Chant de l'Horizon is noticeably an effeminate figure "presque un enfant" - the poet of Alcools who is chained and fettered by love (le poète tourné vers le passé, enchaîné à l'amour" (67)). He puts on his gas-mask to sing of the world of love he has left behind and of his regrets for the passing of time and opportunities lost.

"Tandis que nous n'y sommes pas

Que de Filles deviennent belles

Voici l'hiver et pas à pas

Leur beauté s'éloignera d'elles "

(Whilst we are not there

How many girls grow in beauty

Comes the winter and little by little

Their beauty will fade from them.)

His refrain weaves again the old spell of the plaintive octosyllables  
of La Chanson du Mal-Aimé:-

"Voie lactée o soeur lumineuse"

(Milky way o luminous sister)

but just as the crude Réponse des Cosaques Zaporogues (p.52) violently  
interrupts this plangent melody, the virile, dynamic will of the horizon  
poet surges forth to build new realities and to deny the old memories  
(See above p.193).

"Allons ouvrez les écluses que je me précipite et renverse tout"

Thus the "masculine impulse towards the future" complements the passivity  
of a "feminized past" (68). It is noticeable that the 'fantassin-poète'  
often takes the role of a passive onlooker, a role which is ascribed  
to him, for instance, in the poem Simultanéités (p.285)

"Il regarde venir là-bas ( He watches over there

Les prisonniers (....) " The prisoners coming (....) )

as it is in Chant de l'Horizon

"Il regarde longtemps l'horizon".

Like the Orpheus of the Greek legend as he goes to bring Eurydice from  
the underworld, he is incapable of direct intervention, but he has  
faced and conquered death and emerges from his ordeal invested with  
superhuman powers: he becomes a great poet and through his talents he  
is able to sing not only of the past of Eurydice, but of the past of the  
entire world and to breathe life into that which is not living. However,  
the songs of Orpheus are only immortal and prophetic if he evokes what  
is absent: he can only throw light on a distance world beyond. (69)

Several points from the Orpheus story are thus applicable to the  
'fantassin-poète'; his constant and renewed triumph over death (both in  
the trenches and through poetry); his singing and bringing to life of  
the past and his retirement into a secret world far beyond the reach  
of earthly human conflict. In Simultanéités, it is significant that

the infantryman-poet<sup>0</sup> only gains these powers with the wearing of the helmet and gas-mask, which he puts on "au moment de chanter" (70), at that very moment when he begins to tell of his past loves.

" Il tient son casque dans ses mains

Pour saluer la souvenance

Des lys des roses des jasmins

(...)

Et sous la cagoule masqué

Il pense à des cheveux si sombres. <sup>00</sup>

(He holds his helmet in his hands

In order to salute the memory

Of lilies roses and jasmin

And beneath the hooded gas-mask

He thinks of hair so dark) (p.285)

The soldier-poet behind his mask seems safe from the threat of death and isolated temporarily from his surroundings, his vision of the world becomes strange and different:

" Dim through the misty panes and thick green light,

As under a green sea" (71) ;

" Mais quoi donc l'attend (...)

O vaste mer aux mauves ombres. <sup>00</sup>

(But what awaits him (....))

O vast sea of purplish waves) (p.285)

and he is able to transcend reality to weave fantastic transformations, and to bring out of death the sweetness and joy of life. Yet the poet is not always able to make of the "horrible perfume" of war a "melodious tune of love" (Rose guerrières). This fantastic singer of past love is still constrained by earthly fetters, bound as he is by the physical circumstances of war and his role as a soldier constantly threatened with

death and silence.

<sup>69</sup> Il pleut si doucement pendant la nuit si tendre

Tandis que monte en nous cet effluve fatal

Musicien masqué que nul ne peut entendre.<sup>70</sup>

(It is raining so softly in the night so tender

Whilst the fatal effluvium rises in us

Masked musician whom no one can hear) (Roses Guerrières, p.501)

This then, is the background to the strange and fantastic images of war for which Apollinaire is so notorious. The poem from which the above extract is taken, Roses Guerrières, is particularly interesting for what it reveals to us of the daring transformations of his metaphors of war. The first section has five stanzas which constitute an original version of Fête. The first version was sent to Lou in September 1915 and republished as Fête in L'Elan on the 1st December 1916 and so Apollinaire had some time to process even further the original impetuses of the poem, till it took its final, densely metaphorical form. A brief comparison of the first and last stanzas of the two versions shows how far the final version has receded from experienced realities and how refined is the ultimate metamorphosis of the alien element of war.

Roses Guerrières

Fête aux lanternes en acier

Qu'il est charmant cet éclairage

Feu d'artifice meurtrier /

Mais on s'amuse avec courage

L'air est plein d'un terrible alcool

Filtré des étoiles mi-closes

Les obus pleurent dans leur vol

La mort amoureuse des roses.

Fête

Feu d'artifice en acier

Qu'il est charmant cet éclairage

Artifice d'artificier

Mêler quelque grâce au courage

L'air est plein d'un terrible alcool

Filtré des obus mi-closes

Les obus caressent le mol

Parfum nocturne où tu reposes

Mortification des roses. (72)

Fête is obviously a more polished and elegant version of Roses Guerrières with, for example, a neater, more closely structured first stanza (achieved through a repetition of 'artifice' and the internal assonantial play on the sounds [s], [S] and [Z]). From the first version, beginning 'Fête aux lanternes en acier', there is a discernible movement away from what is essentially a direct transcription of the coloured lights in the night sky, to a contemplation of 'created' beauty and of the powers of engineer and poet alike. (The pun "artifice d'artificier" was obviously as irresistible to Apollinaire as "l'art de l'artilleur"(p.801)). The incidence of punning is an indication of the greater abstraction of the second version. Direct reference to death in the first stanza of Rose Guerrières - "Feu d'artifice meurtrier" is dropped in the final version. Similarly, in the final stanza of Fête, the original clearer reference to death in Rose Guerrières - "les obus pleurent (.....) la mort (etc)", remain only in greatly attenuated form. Real objects from the external world - the stars, the shells, the smell of explosives - "l'air est plein d'un terrible alcool", the rocket flares, are all drawn into the esoteric symbolism of romantic love, intensified in the final version with the overtones of a more private sensuality.

As the war progressed, the 'fantassin-poète' was increasingly adept at holding up his mask between himself and the poisonous odours of war (August 1915, L'Adieu du Cavalier; October 1915, Le Palais du Tonnerre; November 1915, Chevaux de Frise). Occasionally, the mask is lowered to reveal a glimpse of the horrors (July 1915, Côte 146; October 1915, Dans l'Abri-Caverne) but Apollinaire maintains, even at such fragile moments, his characteristic objectivity. Thus, even if we are ready to look behind the mask, when such opportunity is offered, we cannot really hope to discover "La réalité des souffrances" as Debon suggests (73). Rather it is through other weaknesses in the mask that we can gauge the

pressures of reality, as the poet is stretched to his limit and beyond. Indeed, the poet is constantly threatened by the imminent failure of his vision:

<sup>10</sup> O mon amour chéri qui portes un masque aveugle <sup>11</sup> (p.434)

(O my dear love who wears a blind mask)

and there are many examples (Océan de Terre, Dans l'Abri Caverne) which seem to reveal "the ineffable inequality between his impotence vis-à-vis reality and his power over words" (74). Another such example is to be found in the poem Agent de Liaison (dated 13 April 1915), whose utter formlessness is compounded by gratuitous 'word-making':

<sup>12</sup> Le 12 avril 1915 Tormoha Manitangène

Lamohona

Lamahonette <sup>13</sup>

- an indication of the massive technical uncertainty of the poet. The later poem Chevaux de Frise (See Chp. 3, p.126), although much denser metaphorically, as is characteristic of his final phase (see below), bears similar traces of inadequacy. Renaud (75) summarizes admirably the sometimes failed inspiration of 'the ardent muse' of the <sup>14</sup>fantassin-poète.

"Le drame de cette poésie, c'est (...) l'incapacité des métaphores "momentanées" de s'organiser en véritable continuité; le poème semble ne pas avoir de fonctionnement interne, autonome, aucune "source" autre que l'intention du poète: quand celui-ci se tait (...) sa création se défait et retombe devant lui!" (The whole tragic drama of this poetry is the inability of 'instantaneous' metaphors to organize themselves into a true continuity; the poem (Chevaux de Frise) seems to lack an internal autonomous system, or indeed any "source" other than the intention of the poet: when he falls silent, his creation comes apart and falls down before him.)

The Metaphor as Revelation.

"Le Grand Pan est Ressuscité"

The counterpart to the masked poet and an extension of the 'virile new Orpheus' (see above p.207) of Ondes is the horizon-poet, endowed with the strange powers of ubiquity, omniscience and prophecy (76). Master of the secret magic of poetry in Merveille de la Guerre he emerges as a Promethean figure who controls the fire of the gods (77).

"Quelques cris de flamme annoncent sans cesse ma presence."

(A few cries of flame unceasingly announce my presence (p.272)

The poem Chant de l'Horizon en Champagne is a fierce celebration of the power of the poet, whose aggressive desire and intellectual daring can overturn the world. The violent aspiration of mastery which characterizes the end of the poem :-

"Je suis comme l'onde (78)

Allons ouvrez les écluses que je me précipite et renverse tout "

(I am like a wave/Come on open the floodgates so that I can rush  
in and overturn everything)

is essentially an expression of the desire to create a virile, modern poetry which will bring the sharp surprise of innovative combinations, but which will also derive part of its strength from the glorious past of art. All these ideas are contained within the following four lines, whose richness of allusion is a key to the kind of poetry, both avant-garde and epic in spirit, which Apollinaire hoped would emerge from his experience of war.

"Moi l'horizon je fais la roue comme un grand Paon

Écoutez renaître les oracles qui avaient cessé

Le Grand Pan est ressuscité

Champagne viril qui émoustille la Champagne

(I, the horizon, I spread my tail like a huge Peacock

Listen to the rebirth of the oracles that had once ceased

Great Pan is brought to life again

Manly champagne which rouses Champagne)



The phrase "Faire la roue" seems to have a richness of associations for Apollinaire, occurring in, for example, Un Fantôme de Nuées (p.195). In this poem, the turning of cartwheels by the tiny juggler is thought to be a reference to the more perfect music of the new poetry (79) of Ondes. The various possible interpretations offered by Greet and Lockerbie (80) of its meaning in Chant de l'Horizon are of interesting contextual relevance to the war, but the reference may be a much simpler allusion to the visual display of the flares from shells and rockets. In Agent de Liaison (p.433), for example, Apollinaire uses the term "faire la roue" with just these visual connotations:

"O ciel o mon beau ciel gemmé de canonnades  
Le ciel faisait la roue comme un phénix qui flambe  
Paon lunaire rouant '....'  
(O sky oh my beautiful sky bejewelled with canon-salvoes  
The sky spread its tail like a flaming phoenix  
Wheeling lunar peacock....)

The effect of the great peacock's fierce display of bright colours is one of rhetorical bravado; through the grandiose image, Apollinaire seems to be aligning himself with the vast creative/destructive forces of war. The punning transference from 'Paon' to 'Pan' invests the 'horizon-poet' with even greater cosmic significance, (as implied in the 'Paon lunaire' of Agent de Liaison). The god Pan (also linked with the god of Love, Eros, and also Dionysius), is like all of Apollinaire's poetic avatars, a mysterious and complex figure; libidinous god of the South, he is associated with fertility and procreation; celestial being of even greater dimensions, he becomes, in the words of Scott Bates (81) "visage céleste, l'incarnation de la Parole - le tout Orphique" (face of the divine, the incarnation of the Word - the orphic "all") - the creative spirit of the entire universe no less (82). The 'Pan' figure occurs in another earlier poem to Lou (p.380) in the reference to the "neighing" (as of a centaur) 'of suns'.

