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Critical Analysis of War through Robert Graves's Good-Bye to All That and Julian Barnes's Staring at the Sun

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Abstract

Good-Bye to All That and Staring at the Sun are commonly known as ones of the famous post-war novels that pinpoint the disastrous and indelible events that affect the peaceful atmosphere during world wars. Even though, it is the fruit of Barnes and Robert's imagination, these novels shed light on the consequences of World War I and World War II, starting from wounds, loss of lives to the destruction of social environment and public places. Both Robert Graves and Julian Barnes use different narrative styles to relate the facts. While Robert prefers a direct account of events, Barnes's Staring at the Sun is a more complex novel that requires readers' imaginative skills to better understand some facts that have been extremely reshaped by the narrator. Anyway, one could easily understand that Barnes has made an in-depth account of the World War II, giving more details about dates of attacks. From the first novel to the second, it is obvious that the period of world war I and World War II are the saddest period characterised by unending bomb attacks and lack of peace in the whole world. Life and death become close friends so that one's destiny may change in a couple of minutes. To achieve my goal, qualitative method has been applied with a special glance at Good-Bye to All That by Robert Grave and Julian Barnes's Staring at the Sun. Thus, reading these works through the lenses of new historicism and structuralism help to penetrate the two authors' fictional world. The results show that war leads to an uncountable number of deaths, destroys social atmosphere and creates economic crisis.

Keywords: *War, Death, Social Environment, Bombing, Psychoanalytic Theory.*

Introduction

The period of 1914 to 1918 is a remarkable period of world's history that cannot be erased from people's mind. The effect of World War I (1914-1918) on the United Kingdom was enormous, creating many changes on British society, politics, and the economy. The war increased opportunities for women in the workforce and shifts in political attitudes, ultimately contributing to the expansion of suffrage. The conflict also had a major impact on the British economy requiring increased state intervention and industrial mobilization, while creating new challenges in the post-war period. Even if people have faced worse than that during World War II, the sudden change from a climate of confidence to the climate of terror did not end up without leaving its fingerprints. Among a wide range of novels that tackle the question of war, there is Robert Grave's *Good-Bye to All That*. This comprehensive autobiographical work published in 1929 vividly recounts Graves' early life, encompassing his upbringing in England and his transformative experiences as a young officer during World War I. The narrative provides a gritty and realistic portrayal of trench warfare, delving into the physical and psychological challenges faced by soldiers on the front lines. Graves explores the camaraderie among soldiers, portraying the bonds forged amidst the harsh realities of war.

Meanwhile, war is viewed as the opposite of peace, referring to the state of violence, the lack of tranquillity and harmony. From the first chapter of this novel, one could draw the mind mapping of war around the following terms: gun, bombing, killed, military force, injury, destruction and more. As well as Robert Graves, Julian Barnes depicts war as a period when the whole world was under oppression, stigmatised and shaking to escape bombing attacks. In *Staring at the Sun*, he does not hesitate to present the disastrous aftermath of the war, starting from the thousands of people who have been killed to the innumerable ones who have been wounded. He goes further, underlining the fantastic and excellent job done by women who volunteered to rescuing the wounded and feeding people including military forces. The common point

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welding both of them together is their vivid depiction of the war socio-economic consequences for people to scrutinise its fallouts.

Therefore, the present study intends to evaluate the socio-economic drawbacks of war as depicted in Robert Graves's *Good-bye to All That* and Julian Barnes's *Staring at the Sun.* As the study does not focus on statistical analysis, qualitative method has been applied with Robert's novel and Julian Barnes's *Staring at the Sun* as primary sources. Moreover, data from existing literature on the issue including books, articles, and previous dissertations have been collected and processed so as to improve the quality of this research work. Literary theories like psychoanalytic theory and new historicism have been applied as relevant theories to gain much better understanding of the novels.

Background of the Study

Context

Behind every fictional or semi-fictional work lie real historical and emotional truths that inform and motivate the narrative. Historical context, therefore, plays a pivotal role in shaping literary productions. This is particularly evident in Robert Graves's *Good-Bye to All That* published in 1929 and Julian Barnes's *Staring at the Sun* published in 1986, two works that, though distinct in form and tone, both critically reflect on war and its broader implications on individual identity, collective memory, and societal values.

