

University of Pardubice
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Comparison of man's and woman's WWI experience in the works
All Quiet on the Western Front* by Erich Maria Remarque and *Not So Quiet
by Helen Zenna Smith

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Z á s a d y p r o v y p r a c o v á n í :

Studentka se ve své bakalářské práci zaměří na období 1. světové války. Jejím cílem je porovnat literární zpracování zkušeností žen a mužů z tohoto konfliktu. Jako základ pro toto srovnání použije román All Quiet on the Western Front od Ericha Marii Remarqua a román Heleny Zenna Smithové Not So Quiet. Studentka ve své práci uvede oba zvolené autory a jejich díla do dobového literárního kontextu, provede podrobnou analýzu historického období, které obě díla inspirovalo. Bude se věnovat především vlivu, který tato světová událost měla na společnost. Poté provede literární analýzu obou děl, zaměřenou zejména na srovnání ženského a mužského pohledu na tuto událost. Studentka vytvoří analytický akademický text založený na dostatečném množství kvalitní primární a sekundární literatury.

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Souhlasím s prezenčním zpřístupněním své práce v Univerzitní knihovně.

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ANNOTATION

The aim of this thesis is an analysis and comparison of men's and women's experience from World War I in the works of *All Quiet on the Western Front* by Erich Maria Remarque and *Not So Quiet* by Helen Zenna Smith. The theoretical part outlines the mentality of the European society before, at the beginning and during the war. The focus then shifts to Western Europe where the everydayness of civilians, trench-fighters, and voluntary women workers is described. The practical part analyses the already mentioned books and compares the experience of both main characters.

Keywords: *All Quiet on the Western Front*, *Not So Quiet*, World War I, war experience, European society, gender, trenches, volunteer nurses

NÁZEV

Porovnání mužských a ženských zkušeností z 1. světové války v dílech *Na západní frontě klid* od Ericha Marii Remarqua a *Not so quiet* od Helen Zenny Smithové

ANOTACE

Předmětem této práce je analýza a porovnání zkušenosti mužů a žen z první světové války v dílech *Na západní frontě klid* od Ericha Marii Remarqua a *Not so quiet* od Helen Zenny Smithové. První teoretická část nastiňuje mentalitu evropské společnosti před válkou, na začátku a v průběhu války. Pozornost je dále věnována západní Evropě, kde je popsána každodennost tamějších civilistů, mužů v zákopech a žen jako válečných dobrovolnic. Praktická část analyzuje obě již zmíněná díla a porovnává zkušenosti obou jejich hlavních hrdinů.

Klíčová slova: *Na západní frontě klid*, *Not so quiet*, první světová válka, zkušenosti z války, Evropská společnost, gender, zákopy, dobrovolné zdravotní sestry

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0 Introduction

“War appears to be something abominable or something sublime, depending upon the side one experiences” (qtd. in Darrow, 2000, p. 152). No matter how much the quotation sounds peculiar, it still proves to be truthful. People experienced the war in many various ways, sometimes not quite knowing what it really is about.

Nevertheless, when World War I started on the 28th July 1914, everybody thought it would be over by December. People did not know what terror awaited them and to what extent this world event would affect their lives. It was a constant, debilitating change that inflicted enormous and dramatic differences in social mores. This war, more than any other in history, had a psychological impact on everyone, for there were no victors in respect of the multitude of the dead and wounded. This war got far behind the trenches and reached also the ordinary civilians. For instance, in Serbia the First World War casualties outnumbered the total number of the mobilized soldiers.

Unofficially, this war has never ended because the terror and violence we know and live in today comes from this war. The First World War gave us new technical devices designed to kill - tanks, special planes, submarines, rapid-fire machine guns and field guns, and also chemical weapons used en masse. It brought new naval tactics, strategic bombardment and absolute ruthlessness against civilians and brutal treatment of prisoners. After the war the age-old great empires collapsed, the monarchies fell down and in this respect a lot of inhabitants lost their national identities. The instability changed people as anything had before. Manners, behaviours, the Code of Conduct, education, class system, literature and other fields of Arts –these all were affected by the flood of changes. Not in vain the survival soldiers were given medals with engravings saying ‘The Great War for Civilisation 1914-1919¹’.

Many testimonies come from this period of time; however, the primary focus in this thesis will be on the trench soldiers and volunteer nurses because serving in the trenches was the most horrific masculine experience and nursing was the ultimate feminine war work. This thesis does not deal with historical dates or places but only with masculine and feminine

¹ Most soldiers were demobilized in 1919.

experience of war. The theory consists mainly of fragments from memoirs, narrations and diaries. The theoretical part provides firstly the details of the European society's life and stepwise the focus shifts to Western Europe where the Western Front took place. The Western Front is also the setting of the two books which are further analysed in the practical part. The literary analysis is to be of the male main character of *All Quiet on the Western Front* by Erich Maria Remarque and the female main character of *Not So Quiet* by Helen Zenna Smith who wrote her book in response to the Remarque's one.

1 European society before 1914

The following text provides the introductory information about the life of Europeans before WWI in order to outline people's social mores and conventions, which are necessary to further understand the changes that all people had to undergo.

The first decade of the 20th century is said to be the bourgeois paradise of the free market, cheap servants, low inflation and strong currency. Actually, the Europeans were living in a relatively peaceful time in the summer of 1914. Political situation seemed to be relaxed and hardly anybody would expect this calmness to be fundamentally changed. After all, the peace in Europe had prevailed for some time with only few exceptions, such as the Balkans. The last significant conflict occurred between France and Prussia in the years of 1870 – 1871. The following decades were marked as the golden era in many areas of human activities. There was a rapid change in the economic development, cultural life just flowered and people were getting used to the new inventions. Nonetheless, this economic paradise was inhabited only by a negligible minority of people. For instance, Vinen contends that 'only' less than 30 % of the British population lived in or very near poverty. To draw a comparison, it had been 85 % a hundred years before (2007, p. 16). The British Empire was undoubtedly in the limelight. However, the life of the rest of Europeans was unimaginably distant from the British bourgeoisie. According to Gordon, the Western civilization grew rich and powerful, whereas the rest of Europe remained poor, weak and ignorant. People from the West believed in the inevitable industrial and scientific progress as well as in spreading democracy and the rule of law (1992, p. 4). Vinen asserts that the most literal population of Europe was situated in France and Germany, whereas Russia, Spain and some parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire lagged behind (2007, p. 35). The inhabitants of Eastern and Central Europe lived in insecurity and with difficulties. As Vinen claims, it is often forgotten that they spent their summer of 1914 with terribly hard harvest work. Their lives were contended with hunger, cholera and malaria rather than books or music. This was caused by the voluminous increase of population (2007, p. 26). Therefore, the very characteristic feature of the beginning of the 20th century was that many Europeans desired to leave their continent.

Vinen states that about 25 million Europeans migrated to the USA between the years 1875 – 1900 (2007, p. 27). Ferguson notes that 2,4 million people left Britain before the war (2004, p. 66). The society was rather differentiated. As Vinen adds, some Poles, Irish and Southern Italians considered themselves as subordinate races and for that reason chose to

emigrate. European historians did not pay much attention to these emigrants. In fact, it was not suitable to record such stories to the praising ones, emphasizing the industrial progress and consolidating power (2007, p. 27). Majority of people, who emigrated, came from the areas which were not influenced by the industrialization considerably. The emigrants longed for new opportunities and regarded the USA as 'the land of freedom'. Subsequently, there was a boom in transportation companies which caused fall in prices of boat tickets to America. Gordon takes the view that it took a month to cross the Atlantic Ocean on a crowded ship in 1800. One hundred years later capacious and luxurious liners managed to sail it in a week (1992, p. 36). The Industrial Revolution was under way. European governments tried to discourage people from emigrating, especially young men eligible for military service. Nonetheless, there were no passports. Therefore, nobody could impede anyone from migrating. This mass migration had an impact itself, Gordon states it increased literacy because of frequent exchanging of letters and also created gender imbalance in particular areas because mostly young men were leaving (1992, p. 41). This weakened mainly the group of people connected to revolutionary politics. It meant that the old conservative habits in some areas were not to be changed. Nevertheless, this situation was mainly related to the cities only.

Many country people stayed in Europe, isolated from industrialized cities. They were uneducated, spoke with dialects, and did not care about politics. Vinen observes that this isolation was interrupted mainly by military service and building road networks. Yet, it was rather improbable that the most backward countrymen would be recruited in the military service. Weak, ill, or uneducated men were simply not worth recruiting (2007, p. 33). Throughout the 19th century military service became more common. All countries but Britain organized recruitments and only rarely the rich could buy themselves out. Ferguson notes that Britain was reluctant to employ compulsory military service due to the fiasco in the Boer wars. The British public rejected all new suggestions of improving the British defensive powers (2004, p. 48). Concerning the rest of Europe, Vinen takes the view that a Frenchman was three times more likely to be recruited than a man of the same age in Austria-Hungary in 1914 (2007, p. 33). Maurois claims that consequently strikes were organized very often in France. Therefore, the strikes were often prevented by declaring mobilization for a specific group of striking people, for example railwaymen (1994, p. 410). The recruited soldiers found it rather difficult to get used to the new forced life and duties. Relationships between soldiers and officers were troubled and military discipline was very strict. In Europe, as Ferguson

says, officers relied on the former soldiers who were able to keep the rest of the soldiers in peace. It is often said that the main cause of WWI was the culture of militarism, for the recruited men were so well prepared for a war that they started to desire one (2004, p. 37). The military service did affect all men but so did the industrialization.

At the turn of the 19th and 20th century the industrialization was slowly reaching more layers of the European society and the consumption of goods became the measure of social status. All this was shaping a new popular consciousness. Kishlansky contends that the money economy let people enjoy their leisure time more lavishly – the middle classes could afford to spend theirs in special resorts, the working classes in pubs and taverns. The poor were offered inexpensive strip shows and cinemas. This mass culture got to like organized sports as well (The Crisis of European Culture, online). People's lives in general were on a considerably good level of well being. Their lives were rapidly changing and people got used to this more comfortable way of living very quickly. It was also caused by the great changes in politics.

By 1914 most of the European countries introduced the universal male suffrage. It meant that the vote of a labourer suddenly had the same importance as that of a nobleman. Before that only those who had represented the population in parliaments had been able to vote, which had often been less than 5 percent of the individual population. It is not necessary to mention that it had concerned only men. The change did not relate to the female part of the population yet. Nevertheless, this was the time when women started to be interested in political affairs as well. Hledíková mentions that the first international meeting of feminists took place in Paris in 1878 (2007, p. 33). A lot of women, however, kept accepting their prescribed domestic roles, only the strongest feminists kept forming political action groups. The British suffrage movement was the most effective one. Kishlansky informs that as soon as the British Parliament failed to pass voting rights to around 1,000,000 wealthy, property-owning women in 1910, there was a bloody battle between suffragists and the police in the streets (The Crisis of European Culture, online). The movement was a little more successful outside Britain. In 1906 the Finnish women as the first in Europe also asked for the suffrage and won. Consequently, women in Norway gained the right to vote as well in 1913 (Selected suffrage dates, online). Other countries followed after the war. This was a great social change because so far the life and activities of women had been neglected and had never been taken much into consideration.