" Je t'aime tes mains et mes souvenirs

Font sonner à toute heure une heureuse fanfare

Des soleils tour à tour se prennent à hennir."

(I love you your hands and my memories

Cause to sound out at every moment a happy fanfare

Suns upon suns begin to whinny.)

J.P. Richards (83) points out an even earlier appearance of the Pan Figure in the poem Le Brasier (p.108):-

" Le galop soudain des étoiles

N'étant que ce qui deviendra

Se mêle au hennissement mâle

Des centaures."

(The sudden gallop of the stars

Being but that which will become

Is confused with the male whinnying

of centaurs.)

which he sees as supplanting the earlier, charming, feminine figure of the siren of Alcools - "Après la sirène, féminine, attirante, fuyante, archaïque, voici le centaure, viril et jaillissant à venir" (84).

Richards sees the centaur-figure in the Lou poem referred to above, as indicative of the assumptions of a wider, cosmic role by the poet, whose movements of passion engender gods and stars alike (85):-

"Des soleils tour à tour se prennent à hennir

Nous sommes les bat-flanc sur qui ruent les étoiles."

(Suns upon suns begin to whinny

We are the lead horses kicked against by the stars)

Stars and nebulae are erotic (86) for Apollinaire and are equated with love, as for instance, in La Nuit d'Avril (p.243)

" Comme un astre éperdu

Coeur obus éclaté "

(Like a lost star searching for its seasons

Heart exploded shell you whistled your love song)

and with the spirit of adventure and conquest which is behind all human progress, as in Toujours (p.237)

De nébuleuse en nébuleuse  
Le don Juan des mille et trois comètes  
(...)  
Cherche les forces neuves<sup>A</sup>  
(From nebula to nebula  
The Don Juan of a thousand and three comets  
Looks for new forces)

The search for new forces is behind the daring, forward-thrusting poetry which harnesses the dynamism of war itself and which results in such pieces as Merveille de la Guerre p.271), peppered with an outrageous mixture of classical and futurist references. Such poems can be seen both as a challenge to the old assumptions about war and as a poetic alternative, which in the spirit of the article written for La Phalange 1908 (see above p.193), destroys the old lies and annihilates the reality which it replaces.

.....

Metaphor as Mask and Revelation in Le Vigneron Champenois (p.296)

"Dans les jardins rouant plus haut que tous les ciels mobiles  
Les masques de l'avenir descendent et flambent (...)  
Dont les Fausses faces jettent d'éblouissantes clartés" (p,1061)(87)

The idea of the virile power of the new poetry as expressed through the persons of 'horizon-poète' (Pan and Orpheus) is continued in the magical and Dionysiac associations with wine and the related imagery of alcohol which is one of the main themes of this poem. Anne Greet (88) comments on the metamorphosis of shells into wine-bottles which occurs in line 11:-

"J'envoie mes bouteilles partout comme les obus d'une charmante  
artillerie"

(I send my bottles everywhere like the shells of a charming artillery)

'in the following words - "The sparkling, explosive wine represents a manifestation of vitality and exuberance transcending the death-dealing functions (of the real shells) to become an expression of the life spirit". The 'eau de vie' which flows through this poem is indeed a much headier vintage than the strange purified spirits of Alcools and its general volatility seems to evade any serious interpretation. The poem, is, however, based on a noticeable interplay between reality and myth and between the frivolous and serious, surging with provocative imagery intended to surprise and dazzle yet to open new perspectives on the war and containing dream-like mythical allusions which both mystify and suggest. Introducing the interplay between reality and symbol, the first section of the poem contains images and metaphors ostensibly drawn from the actual background of war, but which are, in effect, false masks, behind which the poet hints at deeper revelations (89). The second section opens on a highly evocative line:-

<sup>88</sup> "La nuit est blonde o vin blond" <sup>89</sup>

(The night is blond o blond wine)

Heavy and ponderous with the strangeness of myth and the honey-sweetness of a summer night, it lulls and intoxicates with resonant allusions, which rise like so many bubbles through mythical, cosmic and perhaps even erotic (90) references to the prosaic reality of plain fact:-

<sup>90</sup> "Un vigneron qui sait ce qu'est la guerre" <sup>91</sup>

(The vine-grower who knows what war is all about)

This two-way communication between the worlds of reality and myth is a conscious part of the creative process as described by Apollinaire (91).

"Pour renouveler l'inspiration, la rendre plus fraîche, plus vivante et plus orphique, je crois que le poète devra s'en rapporter à la nature, à la vie" (In order to renew one's inspiration, to refresh and revivify it, to make it more orphic, I believe that the poet should refer back to nature and to life.)

The poem (sent to Madeleine on the 7th February 1916) has a deceptively matter-of-fact opening, the banal realism of which soon gives way to a more atmospheric description of the village where the soldiers are billeted. The reference to "la lumière parfumée", which moves the poem to a vaguely symbolic register, seems a rather facile, neo-symbolist, fin-de-siècle cliché, but in fact the mood of languour which it creates is similarly recorded in a letter written by Charles Sorley four months later, where he describes a little village in the north of France and speaks of "the pleasant smell of manure" and the soothing effect of the countryside "stagnant and smooth like their cider, unfathomably gold; beautiful and calm without mental fear". The line therefore extends beyond mere poetic construct; it has its roots directly in experience. The following line (3) also seems grounded in actual observation but the reference to the priest's helmet (casque) may be yet a further allusion to the poet himself. Line 4

"La bouteille champenoise est-elle ou non une artillerie?"

leans rather heavily on the double meaning of "bouteille champenoise" as both 'torpille aérienne française' and of course, the champagne bottle (93), yet it is through this facile pun that he introduces one of the main themes of the poem. The punning also continues in the word "artillerie" which inescapably combines the ideas of art and war. In the first sense, 'artillerie' has the force of "artifice" whose ambiguity is exploited as we have seen in Fête and also in the poem C'est (p.480)

"Cet univers singulièrement orné d'artifices

N'est-ce point quelque oeuvre de sorcellerie"

(This universe peculiarly ornamented with artifices

Isn't there some sorcery going on there)

Line 8 contains one of the more strikingly 'surreal' metaphors in Apollinaire's war poetry:-

"Bonjour soldats bouteilles champenoises où le sang fermente."

(Hello soldiers champagne bottles where the blood ferments)

Provocative in its easy informality of style and intentional frivolity, the associations with blood (94) are in no way negative as is usually the case in Owen's war poetry (95). In this poem, the allusion to the fermenting of blood in bottles is indicative of virile energy and life and concentrates on the same regenerative aspects of spilt and sacrificed blood (96) as in Si je mourais là-bas, where Apollinaire, much as Brooke does in his similarly titled poem If I should die, dramatizes the idea of his own self-sacrifice (97):-

"Le fatal giclement de mon sang sur le monde  
Donnerait au soleil plus de vive clarté  
Aux fleurs plus de couleur plus de vitesse à l'onde  
Un amour inouï descendrait sur le monde (etc)"  
(The fatal arterial-spurt of my blood upon the world  
would give the sun greater light,  
To the flowers more colour, to the waves more energy,  
A love as yet unheard of would descend upon the world ) (etc)

The rather flippant approach to death, the 'heart-on-sleeve' punning and the lightly ironic humour of the last two lines are all examples of the kind of poetry which earned Apollinaire a reputation for heartlessness. Apparently based on actual observation, the poem deceives by the wry ambiguity of its approach and disappoints any expectations of serious comment. Despite, however, the charming face of war, which the poem projects, there are deep-seated references to the role of poetry and to the significance of the poet himself, both as soldier (*bouteille vivante*) and archetypal deity (*vigneron*). The more 'off-putting' fantaisiste elements should perhaps be interpreted in the patriotic spirit they were probably meant:-

"Notre humeur est charmante l'ardeur vient quand il faut  
Nous sommes narquois car nous savons faire la part des choses"

(A L'Italie (p.274))

(Our humour is charming, ardour comes when it is necessary.  
We are full of bantering spirit, because we know how to get  
the best out of things).

.....

#### Metaphorical Development in the War Poetry of Apollinaire

The foregoing sections have looked at specific examples of metaphorical usage in some of Apollinaire's war poems. Here it is intended to give a brief account of his growing mastery of metaphor taken over the war poetry as a whole. The earlier poetry of the Nîmes period and of his time in the Artillery (Sept. 1914 - June 1915) shows a noticeably higher incidence of simile and "metonymic chains" (98), than for instance, the later love poetry to Lou and Madeleine, which is densely metaphoric. It would seem that in the earlier poems the new and relatively unassimilated theme of war is still an area of uncertainty for Apollinaire. The consequently sometimes tentative style indicates a pressing search for analogy, for orientation and meaning in an increasingly alien world. The fact that, not unnaturally, his physical desire for love increased with the deprivation of the trench conditions brings together both at a psychological and physical level the two apparently contradictory themes of love and war. As he matured in experience as a soldier, so his metaphoric technique matured, resulting in the rich ambiguity of such poems as Désir (Oct. 1915). It is in the later love poems that the opposition between the themes of love and war (99) are most successfully resolved, in a highly metaphoric language whose aim is, unlike most of the war poems proper, the total penetration and knowledge of the object of his desire. (100)

A diachronic view of Apollinaire's war poetry does reveal a fairly smooth movement (101) from the use of conventional metaphors and clichés (Sept. 1914 - March 1915), through a period of trial and orientation (102) in which similes and metonymic chains are a dominant element (April -

June 1915), to the final period of trench experience (July 1915 - March 1916) and a denser, more confident and controlled use of metaphor. The following poems are used to represent the three phases as indicated:-

Phase I (Sept. 1914 - March 1915)

- |                                |                      |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| (i) La Petite Auto (p.207)     | (exact date unknown) |
| (ii) A Nîmes (p.211)           | (Dec. 1914)          |
| (iii) Guirlande de Lou (p.390) | (24 Jan. 1915)       |

Phase II (April - June 1915)

- |                       |             |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| (i) Visée (p.224)     | (June 1915) |
| (ii) Saillant (p.227) | (June 1915) |

Phase III (July 1915 - March 1916)

- |                             |             |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| (i) Chef de Section (p.307) | (Oct. 1915) |
|-----------------------------|-------------|

Phase I - La Petite Auto (103)

Debon (104) refers to a 'renewal' of Apollinaire's poetic repertoire as he came into contact with new experiences - "un renouvellement des images, liées aux circonstances dans lesquelles vit le poète". Initially, however, the earlier phase of his poetry represents a period of consolidation both of his own imagery and the 'received' conventions of the patriotic poetry of the time, which latter had some influence on his style as can be seen in the poem La Petite Auto. Here, for instance, Apollinaire adopts an 'epic' stance (105) through the inclusion of traditionally grandiose and dramatic mythical allusions - "Des géants furieux", "Les poissons voraces" and through the use of abstract plurals (106) "leurs sombres demeures", "montaient des abîmes" etc. Interestingly, Owen reacted in a similar manner to the outbreak of war in an early poem of 1915, The Seed, where he refers to "perishing great darkness", "rending the sails of progress", "famines of thought and feeling". Superlatives such as 'great' appear twice in the poem, and 'perfect' and 'grand' appear once. Similar emphatic superlatives are used by



Apollinaire in the poem A Nîmes, such as 'beau', 'ardemment', 'glorieux', 'intrépide'. Again, Apollinaire records the dramatic moment of his engagement in the army in alexandrines, the traditional metre par excellence of the epic poem. Further contributions to the atmosphere of 'grandeur' and 'awe-ful suspense' are made by the rather awkward dramatization of the conflict between love and duty -

"L'Amour dit Reste ici Mais là-bas les obus"

(Love said Stay but over there the shells)

and the rhetorical flourish of the punning rhyme "obus/buts". Further 'romantic' intrusions-("la splendeur argentine") and 'heroic' flourishes -("vers le nord glorieux l'intrépide bleusaille") emphasize the conventionality of Apollinaire's patriotic attitude to war, whereas the final mystification - "o tour Magne" serves to underline the self-consciousness of the poetic stance. Punctuating the more generally 'poetic' allusions are sudden down-to-earth observations of the banal aspects of barracks-life -

"Le territorial se mange une salade "

(the territorial eats some lettuce)

which disrupt the expectations created by the evocation of traditional images of war and do a great deal to ironize conventional attitudes. However, the irony is not sustained (107), neither is the interest of novelty, as in such similes:-

" 4 pointeurs fixaient les bulles des niveaux

Qui remuaient ainsi que les yeux des chevaux "

( 4 gun-layers were fixing the spirit-levels,

Which moved like horses' eyes)

which, like the comparison "leurs yeux clairs comme mes éperons" (their eyes as bright as my spurs), give the impression of rapidly assimilated similarities included mainly for effect.