Graves's *Good-Bye to All That* is a striking memoir rooted in lived experience. Published in 1929, an unforgettable period of history, it is a little bit difficult to separate the novel from real life experience. First and foremost, the main character of the novel is an accurate representation of Robert. Serving as an officer in World War I with the Royal Welch Fusiliers, Graves was severely wounded in the Battle of the Somme. The horrors and disillusionment of war profoundly affected him, and these experiences are candidly reflected in his memoir. The book serves not just as a personal war account but also as a symbolic farewell to pre-war ideals and the moral certainties of Edwardian England. As the title suggests, Graves parts ways with traditional values, exposing the brutality, trauma, and absurdity of the war and its aftermath. His narrative moves beyond the battlefield to examine how the war reshaped his beliefs, his sense of self, and his view of British society.

A central theme is Graves' critical examination of the war's impact on his identity and worldview. His memoir is notable for its honest, introspective tone and its subtle irony, characteristics that align him with the "War Poets" a group that used literature to critique the romanticized portrayal of war. The narrative unfolds as a farewell to established societal norms and values, as suggested by the title. In fact, Graves reflects on the disillusionment and trauma that led him to reject conventional expectations, creating a poignant and introspective account of the profound changes brought about by the war. The memoir is not confined to the war narrative; it extends to a nuanced exploration of the author's evolving beliefs, societal norms, and the broader implications of historical events. Graves' writing style combines honesty, introspection, and a touch of irony, making *Good-Bye to All That* a significant contribution to both autobiographical and war literature, offering readers a profound and multifaceted understanding of the author's life and the turbulent times in which he lived.

In contrast, Julian Barnes, born in 1946 after the end of World War II, was not a direct participant in the war. Nonetheless, the shadow of the war and its cultural aftermath significantly shape his literary universe. In his work, Barnes frequently examines how historical events, particularly wars, continue to influence personal identity, memory, and human understanding long after the actual events have passed. He is deeply concerned with how individuals interpret and re-interpret history, and how these interpretations become integrated into personal narratives. Barnes was born in 1946, after the end of World War II. While not a participant, the war's legacy and its impact on individuals and society are recurring themes in his work. He examines the tension between personal experiences and the broader historical forces that shape collective identity and experience. In essence, while Julian Barnes didn't live through the war years, he grapples with the war's lasting impact on society and individuals through his writing, exploring themes of memory, history,

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and the human condition. Barnes frequently explores how individuals remember and interpret historical events, and how these interpretations shape their understanding of themselves and their place in the world.

In *Staring at the Sun*, Barnes approaches the theme of war not through combat but through its imprint on civilian life and consciousness. The novel traces the life of Jean Serjeant from the 1920s through to the year 2020. Her encounter with a fighter pilot, Tommy Prosser, during World War II becomes a pivotal moment, prompting reflections on mortality, truth, and the fragility of existence. Rather than focusing on battlefields, Barnes delves into the philosophical and existential questions that arise from war's presence in everyday life. The war becomes a backdrop for deeper meditations on human resilience, memory, and the shifting nature of truth.

While Graves offers a direct critique of the war based on firsthand experience, Barnes presents a more reflective, post-war perspective that interrogates how war is remembered, mythologized, and internalized across generations. Both authors, though writing from different historical standpoints, share a commitment to unveiling the deeper psychological and societal impacts of war. Their works highlight the enduring influence of armed conflict not just on those who fight, but on those who live in its long shadow.

In this context, a critical analysis of war through *Good-Bye to All That* and *Staring at the Sun* allows for a layered exploration of trauma, memory, identity, and the evolving human response to conflict both immediate and inherited.

Problem Statement

Although World War I ended in 1918, violence, conflicts, and episodes of destruction persist worldwide. The destructive potential of war did not end with the Great War; rather, many twentieth- and twenty-first-century conflicts including World War II and the ongoing Ukraine–Russia war have shown that war continues to devastate societies. These modern wars underscore how war's aftermath extends far beyond any single conflict and remains a central concern of contemporary literature.