The role of women in the society before the war was not very significant in general. Basically, their only profession was thought to be motherhood and wifery. The society at

the turn of the 19th and 20th century was begrudgingly willing to accept housewives working in the fields of industry or agriculture. Yet, their wages were three times lower than the men's. Women did not have many options, though. If they wanted to gain secondary or higher education, the public did not agree. Even so, women were gradually getting closer to the equal status not only in the society but in the family as well. Nonetheless, women did not have many rights in general yet and were considered not to be as clever as men. Hledíková contributes that in the Austro-Hungarian Empire women were considered to be at the same mental level as children, madmen or blind and deaf-and-mute people. If a woman, however, committed a crime, she was mercilessly convicted equally as a man (2007, p. 35). Kishlansky mentions that there were even biological studies that "*proved the physical impossibility of women competing with men on an equal footing*" (The Crisis of European Culture, online). Darwin's question whether mankind consists of one or several species perhaps finally also helped women to be respected. Women demanded to be treated evenly as men and did not want to spend their entire days at home, cleaning the house and looking after the children. As Virginia Woolf said: "*women were only a beautiful and indispensable complement to men*" (Woolf, 1957). If a woman tried to stand up for herself and behave as though she had same rights as a man, the society criticized her. All in all, women did not have many choices of living their lives. Preferably, they were supposed to follow the steps of their mothers and never even try to raise an objection. The great changes were, luckily, to come.

As it was mentioned, Britain was in a kind of antimilitaristic position. Britain was under the rule of Liberal parties that kept winning over the more militaristic Conservatives. The Liberal traditions obliquely implied some pacifist politics – free market and peace, aversion to excessive military expenses and to huge armies. Angell in Ferguson strongly argues that the compulsory military service would mean 'Germanization of England' even though a single German soldier would never step on its ground. He also suggested that the British Empire should stay independent and untouched (2004, p. 53). It is no wonder because Britain saw itself and was the world power number one and did not want to leave this position. Assembling defence forces, Britain would abase itself to the German level. The European history between the years 1870 and 1914, though, is a story of economic rivalry between Britain and Germany. German exportation grew faster than that of its European opponents. Thus, Germany became Britain's imminent rival. Ferguson comments that Britain's share of foreign investments was about 44 percent and the investments were mainly exported outside Europe thanks to the British colonies, whereas Germany invested within the

Continent. Britain mainly imported food and exported finished products (2004, p. 64). As a result, Britain's working class had the best living standards in comparison to the rest of Europe. Vinen adds that their proportionally high wages could have been spent on affordable imported cocoa, tea and food (2007, p. 43). The rest of European working classes were not absorbed by the consumerism. The overcrowded dwellings did not support happy family life. The working class culture rather consisted of rough drinking; their life took place mainly between their job in a factory and a nearby pub. Some institutions even tried to make their lives easier, for example, as Maurois claims in France some companies provided their employees with houses, health care and schools (Maurois, 1994, p. 421).

The European life before WWI was rather miscellaneous. It was a time of great expansion. As Maurois states, between the years 1800 and 1914 the number of English population quintupled, the population tripled in Germany and Italy but it hardly doubled in France (1994, p. 415). The industrialization was flourishing – Britain was the economic power and Germany begun challenging the British industry. People in general were gaining more rights, and some could enjoy themselves better than ever. Suffrage movements were spreading very fast. Women started standing up for their rights and fight for equal opportunities. Cheap imported products made British people's lives more enjoyable. The industrialization created also huge differences between the rich and poor. Some people were getting richer and others lost their jobs. Because of the industrialization people were moving from the countryside on a mass scale because of unemployment – their own small rural industries were dying out due to mass production. A lot of people took more drastic action and emigrated. Politics were trying to utilize the causes of masses. As a reaction to the industrialization, socialism emerged and so did trade unionism. Recruitments were organized Throughout Europe and the national hysteria was growing into incredulity among all states. The war and radical changes in lives of all peoples were inexorably approaching.

2 European society's reaction to the outbreak of WWI

This chapter describes the people's reaction to the declaration of war. So far people in general had lived better than ever before. In that respect, a prompt wave of patriotic enthusiasm was expected throughout Europe as soon as the conflict erupted.

Crowds of cheering people gathered on squares in London, Paris, Berlin and other cities. However, this gathering was mainly caused by the fact that the public places used to be the main source of obtaining first-hand information. Bertrand Russell stated unhappily that in the streets *"every average men and women were delighted at the prospect of war"* (Britain and the outbreak of war, online). Patriotism and solidarity were popular and important features of the mood. It was mainly due to the war experience over the past two generations, which was as follows: men marched off to the war, some did heroic things, some died for the country, and the rest came back home next spring and celebrated. People at this moment had no reason to believe it could be otherwise. War, to the popular culture of the time, was an overall positive thing, which could end the interminable sense of crisis. Duroselle states that the slight decline of religion caused that many Europeans began to think highly of their own homeland and consider it as the highest priority. It was right to fight and die for the homeland. People sang patriotic songs full of pride and blood (2002, p. 329). According to Roberts, such popular hysteria meant that some Englishmen even stoned dachshunds to death because they are of German origin (1970, p. 264). This overall mood was called 'the spirit of 1914'. Nevertheless, this is when one of the myths occurred during WWI. What was proudly written in the newspapers was not always the entire truth. The spirit of 1914 started to be called the 'myth of the spirit of 1914' only about forty years ago. Verhey argues that this idea begun in the 1970s. He says *"that some historians suggested that the mood of the German population in July and August 1914 cannot be adequately explained by the adjective enthusiastic"*. He then mentions that many historians promoted similar ideas throughout the years 1970 - 1999 and calls the spirit *"a cliché of broad war enthusiasm"*. Theodor Wolff in Verhey is said to claim on the 31 July 1916:

We know how false it is when Temps and similar newspapers reassure their readers that the German people greeted the outbreak of war with joy. Our people had heavy hearts; the possibility of war was a frightening giant nightmare which caused us many sleepless nights. The determination with which we went to war sprang nor from joy, but from duty. Only a few talked of a "fresh, wonderful war." Only a very few, too, in comparison to the great masses, found flags immediately after the Austrian ultimatum

and marched in front of the windows of the allied embassies, including the Italian, and in front of the Chancellor's office, screaming themselves hoarse (Verhey, 2000, p. 7).

The described mood is definitely not enthusiastic and confirms that only very few people felt so. After publishing that statement, the newspapers were forbidden indefinitely for further publications. It was important that the war kept to be positively promoted. Everyone, who wanted to claim otherwise, was silenced. That explains why historians started to be interested in this fact later after the war. People in general were rather very doubtful and apprehensive about the war. Therefore, it cannot be said that there was a unified reaction to the declaration of war. Dr Pennel suggests that even ordinary British and Irish people were brainwashed, deceived and made support the conflict. Firstly, people did not want to believe that such an event could happen but later on they felt it was the right thing to do in light of the circumstances (2012, p. 29). In France the mood was even surveyed and the results were on the whole similar. People had literally no other choice than to show some elation. Patriotic crowds were only an urban phenomenon; and the country people considered the war as a disruption of their own lives and regarded the mobilisation as meaningless.

All in all, it can hardly be said that the reaction to the declaration of war was the same everywhere. As Ferguson points out, the contrasts between the nations' reactions to the outbreak of WWI are not in national characteristics but in individual personalities (2004, p. 170). Some people were just cheerful because they expected to get rid of the insecurity and tension in Europe, some were feeling strongly patriotic, thus fanatical, and some were startled, anxious and pessimistic or reluctant.

3 WWI experience

WWI broke out and it was an unprecedented experience in people's lives. Men and women confronted the war by building it into their lives. They had to domesticate the war experience, making it an integral part of their environment, cultural aspirations and political dreams. Therefore, this chapter firstly describes the everydayness of civilians, secondly of the soldiers in the trenches and finally of the volunteer nurses.

The living standards of each country and social class were different. The British and French were living the highest standards. Vinen mentions that France was presumably the most prosperous agricultural country in Europe even though its most fertile fields were transformed into battlefields. Luckily, affluent Britain was able to import food most of the wartime. The British civilians did not experience the conflict directly and as for the French, the fierce fighting never reached them owing to the stagnant trench warfare which took place only in certain areas. Therefore, Vinen further explains that the civilians did not have to confront many petrifying series of mishaps, such as plundering and catching infection diseases from the soldiers (2007, p. 63). This might almost sound that the Western civilians were not affected by the war at all. On the other hand, according to Craddick-Adams, the Zeppelin raids on London in April 1915 drew all Brits into the war, including the civilians (Craddick-Adams, online). Many facts and victim testimonies prove that not all civilians escaped the war atrocities. Belgium under the German occupation is a crucial witness. A German soldier R. G. Binding in Jindra gives a testimony from his diary from September 1914:

Four weeks ago it was possible to mark this country as rich. There was enough of beef and pork. Now there is nothing. There is not a single wine cellar in any city which is not confiscated by the German. Every shop with colonial goods, flour, butter and eggs is obliged to supply the German soldiers. All horses, cars, oil, railway wagons, houses, coal, electricity are used or built for our purposes. I shop for myself anything I want, things that are useful and luxurious. I present my name and merchants bow all the way to the shops' doors (1984, p. 169).

The civilians showed respect induced by fear of their own lives and the Germans took whatever they needed or simply wanted. This so called forced requisition was ordered by the German government which told the soldiers to take whatever they needed since the state could not supply them with food properly because of the British blockade and lack of food in general. However, these actions did not always end with systematic exploitation and looting

only. Sometimes the Germans burnt down all towns and executed en masse all people, including women and children. Practically speaking, the soldiers could do whatever they wanted without facing immediate repercussions. Their actions could not be averted. As Jindra points out, a German government newspaper claimed that there could not be left any shelter, refuge or protection for the victims, which included deforestation as well. It became commonplace that such devastation could not be performed without ruthlessness against the civilians. There was no need to deny that according to the German government (1984, p. 170). If the government's attitude was such, it is no wonder that the soldiers altered to men of no scruples. The civilians in other countries were not living easily either.

In the middle of the war, hunger was the main source of discord and made people go on strikes. With lack of food, rationing must have been introduced. Roberts says that Germany was first to do so in 1915, whereas England started rationing only sugar, fat and meat in July 1918, but later on many commodities were abolished completely from the market (2005, p. 272). People spent hours waiting in queues for food or bargaining it on the black market. Vinen states they had to adjust their eating habits and include to their diet food they disliked, such as a turnip. The food availability was restricted because Germany and Austria-Hungary were discredited by the British naval blockade, whereas Belgium was struck by the German invasion and occupation. The countries of Middle and Eastern Europe were affected most terribly because the impacts of war, such as famine and illnesses, reached almost all civilians (2007, p. 63). Food shortage was omnipresent. All people suffered and the illnesses did not defuse the deplorable situation at all. People had to struggle with inconvenience daily and at the same time had to take care of their livelihood by going to work.