The poem Guirlande de Lou written only a month later than A Nîmes is motivated by experience of love long-matured within the poet and shows a more purposive metaphorical usage. However, topical references to the war are not well integrated into the main theme of the poem and appear in 'unprocessed' juxtapositions, rather than fully assimilated metaphor as in the following lines:-

"Héliotropes o soupirs d'une Belgique crucifiée"

(Heliotropes o sighs of a crucified Belgium)

O lys o cloches des cathédrales qui s'écroulent au nord

(O lilies o bells of the cathedrals collapsing in the north)

Elsewhere, the 'flower' theme leads the poet into bathetic abstractness and sentimentality:

"Les lilas de tes cheveux qui annoncent le printemps

Ce sont les sanglots et les cris que jettent les mourants"

(The lilacs of your hair, heralds of spring

Are the sobs and cries of the dying)

which is only just redeemed by the intensity of the final stanza.

#### Phase II - Saillant, Visée

On the 4th April 1915, Apollinaire departed for the front as an artilleryman, during which period he was inundated with new experiences and images, as he wrote in a poem to Lou of 13 May 1915:-

"Les testicules pleins le cerveau tout empli d'images neuves".

Despite the apparently new source of inspiration, there is little evidence of renewed creativity in Visée and more novelty, than renewal in Saillant. Both poems were written in the month of June, both are characterized by a retreat into poeticity and both rely on a chain-like disposition of the imagery for their structural framework.

Visée

This poem consists of a loosely-linked series of metaphors which are not characterized by any particular originality, being rather partly self-borrowings or self-reminiscences (lines 4,5,11), or deliberate mystifications (line 7 in fact refers to the messages carried by telegraph-wire) or vague poeticisms (line 6,7,11).

This poem shares with Saillant a roughly vertical arrangement of images, which is really an dilution of the more compact 'horizontal' transference of meaning to be found in the metaphor. Compare:

↖ ↗  
Narines chevaux de frise  
↖ ↗ ↖ ↗ ↖ ↗  
Coeur obus éclaté tu sifflais ta romance

with:-

↓ Harpes aux cordes d'argent o pluie ma musique  
↓ L'invisible ennemi plaie d'argent au soleil  
↓ Et l'avenir secret que la fusée élucide.

An even better example of vertical transference of meaning is to be found in the poem Il y a des petits ponts épatants (p.423), written in April 1915, which contains only three metaphors and is based solely on listed observations. ( See also above p.201 )

Saillant, although relying on a similar linear juxtaposition, is far less structured than Visée. The typographical disorderliness, the random associations conveyed by disparate images, all show a high degree of experimentation - and ultimately uncertainty of aesthetic stance. (109) Nevertheless, the poem can be seen as some kind of affirmation of order amidst the chaos of experience and as a continuation of the search for significance in a disorientating world. Yet the reliance on trivial double-meaning -

" Salut le Rapace " (torpille aérienne)

" Le crapaud chantait " (obus)

or pseudo-symbolic significance -

<sup>03</sup> Il est ici dans les pierres

Du beau royaume dévasté <sup>04</sup>

(It's here amongst the stones

Of the beautiful ruined Kingdom)

uncovers the emptiness and futility of his analogies, as do the attempts to assimilate new images to old experiences:-

<sup>01</sup> Un trou d'obus propre comme une salle de bain <sup>03</sup>

(A shell crater clean as a bathroom)

and to old memories:-

<sup>01</sup> T'en souviens-tu <sup>03</sup>

(Do you remember)

in order to establish a continuity between past and present. Apollinaire is, it seems, almost defeated by his material in this poem, for the patterns he sets up for us do not correlate with any major areas of human experience. This is, however, not the case in his later love lyrics, such as Côte 146 or Chef de Section or even the much earlier Si je mourais là-bas which can be counted among the best of his poetry which came out of the war.

### Phase III (July 1915 - March 1916) Love and War.

In the later love lyrics, Apollinaire was most in control of his themes and in such poems as Désir (p.263) (sent to Madeleine on the 6 Oct. 1915) and Chef de Section (110) (p.307) ( published in La Grande Revue Nov. 1917) he achieves an almost complete fusion of the opposing concepts of love and war, (L'Amour cette guerre/La vraie guerre (p.487)) through the use of a densely metaphoric poetic language. A similar close identification of the two themes is to be found in the poem Triebkrieg by August Stramm which will be discussed at the end of this section. Owen, on the other hand, intentionally avoids any such identification, but starkly opposes love and war in the harsh contrast of didactic simile, as in the poem Greater Love discussed further below.

Désir. Chef de Section

The poem Désir somewhat controversially describes the act of war in terms of the sexual urge:-

" Mon désir c'est la butte du Mesnil

Mon désir est là sur quoi je tire "

(My desire is the Butte of Mesnil

My desire is over there where I'm firing)

whereas Chef de Section describes the sexual urge in terms of the aggressive act of war:-

" Les soldats de ma bouche te prendront d'assaut "

(The soldiers of my mouth will take you by force)

which is the usual direction of the comparison. An inversion of this comparison brings the less comprehensible and less acceptable association of the vital energy of love with the dynamic destructive forces of war - a common futurist pose:-

" Virilités du siècle où nous sommes

O canons "

(Male organs of our century

O cannons)

(Fusée)

More significantly, however, the energy of love and war is identified with the creative powers of the poet/magician.

" Ma bouche sera une armée contre toi une armée pleine de dispartes

Variée comme un enchanteur qui sait varier ses méta morphoses. "

(My mouth will be an army against you, an army full of incongruities

Varied as a magician who keeps varying his spells).

Poetry and love are capable therefore of equalling and surpassing the dynamism of war. Love is seen as the natural regenerative force in direct opposition to the war (see for instance Chant d'Amour) and can take many forms as in Venu de Dieuze, whether it be religious or patriotic love for one's country:-

"Amour sacré amour de la Patrie"

Principally, however, it is sexual love associated with Pan and Eros and Dionysius

"Couples des marais - les turquoises

Hennissements partout"

(Swamp-butterflies - sky-blue mushrooms

Whinnies everywhere)

which keeps the cycle of the world turning and pulsating with the promise of new life in the midst of death:-

"Les obus miaulaient un amour à mourir"

(The shells whined a killing love (111)) (Nuit d'Avril)

Chef de Section specifically places love as an instinctive compensatory reaction to the horrors of war by the inclusion of the final line, not present in the original version sent to Lou, which situates "the mounting intensity of the poet's desire" (Greet) just before the moment of a trench assault. Placed in this perspective, the sexual urge is none other than "a fervent aspiration toward life in the face of possible death" (112) as he wrote to Madeleine - (113)

"L'horreur tragique, horrible, obscure du corps à corps dans les tranchées, les boyaux, les entonnoirs, augmente ma volupté à t'aimer"

(The obscure and horrible tragic horror of hand-to-hand fighting in the trenches, the dugouts and the shell-holes, merely increases my voluptuous yearning for your love).

#### Greater Love (114)

In this poem, originally addressed 'To any beautiful woman' Owen does not see love between man and woman as the unequivocally positive force which Apollinaire does. The poem Parce que tu m'as parlé de vice (p.396) is perhaps one of the clearest statements of Apollinaire's ideas on the essential purity and innocence of frankly accepted love and its ability to improve the quality of life if approached in a

healthy, guiltless way. (115)

<sup>01</sup> Ennoblissons mon cœur l'imagination

La pauvre humanité bien souvent n'en a guères.<sup>02</sup>

(Let us keep noble dear heart our imagination

Poor humanity too often barely has any)

Owen, on the other hand, in his poem Greater Love, through his use of negative comparison, seems implicitly to discount the joys of heterosexual love, in his desire to emphasize the special bonds between soldier and soldier. Behind the serious parody of Romantic formulae (116)

<sup>01</sup> Red lips are not so red <sup>02</sup>

there is evidence of a real distaste for love between man and woman.

The negative associations of 'shame' and 'lure' (a contrast rhyme in a draft: 'pure/sewer', shows the direction of his attitude to conventional love (117)) carry the implication of woman's shameful and deceitful sensuality. Similarly the 'moli me tangere' theme -

<sup>01</sup> Weep, you may weep, for you may touch them not <sup>02</sup>

suggests her general unworthiness, both through negative contrast with the 'purity' of the soldiers' love and through her implicit association with the repentant prostitute Mary Magdalen. Owen's homosexual proclivities are well-enough known and although such biographical detail should not interfere with critical opinion (118), his personal inclinations in this direction nevertheless do affect his poetry in some important ways. One of the results of his untried love for women is his tendency at times to over-sentimentalize his comrades, especially in death.

<sup>01</sup> Your dear voice is not dear

Gentle, and evening clear

As theirs whom none now hear

Now earth has stopped their piteous mouths that coughed.<sup>02</sup>

This attitude can be compared with the far harsher poem by Charles

H. Sorley When You See Millions of the Mouthless Dead (written 8 Sept. 1915)

whose utter lack of sentimentality =

"Say not soft things as other men have said"

is perhaps more shocking even than Greater Love, which appears somewhat consolatory in comparison. However, the occasional sentimental note is but a thin tinkle beside the rising crescendo of indignation which clamours in Owen's poetry as a whole. Greater Love is full of unforgettably powerful images, as for instance, in the second stanza where the soldiers are abandoned to lonely death:

" Rolling and rolling there  
Where God seems not to care;  
Till the fierce Love they bear  
Cramps them in death's extreme decrepitude."

Here Owen goes far beyond the type of equation of love and death which Apollinaire in his more serious moments occasionally tries, as in the line 'Les obus miaulaient un amour à mourir' quoted above. Owen achieves an unparalleled effect of horror in his description of a contrary union which ends not in the expected joy, but in death. The expressionist poet, August Stramm, in his poem Urtod comes close to Owen's elemental association of love and death, although Stramm uses drastically dissimilar poetic techniques. Urtod (119) describes the violent cyclic forces of creation, where the conflicts inherent in the phases of loving and dying are fused in one single ambiguous movement, as in Owen's image of 'fierce love'

Stramm

Owen

Ringen	(Wrestling/Embrace)	Inverted ecstasy	(lines 7-8)
Werfen	(Subjugation Mastery)	Abandonment in death	(line 9)
Würgen	(Killing ← Self- abandonment → Death		(line 12)
		'Petite-mort'	

A certain fascination with death overtakes both Owen (120) and Apollinaire (121) despite their basic underlying optimism. However,



nowhere do they come close to Stramm's obsessional preoccupation with the abstract idea of death which he sees as pervading all life and all love, whether human or divine. (122) This conception of the cyclic identification of life, love and death can be found clearly developed in the poem Krieg (War. p.80), as further clarified by Radrizzani who explains his idea of war, death and destruction as being the conception and birth of new life and a transitional stage leading towards a new existence:

"Krieg, Tod und Vernichtung als Gebären, Kreißen, Durchgangstufe in neues Werden" (123)

### Krieg

Wehe wühlt	Woe foment
Harren starrt entsetzt	Waiting gazes transfixed
Kreißen schüttert	Birth pains shake
Bären spannt die Glieder	Bearing tenses the limbs
Die Stunde blutet	The hour bleeds
Frage hebt das Auge	Question raises the eye
Die Zeit gebärt	The time is bringing forth
Erschöpfung	Exhaustion
Jüngt	Death
Der	Bears
Tod	

The metaphor child-birth/war identifies the physiological processes of birth and death in much the same way as those of physical love and death are associated in Owen's Greater Love. The horrific effect of the resultant irony is also largely equivalent. In Stramm's poem, however, the realization of the horror of war is achieved more by intellectual deduction than sensual and emotional empathy. The reading process involves a constant 'decoding' of ambiguities (Erschöpfung/Schöpfung) and subliminal associations (Jüngt der Tod/Der jüngste Tag), a continual

reconstitution of linguistic fragments (Bären for Gebären) and logical inconsistencies (Frage hebt das Auge; subject of jünger?) and also a recognition of generic vagueness (Harren-verbal noun, Wehe - singular or plural?).