World War II serves as a dramatic case in point. It saw far higher civilian casualties and greater infrastructural collapse than World War I, with global consequences that leagues the earlier war in scale and scope. It demonstrated a universal truth: as long as warfare continues, its effects death, displacement, trauma, and economic collapse remain relevant subject matter for writers across generations.

The ongoing Ukraine–Russia war (2022–present) similarly highlights this recurrence. Recent June 2025 missile strikes on Kyiv killed dozens and injured more than 130 civilians in a single night. Overall, estimates indicate that hundreds of thousands possibly more than a million soldiers and civilians have been killed or wounded in the conflict. Beyond tragic loss of life, the war has inflicted economic hardship, displacement, and infrastructural ruin across Ukraine and Russia. These realities underscore both the tragedy and timeliness of investigating war's multifaceted impacts today.

Why this Matters and Why Now

- Literary engagement with contemporary crises: Society continues to live under the shadow of war. As scholars contend, literature remains a powerful means to process fear, grief, and political division and to advocate for peace and policy reform.

- Economic fallout as a critical dimension: War doesn't end with the cessation of gunfire it dismantles economies, drains public wealth, and leaves nations grappling with reconstruction and debt. Any meaningful study of war must address these long-term economic consequences.

- Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, while set after World War I, remains relevant to this study. Its exploration of love, disillusionment, and the sense that war undermines moral and social certainties mirrors themes addressed by Graves and Barnes, bridging past and present.

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By drawing on these sources and contemporary events, this research situates *Good-Bye to All* and *That*, *Staring at the Sun* within an ongoing literary and historical dialogue about war a dialogue that is as urgent today as ever. This research raises the problem of war and destruction, with a special emphasis not only on the social effects of wars but also on its economic consequences.

Significance of Study

This research work holds considerable value for scholars, students, and general readers interested in how literature interrogates war; specifically, it:

- Provides a reference point for overlapping and contrasting visions of war: By examining Robert Graves's firsthand account in *Good-Bye to All That* alongside Julian Barnes's reflective narrative in *Staring at the Sun*, this study illuminates distinct but complementary portrayals of war one emerging from direct experience, the other from subsequent memory and interpretation.

- Deepens understanding of war's psychological and societal impact: As existing scholarship shows, war literature reveals not just battlefield brutality but also enduring trauma, moral ambiguity, and shifts in identity. This study furthers that analysis, showing how Graves's work exemplifies disillusionment and literary critique of pre-war norms, while Barnes explores courage, mortality, and the philosophical aftershocks of conflict.

- Challenges glorified narratives of war: Both authors invite readers to question traditional ideals of heroism and valor. Barnes, for example, contends that "there was no courage without fear…" emphasizing endurance over battlefield heroics. By foregrounding fear and endurance, this study highlights how their works resist romanticized conventions.

- Highlights ethical and economic dimensions of conflict: Beyond psychological effects, the study addresses how war restructures societies not only through loss and trauma, but also via economic disruptions. This echoes broader war literature scholarship, which critiques how economic strain becomes part and parcel of war's legacy.

- Fosters critical and empathetic discourse: War literature prompts ethical reflection and empathy, encouraging readers to reconsider consensus around militarism. This research builds on that role, demonstrating how Graves and Barnes help balance the scales toward dialogue, memory, and humanism instead of glorified violence.

- Serves as a pedagogical tool: Designed for use in teaching contexts, this comparative analysis can support modules on war writing, modern memory, and trauma studies. It equips educators and students with a framework for exploring how narrative, form, and historical perspective shape war literature a field long recognized for its educational importance in fostering moral and critical awareness.

By addressing these dimensions, the research makes meaningful contributions to literary criticism, trauma and memory studies, and the broader cultural understanding of war. It underscores why narrative matters not only in remembering the past but in shaping how we respond to conflict today and in the future.