Manual labour was surprisingly easily accessible, as it was necessary for example to produce more ammunition. Unemployment therefore decreased during the war. According to Jindra, in August of 1914 the unemployment rate in Germany was 22,4 %. At the end of the year it decreased to only 7,2 % (1984, p. 152). High unemployment in August was caused logically by the departure of workers to the fronts as recruits. This created quite a new situation on the market. Women, seeing the opportunity to help, wanted to take part in the war, so they replaced their men in the offices, posts, railways, and mainly in factories. Jindra quotes numbers – 25 % of all workers employed in the metal industry were women in Britain in 1918. Four years ago it was only 9 %. The number of women employed in the government arms factories increased to 47 % from original 2,6 % (1984, p. 193). Similar changes happened in other states too. Nonetheless, the working conditions were too demanding. Jindra

describes the way people had to work overtime, sometimes even 36 hour shifts. Due to the exhaustion from hunger working hours had to be shortened from 59 to 54 hours per week. A testimony of a worker from a Berlin munitions factory says:

It was just as the beginnings of capitalism. There was always something going on, especially during the night shifts. There was not a night during which one or more women collapsed from exhaustion, hunger or illness. During some winter days the heating was cold; workers were loitering, could not and did not want to work. In canteens there was sold only a turnip and very occasionally potatoes. Almost every day there were fights over a ladle not being full enough (1984, p. 194).

The life was undoubtedly and exceedingly burdensome. People were starving and contracting diseases easily. Very often people went on strikes but it was only a vain attempt of changing unchangeable. Regrettably, in this troublesome time people also lost the support of trade unions. Roberts explains that trade unions integrated with the state which they had tended to see as an enemy before the war, especially in France and Germany (2005, p. 271). As Jindra points out, some trade unions even refused to pay financial aids to the striking workers (1984, p.194). Eventually, strikes and work conflicts became criminal acts. Workers who demanded better working conditions were threatened to be recruited to the fronts or fired from the factories. Nevertheless, manpower was the key shortage everywhere. Industry and agriculture demanded men but so did armies. Bitter reality started to have influence on people's moods.

It was hardly surprising that those who felt exaltation of the first months of the war were losing it during the years of 1915 and 1916. Patriotism feelings suffered horribly. The idealism was weakened due to the fact that the war was stagnant and longer than anybody had thought. Civilians had to fight for their own survival. They also were desperately worried about their husbands who had been recruited. Those men, soldiers, were in the meantime undergoing their most harrowing experience of their lives.

Trenches were not firstly used in WWI. They had been widely practised in the US Civil War and other fairly recent wars. The trenches of WWI were initially used as roads to keep the soldiers from getting out of sight of enemy snipers. However, with the First Battle of the Marne in September 1914 the war resulted in stalemate in the form of static trench warfare. Neither side was able to overpower the other. Gumm describes the trenches of the Western Front as lines stretching from the Franco-Swiss border to the English Channel ports of Flanders, being up to 400 miles long (Gumm, 2009, online). Nevertheless, the trenches were not in a shape of a straight line but rather bordered the surrounding countryside, creating a zigzag pattern. Duffy claims that the German Army built their trench system because of

defence. As a result, they designed them for extended periods of use. On the other hand, Allied commanders were hoping for an early resumption of the war movement. Accordingly, their trenches had to be constantly repaired (Duffy, *Life in The Trenches*, online).

The soldiers, hiding in the trenches and having No Man's Land in front of them, could only fight the enemy with weaponry. This subsequently meant more ammunition consumption, which was as excessive as in no other war before. Jindra confirms this fact with numbers – in the greatest battle of WWI near Verdun about 1,350,000 tons of steel was used in the main 30 weeks of fighting. The German field artillery fired in total on all fronts 222 million of bullets (Jindra, 1984, p. 157). This endless shooting required to introduce new modern technological weapons. The Germans came up with flame-throwers and gas, The Allies with tanks. However, the trenches provided no protection against heavy artillery. For that reason the soldiers dug braced holes with a side entrance from the trench which were called the 'dug-outs'. Neither of the opposing sides ever knew when or where the next shell would fall. Therefore, the life in the trenches on both sides became pretty similar.

The daily trench routine was filled with dullness and many difficulties. During daylight hours the soldiers tried to rest because *"each side's front line was constantly under watch by snipers and look-outs"* (Duffy, *Life in the Trenches*, online), whereas at nights they were repairing the trenches, or carrying up supplies, hardly to be spotted by the enemy snipers. The most active parts of every day were dusks and dawns when visibility was poor. With the first light, the everyday ritual was repeated with 'stand-to', which was *"a period of manning the trench in preparation for an enemy surprise attack"* (Baker, online). Nonetheless, such an attack hardly ever happened. Duffy describes the ordinary day of a soldier: *"Generally men would be expected to provide sentry duty for up to two hours. Any longer and there was a real risk of men falling asleep on duty - for which the penalty was death by firing squad"* (Duffy, *Life in the Trenches*, online). When the soldiers were off duty, they tried to rest even though it was really difficult because no-one could make oneself comfortable in the trenches.

The living conditions in the trenches were like hell on earth for the soldiers who called them home. A variety of stenches hung over them. The smell of unwashed soldiers, death and decay, and overflowing latrines mingled with the remains of poison gases, cigarette smoke and a mixture of obnoxious food odours. The trenches were so malodorous that new arrivals were often physically sick. They were bitter cold in winter and often flooded with water and mud when it rained so that some men actually drowned in them. These terrible conditions lead

to an extremely painful infection called 'trench foot'. Duffy claims that trench foot was initially believed to be a symptom of poor morale by military authorities. It was in fact "*a fungal infection of the feet brought on by prolonged exposure to damp, cold conditions allied to poor environmental hygiene*". About 20,000 casualties were reported with trench foot by the end of 1914 in the British Army (Duffy, Trench Foot, online). Some of the men's toes or even feet had to be very often amputated due to gangrene. Only the arrival of summer brought the troops some relief. Yet, the filth of the trenches inevitably brought the problem of lice. It was a never-ending problem, causing men to itch unceasingly. Despite the fact that the clothes got repeatedly washed and deloused, the lice eggs hidden in the seams of the clothes initially hatched when the body heat warmed them again. Lice also caused 'trench fever' which is characterized by Megaw as a high fever accompanied by muscular pains, thanks to which the soldiers were unable to serve for up to twelve weeks. Megaw asserts it infected 800,000 Allied soldiers throughout the war (Megaw, 1948). Another vermin problem were rats. They grew into incredible sizes, feeding on the corpses which littered the area around the trenches. Huggins mentions one soldier's testimony:

The rats were huge. They were so big they would eat a wounded man if he couldn't defend himself. These rats became very bold and would attempt to take food from the pockets of sleeping men. Two or three rats would always be found on a dead body. They usually went for the eyes first and then they burrowed their way right into the corpse (2003, online).

The soldiers tried to fight the rats but it was rather pointless as "*one pair of rats could produce up to 880 offspring in a year*" (Huggins, 2003, online). For that reason shooting them was a waste of ammo, thus the soldiers sometimes had fun by chasing the rats and making trophies of them. The circumstances of living in the trenches were undoubtedly below any standard of life. Fierce battles did not rage everyday. For the troops not serving exactly on the front lines, boredom became a part of their lives as well.

Thereupon the soldiers endeavoured to ease the everyday miserable routine by reading books, singing or writing letters home. Cheng contends that letters became crucial to the soldiers as they helped keep them sane and distracted them from the horror reality. 12,5 million letters were sent to the soldiers from their families every week on average (Cheng, 2008, online). To fill the spare time between battles, the soldiers at rest also created decorative or souvenir objects from old used shells. This was called 'trench art'. Kimbell nicely described the items as "*cruel destroyers of humans and landscapes transformed into objects of beauty, providing a remembrance of comrades lost and souvenirs for those who*

lived to tell their tales". She observes that the hammering involved in the process of art would provoke enemy to unwelcome hostile fire, therefore the art items had to be created far behind the front line trenches. She also suggests that this handicraft gave the soldiers great convalescence therapy (Kimbell, 2004). This was definitely a great way of spending their free time but when a battle occurred, all that had to be set aside.

The soldiers rarely left the trenches into perilous No Man's Land. Except the moment a battle took place or they tried to eavesdrop the enemy's strategy or to collect the bodies of wounded or dead comrades at nights. If a soldier got wounded in No Man's Land, sometimes he would wait for a few days, uttering no sound so that the enemy would not hear him, until a fellow would happen to find him. Anyhow, the order to go 'over the top' was the most fearful command. Harry Patch, who never spoke about the war until he turned 100 years old, remembers his feelings:

Never forget it. We crawled, couldn't stand up - a sniper would have you. I came across a Cornishman, he was ripped from his shoulder to his waist - shrapnel. Now a bullet wound is clean, shrapnel will tear you all to pieces. He was laying there in a pool of blood. As we got to him, he said, 'Shoot me.' He was beyond all human aid. Before we would pull out the revolver to shoot him, he died. I was with him in the last seconds of his life. Then he went from this life, to whatever is beyond. Now what I saw in the way of sights at [battles of] Passchendaele and Pilkem - the wounded lying about asking you for help - we didn't have the knowledge, the equipment or the time to spend with them. I lost all my faith in the Church of England (Patch, online).

No Man's Land was the most dangerous place in the world. Incessant bombing deformed the land into holes full of mud, pools of blood and pieces of limbs. Almost all soldiers lost their faith there. The trenches were filled with the wounded and rotting corpses of the dead. Many were deafened, disfigured, or killed by the blasts. Gas attacks caused a devastating blow to the men. If unprepared, the effects included temporary or permanent blindness, burns, or death. Listening to explosions permanently for four years almost in a row, the men lived in constant fear of exploding shells. Paul Bäumer himself admitted while he was on his leave: "*I have been startled a couple of times in the street by the screaming of the tramcars, which resembles the shriek of a shell coming straight for one*" (p. 62). As a result of the intense warfare, many left the trenches with a physiological condition, which had been diagnosed by doctors a bit later during the war, known as 'shell-shock'. Bourke says the symptoms ranged from uncontrollable diarrhoea to unrelenting anxiety. She describes the medical symptoms as a result of the soldier's war experience: "*those who had bayoneted men in the face developed hysterical tics of their own facial muscles, snipers lost their sight, stomach cramps seized men*

who knifed their foes in the abdomen” (Bourke, online). Some were not able to walk properly, some suffered from a phobia of uniforms; some could only be lying, having seizures. The worst of it is that commandants again considered this behaviour as cowardice at the very beginning of the war. Thus, when a soldier was unable to obey a command and pick up his bayonet, he was simply shot dead.

Being a soldier was a respectable occupation tolerating many risks. Some soldiers came home to their families decorated with medals, some returned bearing scars or missing limbs, and some never came home at all. Even though women were not allowed to the trenches, they had to undergo many changes as well and adapt themselves to the most gruesome and completely new conditions of their lives.