The high degree of abstraction which allows such a total identification of the opposing themes of love and war in many of Stramm's poems, is not of course characteristic either of the poetry of Owen or of Apollinaire. Apollinaire's 'fusion' of the two themes seems unsubtle, naive and partial in comparison, as in this equation of cannons and male genital organs:-

" Les canons membres genitaux	" The guns genital organs
Engrossent l'amoureuse terre	Make big the amorous earth
Le temps est aux instincts brutaux	The time is for animal instincts
Pareille à l'amour est la guerre."	" like love is war."

Apollinaire only occasionally adopts such a controversial stance towards war. Most of his metaphoric equations such as

" Ton amour est mon uniforme " (p.386)

" Ton coeur est ma caserne " (p.380)

stresses the protective, intimate side of love, while the more daring comparisons

" Tes seins sont les seuls obus que j'aime "

(Your breasts are the only shells I love)

defuse the comparison of love with war, by rejecting one half of the equation (les seuls que j'aime). It is hard, therefore, to agree completely with Debon's view (p.132) as to the "fusion totale qui s'opère entre les éléments de la guerre et l'amour" in Apollinaire's poetry, for love is usually the dominant element in any comparison. This is not the case in the work of August Stramm, where the act of love is indistinguishable from the act of war, as in the following strangely powerful poem

Triebkrieg (124) ( War of Desires ). It represents the ultimate synthesis of the two themes (125):

Augen blitzen  
Dein Blick knallt auf  
Heiss  
Läuft das Bluten über mich  
Und  
Tränket  
Rinnen See  
Du blitzst und blitzest  
Lebenskräfte  
Lodern  
Moder wahnnet um  
Und  
Stickt  
Und  
Stickt

Eyes flash  
Your glance cracks open  
Hot  
The bleeding runs over me  
And  
Soaks through  
Coagulation/ Lake  
You flash may flash  
Life forces  
Flare  
Decay circles delusional  
And  
Suffocates  
And  
Suffocates

Again, the title of the poem indissolubly links love and war (126) and the poem itself develops the associations between love-encounter and "L'horreur tragique obscure du corps à corps" (Apollinaire). As in the poem Trieb, there is a further dimension of meaning which also suggests the theme of human aspiration and struggle towards the divine, whilst at a deeper level still, there is an intimation of the interplay between the opposing cosmic principles of life (Lebenskräfte) and death (Moder) as an expression of the eternal life cycle.

In the first line, the eyes are referred to as 'flashing', presumably with amorous desire or martial aggression. The choice of 'blitzen' is not casual - for Stramm light of any kind symbolized the principle of good, as René Radrizzani points out (127):-

"Dem Lichten, Guten (mag es als Stern, brennende Kerze, ewiges Licht, Blitz, Feuer, Tag in Erscheinung treten oder als Strahler verkörpert sein) steht das Dunkle, Böse, die Nacht gegenüber. Gutes geschieht am hellichten Tage: Böses bei Nacht" (In opposition to the luminous principle of Good (whether it appears as star, burning candle, eternal light, fire, day or as shining body) stands the dark night of Evil. Good happens in the clear light of day, Evil by night).

Stramm also shared with many other proponents (128) of the orphic principle in Art, the idea that light is the origin of all intellectual and creative impulses. This poem could also be a reference to the poetic creative process and the ever-present threat of the failure of inspiration, but this is a less likely interpretation.

On a more banal level, the second line continues the idea of eye - contact in the encounter of two lovers, and the mutual interchange of souls. On the other hand, the violence of the verb "knallen" which suggests the sound of the whipcrack or bullet, conveys the idea of hatred between two enemies. This use of auditive verbs is a common expressive technique in Stramm's poetry (129), suggesting on the whole not a direct impression from the real world (although in the context of war the verb can be taken as a realistic allusion), but a very intensely felt or significant moment. According to the evidence put forward by René Radrizzani in his essay Allmacht, ein Liebesgedicht (130), real knowledge of the divine was only possible for Stramm through a loving relationship with the other, the Du, the woman (131) as expressed in a poem fragment:-

" Du erschließt mir die Welt

Du bist der Tempel in dem mein Gott wohnt. "

(You open up the world for me

You are the temple in which lives my god)

In the poem Werben (p.39) similar emphasis is laid upon the sudden opening of the eye, as in Triebkrieg, but with less violence:-

" Auf schließt dein Blick! "

The third line of Triebkrieg contains the single word - 'heiß' - which whilst possibly referring to the quick surge of hot blood at the moment of attack so graphically described by Ernst Junger or Drieu la Rochelle, is also the conventional adjective denoting passionate desire. The

fourth line continues this meaning. However, the interesting feature here is the coinage 'Das Blüten' (verbal noun). Stramm was obviously very satisfied with the expressive power of the gerund because he had intended to write a drama with the title Das Blüten, which he was forced to give up because of the war. In the poem Haidekampf (p.91) there is a striking typographical arrangement which was supposedly meant to be a rendering of the slow, gradually increasing, drip of blood. The passage is as follows:-

Blut

Und

Bluten

Blut

Und

Bluten Blüten

An interesting final line in Haidekampf

Sonne Halde blumet knosper Tod

(Sun hillside blooms budding death)

exemplifies the association of death and flowers (Bluten/Blüten) which occurs implicitly or explicitly in many of Stramm's poems. The line is a powerful impression of battle and is strongly reminiscent of similar lines in Owen's Spring Offensive (p.111)

" 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 Stramm, however, the inclusion of nature in the processes of death suggests a deeper reference to his favourite theme of the eternal life cycle. In the very midst of life (symbolized by all the colourful and fragrant associations of flowers) is the presence of death, as suggested by the word 'blut' (blood) contained within the word 'blumet' (blooms, flowers)

The association of flowers and death is of course a common one.

Owen uses a similar image in the poem A Terre - "to buds my sap"; Apollinaire's reference to 'Coquelicots' in Echelon echoes the popular symbol of the red poppy, whilst the poem Guirlande de Lou:- "Héliotropes o soupirs d'une Belgique crucifiée" specifically links flowers with death. Finally, a poem by the German worker poet Max Barthel (132) takes up the same theme in a particularly romantic image of a 'blood-bedewed bouquet' of flowers: "ein blutbetauter Blumenstrauß".

The reference to blood is continued in lines 6 and 7, which describes its soaking (tränket), seeping (rinnen) and final coagulation (See). Again, there are many different levels of interpretation. The lines may be describing the dripping of blood from a wound, the symbolic mounting of desire or the gradual spread of life through the universe.

Stramm certainly manipulates the inherent ambiguity of his language. It is a peculiarity of the German lexicon that a word can often carry its opposite meaning. Such an example is the verb 'rinnen' made here into the gerund 'Rinnen', which usually means to flow, stream or trickle gently. Exceptionally, as an archaism, it can be used in lieu of 'gerinnen' which means to coagulate or curdle. Similarly, 'See' without its article has a dual meaning, (i) lake (something contained, with the overtones of possible stagnation) or (ii) Ocean (signifying unbridled energy or the passionate impulse of desire as in the cliché "O Meer von Lust" (Karl Bröger)).

The next line, 'Blitzst und Blitzest', with its emphatic insistence on the presence of light, possibly suggests through the use of the subjunctive form, the persistence through all dimensions of the principle of good, and the all-pervasiveness of life. This idea is continued in the two lines -

Lebenskräfte<sup>00</sup>  
Lodern<sup>00</sup>

The implications of 'loder'n' are very complicated. Firstly, it implies burning with great heat and light, and as such can suggest, at this primary level, the background flares from shells and rockets in the night sky. Secondly, it has the figurative meaning of 'burning with desire' in the erotic sense, with all the potential for the creation of new life. In the poem Schlacht (p.77), occur the following lines:-

Schreien wachst empor

Das Leben

Flammt"

(Screams rise/Life flames)

denoting the screams of dying men which rise towards Heaven /like a final affirmation of life/ before the last sparks are finally quenched. (Die letzten Brande Sprühen Wild Krallt Das Sterben Auf Zum Himmel - The last fires, spray wildly claws dying upwards to Heaven). The reference 'emporwachsen' and 'flammen' are the original (133) and current meanings of the verb 'loder'n' which is also related to the word 'Lode' or 'shoot' (of a plant). "Loder'n is therefore unequivocally a positive principle, yet at the same time intimately associated with the idea of death, embodied in the word 'Moder' (134). The line 'Moder wahnnet um' presents death as some circling madness, from whose persistent and inevitable presence it is impossible to escape.

"Und stickt

Und stickt "

The verb 'sticken' allied to 'ersticken' (to suffocate) is linked in meaning to the old biblical word 'würgen' (to strangle, deprive of life) Such an association occurs, for instance, in the poem Traumig (p.93) in the line -

"würgen sticket klamm die tränen Schlund "

Here the authority of the biblical 'würgen' gives it the value of an age-old process of killing in which the entire cosmos has taken part

since the beginning of time. Thus the poet leads us from the particular horrors of a historical experience to the abstract nightmare of conflicting universal forces. Many of Stramm's war poems do not, in fact, express the actuality of war as such, but rather his meta-physical vision of cosmic processes, intensified by his experience of the trenches. At best, the reading of his poetry is an intellectual experience which leads deep into an interlocking network of private and public linguistic knowledge. At worst, it is an abortive experiment with language, leading to the brink of significance and beyond the pale of human relevance. (135)

f  
.....



FOOTNOTES : CHAPTER FOUR

(1) See J. Claude Chevalier, Apollinaire et le Calembour, p.60

- "Le calembour est rarement séparable de la métaphore".

See also, Sven Bäckman, Tradition Transformed, in Lund Studies in English, (54, 1978, p.189) on the close connection between Owen's use of pararhymes and punning, both of which, along with the metaphor, aim to make the "unrelated akin".

(2) The simile involves the same search for identities, analogies and new insights as does the metaphor.

(3) Roger Little, Guillaume Apollinaire, p.62.

(4) This has already been discussed in Chps. 1 and 2.

(5) Claude Debon, Guillaume Apollinaire Après Alcools, (Lettres Modernes Minard, 1981, p.127.)

(6) The terms 'image' and 'metaphor' are used interchangeably here, as there seems to be no important sense in which they differ. For a discussion of the definition of Image, Metaphor, Symbol and Myth, See René Wellek and Austin Warren, Theory of Literature, (Penguin Books, 1973 Chp. 15.)

(7) These may seem rather broad requirements on the same lines as J.H. Johnston's demands of the Epic. However, A.C. Bradley's (op. cit, p.26) comments are closer to what is meant here:-

"About the best poetry and not only the best, there floats an atmosphere of infinite suggestion. The poet speaks to us of one thing, but in this one thing there seems to lurk the secret of all." This meaning seems to beckon away beyond itself (to something) which, we feel, would satisfy not only the imagination, but the whole of us".