Theoretical and Methodological Framework

Theoretical Framework

To analyse war as depicted by Julian Barnes and Robert Graves in the novels under study, New Historicism appears as one of the adequate theories to be used. It helps to better understand contemporary fictional works. Also Known as Stephen Greenblatt's theory, Historicism underlines the influence of historical context on authors' works. Greenblatt has noticed that New Historicism *"is regarded by many to have influenced many traditional period of English literary history"* (Stephen Greenblatt), Greenblatt suggests that literature must

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be seen as a product of its social and historical context. It also examines the power relations of rulers and subjects, the haves and have-nots, employers and employees. It reveals the conflicting power relations that underline all human interaction and the way the oppressed struggle to attain self-confidence and independence, while the dominant group find other ways of maintaining power (Kofi Agyekum, p.216). In fact, David Graves' *Good-Bye to All That* has been seen as an autobiography and Graves is the main character. The author has completed his education at Charterhouse in 1914. Due to the war, he did not complete his college education until 1926 (bookrags).

Besides, in the view of structuralism critics, the notion of structure refers to the systems of signs that designate meaning (Kofi Agyekum, p.222). Even though signs are arbitrary in languages, they are conventionalised and that is why the names of particular objects change from society to society and the same name may refer to different objects and concepts in various languages (Di Yanni Robert, 2002). Charterhouse School is a metaphor for the oppressive British class system. Charterhouse School is an English independent school in the county of Surrey. Robert Graves completed most of his primary education at Charterhouse. His description of it presents it as a tradition-bound school where hazing was common and students' lives were often unpleasant (bookrags).

Thereby, *Staring at the Sun* by Julian Barnes could not be analysed without looking at the historical context in which the novel has been written. This theory is then chosen in order to go beyond the story and disclose the influence of contemporary realities on Barnes's fiction. Thanks to this theory, one could easily understand the meaning of some terminologies used in the novel. The WVS used by Barnes in the novel under study could not be easily understood without referring to the historical context during which the novel has been published. Written during the World War II, the WVS is the short form of Women volunteer service, used as symbol to emphasize women's efforts during the war.

Methodological Framework

In the frame this analysis, qualitative method has been applied with *Good-Bye to All That* by Robert Graves and *Staring at the Sun* by Julian Barnes as primary sources. These books have been chosen because of their originality. Extracts from these novels have been used as evidence to point out the consequences of wars in the UK. Out of these novels, data from other research articles have been collected and processed in order to improve the quality of this research.

Ways To Analyse War Through Julian Barnes's Staring at the Sun And Good-Bye to all That By Robert Graves

Symbolism In Julian Barnes's Staring at the Sun

Beyond simple words, Barnes uses symbolism as a way of expressing his ideas. While reading this novel, one could notice that some names, years, and places are not mentioned in vacuum. Most of them are used as symbols to point out some historical events or as reference to some association. Then, these years, places and words may be source of another investigation that may help to better understand the writer's work. Here are some.

- *June 1941 (Barnes 9)*

Julian Barnes begins his narration, introducing Sgt Thomas Prosser, the airman who is poaching over the north region of France on his way back to base in England. The narrator pinpoints that it was in June 1941. This date is used for a specific objective even if this objective is not mentioned in the novel. He could get rid of this date and the story would be well understood but he prefers to reveal this date because it is a memorable date in the history of the United Kingdom. Therefore, the main question that begs to be asked is: where was Sgt Thomas Prosser coming from? This question seems a little bit complicated to answer though the same chapter of the novel depicts how Prosser succeeds to escape to enemies attacks. Surely, he was back from battlefield.

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From fictional work to reality, research shows that June 1941 refers to the end of the Blitz. Started in October 7, 1940, this period of war and several attacks that affected British citizens' lives has ended on June 6, 1941. According to a recent publication on Historic England page, "almost 28000 explosive bombs and over 400 parachute mines were recorded landing on Greater London" (Tinkler 2). To wit, Julian Barnes's story has started at the end of the Blitz. He has mentioned this historical date not only to allow readers to follow the chronological order of events but also as symbol to highlight that the UK has just escaped from series of bomb attacks as mentioned blatantly on Historic England page: The Blitz effectively ended in June 1941 when Hitler removed his air forces from Western Europe to take part in the invasion of the Soviet Union (Tinkler 2).