With the men gone, the war meant for women an unprecedented chance to act independently and thus transform the traditional womanhood. Yet, the shift in perspective on this woman matter was rather difficult as the society was deeply rooted in conventional attitudes about the women’s roles. And so with the suffragists also emerged the antisuffragists. Gould mentions a letter by an anonymous woman sent to the editor of *The Morning Post* in reaction to women dressed in khaki shirts, ties, and tunics in 1915:

A British Officer in mufti had lost his left arm and right leg... Surely if these women had a spark of shame left they should have blushed to be seen wearing a parody of the uniform which this officer and thousands like him have made a symbol of honour and glory by their deeds (qtd. in Randolph, 1987, p. 119).

Obviously, this woman was strongly hinting at a fact which those women in khaki did not realize according to her. If they were actually obliged to wear that uniform, they would have to fight and experience terrors they could not even imagine. To her those women only disrespected the meaning of being an honourable soldier. She accused them of playing and pretending to be someone who they are not while the real soldiers perform heroism. However, as Gould in Randolph also points out, for instance in France, women were not allowed to do war work unless they wore a uniform (ibid). The subject of women wearing uniforms aroused ambivalent feelings because people in general were not used to such women’s roles. Popular prejudices persisted, some hoped it was only a fashionable fad, some strongly argued that khaki women ridiculed the real guards of honour, and some believed that military training for women was a waste of time. Yet, these hostilities did not seem to dissuade women from fighting for their new life-changing rights, and thus they started establishing and joining new associations.

Many individual organizations were set up in order to train women to provide voluntary war work. WWI was officially the first war that allowed women to serve in the army legally. Norwood claims that, for example, the Army Nurse Corps was founded in 1901 and provided during the war up to 30,000 nurses (Norwood, online). Gould notes that British women had the unique opportunity to help with defence of their country already in 1910 with the establishment of Voluntary Aid Detachments (hereafter referred to as VAD) in which they could provide voluntary aid in various kinds of work. Nonetheless, she also claims that joining VAD was of little interest before the conflict (qtd. in Randolph, 1987, p. 115). When the war was declared, an immediate wave of women volunteers appeared to care for the sick and wounded. Still, the image of women suddenly playing other roles than nurses or knitters was not popular. At best, women either replaced their men in factories or got married and took care of the children.

Those women who stayed at home were encouraged to embolden men to join the army. Layton claims that both men and women experienced the inability to participate in the war as impotence and equated it with being effeminate (qtd. in Randolph, 1987, p. 72). However, women started to feel the tension between the horror of wasted lives and the importance of patriotism feelings. Soldiers, on the other side, would not acknowledge the negative side of this war until they reached the trenches. Helen Foster tells her story:

We would have some of the boys from Sunday School over for dinner parties. I guess most of these boys were around eighteen. We'd have music and dancing, and my job would be to smile and encourage them to go and join in the fighting. I told them I would be so proud, and they would be such good boys. I can never forgive myself. Bruce Skinner came home with a crippled leg. Matthew never got married because of his drinking. And we thought it was the right thing to do (Foster, online).

Nevertheless, many women chose not to stay at home and stand idly by the progress of war. Apart from soldiers, they could decide whether to stay or return home. They also had the opportunity to choose which job they want to enlist to. A BBC article says that voluntary work was mainly undertaken by the members of the upper classes who did not have to work to support their families (Women at War, BBC, 2012, online), they also were every so often accompanied with their own servants. One of the war work, nursing, was the least safe job women could perform. They had to challenge their own fears as some of them had never experienced or seen such horrors in their lives before. Some nurses were as near the front lines as other soldiers, however, Donahue claims they were usually not allowed to be directly on the front but rather in the field hospitals just behind it or most possibly in evacuation

hospitals miles back from the front (Donahue, 2011, p. 189). A lot of them wanted to be near specific fronts because their close relatives were deployed there. Their own experience often vary based on their own practice. Vera Brittain, who was a British feminist and writer, depicts her own experience. She desperately longed for becoming a soldier. In the end, she became at least a full-time nurse, although she never admitted that this war work was as important as of the men. Therefore she got disillusioned. She expressed complaints about her fellow workers not having enough spirituality in nursing. She mentioned that the nurses had to force their warmth out in order to be good nurses (Brittain, 2005, p. 211). Only skilled nurses could carry out the real nursing job. Additionally, they had to learn some empathy, not only for their soldier patients, but also for each other and even enemy soldiers too. Their daily routines were again similar on both belligerent sides.

Norwood specifies the nurse roles as picking up the wounded soldiers, knitting the bandages, running canteens and driving ambulances. The most experienced nurses were on active duty at hospitals along the frontlines where the most severely injured soldiers were received. Nurses, as soldiers, worked from dusk till dawn, very often being up to the morning hours, and having got barely any sleep. Norwood further adds one nurse's memoir in which she describes the life as marvellous and healthy one in which they work and then sleep enough to work again (Norwood, online). This testimony is still filled with the beginner's enthusiasm. When fulfilling their own duty, nurses often characterized it more articulately than soldiers. Nurse Florence Nightingale who treated soldiers hurt in the Battle of Somme described her feelings: "*On night duty tonight in the lines, many very ill, the whole night spent trying to ease their pains, two died within 10 minutes of one another, oh! it is sad*" (qtd. in Hartley-Parkinson, online). This very short diary entry is absolutely eloquent. It gives a clear notion that the nurse was awfully busy and, yet, had the urge to hurriedly express her mood of despair and hopelessness. Her own unenviable duty during that night was to facilitate soldiers' dying. Sometimes the nurses had simply no other work to do. Despite the fact that hospitals were placed sometimes quite beyond the battlefield, nurses' work was frequently accompanied by the battle sounds, explosions and shooting. Yet, some of the nurses were utterly pleased to have the job. An American girl serving in a French Army Hospital at the Front wrote in her letter home:

Work has begun in earnest. Alas, that I dare not take the time from sleep for more than a hasty scrawl, but when one puts in twelve hours' work daily, one must guard jealously the other twelve. Actually for the first time in my life I begin to feel as a normal being

should, in spite of the blood and anguish in which I move. I really am *useful*, that is all, and too busy to remember myself, past, present, or future (Mademoiselle Miss, online).

The fact that the girl felt as a normal human being in the middle of the most brutal war was influenced by not having many rights in her life before. The opportunity to do finally something useful was probably so overwhelming that it suppressed what was happening around. Not every nurse was in enthusiastic moods though. Jeanne Louise describes her feelings:

If I had know a little of what the trenches looked and smelled like, I would never have become a nurse. ... Upon reaching my destination at the trenches, I was bombarded by the horrifying sounds of constant artillery fire, men howling in pain, and the disgusting smell of rotting flesh. My first patient was a man with a bad case of trench foot. My job was to hold the man's arm, while another doctor sawed his leg off. It took us about 2 hours, and all that I could hear was the artillery fire, and the man I was holding crying out to us to put him out of his misery. Finally, after 40 minutes of crying and shouting, the man lost consciousness, and just in time, because I could not bear to listen to his pleas another minute, without losing the will to go back home. ... I was a nurse for 1 year, but I saw more horrible things than any person could see if they lived a 100 years then I did in this 1 year (qtd in A letter from a nurse in the trenches, online).

Other unfamiliar feelings aroused when coming back. When Vera Brittain was returning, she complained that nurses, as for example soldiers suffering from shell shock, were not welcomed with cheerful thanks as if their four years of war work was absolutely ignored (qtd. in Randolph, 1987, p. 76). On the other hand, Norwood claims that many nurses were honoured medals and at least three nurses were awarded the second highest military honour the Distinguished Service Cross (Norwood, online). As Darrow noted, nearly a thousand French nurses received the Croix de guerre² (2000, p. 140). That led to disillusionment. Hostility between women, who had served in the war and those who had not, escalated because the returned nurses had a feeling that those women, who had stayed, did nothing to support their nation. They entailed no risks. The nurses behaved aloof, haughty, and resentful to them. The losses of nurse lives were not as tremendous as of the soldiers, however, according to Darrow, more than twenty Red Cross military nurses were killed at the front (2000, p. 142).

Those two people, a soldier and a nurse, during the war also met. Even though the soldiers were often in a lot of agonizing pain, it was the physical surrounding that gave them

² French Cross of War awarded to those who distinguished themselves by acts of heroism.

that bit of relief. There were also male nurses earlier but it was the female nurse that contributed to the process of recovery. The soldiers lying there, the female nurses taking care of them. To become a nurse did not require only the training but mainly her femininity. Darrow explains:

It was women's voices, their way of moving, bending over, or sitting at the bedside and especially, the infinitely consoling balm of the womanly hearts that reassured the wounded in ways male attendants could not. For others, it was a woman's hands or her smile (2000, p. 145).

Although the description sounds a bit indecent and arousing, the women were to some men as soothing as a remedy. The hands, the smile, the heart, the womanly elegance – these were to achieve the greatest victory; they were to heal all nations. Even though their main roles were to be a nun and a mother, which were to the utmost asexual ones, women were encouraged to flirt with soldiers. If they were not able to do so, they were mocked by the others.

4 Comparison of men's and women's experience

The following chapter is not written in order to determine whose war experience, whether men's or women's, was more burdensome, irritating or demanding. It is to present and analyse the facts, to find the particular common thoughts and experience which both heroes had to deal with, and finally to provide their experience in which they diverge. Just like E. M. Remarque noted at the beginning of his *All Quiet on the Western Front*:

It is to be neither an accusation nor a confession, and least of all an adventure, for death is not an adventure to those who stand face to face with it. It will try simply to tell of a generation of men [and women] who, even though they may have escaped shells, were destroyed by the war (p. 1).

Thus the following subchapters will deal one by one with these specific motifs: patriotism, family and friendship, sexual emancipation, masculinity vs. femininity and finally the psychological effects. Since all wars had always been a matter of patriotism, it is going to be the first matter to look into.

The meaning of war in general had always revolved around manly matters such as courage, heroism, self-sacrifice, and honour. With the advent of WWI this traditional masculine heroic formula altered. Suddenly, the attitude towards war changed, the patriotic enthusiasm gradually ceased and emotions became rather embittered. Too many people had to live in the war for too long a time. Both men and women started questioning the true meaning of war. They started wondering what they had become because of it. Men started to be filled with doubts and misgivings about the purpose of being a soldier. Paul manifests his disillusionment:

We have become wild beasts. We do not fight, we defend ourselves against annihilation. It is not against men that we fling our bombs, what do we know of men in this moment when Death is hunting us down – now, for the first time in three days we can see his face, now for the first time in three days we can oppose him; we feel a mad anger. No longer do we lie helpless, waiting on the scaffold, we can destroy and kill, to save ourselves, to save ourselves and to be revenged (p. 42).