Descriptions of the effects of poetry on this level tend to be elusively vague. Owen speaks for instance, of "spiritual glinter"

(Winter Song); C. Day Lewis of "something evermore about to be"

(The Poetic Image (Clark Lectures), Jonathan Cape, London, 1947, p.34.)

Apollinaire speaks in similar terms of a continuing 'refinement of meaning' which is the aim of poetry. ("Les poètes seront chargés de donner un sens toujours plus pur (....), L'Esprit Nouveau, Mercure de France, (Vol CXXX, Dec. 1918, p.394))

A more banal formulation of the aims and concerns of good poetry comes from Sasi Bhushan Das, Aspects of Wilfred Owen's Poetry, (Ray and Ray, Calcutta, 1979, p.55.)

"all poetry, which has been universally acknowledged as great, has always been found to concern itself with the deep themes of human life and destiny and to express the poet's profound sympathy for his fellow beings".

(8) A.C. Bradley, op. cit. p.29.

(9) Chp. 2, p.75, and Chp. 3, p.112, 118 ff.

(10) See Claude Debon, op. cit., pp.125-128, for a summary of the attitudes of some of Apollinaire's major critics.

Roger Little is also no admirer, but his view of Apollinaire's punning technique (p.55), presents a fair judgement of the whole war poetry "Some will appreciate (....), others deplore (....); none would deny the impact".

(11) See Chapter One, p. 31.

(12) O.C. IV. p.621.

(13) See Philippe Renaud, Lecture d'Apollinaire, (Editions L'Age d'Homme, Lausanne, 1969, p.396) - "le mot 'guerre' eût aussi fait l'affaire" (the word 'war' would also have done the trick).

(14) op. cit. p.396.

(15) See Renaud, op. cit. p.397.

"On peut avancer qu'elle (la guerre) eût plus de génie imaginatif que le poète en eut jamais"

(16) T.S. O.C. IV. p.500.

(17) Letter to Walden 23.3.15 quoted in August Stramm, Das Werk, (Limes Verlag, Wiesbaden 1963, hrsg. von René Radrizzani, p.447).

(18) Claude Debon, op. cit. p.173.

(19) See Chp. 3. p. 121 and 122.

(20) Sven Backman op. cit. p.16.

(21) "Voilà tout le secret de la guerre où nous sommes

Le reste est dans la joie et la vertu des hommes." (p.807)

(22) "Douce poésie! le plus beau des arts! Toi qui, suscitant en nous le pouvoir créateur, nous mets tout proches de la divinité (....). La guerre même a augmenté le pouvoir que la poésie exerce sur moi et c'est grâce à l'une et à l'autre que le ciel désormais se confond avec ma tête étoilée" (Gentle poetry! the finest of the arts! You who, inspiring in us creative power, put us very close to God (....). The war has even increased the power which poetry has over me and it is thanks to both of them that the sky henceforth is identical with my star-spangled head" ). La Femme Assise (O.C.I. p. 417.)

(23) See Chp. 3 p.120 ff.

(24) See the discussion of this poem in Chp. 3. p.126ff. See also Renaud's analysis op. cit. pp.418-422.

(25) "Enfermons - nous ensemble en mon âme"

he writes to Lou in his poem to her Agent de Liaison, p.433.

(26) Wellek and Warren, op. cit. p.198.

(27) Charles Nordmann, in his book A Coups de Canon, (1917, p.23) describes the "coup de hache du 75" (the 'axe-effect' of the French 75 mm ) and its effects. "Ce sont des fragments projetés de tous côtés qui font tant d'affreuses blessures si difficiles à guérir" (It throws up shrapnel from all sides and it is these which cause the many terrible wounds that are so difficult to heal).

(28) This particular image is a good example of the 'indulgence of metaphor' where one feels that the poet is casting around for comparisons for his own self-satisfaction and not to convey any particular feeling or idea. Roger Little, op. cit. p.62, is well aware of this weakness in

Apollinaire:- "Too often the journalistic streak is uppermost; too often neither form nor texture draws attention to itself away from self-indulgence"

(29) cf. his remark in Le Nouveau Esprit, op. cit. p.391.

"Il y a mille et mille combinaisons naturelles qui n'ont jamais été composées"

Apollinaire's apparent enthusiasm for indiscriminate analogy may explain the lack of control which is typical of many of the poems in Calligrammes.

(30) It is well known that Owen suffered from shell-shock and had to spend some time at Craiglockhart Hospital to recover. On May 2 1917 he wrote from the 13th Casualty Clearing Station, "The Doctor is nervous about my nerves, and sent me down yesterday - labelled Neurasthenia" (quoted in The Poems of Wilfred Owen, ed. Blunden, p.23).

Disorientation, confusion and nervous excitability are painfully evident in Stramm's last letters as we have seen. A final confession to inner strife is expressed in August, shortly before his death. "Ich kann ja gar nicht sagen was ich will. Ich bin zu zerrissen. Mir versagen immer die Worte und ich bin roh. (I simply cannot say what I want to. I'm too churned up. Words always fail me and I am all rough edges).

(31) As he wrote to Andre Billy in a Poème Epistolaire (p.766) "La vie ô but de l'Art et mon unique culte".

(32) Debon, op. cit. p.81.

(33) *ibid*, p.170.

(34) Against Debon's theory, one must take into consideration the later love poems to Lou and Madeleine which are amongst some of his most successful and positive affirmations of life.

(35) In Calligrammes: Poems of Peace and War, trans. A.H. Greet with a commentary by Lockerbie and Greet, (University of California Press, London 1980, p.18.)

(36) Quoted in Bäckman, op. cit., p.34.

(37) For more detailed discussions of the general nature and function of metaphor see :-

Wellek and Austin, Theory of Literature.

Charles Hartmann, Cognitive Metaphor.

Uwe Wandrey, Das Motive des Kriegs in der Expressionistischen Lyrik  
(p.67 onwards)

Cecil Day Lewis, The Poetic Image.

(38) L'Esprit Nouveau, in Mercure de France, 1918, p.392.

(39) These are Apollinaire's own words, see *ibid*, p.394.

"(Les poètes) vous entraîneront (....) dans ces univers plus proches et plus lointains de nous qui gravitent au même point de l'infini que celui que nous portons en nous".

(40) Stramm's letters are full of strenuous allusions to a metaphysical reality which forms an important background to his poetry. cf Brief an Walden 21.3.15.

"Die Weltfremdheit erst kennt die Welt, ist Weltkenntnis. Das was ich kenne, erlebe ich nicht mehr" (etc) (Alienation from the world first brings knowledge of the world, is world knowledge. What I already know I no longer experience)

Apollinaire, on the other hand, was not so intensely curious about his relationship to his art and to reality, cf. Philippe Soupault in Les Critiques de notre temps et Apollinaire (editions Garnier, Paris, 1971, p.23)

"Je lui en veux de cette négligence et d'avoir laissé tant de questions sans réponse (Je ne crois pas qu'un seul jour il ait eu l'idée de se demander: "Pourquoi est-ce que j'écris?")

(..I'm angry with him for this negligence and for having left so many unanswered questions (I don't believe that on one single day did he ever have the idea of asking himself : "Why do I write?"))

(41) cf. Lettre à Lou, le 19 Novembre 1915.

"Je voudrais qu'aimassent mes vers un boxeur nègre et américain, une impératrice de Chine, un journaliste boche (.....) et un officier anglais des Indes".

(42) Stramm wrote ecstatically to Walden, 12.2.15.

"Ich bin nicht eine Person. Ich fühle mich All! All! Ich bin bewußt des Unbewußten!.. Ich fühle All! (..) Sprache ist Ich. All ist All."

(I am not a person. I feel that I am everything! Everything! I am surely part of the unknown! I can feel Everything! (..) Language is Self. Everything is Everything). Quoted in Das Werk, op. cit. p.445.

(43) Again Stramm writes from the trenches:-

"Schlacht und Not und Tod und Nachtigall alles ist eins !  
Eins! Nacht und Tag. Leichen und Blüten (..) Ich schwimme  
durch alles. Bin Alles! Ich".

(Battle and deprivation and death and nightingale, all are one!  
One! Day and night. Corpses and blooms. I am swimming through  
everything. I am everything, I.) quoted ibid p.450.

Apollinaire was not quite so frenetic, despite his attraction to the idea of omniscience as a poet: obviously his hold on reality at this time was much firmer than Stramm's :-

"Car si je suis partout à cette heure il n'y a cependant que moi qui suis en moi" (And if I am everywhere at this hour, there is however only myself who is in myself. Merveille de la Guerre. p.272)

(44) Renaud, Lecture d'Apollinaire, op. cit. p.427.

(45) Debon, G. Apollinaire après Alcools, op. cit. p.151.

(46) Edmund Blunden, <sup>0</sup>La Quinque Rue, <sup>0</sup>in The Penguin Book of First World War Poetry, ed. Jon Silkin, (1979, p.107).

(47) Uwe Wandrey, op. cit. p.72.

(48) ibid. p.83.

Wandrey suggests political and state reasons behind the deliberately 'metaphorical' stance of many patriotic poets:-

"Sie (die Metapher) ist eine literarische Form subversiver Suggestion durch Presse, Poesie und Kriegspropaganda" (p.73).

(49) Charles Hartmann, Cognitive Metaphor, p.334.

(50) C. Day Lewis, The Poetic Image, op. cit., p.43.

(51) Quoted in C. Day Lewis, op. cit., p.23.

(52) "Ein Wort bäumt sich gegen das andere auf, und wie Geschosse werden die Wortkonzentrate herausgeschleudert" Zur Sprachform des Frühexpressionismus bei August Stramm, p. 296. (One word rears against another and like bullets the concentrated essence of the words is hurled out).

(53) L'Esprit Nouveau, op. cit. p.396.

(54) Quoted in The Poems of Wilfred Owen, ed. Blunden, p.34.

(55) ibid, Apologia Pro Poemate Meo, p.85.

(56) This poem does, however, have an veiled satiric message. The 'she' of the poem probably represents Britannia, the figurehead of uncaring officialdom.

(57) See D.S.R. Welland, Wilfred Owen, p.62 ff. for an interesting discussion of Owen's blood imagery.

(58) See Sven Bäckman, op. cit., p.65 ff.

(59) See Debon, op. cit., p.162.

(60) An interesting insight into the frequent association of love and war (see also Debon, p.132, Footnote 6) is to be found in a book review by Anthony Burgess in The Listener (August 20 1964). The book reviewed is The Sexual Cycle of Human Warfare by Major Norman Walter (Mitre Press, 1950) where the millions of men sacrificed are likened to "millions of spermatozoa sent over the top so that one or two might live". War then is "a

kind of phallic thrust at other tribes" (cf. The phallic references in Le Vigneron, the phallic meaning of the 'Pontife' builder of bridges in Liens etc). The article continues with a further quotation:

"If (the war is a kind of phallic thrust) it explains why the 1914-1918 war seems not only tragic but majestic, as if there were some life-enhancing principle (cf Apollinaire Chant d'Amour) behind the carnage, (that is) the unconscious and archetypal purposes behind the biological meaning, which had to be expressed in myth."

(61) Debon, op. cit. p.169.

(62) "La volonté de dédramatisation, liée à l'endurcissement nécessaire à la survie", *ibid*, p.169.

(63) cf. Renaud op. cit. p.426. "L'horizon-poète - c'est un grand costumier, un habile manieur de métaphores et de jeux de mots".

(64) Renaud op. cit. p.428.

(65) See Renaud op. cit. pp. 426-428 and following, for an interestingly complex existential discussion of the identity of the Self in Calligrammes.