Although, S*taring at the Sun* by Julian Barnes is a fictional work, it embraces some aspects of the real life, starting from the British puzzle during the Second World War to finish in contemporary period. To testify the originality of the previous source, one could get back to novel under study in order to find evidence that may truly show that this date marks the ends of the Blitz. For Instance, the narrator declares: Bomber would have skirted antiaircraft guns, declined the publicity of searchlights, dodged barrage balloons and night fighters; it would be steadying itself, the crew would be thinking of hot coffee fierce with chicory, the landing gear would crunch down and then would come the poacher's crafty retribution (Barnes 9).

The above extract shows eventually that British military forces are happy. After a long period of blitz, defending Hitler's air forces, they feel a little bit free because most of them could get back to base, breaking the unwanted fasting period and drink a hot coffee.

- *WVS*

In this novel, Barnes has used WVS as symbol to emphasise women's effort during the Second World War. According Tinkler, Women Volunteer Service (WVS) has been founded in 1938 before the starting of the Second World War (Tinkler 4). This organization gathers many British women who are willing to give extra hand to men. It is true that they did fight as men, but they have contributed a lot during the Second World War. Firstly, they have created static and mobile canteen to feed Dockers and those who have been affected by dangerous air raids sent in the town. According to Tinkler, women assist people in need, bringing clothes to evacuees. Apart from foods, Women Volunteer Service contributes to salvage and blood transfusion during the Second World War (4)

Underlining that Jean's mother has joined women Volunteer Service (WVS) is a way to show that women's efforts are not ignorable. That is why he has stressed up Jean's mother's repetitive absence at home. This shows indirectly that those brave women have done a great job without rest.

- *The Bomber*

The term bomber is used several times in this novel. Meanwhile, a bomber is not like biscuit that could be easily bought in the different markets. It is not like children's toys with which people could play. The bomber is a dangerous machine used by the narrator to symbolise war or violence. Behind the bomber, one could virtualize enemies who are sending bombs. As such, the bomber may be used as reference to the enemies of the second military camp who are attacking British military forces. To wit, bomber may be viewed as war planes .in charge of destructing, killing and shelling. When there is bomb shelling, probably there is war. When there is war, there is death and when there is death, there is sadness. Thousand British citizens are saddened by this barbaric attack. But who is attacking the UK? It may be Hitler because Barnes underlines that Prosser, as British military airman and his crew were in the position of defender (Barnes 9). Then, if Hitler had really removed his air forces from Western Europe as mention on Historic England page, the bomber obviously refers to Hitler's air forces.

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- *Munich (Barnes, 23)*

The names of some places have been symbolically mentioned in the novel under analysis. Most of them recall the shady moments of war. Without thinking too long, Munich reminds people of Munich conference. It also symbolises the union of three great powerful men even if it does not last longer. It refers to Munich conference of 1939 where the Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression pact has been signed by three great powers included: Italia represented by Mussolini, German represented by Hitler and his interpret and Great Britain represented by Neville chamberlain, the British prime minister of that era.

Symbolism in Robert Graves's Good-Bye to All That

Robert Graves harnesses a wide array of symbols in *Good-Bye to All That* to articulate the devastation of war, its emotional toll, and the collapse of pre-war certainties.

- *Rats as Decay and Disintegration*

Graves repeatedly invokes rats in the trenches to embody the pervasive death and degradation of trench warfare. He writes: *"Cuinchy-bred rats. They came up from the canal, fed on the plentiful corpses, and multiplied exceedingly"* (Graves 1929; Shiken).

These rats cut across national boundaries and thrive equally in British and German trenches symbols of the war's universal corruption (Shiken). Such recurring imagery conveys the breakdown of hygiene, morale, and meaning in the war zone.

- *Chemical Weapons as Moral Corruption*

Mustard gas described as "dirty" and "not soldierly" becomes a powerful emblem of warfare's moral decline (Sotheran 123). Graves's narrative of the improperly deployed gas at Loos highlights both technological failure and ethical collapse. Even after the war, he confesses to being haunted by phantom gas smells, indicating its lasting psychological footprint (Sotheran 130). Chemical warfare, therefore, is symbolic of modern war's inhumanity and residual trauma.