Paul started to see them, the soldiers, as animals out of control. He knew that on the other side of No Man's Land there were men like him and, yet, his unavoidable task was to slaughter them. The war changed him. "*We have lost all sense of other considerations, because they are artificial. Only the facts are real and important for us*" (p. 8) says Paul, when his friend is eager to get boots of their dying friend who does not want to give up these boots of his even

though his legs have been amputated. The soldiers were not well taken care of, which forced them to this animalism. Anytime, there was an attack, their behaviour of ordinary men turned into ruthless savages without conscience. They acted so not in order to win the war but in order to survive. These actions were in their blood and became their basic instinct. Paul's friend Albert ruminates on the reason of their behaving: *"It's queer, when one thinks about it. We are here to protect our fatherland. And the French are over there to protect their fatherland. Now who's in the right?"* (p. 76). Even though none of them was ever able to understand the real purpose of the fighting, they obediently kept on performing their duties, without a hint of patriotism, simply because doing otherwise, they all would be shot dead. Also almost all women, after seeing the atrocities of war, lost their initial patriotism with which they enlisted to it. A friend of Smithy's laments: *"I know too much. Let the people who make the wars fight them. I would rather see a child of mine dead than see him a soldier."* (p. 55). This is a fundamental change in the sense of patriotism and perceiving the soldier as a war hero. He is no more the hailed character fighting for their country because in this war the perception of country as a national manifestation dissolved. As Paul's friend Tjaden explains: *"A mountain in Germany cannot offend a mountain in France. Or a river, or a wood, or a field of wheat"* (p. 76). People living at or near fronts realized that the war would not ease their existence or improve their living conditions at home at all because the price they had to pay was immensely and unreasonably high. Smithy herself provides one brief description of life out there: *"Stripped of the pretty-pretty, 'gay-lasses-in-khaki' touch, war is a beastly, boring business. Pure, unadulterated hell"* (p. 136). Smithy alludes to the keenness for uniforms women had before the war, when they had no idea about the stark reality yet. As a protest against the war, Smithy burns her expensive uniform when she comes back home from France where she volunteered as an ambulance driver. In the argument with her mother she even admits that she is a *"pacifist if they [pacifists] are against the war"* (p. 184). Such an attitude was an outrage to the extremely patriotic civilians. When Smithy has to go back to serve her country, she signs as a domestic worker in protest at her mother and the war. She knows that it is not as noble as an ambulance driver and her mother will not be able to boast about her in front of the other snobby families.

Civilians, on the other hand, lost their elation for war not in the slightest bit, especially those from the upper classes because they did not have to worry about their livelihood. Smithy has real problems getting on with her mother as she cannot tell her the reality of the war because her mother, an obstinate patriot, would neither admit nor understand the truth.

Volunteer women struggled with their feelings alone because they could not say a negative word about the war in letters home, for they would be mocked and accused of exaggeration by their parents. Their daughters in such a case deserved what they had longed for according to them. Women, unlike the soldiers, could quit and come home whenever they wanted to but rarely did so because: *"It takes nerve to carry on here, but it takes twice as much to go home to flag-crazy mothers and fathers"* (p. 13). Letters, as already mentioned above, kept war workers sane because the best way to ease worries was to unburden oneself. Women for this reason rather lost touch with their family. Therefore, they had to deal with their psychological burdens on their own. Parents in general were not much interested in the terror their children had to be engaged in. They proudly acknowledged that their children were 'doing their bit'. Smithy's one and only enemy in this war is her mother because her mother's job was to eagerly recruit new soldiers and send them to the front and Smithy's was to take these men to hospital, and thus save them. Her mother even competes with a friend of hers in a number of new recruited young men. For that reason Smithy imagines both these women being there with her, showing them exasperatedly not her own onerous responsibility but to what they send their young recruits:

Oh, come with me, Mother and Mrs Evans-Mawnington. Let me show you the exhibits straight from the battlefield. ... Those trays each contain something that was once a whole man ... the heroes who have done their bit for King and country. ... Shut your ears, Mother and Mrs Evans-Mawnington, lest their groans and heart-rending cries linger long in your memory ... lift your silken skirts aside ... a man is spewing blood, the moving has upset him, finished him. ... He will die on the way to hospital ... It isn't pretty to see a hero spewing up his life's blood in public, is it? ... That man strapped down? That raving, blaspheming creature screaming filthy words you don't even know ... Oh, merely gone mad ... he may have seen a headless body running on and on, with blood spurting from the trunk. No, not shell-shock. ... Let me find you an example ... The one staring straight ahead at nothing ... twitching, twitching, twitching, each limb working in a different direction, like a Jumping Jack worked by a jerking string. Look at him, both of you. ... See the man they are fitting into the bottom slot. ... He is coughing up clots of pinky-green filth. That is gas. You've heard of gas, haven't you? It burns and shrivels the lungs to the mess you see on the ambulance floor there. He's about the age of Bertie, Mother. ... The son you are so eager to send out to the trenches, in case Mrs Evans-Mawnington scores over you at the next recruiting meeting (p. 90 - 93).

Smithy knows well that neither woman would stand the look at the wretches. She is from the beginning very upset with her devoted mother, however, this is the first time in *Not So Quiet* when the author let her heroine express her furious feelings aloud. It is a crucial point where she stops being a well-brought-up and courteous daughter which at that time was a behaviour taken for granted. It is, therefore, not only the war experience but also the family that

influenced and significantly changed the main character of *Not So Quiet*. The subtitle of *Not So Quiet, Stepdaughters of War*, symbolizes the outrage over parents who failed to perform their parental duties. The war itself is not a mother to whom we all should be obediently devoted but a wicked, evil stepmother who adopts all daughters and sons of all countries and mercilessly uses them only for her own objectives, just like Smithy's mother does. When Smithy's fiancé gets blinded and has his leg amputated, her mother's first reaction in a letter to her is: "*Isn't it wonderful that Roy has had the M.C.³?... Darling, what an inestimable privilege you have, marrying one of England's disabled heroes, devoting your life to his service!*" (p. 228). Roy's mother calls his state "*a splendid achievement*" (p. 229). On the contrary to these mothers, Smithy perceives this medal as a useless piece of metal. Paul's mother, on the other hand, shows more understanding. She is able to picture well the image of war, but she cannot resist and eventually asks Paul whether it was bad out there. Paul, being desperate and unfortunate about her asking, simply tells her a white lie: "*No, Mother, not so very. There are always a lot of us together so it isn't bad*" (p. 61). Their relationship is healthier and stronger even though Paul lies to her in order not to hurt her for she is seriously ill. His father, on the contrary, would love to know the complex details about the exciting new weapons. Unfortunately, he understands neither the purpose nor the result of using these arms, which is the reason why Paul does not want to talk about it.

A deep abyss of estrangement between the parents and their offspring resulted from the isolation for they had never been obliged to tell such monstrous lies to their parents before. Since most parents provided neither consolation nor sympathy, men and women were looking for these among their co-workers. Camaraderie of the trenches was solving this social question. The soldiers formed emotional attachments to one another because they, wordlessly, had the ability to understand each other due to their experience. Moreover, the change of perspective, such as the concentration of self-awareness, usual for peacetime, was destroyed by the war. Men knew that alone they would never survive, which was their one and only goal. While Paul is on his leave, he must think about his friends Kat, Albert, Müller and Tjaden all the time. He is not able to enjoy his leave and rather wonders what his friends are doing at that moment, worrying whether he will manage to see them again. When he reunites them, he feels relieved: "*I could almost weep. I can hardly control myself any longer. But it*

³ The Military Cross is the third-level military decoration granted in recognition of an act or acts of exemplary gallantry during active operations against the enemy on land.

will soon be all right again back here with Kat and Albert. This is where I belong” (p. 75). Despite being back under heavy shelling and very close to death, he felt that that was the exact place to be - with his comrades. When Paul is on patrol and gets lost in No Man’s Land at night, he suddenly hears voices of his comrades over the noise of the artillery-fire:

At once a new warmth flows through me. These voices ... recall me at a bound from the terrible loneliness and fear of death by which I had been almost destroyed. They are more to me than life ... more than motherliness and more than fear. ... We all share the same fear and the same life, we are nearer than lovers, in a simpler, a harder way; I could bury my face in them, in these voices, these words that have saved me and will stand by me (p. 79-80).

Camaraderie became thus very intimate and unique. The voices alone reassured Paul that he would be alright and prevented him from despair which he had to face in this case alone. Paul’s thoughts depict the romantic elements of the comradeship, which would be expected rather from women.

Such close and idealistic friendship was not developed so strongly among the women though. The comradeship in *Not So Quiet* is more likely perceived as a means of dealing with life during the war. It allows them to speak openly about the changes they undergo, such as moral standards. Since Smithy and her co-workers come almost all from the upper class, this camaraderie taught them mainly to behave selflessly. When one of them is going to leave, they plan a send-off party for her and each contributes food they have for themselves: *“The butter we owe to The B. F., who has been saving it since last mail day; the sardines are from Etta Potato; the potted meat from Skinny; The Bug has given the biscuits, while the stale cake is my contribution to the feast”* (p. 105). The girls take care of each other, wordlessly. When Smithy is on duty alone till morning hours, she gets upset when she gets back because she is frozen and hungry but cannot boil water for her hot-water bottle so as not to wake up the others. Furious, she goes to sleep and finds out that in her sleeping bag there already is one inside: *“My feet touch something, something hot. A hot-water bottle? They have made a hot-water bottle for me. My friends! They have not forgotten me. This touch of kindness finishes me completely. The tears roll down on my cheeks”* (p. 44-45). Having a tiring and strenuous duty over, Smithy goes reluctantly to bed not expecting to fall asleep because *“one can’t sleep unless one is warm”* (p. 42). Because the girls allowed her to have her important two-hour sleep, she feels deeply thankful and touched even though she cursed all of them a few minutes before.

Both heroes, Paul and Smithy, sacrifice themselves for their comrades when they are in desperate need of help even though it means breaking some rules or endangering oneself. Both of them have to deal with the most feared matter - the loss of their friends. They comprehend the significance of camaraderie; they both feel that without it, there is only a deep, empty hole inside each of them. With their beloved friends they also went through their first sexual experiences.

Another change men and women were undergoing throughout the war was related to sexual emancipation. This brief utterance of an upper class woman from the 1920s is irrefutable evidence: *"I don't understand why people talk about their intimate parts. There is nothing intimate about mine"* (qtd. in Vinen, 2000, p. 96). These words reflect the new view on sexual relations which appeared after WWI. Sexual abstinence had been a common moral value before the war. Nevertheless, men's but also women's behaviour throughout the war turned out to be suddenly different, which was shocking to the society of the time. Chastity was one of the war's casualties, whereas promiscuity became a part of life of at least some of them. For instance, three men appear suddenly and gradually in Smithy's life, whereas in Paul's it is only one French woman. The first man whom Smithy meets breaks her own perception of chastity. She refused to make love to him but let him at least kiss her. Later on, she is shocked by her change of outlook:

Oh, damn, why not [to spend the night with him]? Why not? Why not to get something out of life before ... you, Nellie Smith, a virgin, thinking these things, after the sheltered way you've been brought up. ... Oh, damn, what does virtue matter – a little thing like chastity? (p. 147).