(66) For a discussion of the 'old' and 'new' Orpheus, see Debon, op. cit., Chp. 3, "Les deux visages d'Orphée".

See also Renaud (p.171-186) for a detailed explication of the very complex Orpheus figure and the profoundness of its significance in the poetry of Apollinaire.

(67) Debon, op. cit. p.49.

(68) *ibid*. p.49.

"A la féminisation du passé s'oppose la virilité de l'avenir".

(69) All the information about the Orpheus figure is taken from Renaud, op. cit. p.186.

(70) Renaud, op. cit. p.428.

(71) Owen, op. cit. Dulce et Decorum Est, p.66.



(72) For a translation of Fête, see Greet and Lockerbie, Calligrammes (University of California Press, London, 1980, p.183).

(73) Debon, op. cit., p.173, seems to suggest that the 'real' poet lies just behind the mask, if one knows where to look for him - "si l'on sait voir derrière le masque de la pudeur".

(74) Roger Little, op. cit. p.46.

(75) Renaud, op. cit. p.422.

(76) See Chant de l'Horizon en Champagne, p.265, "Je suis l'invisible qui ne peut disparaître" .

Merville de la Guerre, p.272,

"Je lègue à l'avenir l'histoire de Guillaume Apollinaire  
Qui fut à la guerre et sut être partout."

See also the important poem 'Les Collines' in Ondes (p.173)

"Enfin est né l'art de prédire".

(77) See Renaud, op. cit., p.176 ff; on the motifs of light and fire.

See also Chroniques d'Art for Apollinaire's discussion of the artistic significance of the 'Flame' symbol.

(78) The significance of 'l'onde' becomes clearer in Chant d'Amour (p.283) where the waves symbolize the birth place of life and beauty - "Les vagues de la mer où naît la vie et la beauté".

(79) For a discussion of the significance of 'le petit saltimbanque', see Renaud, p.279 ff. Also Debon, p.61 on the 'musique des formes' and the link between the circle - divine shape, and music - harmony of the spheres.

(80) See Calligrammes, ed. Greet and Lockerbie, op. cit. p.459.

(81) Scott Bates, Les critiques de notre temps et Apollinaire, ed. Garnier, Paris, 1971, p.118 .

(82) J.P. Richards, *ibid.* p.127. He speaks of Pan as being "l'esprit créateur de l'univers".

(83) *ibid*, p.127.

(84) This idea parallels Debon's theory of the two Orpheus<sup>o</sup> of Alcools and Ondes.

(85) *cf.* Richards, *op. cit.*, p.127, "(voici) une nouvelle fonction cosmique du poète: il est celui dont la seule ardeur engendre dieux et astres".

(86) This association goes as far back as La Chanson du Mal-Aimé :-

"Voie lactée ô soeur lumineuse

Des blancs ruisseaux de Chanaan

Et des corps blancs des amoureuses".

*cf.* also Les Mamelles de Tirésias (p.880),

"Et les astres sublimes se rallumèrent l'un après l'autre

Nos obus enflammaient leur ardeur éternelle

L'artillerie ennemie se taisait éblouie

Par le scintillement de toutes les étoiles. "

(87) "In the gardens wheeling higher than all the mobile heavens

The masks of the future descend and flame

And their false faces give off dazzling light".

(88) Greet and Lockerbie, *op. cit.* p.483.

(89) Debon, *op. cit.* p.155, notices a similar effect when reading the poem Carte Postale, which is arranged according to a real post-card and presumably intended to have "un effet réaliste" but which taken in totality acquires an opposite, symbolic value - "au contraire une valeur deréalisante et presque symbolique".

(90) "Un vigneron sans bouche" (a mouthless poet) is a strange image, but may have private erotic connotations (viz. the phallic image of the bottles) in the same vein as the reference to "un homme sans yeux sans nez et sans oreilles" (*cf.* Scott Bates) in the poem Le Musicien de Saint-Merry (p.188)

(91) *O.c.*, T.3, p.884.

(92) Charles H. Sorley, Poems and Selected Letters, (ed. H.D. Speer p.99). The letter is dated 1st June 1915.

(93) The 'champagne bottle' held a seemingly rich source of possibilities for Apollinaire. It may be, for instance, behind the obscure "Flacon au col d'or" in the poem Echelon (p.233). This image itself may be a recherché reference to the metal of a shell-case - cf. The description of rockets in Le Palais du Tonnerre "des fusées détonateurs joyaux dorés à tête émaillée" (p.255).

(94) Jean-Claude Chevalier in his article Quelques Remarques sur un Index de Calligrammes (RLM, Spring 1962, p.41) remarks on the diminishing frequency of the use of the word 'blood' from Alcools to Calligrammes :-  
- "On sera touché de voir que la fréquence de sang (et ses dérivés), de mort (et ses dérivés) a diminué d'Alcools à Calligrammes". This fact may seem surprising in a war poet - Owen for instance, uses the word 'blood' (and its derivatives and compounds) 7 times more than Apollinaire, who uses it only 18 times in Calligrammes and the Poemes à Lou in the context of war. Furthermore, Apollinaire does not achieve much variety in his employment of the word SANG. It is either a river (un fleuve) which flows (coule) or dries up ('tarit') (p.243). SAIGNER is also used within the conventions of patriotic cliché: a wound bleeds, so does his heart and Christ (p.265), so do flowers such as "le laurier rose".  
Uwe Wandrey, op. cit. p.44, also notes in passing the stereotyped, highly abstract usage of the theme 'blood' in the war lyrics of the Expressionists, who were not, as we have seen, interested in war as either an historical or human phenomenon. His observations are as follows:-

"Fast die Hälfte der zugrundeliegenden Textstellen zur Blutvorstellung sind durch Wörter für grosse, nicht feste Mengen wie Meer, Regen, Brei, (Blut-)Bad, Orkan, Dampf" (Almost half of the basic contextual references to blood are through words describing large, undetermined quantities such as ocean, rain, pulp, (blood)bath, tempest, vapours).

Apollinaire's usage of the word 'blood' gives a similar impression of abstraction. This simply reinforces what we already know about his war poetry - that he was interested less in the physical actualities than the poetic possibilities of his trench experience.

(95) See D. S. R. Welland for a discussion of 'Blood Imagery' in Owen (p.62 ff). Usually occurring as a symbol of guilt (Mental Cases), Welland also points out its "unificatory and regenerative value" (A Terre, Strange Meeting, Apologia).

(96) See Debon, op. cit., p.118, "Apollinaire exalte la valeur vivifiante du sang versé".

(97) Apollinaire writes in a letter to Madeleine of the purificatory value of self-sacrifice - "Oui, j'ai eu il y a quelques jours dans une lettre que tu n'as pas encore(...), l'idée de sacrifice de mon sang sans doute qu'exige la perfection paradisiaque de notre amour" (T.S. Oc. IV. p.628) quoted in Debon, p.119)

(98) See Willard Bohn, Metaphor and Metonymy in Apollinaire's Calligrammes, op. cit.

(99) Debon, op. cit., p.170, who refers to "la tension entre la mort et la vie, l'opposition entre guerre et amour".

(100) See Raymond Jean, "L'Erotique d'Apollinaire" in Les Critiques de Notre Temps (op.cit. p.144). He describes the language of the secret love poems, particularly, as being "une langue érotique d'une exceptionnelle abondance métaphorique (..), une langue de célébration et de cantique (,,) une forme active de connaissance".

(101) The periods discussed are not, of course, rigid categories and some poems do not fit neatly into the proposed stylistic chronology. However, a general trend does seem to make itself evident.

(102) The period of 'trial' is characterized by a sudden upsurge of largely uncontrolled imagery. Decaudin, (O.P. p.1076) is more lenient: "Apollinaire entre dans la guerre et use d'une expression qui jamais ne fut plus libre et plus riche".

(103) The first part of this poem from the line:-

"Le 31 du mois d'Aout 1914"

to:-

"Les morts tremblaient de peur dans leurs sombres demeures"

and the final section from:-

"Et quand après avoir(...)"

to the end, were written in black ink and seem to pre-date the middle section, which was written in violet ink and presumed to date from a later period. (See O.P. p.1086 Note). It is these earlier sections that are of interest in the present discussion.

(104) Debon, op. cit., p.131.

(105) See Chp. 2., p. 73 and 74.

(106) See Uwe Wandrey, op. cit. p.89 ff, on the use of 'collective metaphor' (die kollektivierende Metapher) in the highly abstract treatment of war by some German Expressionists.

(107) For instance the patriotism of "notre beau regiment"; the nostalgic reference to the simile "Gris comme l'eau du Seine" and the poeticism "Ce pâle blessé", are reversions to conventional style.

(108) The rather ill-defined shape of this Calligramme is described by Debon, p.152, as being the form of a "triangle de visée, qui pointe vers le but à atteindre, qui est en même temps l'avenir de l'humanité".

(109) Greet, op. cit., p.422, is far kinder in her appraisal of this chaotic poem, which she sees as a typical illustration of the 'telegraphic style', which successfully conveys "the many simultaneous impressions crowding into his mind when he comes under artillery fire".

(110) The Chef de Section published in Nov, 1917 is a revised edition of Le Quatrième Poème Secret (p.631) which was originally sent to Madeleine on October 19, 1915.

(111) These translations of Vern de Dieuze and Nuit d'Avril are from Greet and Lockerbie.

(112) Greet and Lockerbie, op. cit. p.495.

(113) T.S. p.293.

(114) The dating of Greater Love is problematical. Stallworthy suggests Oct. 1917, whereas Welland prefers the date May 1916.

(115) See also Debon, op. cit, p.162

"La guerre avait en quelque sorte innocenté son amour pour Lou".

(116) Greater Love is based on the antithetical structure of the (didactic) negative simile, which itself is based on the inversion of Romantic love-lyric formulae (See Sven Bäckman, op. cit. p.65 ff) and the resultant effect of 'ironic contrast'. This confrontation between the conventional expectations of a particular genre and the horror of the experiences described is indeed a very powerful and emphatic device. An illustration of the effect of Owen's technique can be gained by comparing the inverted formula:-

"Your slender attitude

Trembles not exquisite like limbs knife-skewed".

with the completely orthodox usage of the same formula by Apollinaire in his uncomplicated love poem Pour Madeleine Seule (p.628) which follows the conventional scheme of praise, whereby the beauties of nature are compared with the loved one and found to be wanting:-

"Lune candide vous brillez moins que les hanches

De mon amour

Aubes que j'admire vous êtes moins blanches" (etc)

(Guileless moon you shine less brilliantly than the thighs of my beloved

Dawns which I admire you are less white (etc))

(117) See Sven Bäckman, p.81.

(118) See for instance, C.H. Sisson, English Poetry 1900-1950. (Chapter Three, footnote 9) who allows his obvious dislike of Owen's private

inclinations to colour his whole judgement of the poet.

(119) 'Urtod' in August Stramm, Das Werk (hrsg von René Radrizzani,) op. cit. p.87.

(120) This is the Track (p.96) speaks of his fears of "barren plunging without end".

(121) Poème à Lou (p.487)

Nous menons l'Amour en grande pompe

Vers la mort

Vers le seuil suprême

Où veille la Mort.

(We are leading love in great pomp and circumstance

Towards death

Towards the final threshold

Where watches Death)

(122) See Jeremy Adler, Urtod: An Interpretation, in August Stramm, Kritische Essays und unveröffentlichtes Quellenmaterial aus dem Nachlaß des Dichters (hrsg. von J.D. Adler and J.J. White, Erich Schmidt Verlag, Berlin, 1979, p.86)

"As so many poems testify, Stramm makes no hard and fast distinctions between 'love poems', 'war poems' and 'religious' works".

(123) August Stramm, Das Werk, op. cit. p.446.