- *Trench Mortars and "Dud Shows" Futility and Chaos*

Graves labels some offensives "dud shows," a metaphor for the strategic absurdity and futility of trench assaults (Commentary). He recalls mortars filled with nuts, bolts, and even false teeth death made grotesque and impersonal (Course Hero). Weapons tailored to maim rather than kill underscore the grotesque theatricality of mass industrialized slaughter.

- *Mountaineering as Freedom and Loss*

Before the war, Graves enjoys mountaineering, describing it as an "ultimate freedom" (Course Hero). But after experiencing the trenches, he abandons the sport, admitting he "could never again now deliberately take chances with my life" (Wikipedia). This abandonment symbolizes the loss of youthful optimism and liberty, replaced by a pervasive fear and resignation.

- *Mis-Mourning and Chaos of Military Communication*

Graves was once mistakenly declared dead, a moment loaded with symbolic uncertainty: *"The wrongly mourned soldier"* reflects wartime errors and the collapse of reliable communication and social order (GradeSaver).

It epitomizes the broader theme of administrative chaos, where families grieve unnecessary losses and individuals vanish from record only to reappear a testament to the war's disorder.

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- *"Temporary Gentlemen" and Collapsing Hierarchies*

Graves ridicules the rushed commissioning of untrained young officers dubbed "Temporary Gentlemen" as emblematic of degraded class and military structures due to attrition (GradeSaver). The symbol underscores the arbitrary ascension and moral haziness of wartime leadership.

- *Connecting Graves with Barnes*

While Graves harnesses direct, visceral symbols rooted in his lived experience of the trenches, Barnes's symbolism in *Staring at the Sun* is subtler and more reflective rooted in memory, mortality, and philosophical rumination (Section 3.1). For instance, Jean Serjeant's encounter with Tommy Prosser during WWII functions less as battlefield spectacle and more as a symbolic confrontation with death and fleeting human connection. Both authors deploy symbolism to reflect on survival and disillusionment, but Graves's is immediate and corporeal, whereas Barnes's unfolds in retrospective contemplation linking trauma across time and generational memory.

Social Consequences of the War

War is not like a period of celebration when smile and good humour are shared. Far from being a good time, the period of war is known as a period of insecurity when the majority of people are afraid. Despair, fear, and hunger are mostly readable in people's eyes. Many people are afraid of war because they fear its social consequences. Starting from the climate of insecurity, war brings terror and puts everybody in a state of frenzy. Even armed forced who are supposed to be defending shakes in front of enemies attack.

War affects people mentally and physically. As a mental consequence of war, it is worth underlining the high oppression faced by the population. Hearing gunshots every single time may lead to hypertension especially for those who are not used to it. War increases depression rate in the community especially when you lose a relative. Widows and widowers are mostly left wrecked and miserable during wars thinking about the sudden departure of their dear husbands or wives. Robert Graves puts a specific stress on the fact that people are not free of their movement. While reading his account of the World War I, one could understand that people lack peace of mind. They are restless, always thinking about what is going to happen and why are the gunshots getting closer.

Another side of the war is related to uncountable numbers of people who lost their lives during wars. Both narrators have emphasised that many people die during wars. Losing seven thousand people during a war is uunbearable. Imagine how those people's relatives are going to cope? It would be very difficult. The same gods with Julian Barnes who also tells that many people have been killed during World War II.

"Good-Bye to All That," Robert Graves traces the course of World War I through a nuanced and detailed narrative that combines personal experiences with historical events. The structure of the book follows a chronological order, offering a comprehensive journey from the initial idealism of recruitment to the aftermath of the war.

The narrative shifts to the harsh realities of trench warfare, providing graphic and detailed accounts of the brutal conditions on the front lines. Graves does not shy away from describing the physical and psychological toll of the conflict, offering readers a visceral understanding of the horrors faced by soldiers. Though the conflict is physical, a clear understanding of Robert's work help to have an overview of the psychological impact of the war.