Smithy realizes that the way she was mannered is a meaningless matter in life. Everything the soldier wanted from her was to give him some pleasure of life before he went back to the front because he knew he would be probably dead in a few days. Smithy blames herself for being *"silly to accuse a man of being ungentlemanly when he is practically sentenced to death"* (p. 145). Paul is sexually inexperienced too. He and his friends chance on French women while they are swimming in a river: *"Three women come strolling along the bank. They walk slowly and don't look away, although we have no bathing suits. ... There is one slim little brunette, ... her dress swings loosely about her legs"* (p. 54). The fact that the women do not avert their eyes blushing from the naked soldiers is a proof of women's change in behaviour. The mystery of the other sex was brusquely revealed in WWI, for the nurses saw everything of wounded soldiers while treating them. When Paul describes his little brunette, it is obvious that he sees a woman after a long time which gives him a surge of

excitement. Later on at night the boys take each his woman to adjoining rooms of the girls' house. Paul feels afraid of what is going to happen. Eventually, he makes love to her because he wants to forget about the war at least for a moment: *"I want it all to fall from me, war and terror and grossness, in order to awaken young and happy. ... And if I press ever deeper into the arms that embrace me, perhaps a miracle may happen..."* (p. 56). On the other hand, in *Not So Quiet* Smithy wonders: *"Shall I ever know a lover who is young and strong and untouched by war, who has not gazed on what I have gazed upon"* (p. 164). She is aware of the fact that her entire generation is going to be affected by the warfare. Eventually, she has her first sexual experience when she comes back to England on her way home. She meets at a hotel lounge a young recruit who is departing to the front for the first time on the following day. That is why *"his eyes are still laughing"* (p. 170). That is why she likes him. She knows that his appearance and soul will be changed by the end of the war. She, unlike him, knows what awaits him and for that reason she consents to spend the rest of the evening with him: *"Yes, I will drink more champagne with you, I will smile when you smile... I will press your hand when you press mine under the table... yes, I will dance with you again till I forget I have seen you at the end of the ghostly procession that has crossed the Channel with me"* (p. 172). Although Smithy is not in a cheerful mood at all at that moment, she is obliging to entertain this young man also as a compensation for the first man she met in France. This is an action unthinkable for a woman of her class before the war. Due to Smithy's war experience, she desires and perhaps is even obsessed to once marry someone *"whose straightness and strength will erase from my mind these mangled things I drive night after night"* (p. 57). She enthuses over men untouched by war:

Oh, the beauty of men who are whole, who have straight arms and legs, whose bodies are not cruelly gashed and torn by shrapnel, whose eyes are not horror-filled, whose faces are smooth and shapely, whose mouths smile instead of grinning painfully ... oh, the beauty and wonder of men who are whole (p. 163).

Yet, she is not able to escape her deformed and affected generation. She later on at home engages to a long-time friend Roy who marches off to the front as well where he is blinded, has a leg amputated from his hip and becomes impotent. Smithy's younger and simpler sister Trix shows signs of the corruption of her innocence as well. She urges Smithy to help her get money for abortion as she does not even know who the father of the unborn child is: *"It might be any of the three..."* (p. 198). Trix tries to excuse herself that it is such boredom out there, obeying rules all over again and that there is nothing bad about it: *"They don't think rotten of a girl who sleeps with them nowadays, just that she's a fool if she doesn't"* (p. 200).

Both Smithy and Paul go through their first sexual experience without being in love which was not a usual matter of the society of the time. They practically do it in order to either forget or at least ease the pain from the war which they know they will have to endure for the rest of their lives. They both realize that *“life is too short”* (Rem., p. 52). This sexual emancipation led not only to the change in behaviour but also to an alternation in masculinity and femininity.

A question might be raised why women should fight at war when it had always been a masculine issue. A girl's true aim to become a volunteer was not conceptualized as to serve the country but to further her own feminine interests. Smithy explains:

There may be an odd few who enlisted in a patriotic spirit – I haven't met any, personally. Girls who were curious, yes; girls who were bored stiff with home (like myself) and had no idea of what they were coming to, yes; man-hunters like The B.F., yes; man-mad women, semi-nymphomaniacs like Thrumms, who was caught love-making in an ambulance ..., yes; megalomaniacs like Commandant who love bossing the show ..., yes; girls to whom danger is the breath of life, yes; ... but all the flag-waggers are comfortably at home and intend to stay there. ... Our wonderful high spirits! We lost those the first night we arrived (p. 135).

Ladies thus enlisted out of curiosity or boredom, because of their love or in order to find one, or they were looking for some adventure. After arrival they soon found out that their reasons would not be so easily followed. New unskilled recruits in the trenches were also often very unaware of the different drill and life there, thus young soldiers were dead before they knew it. *“The recruits give us almost more trouble than they are worth. ... They fall like flies. ... They are so stupid; a man would take them by the arm and lead them away from here...”* (p. 49). Paul sounds here as a mature grown-up who has seen it all, he regards the young recruits as useless, inexperienced children. They do not know how to survive even though the experienced try to teach them but the young forget everything as soon as they get into a battle. Among women the newcomers were often very naïve. Their adopted manners from home made them believe they would be treated with some respect. The first thing the newcomers in Smith's book ask for is a cup of tea. Smithy calls them afterwards: *“Poor deluded fools”* (p. 69), but does not warn them. What the women newcomers expected was to be on probation for a month, to drive beside another woman and learn everything step by step. Since there was never time for this, they could either adjust themselves or go home, which was the least option for them to choose. With their arrival the process of the loss of their womanliness began. The code of conduct that had been expected of ladies at home slowly vanished. Smithy reluctantly cuts her hair very short like a boy's owing to the ever-present dirt and lice: *“Tosh*

thinks it will become quite a universal fashion, but I don't agree. It isn't feminine enough. Women will never adopt a mode that isn't essentially feminine" (p. 148). Even though she does not realize it or even admit it, she undergoes a transformation. She also starts using a language filled with strong, vulgar expletives because of the contact with the blaspheming soldiers. She knows well that her mother would be outraged at her new vocabulary: "*We, who once blushed at the public mention of childbirth, now discuss such things as casually as once we discussed the latest play*" (p. 165). She even humiliatingly calls the wounded soldiers 'things', suggesting that they cannot be regarded as living creatures any longer. The known feminine world ends with this war. The corruption of feminine innocence took place instead. Many women showed heroism, mobilized together with soldiers, performing a common duty, sharing the same risks, the same war but it deprived women of their femininity and taught them masculinity. Smithy's job, driving a vehicle and fastidious care of the engines, is a typical masculine matter as well. Nonetheless, there are some masculine army-like duties both heroes have very much in common.

Both women and men had their daily routine thoroughly scheduled. Men in *All Quiet on the Western Front* had to be awake and ready by dawn; women in *Not So Quiet* had to be ready for a roll-call at 7.30 AM precisely. Men had shifts on their 'stand to'; women could take a rest after lunch but had to 'stand by' in case of emergency. They both perform their duties automatically like robots. Paul describes: "*If we were not automata at that moment we would continue lying there, exhausted, and without will. But we are swept forward again, powerless, madly savage and raging*" (p. 43). They had to behave like machines in order not to think or feel anything. He further adds: "*Momentarily we have the two things a soldier needs for contentment: good food and rest. ... It is all a matter of habit – even the frontline*" (p. 52). The soldiers had to become kind of stultified. Smithy experiences similar situations when she drives her ambulance: "*Brake off. Clutch out. Gear. Gas. I am not doing it – its doing itself somehow*" (p. 154) and "*... no wonder we go a bit mad off duty ... don't know what you're doing half your time*" (p. 199). Her moves are co-ordinated by mechanization in order to disencumber herself from the moaning and shrieking passengers she has to drive. They both also had to deal with sleep deprivation, lack of food, wicked and cold weather, bully from their superior and fleas. The differences start to reflect in the surroundings in which they both live.

Paul, as a noise-making fighter, is compelled to the everyday state of being quiet in the trenches while waiting for an attack. To be obedient, hidden and to sit mutely had always

been a feminine matter of life. On the other hand, Smithy, as a silent woman accustomed to domestic peace, is forced to perform masculine duties, and drives her ambulance in the open spaces among exploding and deafening air-raid bombs accompanied by the screaming and blaspheming wounded soldiers. Their roles exchanged and each experiences the war through the body of the other. Paul and his comrades lose their masculinity and become rather feminized, whereas the ambulance drivers become masculinized. The word 'Quiet' in both titles represents the unexpected difference in their experience. All is quiet in Paul's trenches most of the time and there is nothing so quiet on the Smithy's ways to hospitals at all. Moreover, the ways the books are written also denote the feeling of noise and quietness. *Not So Quiet* is composed of disjointed sentences and the text is full of ellipses marking the chaos and jeopardy in which Smithy has to live. *All Quiet on the Western Front* is contrarily comprised of a complete and smooth text. The tension in battles is described by short percussive sentences. Also the narrative often slips to nearly romantic descriptions. Paul's feminization is also distinguishable from the subplots in which he often describes the surroundings, for example his hometown or flying butterflies: "*Around us stretches the flowery meadow. The grasses sway their tall spears; the white butterflies flutter around and float on the soft warm wind of the late summer*" (p. 4). He notices things a woman would rather notice. Also, the romantic comradeship intensifies the feminization:

In a half sleep I watch Kat dip and raise the ladle. I love him, his shoulders, his angular, stooping figure – and at the same time I see behind him woods and stars, and a clear voice utters words that bring me peace, to me, a soldier in big boots, belt, and knapsack, taking the road that lies before him under the high heaven, quickly forgetting and seldom sorrowful, for ever pressing on under the wide night sky (p. 36).

Such strong but yet gentle relations are not so fully developed among the ambulance drivers. Women, unlike the soldiers, had to drive unaccompanied and alone, which made them more self-reliant and courageous, for at nights they had to drive with their lights turned off in case of air-raids. Furthermore, when Paul and Albert are wounded and are being transported to hospital, Paul needs to use a toilet. He feels utterly embarrassed to tell the nurse: "*I am in mortal terror at this turn, for I haven't any idea what the things are called professionally*" (p. 93). He does not realize that the nurse has already seen and experienced far worse things. When she finds out his need, he is astounded by her calm bearing: "*Shocking business! I sweat like a pig and answer her shyly ...*" (p. 93). His bashful behaviour reminds again of a feminine one, whereas the nurse here represents the serene man. Paul's first sexual experience is also accompanied by typically feminine feelings:

But I – I am lost in remoteness, in weakness, and in a passion to which I yield myself trustingly. My desires are strangely compounded of yearning and misery. I feel giddy, there is nothing here that a man can hold on to. We have left our boots at the door, they have given us slippers instead, and now nothing remains to recall for me the assurance and self-confidence of the soldier; no rifle, no belt, no tunic, no cap. I let myself drop into the unknown, come what may – yet, in spite of all, I feel somewhat afraid (p. 56).

Stripped of his uniform, which gives him the feeling of a bold and fearless doer, he feels as coy and vulnerable as a woman. His masculine personality fades away again.