(124) Stramm wrote two poems entitled Trieb (Impulse, Desire) (p.34) and Krieg (War) (p.80) just discussed. These are useful references to the poem Triebkrieg.

The poem Trieb describes an encounter between man (Ich) and woman Du (Ich and Du can take on a more universal significance: 'I' as the universal human ego striving, for instance, to the divine presence of 'Thou' - (See Martin Buber). The movement of the poem would then trace the conflicts of spiritual yearning followed by final self-surrender to the divine principle. This reading will be considered as secondary for the purposes of this discussion). There are certain key words

(WEHREN RINGEN) in Trieb which also appear in Urtod, a poem of much greater epic dimension. On the whole, however, cosmic implications are suppressed in Trieb, which concentrates on the unification and self-discovery achieved through love, rather than on the universal dissolution which is the inevitable process of death. In contrast Krieg, discussed earlier, follows the same dramatic impulse towards death found in Urtod.

(125) There are few isolated metaphors in Stramm's poetry, as each poem is in itself one single synthesis of several different themes. Furthermore, each single word functions separately as an independent metaphor, as a complete synthesis of felt perceptions - "ein ganzer Empfindungskomplex". In a letter, Stramm rather strangely emphasizes the importance of feeling over intellect in his poetry:-

"Nicht Sinn, nicht Verstand, nicht Sehen, Tasten, Hören! Empfinden! Empfinden! Welch himmlisches Wort! (quoted in Das Werk, op. cit. p.445)

This particular idea comes from his reading of the popular philosopher Vaihinger, Die Philosophie der Als Ob (for a fuller discussion see Partick Bridgewater, The Sources of Stramm's Originality in Kritische Essays (op. cit. p.32 ff) who thought that reality was unknowable:-

"Eine Wirklichkeit, wie der Mensch sie sich einbildet, ein absolut festes von uns unabhängiges und doch von uns erkanntes Dasein - eine solche Wirklichkeit gibt es nicht und kann es nicht geben"

(A reality, as it is imagined by us, a completely permanent and independent yet known presence, does not and cannot exist)

This view of reality is neither particularly German or Expressionist but entirely modern. Paul Valéry, in his play Le Solitaire (Oeuvres Tome II Pleiade, 1960, p.389) expresses similar ideas:- "La réalité est absolument incommunicable. Elle est ce qui ne ressemble à rien, que rien ne représente, que rien n'explique, qui ne signifie rien (etc)". (Reality is absolutely incommunicable. It resembles nothing; signifies nothing; nothing can represent or explain it. (etc)).



Vaihinger did not pursue his conclusions as far as Valéry, but he did stress that "the individual's sensations are the sole reality" and that knowledge of reality could only be by analogy, by approximation:- "All knowledge can only be analogical (...) all conception and cognition are based on analogical apperceptions." (quoted Bridgewater, op. cit. p.36).

It is this rejection of external material reality and the mimetic function of Art, which makes Stramm's work so generally metaphorical.

(126) Again, this comparison between love and war is quite conventional and indeed a common theme in literature as Debon, op. cit., p.132, reminds us:

"Les sentiments amoureux et tout ce qui en résulte ont souvent été assimilés à la guerre elle-même. Dans presque toutes les langues, il existe des locutions, des traditions, etc., qui assimilent la lutte amoureuse aux autres formes de lutte et l'impulsion guerrière à l'impulsion amoureuse" ( from Bouthoul, Traité de Polémologie )

( Amorous feelings and all that derives from them have often been associated with war proper. In almost all languages there are expressions traditions, etc. which associate amorous conflict with other forms of conflict and also which associate the warlike impulse with the erotic urge).

(127) René Radrizzani, in Das Werk, op. cit. p.423.

(128) For instance Kandinsky and Apollinaire - cf. Le Brasier (p.110)

"Descendant des hauteurs où pense la lumière".

(129) cf. for instance, the poem Schrapnell, (p.81) and the 'tittering' of eyes:- "Augen kichern".

(130) in Kritische Essays, op. cit. p.101, this argument is based on a possible precursor to Allmacht, a fragment entitled Gedichtentwurf ohne Titel.

(131) Radrizzani, *ibid*, p.101:-

"erst im Du der Liebesbegegnung erschließt sich das Göttliche"

(132) "Frankreich du bist voll Qual und Süße, "in Deutsche Arbeiterdichtung 1910-1933 (*op.cit.*, p.54.)

(133) "Seit dem 15.Jh, eigtl"emp<sup>o</sup>porwachsen"; zu indogermanisch leudh-  
wachsen"; verwandt mit Lode "Schoßling"

Wahrig Deutsches Wörterbuch (Bertelsmann Lexikon-Verlag)

(134) This word receives great emphasis in the play Kräfte ( Das Werk,  
p.206)-<sup>q</sup>WELKE BLÄTTER (buscheln durchs Fenster)

SIE. (rast, zertritt, stampft, schleudert) Moder? (erstarrt, nestelt  
ein Blatt aus dem Haar, hält die ausgestreckte Hand, versinkt ) Wer? (*etc.*)<sup>q</sup>

(135) There are however, some redeeming features in Stramm's poetry,  
which does err as a whole on the side of abstraction. Frostfeuer (p.76)  
is a simple description of sitting round a camp fire and being burnt  
in front and cold behind. Abend (p.74) conveys similar yearnings and  
depressions as Apollinaire's Dans L'Abri-Caverne, (p.260). Patrouille  
(p.86) is a very vivid portrayal of the hostility of nature in war,  
of the death of a soldier and the grief of his womenfolk. Otherwise,  
as in most other examples of German war poetry, the suffering of the  
individual and the individual experience are completely ignored. See  
Chp. IV.

. . . . .

## CONCLUSION

Despite the ultimate failure of Stramm's tortured abstractions, the recurrent disappointments afforded by Apollinaire's seemingly wilful aestheticism and the sometimes over-wrought imagery of Owen, the great poems of the war can still stand, perhaps more so even than the war prose, as the most profoundly expressive comment on the experience of 1914-18. A few brilliant images remain as the most perfect reflection of intellectual, emotional and moral order in the midst of the chaos of the trenches. They stand as an enduring protest against the senseless aberration of war. The patriotic poetry and most of the French and German poetry lack the crucial element of moral concern and have none of the inner fire which generated some of the most graphic yet sensitive imagery in the English language. The proto-fascist ideology behind much of the German poetry is seen as one of the main reasons for its lack of realism and human involvement, its rigid adherence to an ossified poetic language and its consequent failure as Art. The element of protest is also missing in the work of Apollinaire whose war poetry has been criticized for its shallow and often gimmicky aestheticism. Despite his poor reputation, there are some small signs of a change in his metaphoric usage which might ultimately, had time allowed, have brought him closer to the stance of the British poets. Certainly, the metaphors in some of his later love poems, which fuse indissolubly the themes of love and war, are richer and tougher than before. And paradoxically perhaps, like Owen and Stramm and others, despite contemporary pressures for an even greater realism, he ultimately began to respond to the experience of war in a denser metaphorical language, seasoned and matured by suffering and deprivation of many kinds. Such poems as Owen's The Encounter, Rosenberg's Dead Man's Dump, Apollinaire's Si je mourais là-bas and perhaps Stramm's Triebkrieg are among the most passionate arguments for peace in a century of violence.

## SECTION I

### (i) GENERAL HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

#### English

HARRISON, J.F.C., *The Early Victorians 1832-51* (Panther Bks. 1973).

LASSWELL, Harold D., *Propaganda Technique in the World War* (Kegan Paul, London, 1923).

MARWICK, Arthur, *The Deluge : British Society and the First World War* (The Bodley Head, London, 1965).

SANDISON, Alan, *The Wheel of Empire* (London, 1967).

TAYLOR, A.J.P., *English History 1914-45*, (O.U.P., 1965, Chps. 1-3).

#### French

BAINVILLE, Jacques, *La Troisième République, 1870-1935* (Fayard et Cie, Paris 1935).

BERNARD, Philippe, *La fin d'un monde 1914-1929* (Editions du Seuil 1975).

CAHM, Eric, *Péguy et le Nationalisme Français* (Minard, Paris, 1972).

METTAM and JOHNSON, *French History and Society* (Methuen, 1974). (The Wars of Religion to the 5th Republic).

MONTAGNE, (de la) H., *Histoire de l'Action Française* (Amiot Dumont, Paris 1950).

REBERICUX, Madeleine, *La République radicale? 1898-1914* (Editions du Seuil, 1975).

ZELDIN, Theodore, *France 1848-1945 (Vol I), Ambition, Love, Politics* (Oxford, 1973).

#### German

BEYENS, Eugène, *Deux Armées à Berlin 1912-14* (2 tom) (Paris, 1931).

BÜLOW, Prinz von, *Imperial Germany* (Trans. M. Lewenz, Cassell, London, 1914).

PINSON, Koppel S., *Modern Germany, Its History and Civilization*. (Amiot Dumont, Paris 1950).

WEHLER, Hans Ulrich, (hrsg. von), *Moderne Deutsche Sozialgeschichte* (Athenäum Verlag, Düsseldorf, Droste, 1981).

### (ii) COMPARATIVE

BONNEVILLE, Georges, *Prophètes et Témoins de l'Europe* (A.W. Sythoff/Leyde, 1961)

CUNLIFFE, Marcus, *The Age of Expansion 1848-1917* (London 1974).

FURNESS, Raymond S., *The Twentieth Century 1890-1945* (Croom Helm, London, 1978).

MARWICK, Arthur, *War and Social Change in the Twentieth Century*, (London, 1974).

ed MENDEL, P.A., *The Twentieth Century 1914-64* (Collier-Macmillan, London, 1968).

THOMSON, David, *Europe since Napoleon*. (Pelican 1966, pp. 347-600).

## SECTION II

### WORKS DEALING WITH THE PRE-WAR SITUATION

(General social context; history of attitudes to the war)

#### English

- ANGELL, Sir Norman, *The Great Illusion* (Guildford Press, London 1910).  
BUTLER, Sir W.F., *The Invasion of England* (Sampson Low & Co. London, 1882).  
CHESNEY, Colonel Sir George, *The Battle of Dorking* (in *Blackwood's Magazine* (Edinburgh, 1871)).  
FAULKNER, William, *A Fable (Story of the Mutiny of the French Army, 1917)* (London 1955).  
FORSTER, E.M., *Howard's End* (Penguin Books, 1972).  
SASSOON, Siegfried, *Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man* (Illustrated ed., Chiswick Press, London 1929).

#### French

- DANGIN, Eduard, *La Bataille de Berlin en 1875 Souvenirs d'un vieux soldat de la landwehr.* (Lachand, 1872)  
(A French Revenge Fantasy).  
PEGUY, Charles, *Notre Jeunesse* (Pléiade, 1910).

#### German

- LERSCH, Heinrich, *Hammerschläge* (Suhrkamp Verlag, Düsseldorf-Köln 1980).  
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NIEMANN, A., *Der Weltkrieg, Deutsche Träume* (Berlin, 1904).

## SECTION III

### HISTORY OF THE WAR

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CRUTWELL, C.R.M., *History of the Great War 1914-18*, (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1936).  
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TAYLOR, A.J.P., *The First World War. An Illustrated History* (Penguin Books, 1972).  
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#### French

- FERRO, Marc, *La Grande Guerre 1914-18* (Collection Idées, 1969).  
Publ. HACHETTE, *La Vie Quotidienne des Soldats pendant la Grande Guerre* (Paris, 1966).

## German

- DOLLINGER, Hans (hrsg. von), Der erste Weltkrieg (Verlag Kurt Desch, München, 1965).  
ISSELIN, Henri, La Ruée Allemande, Printemps 1918 (Arthaud, Paris, 1968).