Indeed, Graves undergoes a profound transformation. He becomes increasingly disillusioned with the war's objectives and questions the leadership and strategies employed. The narrative becomes a reflection on the psychological trauma inflicted by the continuous exposure to violence and death. Graves also weaves his personal relationships into the fabric of the narrative, exploring the bonds formed with fellow soldiers and the impact of the war on his interactions with others. These relationships serve as a microcosm of the larger

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societal shifts occurring during the war. In essence, Graves employs a blend of personal narrative and historical reflection to trace the trajectory of World War I, providing readers with a deeply introspective and critical examination of the war's impact on both individuals and society as a whole.

Moreover, presenting the main character of Staring at the underlines that several women were engaged as ambulance driver. It is clear that ambulance does not share fast food to people, rather it is used to transport the wounded to hospitals. This indirectly showcases the horrific aftermath of the war. Apart from the deaths of thousands of people, uncountable people are also wounded and need necessary care. All these are some social consequences of the war. Even Frederick Henry, the protagonist has also been affected before being sent to hospital where he meets the British nurse, Barkley, her love. In the other side, sergeant Prosser has lost his life in the battlefield.

Economic Consequences of War

Beyond its social repercussions, war inevitably leaves deep and lasting scars on national and global economies. The economic consequences of both World Wars were far-reaching and devastating, altering trade patterns, industrial output, labor markets, and public finance structures worldwide. As Ivan and Mihail aptly state: *"Never before had the world economy been so intertwined. Indeed, the sudden end of this prosperous world came as a shock to its contemporaries"* (Ivan and Mihail 1). This observation highlights the profound disruption that war brings to economic interdependence and global stability.

The outbreak and prolongation of war typically result in the near-total shutdown of normal economic activity. International trade is disrupted, major industries are repurposed for wartime production, and human capital is redirected from civilian employment to military service. For instance, during wartime, businesspeople and merchants are often unable to travel or trade due to security concerns and logistical challenges, leading to shortages of goods and services. Essential commodities become scarce, and inflation frequently rises as demand outweighs supply.

Moreover, the cost of war itself is staggering. Massive financial resources are redirected from social and economic development toward military expenditure. Infrastructure is often destroyed, production capacity is diminished, and post-war reconstruction demands enormous investment. Yet, the funds allocated for reparations and rebuilding are often insufficient to stimulate real economic recovery.

One of the gravest economic outcomes of war is national bankruptcy, especially for countries on the losing side. In addition to their physical and human losses, defeated nations are frequently burdened with the obligation to pay war reparations. These payments can cripple already weakened economies, provoke inflation, and delay post-war recovery for decades. Even victorious nations are not immune to financial strain, as wartime borrowing can lead to unsustainable national debts.

In the context of *Good-Bye to All That*, Robert Graves does not focus extensively on economic analysis, but his depiction of the chaos and resource reallocation during World War I suggests the widespread disruption of civilian life, including economic routines. Similarly, Julian Barnes, in *Staring at the Sun*, indirectly engages with economic consequences through the long-term social effects of war, showing how post-war societies grapple with new realities including the financial and psychological cost of survival.

Conclusion

Robert Graves's *Good-Bye to All That* and Julian Barnes's *Staring at the Sun* are two British novels that depict the issue of World War I and World War II. *Good-Bye to All That* portrays the trench warfare and the psychological fallouts experienced by soldiers like Graves with narrative style, full literary devices and personal reflections, offering a unique blend of artistic expression. Analysed as *a* provocative and modern novel, *Staring at the Sun* Barnes follows Jean Serjeant from her childhood in the 1920s to her flight into the sun in the year 2021. It is a remarkably complex novel which, at least in part, shows how an ordinary life can be made less ordinary. Through Robert Graves's *Good-Bye to All That* and Julian Barnes's *Staring at the Sun* are the two authors reveals the aftermaths of wars on the society and individual that still longer in

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twenty-first century. To achieve my goals, I have used qualitative research, and psychoanalysis, new historicism and structuralism have been used as appropriate theories. My research reveals that Robert Graves and Julian Barnes have used their fictional world to to show that war has constituted, both in the past and today, one of the evils that hinders the development of the individual and society. Humanity must avoid war by promoting dialogue and respect for legal texts and by creating an environment based on respect for human dignity.

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