The soldiers in Remarque's novel are observant like women; they hear, smell, can find food and depict vividly the world around them. The two main heroines in Smith's novel, Smithy and Tosh, are pert and clownish, they sing, joke, and curse like men. The use of names in both books is also a depiction of the body exchange. In *Not So Quiet* women use their nicknames rather than their first names, which shows that the reader would not know the person's sex if the names stood on their own. To illustrate this point, there are nicknames such as Smithy, Tosh, B. F., The Bug, Skinny, Misery, Cheery, and Blimey. In *All Quiet on the Western Front* the soldiers use simply their names – Paul, Tjaden, Albert, Haie, etc. and rarely use their surnames. The war itself had other life-changing psychological effects which are described below.

People had to mainly deal with a lot of human feelings which are not only unavoidable under such circumstances but also limiting under the war conditions. As mentioned above, war is the embodiment of courage and bravery. On the contrary, both heroes have to cope with the feelings of fear and cowardice. Paul considers cowardice as an act of high treason. When Corporal Himmelstoss is hiding during a battle in a dug out, pretending to be wounded, Paul gets angered and does not know his manners even though Himmelstoss used to be Paul's senior: "*You lump, will you get out – you hound, you skunk, sneak out of it, would you? ... You cow, you swine*" (p. 50). Paul gets very upset with him because there are younger recruits who fight and are braver than him. Paul himself has to face cowardice when he gets lost in No Man's Land and wounds a French soldier. He is not doing well and acts as a senseless man because this is his first man he has to kill in a hand-to-hand fight. Through long hours and days while watching the French soldier dying, he succumbs the sense of guilt and promises the dead French soldier impossible - that he would write his wife or become a printer as he was. When he gets back to the trenches, he comes to his senses and forgets about the dead man very soon. No Man's Land was such a terrible place to be in that it seized all good qualities of the soldiers and made them behave in a way, which they otherwise despised.

Smithy, on the other hand, admits without scruples that she is a coward: *"I am the type that should have stayed at home ... I have no guts. It takes every ounce of will-power I possess to stick to my post when I see the train rounding the bend. I choke my sickness back into my throat, and grip the wheel, and tell myself it is all a horrible nightmare"* (p. 89). She is in denial of what she sees in order to keep performing her duty. The only heroine out there is, according to her, brave Tosh who is later hit by a bomb during an air-raid and dies. Smithy wishes that either their commandant, Mrs. Bitch, or she alone was in her place: *"Tosh the brave, the splendid, the great-hearted. Tosh is dead. And I, the coward, the funk, the white-livered ... I am alive"* (p. 160), which makes her very brave and self-scarifying.

As was already mentioned, WWI affected people in innumerable ways. These psychological effects on people were evinced already during the war. Their consequences were further deepened when coming home - back to the normal life. The war experience led mainly to disillusionment, loss of faith, changes in the views on future, and last but not least the disruption of mental condition.

The war made the young generation grow older incredibly fast. Smithy whines: *"I am flat. Old. I am twenty-one and old as the hills. Emotion-dry. The war has drained me dry of feeling. Something has gone from me that will never return"* (p. 169). At the age of twenty-one every young girl would be enjoying her carefree and light-hearted life, looking for love of her life. But Smithy knows she will not be able to cheer so easily anymore. Although she finds the love of her life when she is on her sick leave after Tosh's death and starts to feel *"happy, happy, happy"* (p. 191), she inevitably loses this mood after coming back to France to continue doing her bit. Unlike Paul, Smithy possibly survives the war but her soul dies at the end of the story when she, as the only woman out of forty, survived an air-raid. This 'death' is intensified by the change of the first person narrative into the third person:

Her body was untouched, her heart beat calmly, the blood coursed as ever through her veins. But looking deep into those emotionless eyes one wondered if they had suffered much before the soul had left them. Her face held an expression of resignation, as though she had ceased to hope that the end might come (p. 239).

The bird-eye description resembles a dead body. Smithy seems to yield while undertaking her second war work. She reminds of a mindless puppet mastered by the war. She is probably out of her mind as she admits in her last sentence: *"I have never felt less hysterical in my life"* (p. 239). Paul also carries the signs of aging: *"I am young, I am twenty years old; yet I know nothing of life but despair, death, fear, and fatuous superficiality cast over an abyss of*

sorrow” (p. 99) and “*Youth! We are none of us more than twenty years old. But young? Youth? That is long ago. We are old folk*” (p. 8). Had Paul survived the war, his life would be doomed as well because, according to him, he has nothing to return to. The older soldiers have “*wives, children, occupations, and interests, they have a background which is so strong that the war cannot obliterate it*” (p. 8). These elders can be able to perceive the war as an interruption in their lives if they survive. Paul, on the other hand, is aware of having only his parents who would never be able to support him because of the already mentioned estrangement. For having been only a student, he has not managed to do anything in his life yet. In other words, he feels miserable. The war took the option of living his life from him. Paul realizes that he does not know much neither about life nor about what he should make for living afterwards: “*Through the years our business has been killing, it was our first calling in life. Our knowledge of life is limited to death*” (p. 99). Paul manifests his disillusionment already at the beginning of the story: “*It [earlier life] has become so unreal to me I cannot comprehend it any more. Our early life is cut off from the moment we came here, and that without our lifting a hand*” (p. 8). He knows from the very first moment that this reality is dissimilar to his previous childish way of life. It is a severe disruption in a young adolescent man’s life. If he ever lived to return home, he would be definitely a part of the lost generation. There is a brainstorming discussion on the topic about future among the soldiers of various ages and the ideas and opinions differ a lot. Albert claims pessimistically: „*There won’t be any peace-time*” (p. 29) but then he, in agreement with Kropp, admits that the first thing he would do is to get drunk. They simply cannot think of anything better waiting for them at home. Another soldier Haie gets excited and affirms jovially: “*I’d grab some good buxom dame, some real kitchen wench with plenty to get hold of, you know, and jump straight into bed... I wouldn’t put trousers on again for a week*” (p. 29). After quite a thinking he changes his mind and comes to realize that it would not be as easy as he thinks to return to such a normal life: “*I’d stay with the Prussians and serve out my time*” (p. 30). The war had such a psychological effect on this soldier that he is not even able to imagine his life without it. None of them mentions simply coming back to their families which might seem to be the easiest way, however, the soldiers know that would be the most difficult option. Smithy seems to be rather pessimistic as well:

What will they expect of us, these elders of ours, when the killing is over and we return? Once we were not allowed out after night fall unchaperoned; now we can drive the whole night through a deserted countryside with a man – provided he is in khaki and our orders are to drive him. Will these elders try to return us to our conventional pre-war habits? What will they say if we laugh at them, as we are bound? (p. 165).

She is aware of the fact that after acquiring the habit of taking what they can from life, the strict, unresisting life back home seems to be ridiculous to her. She also reflects on the younger generation: “*young things raised in a blood-and-hate atmosphere – I see them hard and callous and cold...*” (p. 166). She knows she will be surrounded by people of various generations who will never understand her: “*We – war products... feared by the old ones and resented by the young ones ... a race of men bodily maimed and of women mentally maimed*” (p. 167). Both heroes have to worry about their future as if dealing with their own present lives at that moment was not burdensome enough at that moment.

5 Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to analyse and compare the men's and women's WWI experience from two works of literature, namely *All Quiet on the Western Front* by Erich Maria Remarque and *Not So Quiet* by Helen Zenna Smith. The analysis and subsequent comparison of these books contributed to below described findings.

The extreme pessimism of the rest of the century stems from the cruelty of WWI, in which all rising expectations were drastically lowered. WWI was a crucial event that undermined the Europe's self-esteem. It destroyed the old political order created by the German, Austro-Hungarian and Russian Empires. Nevertheless, the more devastating impact was rather psychological. Four years of engagement in terrible trench warfare beyond description, in which tens of thousands were dying daily, proved the ideas of technological progress false. Virtues such as fidelity, diligence, stamina and patriotism lost their value. The brutal and merciless killing of people en masse discredited the bourgeois world. Cognizance of the fact that the industrial progress can be easily turned into immoral and groundless war lead to a bitter loss of the meaning of war, which had always been perceived as a good thing for the country.

From the bourgeois virtues, patriotism was the one that suffered most. The war changed all who served it. The war used its servants mercilessly for its own objectives, thus men and women were no longer able to understand the true meaning of war. This feeling was more likely to be sensed by women because they saw the difference more clearly – the difference between their cosy homes and field hospitals was enormous. Some women even ceased perceiving soldiers as performing the most honourable occupation. Nevertheless, this loss of patriotism did not concern the civilians who did not see the real atrocities of the war. As a result, family relationships were weakened owing to lack of understanding and consolation. Men and women sought for comprehension among their co-workers who became their best friends. The comradeship became very close and intimate. They did not have to necessarily talk about what they were going through. They together were going through adventures as well, meeting people of the opposite sex. Accordingly, both men and women very often had their first sexual experience in order to take their mind off the war. This action was rather unthinkable of the time before the marriage. People thus became more candid and open-minded because they realized that life is too short.

The differences in the experience appeared in the particular surroundings in which both men and women were located. The trenches feminized the soldiers due to their everyday status of being quiet, obedient, and hidden, which had always been qualities of a good housewife. Conversely, women were masculinized due to their masculine responsibilities such as driving ambulances and care of engines. Yet, both were performing their duty until the end, whatever the end was.

The women's war was the war that happened after the man's war. Even though women were mainly volunteering in order to pursue their own feminine interests, it helped them to their emancipation and independence. Volunteering in France was perceived as an exotic travel abroad. In the end, women fought masculine war just like the army soldiers. They voluntarily helped within the meaning of 'doing something finally useful'. They had never worked this hard before; they were in charge of new duties, worked late into the nights, and had to struggle with lack of sleep. Also, the mysteries of the other sex were abruptly unveiled so diffidence vanished in the course of time. Women proved they are useful even in the most dangerous places. Nonetheless, women only saw the saddest of realities, they did not have to fight or kill other people, and thus they only saw the other side of the picture.

Both men and women witnessed mangled soldiers who were slowly dying and begged to be put out of misery. Due to such dreadful experiences they lost the faith in goodness, in which they were brought up. Many such people were no longer able to understand the point of an ordinary family life. The bleakness of the war was to the utmost soul-destroying. However, as it turned out, WWI was only a portent of new forms of the worst evil in the world.

Resumé

Cílem této práce je porovnání mužských a ženských válečných zkušeností z první světové války u hlavních hrdinů knih *Na západní frontě klid* od Ericha Marii Remarqua a *Not so quiet* od Helen Zenny Smithové, která napsala svoji knihu jako reakci na Remarqueův román *Na západní frontě klid*. Práce v teoretické části nejprve popisuje způsob života v Evropě před válkou, načež se pozornost zužuje k západní Evropě. V dalších kapitolách je vylíčena každodennost jak obyčejných civilistů, tak i vojáků v zákopech a dobrovolných zdravotních sester během první světové války. Praktická část analyzuje válečné zkušenosti hlavních hrdinů obou již zmíněných knih.