## (ii) ARTICLES

- DIXON, Norman Dr., The Psychology of Military Incompetence in Psychology Today, (pub. Jonathan Cape, July 1976, No. 7).  
RENOUVIN, Pierre, 1914, A French View, in The Listener, July 23, 1964.  
TAYLOR, A.J.P., 1914, Events in Britain in The Listener, July 16, 1964).

## SECTION IV

PRIMARY PROSE WORKS (Diaries, First Hand Accounts, Fictionalized Autobiographies, Novels) (This list is a mere sample of the enormous number of books written about the war. For further bibliographical indications see: Holger Klein, Albert Schinz, Léon Riegel, Mielke-Homann and references therein)

## English

- ADCOCK, A., St. John, For Remembrance (Soldier Poets Who Have Fallen in the War) (Hodder and Stoughton, London 1918).  
BLUNDEN, Edmund, Undertones of War (Cobden-Sanderson, London 1928).  
BRITTAIN, Vera, Testament of Youth (Victor Gollancz, London, 1933).  
GRAVES, Robert, Goodbye To All That, (Jonathan Cape, 1929).  
JONES, David, M., In Parenthesis, (Faber and Faber, London, 1963).  
HEMINGWAY, Ernest, A Farewell to Arms (London, 1929).  
HOUSMAN, Laurence (ed.) Letters from the Home Front, War Letters of Fallen Englishmen. (Dutton and Co., New York, 1930).  
MOTTRAM, R.H., The Spanish Farm Trilogy 1914-18 (Chatto and Windus, London, 1927).  
REPPINGTON, Colonel, The First World War 1914-18, Vol. I (Constable, London, 1920).  
SASSOON, Siegfried, Memoirs of an Infantry Officer (London, 1930).

## French

- BAREUSSE, Henri, Le Feu (Paris, 1917).  
DORGELES, Roland, Les Croix de Bois (Paris, 1931).  
FRANCONI, Tristan, Un Tel de l'Armée Française (Payot et Cie, Paris, 1918).  
GRIAUDOUX, Jean, Lectures pour une ombre (Emile-Paul Frères, Paris, 1918).  
GIONO, Jean, Le Grand Troupeau (NRF Gallimard, 1931).  
MALHEREE, Henri, La Flamme au Poing (Albin Michel, Paris 1917).  
NORDMANN, Charles, A Coups de Canon (Perrin, Paris, 1917).  
PAULHAN, Jean, Le Guerrier Appliqué, (no pub. 1914?)  
TARDIEU, Charles, Sous la Pluie de Fer (Alfred Capus, 1917).  
WEISWEILLER, Arthur, Impressions et Visions de Guerre (no pub. 1918).

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- CAROSSA, Hans, Rumänisches Tagebuch (Bibliothek Suhrkamp, Baden-Baden, 1978).
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- MEYER, A.R., Vor Ypern, Aus dem Tagebuch eines deutschen Armierungssoldaten (Gent 1915).
- REMARQUE, Erich-Maria, Im Westen Nichts Neues (Propyläen-Verlag, Berlin, 1929).

## SECTION V

### MAIN POETS DISCUSSED IN THIS STUDY

#### I Guillaume Apollinaire (de Kostrowitzky)

Conventional Abbreviations of Apollinaire's works (of this period).  
(For a fuller list see Oeuvres Poétiques, (Ed. Gallimard, 1965 preface par André Billy. Texte annoté par Marcel Adema et Michel Decaudin)

Oe.C or O.C.	Oeuvres Complètes	L.Lou	Lettres à Lou
Oe.P. or O.P.	Oeuvres Poétiques	P.L.	Poèmes à Lou.
C A	Chroniques d'Art	T(C)S	Tendre Comme le Souvenir
F A	La Femme Assise		

RLM(GA) 1,2, etc. refers to the important series on Apollinaire in the Revue des Lettres Modernes, which began in 1962.

For a comprehensive bibliography of primary works see Oe.P. (op.cit).

The following list comprises only those works of special interest to this study

(1) CALLIGRAMMES, Poèmes de la Paix et de la Guerre 1913-1916 (O.P. pp.163-314). Calligrammes contains the sections as follows:

- Ondes (Immediate pre-War period)
- Etendards (From declaration of War-departure to front April 1915)
- Case d'Armons (Printed on squared paper 17 June 1915 on the front)
- Lueurs des Tirs (Sept.-Dec. 1915. 1st 7 written for M. Laurencin).
- Obus Couleur de Lune (Sent to Madeleine from August 1915-Feb. 1916).
- La Tête Étoilée (Chronology uncertain: Last 3 after wound 1916)

For a precise dating of the poems see C. Debon, Guillaume Apollinaire : le poète et la guerre.

All six sections of Calligrammes finally published in Mercure de France, April 1918.

For bibliographical detail of first editions, See M. Adema, Bibliographie Générale de l'Oeuvre de Guillaume Apollinaire (Chez l'Auteur, 1949, p.15).

## 2. IL Y A

Il y a was published posthumously in 1925 by Jean Royère from unpublished texts and those poems scattered in reviews. Only a few poems in this section are of interest for the war period. They are as follows: Un Poème; Le Pont; Fusse Signal; Allons plus vite; Sanglots; Bleuet; A Luigi Amaro; (possibly Fagnes de Wallonie).

## 3. POEMES A LOU

These poems were published posthumously by Pierre Cailler in 1947 and then more definitively in 1955 by the same editor. Apollinaire recognised them as "Mes meilleurs poèmes depuis la guerre" (Lettre à Louise Faure - Favier 24 June 1915).

## 4. LA GUETTEUR MELANCHOLIQUE

Published posthumously by B. Poissonier and R. Mallet in 1952 from various reviews and other sources, the title was chosen by the editors in the hope, as André Salmon remarked in his Preface, that it would appeal not only to the dreamer of Landor Road and Pont Mirabeau, but also "au fier garçon vêtu de bleu ("""") guettant au ciel de ces fusées dont les pauvres soldats transformaient l'armature en belles et misérables bagues, si souvent gages de l'impossible espoir." The poems of interest in this section are: (possibly Cité de Carcassonne; Ami je vous écris; Ce soir est doux; Leo Larguier Soldat; Tristesse de L'Automne; Benodet; Un Cahier d'anciens croquis.

## 5. POEMES A MADELEINE

Some of these poems are in Calligrammes with certain modifications, and all of them were published in the collection of letters Tendre Comme le Souvenir in 1952. The collection extends from 15 April 1915-Sept. 1916. Editorial comment; "on verra qu'il ne s'agit pas d'une poésie épistolaire facile et amusée, (-) mais d'une émouvante suite de poèmes de guerre et d'amour".

## 6. POEMES A LA MARRAINE

Written from 16 Aug. 1915-23 Nov. 1916. These poems, included with the letters he wrote to Yves Blanc, were published posthumously under the title Lettres à sa Marraïne in 1948.

## 7. POEMES RETROUVES

Published by Apollinaire. Poems of interest: Orphée, Souvenir de Flandres (pub. 15 Nov. 1918, programmatic poem).

## 8. POEMES RETROUVES

Published after the death of Apollinaire. Poems of interest: Qu'est-ce qui se passe? Au Secteur 59; La Nuit Descend, Je suis la Vie; Endurcis-toi vieux cœur; Inscriptions; La Mort ô Vie; Nations Je vous offre-;

## 9. POEMES EPISTOLAIRES

These are mainly of topical or biographical interest.

## 10. POEMES INEDITS

Poems of interest: Méditation (Written on the Front, towards the end of 1915), Si on me laissait faire (Written in hospital after trepanation.)

## 11. OTHER WORKS OF INTEREST TO THE PERIOD

Lettres à Lou (Preface de Michel Decaudin, Gallimard, 1969)

Lettres à sa Marraïne (Gallimard, 1952)

Tendre Comme le Souvenir (Gallimard, 1952)

Le Poète Assassiné (ed. M. Decaudin, Club du Meilleur Livre, Paris 1959).

La Femme Assise (Editions NRF, 1920).

Couleur du Temps (Drama) (Editions du Belier 1949).



## 12. CRITICAL WORKS ON POETRY AND ART

L'Antitradition Futuriste (signé et daté, Paris le 29 Juin 1913; also published in Italian).

Le Cinquantenaire de Charles Baudelaire (1917).

L'Esprit Nouveau et Les Poètes (Mercure de France, 1918).

Les Peintres Cubistes (ed. L.C. Breunig and J. Cl. Chevalier, Hermann, 1965).

All these works are to be found in the O.C. ed. Michel Decaudin.

### (ii) APOLLINAIRE (Secondary Works)

(Criticism not specific to Calligrammes:)

ADEMA, Marcel, Apollinaire (Paris 1968).

CHEVALIER, J.-Cl, Alcools d'Apollinaire: Essai d'analyse des formes poétiques (Lettres Modernes Minard, Paris, 1970).

COUFFIGNAL, R, 'Zone' de Guillaume Apollinaire: Structure et Confrontations (Lettres Modernes Minard, Paris, 1970).

DAVIES, Margaret, Apollinaire (Oliver and Boyd; Edin. and London, 1964)  
Some chapters of relevance to A's war experience.

DURRY, Marie-Jeanne, Guillaume Apollinaire: Alcools (3 vols.) (Sedes 1956-64) A standard criticism.

GIEDION-WELCKER, Die neue Realität bei Guillaume Apollinaire (Verlag Benteli Bern Bümpliz, 1945).

LITTLE, Roger, Guillaume Apollinaire (Athlone French Poets, 1976)  
A basic student text with a clear-headed approach. One section devoted to Calligrammes.

MACKWORTH, Cecily, Guillaume Apollinaire and the Cubist Life, (John Murray London, 1961) An interesting, but inaccurate 'novelette' approach.

METER, Helmut, Apollinaire und der Futurismus (Schönböck Verlag, 1977).

REES, Garnet (ed.), Alcools (Athlone French Poets, 1975).

SIMONIS, Ferdinand, Die Lyrik Guillaume Apollinaires (H. Bouvier Verlag, Bonn, 1967).

SHATTUCK, Roger, The Banquet Years, (Jonathan Cape, 1969).

TOURNADRE, Claude (Ed.), Les Critiques de Notre Temps et Apollinaire (Editions Garnier Frères, Paris, 1971).

(A good introduction to the major critical material on Apollinaire)

### (iii) Criticism of specific relevance to the War Poems

DEBON, Claude, Guillaume Apollinaire: Le poète et la guerre (Lettres Modernes Minard, Paris, 1981).

GREET A.H. and LOCKERBIE S.I. (trans. and annotated by), Calligrammes: Poems of Peace and War, (Berkley, 1980).

RENAUD, Philippe, Lecture d'Apollinaire (Edition L'Age d'Homme, Lausanne, 1969)

ROUYEYRE, André, Apollinaire (Paris, 1945).

### (iv) Articles on Apollinaire

ADEMA, Pierre-Marcel, Un Manuscrit Inédit de "Merveille de la Guerre" (RLM(GA) 13, 1976 pp.99-104).

ARAGON, Louis, Beautés de la Guerre et leurs reflets dans la Littérature (Europe, Dec. 1935, pp.474-480).

- BALKAN, Anna, Apollinaire and the Modern Mind, (Yale French Studies, pp.79-90) 1949).
- BARRERE, Jean-Bertrand, Apollinaire, obscène et tendre (Revue des Sciences Humaines, 1956 pp.378-389).
- BATES, Scott, Les Collines, (RLM(GA), 1962 pp.25-39).
- BOHN, Willard, Metaphor and Metonymy in Apollinaire's Calligrammes, (Romanic Review, Vol. LXXII, 2, March 1981, pp.166-81).
- BOISSON, Madeleine, En Marge des Lettres à Lou (RLM(GA), 12, 1973, pp.45-65).
- EURGOS, Jean, Pour une approche de l'univers imaginaire d'Apollinaire (RLM(GA), 10, 1971, pp.34-59).
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