První světová válka ovlivnila v neskutečném měřítku celou Evropu. Život v předválečné Evropě byl vcelku různorodý. Byla to doba buržoazního rozkvětu a hospodářského rozmachu. Například mezi lety 1800 a 1914 se populace Anglie zpětinásobila, v Německu a Itálii ztrojnásobila, kdežto ve Francii se sotva zdvojnásobila. Industrializace byla v plném rozmachu. Británie byla ekonomickou světovou velmocí číslo jedna a Německo ji začalo pomalu dohánět. Británie dovážela ze svých kolonií spoustu nových a exotických výrobků jako je čaj, kakao, ale i opium, jež si lidé mohli kupovat za poměrně levný peníz. Lidé všeobecně začali získávat více osobních práv a někteří si žili dokonce lépe než kdy před tím. Hnutí za lidská práva se začala rozšiřovat do všech států. Ženy začaly bojovat za svá práva a rovnoprávné možnosti. Industrializace ovšem prohloubila rozdíly mezi vyššími a nižšími vrstvami. Někteří lidé díky ní bohatli a někteří ztráceli svá zaměstnání, jelikož v masové produkci nezbylo pro drobná venkovská řemesla místo. Kvůli tomu se lidé začali stěhovat z venkova do měst, někteří ovšem podnikli mnohem drastičtější kroky a emigrovali. Politici se pokoušeli využít nově vzniklých mas ve svůj prospěch. V reakci na industrializaci tak vznikl např. socialismus a také odbory. Skrz celou Evropu státy započaly s mobilizací a civilisté podleli patriotické hysterii, národy tak začaly nedůvěřovat jeden druhému. Válka a radikální změny v životě všech lidí se nevyhnutelně blížily.

Jakmile válka vypukla, očekávalo se, že skrz celou Evropu proběhne ohromná vlna patriotického nadšení. Radostné davy lidí se shromažďovaly na náměstích v Londýně, Paříži, Berlíně a dalších velkoměstech. Ovšem toto shromažďování bylo spíše způsobeno tím, že tyto veřejné plochy byly nejhlavnějším místem zdrojů informací z první ruky. Objevil se tak mýtus válečného nadšení roku 1914. Tento entuziasmus byl zejména podpořen tiskem a kdo se snažil tvrdit opak, byl umlčen. Patriotické davy byly tak pouze městským fenoménem, lidé

z venkova považovali válku pouze za narušení jejich poklidných životů a mobilizaci považovali za nesmyslnou nutnost. Reakce na vypuknutí války se tak neprojevovala jako národní charakteristika jednotlivých států, ale odlišovala se v jednotlivých osobnostech. Někteří se radovali, jelikož očekávali uvolnění napětí a nejistoty v Evropě, jiní byli fanaticky patriotičtí a ostatní byli vylekaní, nervózní, pesimističtí a zdráhající se věřit, že by něco dobrého z této války vzešlo.

Civilisté ale vždycky všeobecně věřili v dobro války. Průběh jakékoliv války byl doposud takový, že muži odkráčeli do bojů, někteří padli za vlast a zbytek se vrátil příští jaro domů a oslavovalo se. Válka ovšem vypukla a lidé zažívali bezprecedentní pohromu svých životů. Nebylo proto divu, že ti, kteří projevíli nadšení v počátečních měsících první světové války, jej ztratili v letech 1915 a 1916. Předem zidealizovaná válka se stala realitou. Stagnující a příliš dlouhotrvající válka nebylo to, co entuziasté očekávali. Civilisté museli bojovat za své vlastní přežití, jídla byl ohromný nedostatek a práce byla vyčerpávající. Muži i ženy se museli válce přizpůsobit a naučit se v ní žít. Museli se začlenit do jejího prostředí, přizpůsobit tak své kulturní zvyklosti i politické sny.

Muži vojáci se mezitím museli taktéž aklimatizovat v nepříznivých podmínkách zákopů. Každodenní rutina byla naplněna nudou a různými nepříjemnostmi. Během dne se vojáci snažili odpočívat, jelikož na každé straně fronty měli hlídku na starost odstřelovači. Útok jako takový se objevil velice zřídka. Životní podmínky v zákopech připomínaly peklo na zemi. Neskutečný zápach nemytých vojáků, smrti a hniloby, přeplněných záchodů míchajících se se zbytky jedovatých plynů, cigaretového kouře a oděru jídel se linul ze všech koutů. Zákopy tak moc páchly, že nově příchozím vojákům se často udělalo nevolno od žaludku. Zákopy byly v zimě velice chladné a často zaplavené vodou a bahnem. Tyto podmínky vedly k extrémně bolestivé infekci nohou, jež způsobila to, že mnoha vojákům musely být i části končetin amputovány. Špína způsobovala taktéž výskyt vši a krys, jež byly neuvěřitelně přemnožené. Byla to nikdy nekončící potíže, muži se museli neustále drbat a bojovat s přerostlými krysami o své jídlo. Vojáci se snažili ulehčit svůj život čtením, zpěvem či psaním dopisů svým rodinám. Někdy se i vojáci zabavovali vyrýváním ornamentů do zbytků vybuchlých bomb.

Jelikož téměř celá generace mužů odešla do války, ženy zažívaly nebývalou šanci se osamostatnit a uzpůsobit tak zažitý tradiční koncept ženskosti. Tato změna ovšem neprobíhala zdaleka tak lehce, jelikož tehdejší společnost byla zarytě konzervativní ohledně ženských rolí. Tak se objevily se sufražetkami i antisufražetky. Bylo založeno mnoho jednotlivých

organizací pro podporu válečných prací. Ženy se snažily dychtivě provádět náborů mužů, jež se zdráhali nastoupit do války. Ti, kteří odmítli či nemohli, byli společensky téměř odsouzeni a ženy jimi opovrhovaly. Některé opovrhovaly dokonce i těmi muži, jež se vrátili z fronty zmrzačení, jelikož nepadli za svoji vlast. Do dobrovolných činností se nejvíce hlásily ženy z vyšších vrstev, protože se nemusely starat o svoji rodinu. S příchodem na frontu či poblíž ní jejich nadšení rázem opadlo. Nikdy totiž nemusely žít v takové špíně, zápachu a poslouchat neustále klení bolestí se trápících vojáků. Role sester zahrnovala zejména práce jako pletení obvazů, vedení kantýn a převážení zraněných. Ošetřování vojáků měly na starost pouze ženy zkušené ve zdravotnictví.

Hlavním cílem praktické části této práce není porovnat, či zkušenost byla horší a obtížnější, zda-li mužů či žen. Cíl je nastolit a analyzovat hlavní fakta, jimiž si oba hrdinové obou knih museli projít, a do jaké míry je válka změnila. Práce popisuje hlavní motivy, např. záležitosti patriotismu, rodiny a přátelství, sexuální emancipaci, změnu mužskosti a ženskosti a také psychologické následky z života v této válce.

Význam války jako takové se vždy točil kolem mužských hodnot jako je odvaha, hrdinství, sebeobětování a čest. S příchodem první světové války se tato mužná hrdinská formule pozměnila. Přístup k válce se změnil, patriotické nadšení postupně ochabovalo a lidé začali pociťovat hořkost a utrpení. Muži i ženy začali zpochybňovat pravý význam války, začali přemýšlet nad tím, v co je mění. Téměř všechny ženy po tom, co ve válce doopravdy viděly a zažily, přišly o své nadšení, s jakým se do válečných prací zapojily. Smithy, hlavní hrdinka *Not So Quiet*, jako protest vůči válce dokonce spálila svoji drahou a cennou uniformu, ve které sloužila ve Francii.

Civilisté, v knihách zejména rodiče, se všeobecně moc nestarali o to, jakými hrůzami a terorem si musely jejich děti projít. Stačilo jim, aby věděli, že jejich děti sloužili vlasti. Tak se Smithyovým jediným nepřítelem stala její matka, která nikdy nedokázala pochopit, o čem tato válka vlastně je. Podnázev knihy *Not So Quiet* je *Nevlastní dcery války*, jež naznačuje rozhořčení nad rodiči, kteří selhali ve svých rodičovských povinnostech. Válka samotná se stala nevlastní matkou synů a dcer všech národů. Matkou, která své děti nemilosrdně využila pro své vlastní záměry, tak jako Smithyina matka.

Jelikož děti nemohly hledat pochopení a útěchu u svých rodičů, kteří nikdy nepoznali pravou tvář války, musely hledat útočiště někde jinde. To našly u svých přátel, kteří zažívali stejná muka jako ony samy. Přátelství v zákopech řešilo tento společenský problém, jelikož

vojáci rozuměli jeden druhému, a to bez zbytečných slov. Muži věděli, že jeden bez druhého by neměli šanci přežít, proto se společné přežití stalo jejich jediným cílem. Válka jako taková pro ně ztratila smysl. Kamarádství se pro ně stalo velice důvěrné a jedinečné. Tak blízké vztahy si ženy ovšem nikdy nevytvořily. Pochopily také, jak důležité toto přátelství je, ovšem využívaly je spíše pro vypořádání se s válkou. Dovolilo jim otevřeně mluvit o změnách, jež musely podstoupit, jako například ztráty morálních hodnot.

Na ženách bylo zřetelně vidět, že v této válce být nechtějí. Vyvstává tak otázka, proč se v první řadě vůbec dobrovolně zapsaly. Smithy vysvětluje, že pravý cíl bylo sloužit své zemi kvůli svým vlastním ženským zájmům - jako například zbavit se nudy a vyhledat nějaké dobrodružství, nebo kvůli své lásce či za účelem najít si lásku svého života. Tato naivní představa jim ovšem umožnila změnit svoji ženskost, protože domů se vrátit nemohly, jelikož by se jim všichni vysmívali, že ve válce moc dlouho nevydržely. Tak díky válce ženy zmužněly, jelikož jejich práce byly typicky mužské záležitosti – např. řízení aut a údržba motorů vozidel.

Na druhou stranu Paul, typický hlučný muž, je donucen ke každodennímu sezení a schovávání se v zákopech před nepřítelem. Být takto poslušný, tichý a schovaný byla vždycky typická záležitost žen v klidné domácnosti. Role mužů a žen se prohodily, muži i ženy prožívali válku skrz tělo toho druhého. Muži v zákopech ztratili svoji mužnost, ženy řídící sanitky uprostřed náletů ztratily svoji ženskost. Slovo „klid“ v obou názvech tak zastupuje tuto neočekávanou změnu v jejich zkušenostech. V Paulových zákopech je téměř všechno klidné, kdežto nic klidného na Smithyových cestách do nemocnic vůbec není.

Válka tak moc zasáhla všechen lid, že i lidé sloužící jí si nedokázali představit život zpátky doma. Smithy i Paul se neochotně a neradostně vraceli domů. Oba se museli do války vrátit, ovšem Paul byl zastřelen, tudíž byl možná osvobozen od nuceného začleňování se zpátky do společnosti, jež bylo téměř tak těžké jako život v zákopech. Smithy válku nejspíše přežila, ale její duše utrpěla neskutečná muka a utrpení a na konci knihy je tak popsána smrt její duše. Smithy se tak vzdává a tuší, že již nikdy nebude schopná normálního života, který si kdy vysnila. Stala se tak loutkou bez duše, která udělá, co se jí řekne.

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