



TRANSFORMATION OF MORTALITY TO IMMORTALITY: ONTOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF PATRIOTIC SACRIFICE IN BROOKE'S

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Abstract

This article explores Rupert Brooke's (1887-1915) views of the transformation of mortality into immortality through an ontological lens in his war poetry. Death is not the final cessation of life rather Brooke reimagines it as a process of transformation through which the patriotic hearts attain a lasting form of existence. The study argues that death in his poetry functions not as an end but as a passage into immortality sustained by memory, national identity and collective remembrance. Through close readings of his selected poems such as "Peace", "Safety", and "The Recruit", the paper examines how the fallen soldier remains present within the nation's consciousness, the landscape, and the stories of sacrifice preserved for future generations. Thus, Brooke's poetry constructs a sense of patriotic sacrifice as a means of transcending physical mortality and grants the troops an enduring ontological presence. The findings reveal that death is represented as a transformative experience that converts individual life into collective permanence and, hence, elevates patriotic sacrifice from a temporal act to an immortal state of existence.

Keywords: *Death, Immortality, Patriotism, Sacrifice, Transformation, War.*

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1. Introduction

Wars are generally divided in two categories i.e., defensive and offensive. Regardless of the political objectives behind these conflicts, war poetry is sombre and addresses the topics of patriotism, bravery, sacrifice, sorrow, separation, bereavements and the ways death is seen, experienced and expressed. Similarly, the poetry on World War I reflects the unprecedented havoc particularly wrought on masses on a wide and wild scale. No doubt, war becomes a necessary evil, particularly, for those whose homeland is invaded. Brooke's most famous collection of poetry contains all five sonnets, *1914 & Other Poems*. It was first published in May 1915 and reflects the prowess of those persons who stand defiantly and refuse to surrender before uncontrolled mammoth of war. Although, his poetry was frequently used by the colonial regimes for propagation to entice the youth into battlefields yet, his poems echo a lesson of courage and bravery for those who defend their land against unjust invasions to protect their identity and dear ones without any fear of death. In *Great War and Modern Memory*, Paul Fussell (1975) states that from this angle, Rupert Brooke, an English poet, stands out – he saw things differently than most who followed him. While others focused on pain, his words carried national pride and belief in better outcomes, fed by feelings when war began. Fighting, to him, was where courage grew, people gave themselves fully, rose above (Fussell, p.51).

Ouvre of poetry on war such as *Up the Line to Death: The War Poets 1914–1918* by Gardner (1964) or *The Oxford Book of War Poetry* by Stallworthy (1984) echo ideas of sacrifice, identity and memory. While reading these poems, particularly, by Brooke, one notices how these poems show dying as something noble, tied to loyalty and shared history. Death seems to be a passage leading to continuity rather than an end. Brooke's poems, "The Soldier" or "The Dead," remain a part of the story of the country living in its memories and unity. However, the contrast is sharper when one hears the words of Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon, who express the agony experienced by men on the battlefield or the chaos present in the human mind. Ironically, they expose the stark reality of death that cannot be described with magnificence (Owen, 1920; Sassoon, 1920).

War poetry, generally, portrays the issue of patriotism, death, or depiction of war. On the contrary, some scholars note a unique edge in Brooke ideas who uses memory and shared history to extend life beyond its limits. His poems suggest dying not as an ending but as shifting into something else. A few explore what that shift means for existence. Discussions tend to remain at the surface, leaving aside the moment when death becomes less absence and more transformation.

Brooke's war poems show how dying becomes more than loss. Instead of only representing love of country, death shifts into another form of being. Memory carries it forward, along with the idea of the nation and symbolic presence. This perspective extends earlier interpretations of his work. What appears as an ending becomes a passage – life

reshaped rather than erased. In other words, human existence continues beyond physical death, though earlier studies have not fully explored this dimension.

1.1. Research Questions

1. Why does Brooke believe in the transformation of mortality into immortality through the idea of patriotic sacrifice in his war poems?
2. How does Brooke's poetry create an ontological shift where human existence transcends the physical body into immortality?
3. How do the poems such as "The Soldier," "The Dead," "Peace," "Safety," "The Recruit," and "The Dead Soldiers" portray death as a transitional stage rather than a terminal one?

2. Review of the Literature

War poems, particularly, ones from the first great war – keep holding space in books, mostly because they speak straight to real things: grief, obligation, separation, loss and hurt. That time held scenes where old ideas on honor, courage, dying for soil either stood firm or cracked underweight. This push and pull make voices split – some write with light, others with pieces inside. However, Rupert Brooke is shaped unlike the rest. Born right when conflict began, Brooke met death like a quiet change, not an end. While others praise devotion, honor, or bold sacrifice, most skip the deeper layer – his view turns passing on into something steady, soft and ongoing.

Out there among war history, one title keeps surfacing: *The Great War and Modern Memory* by Paul Fussell (1975). He traces how World War One twisted the way people told stories about combat. Once noble images of courage drowned in trenches thick with sludge and corpses – after that, irony crept in, alongside jagged narratives and raw disillusionment. Writing changed; what followed wasn't glory, but hesitation, uncertainty etched into every line. Soldiers returned bearing experiences too heavy for sentences. Into these steps Brooke – not as a lesson from afar, yet part of the instant right before collapse began (Fussell, p.57). In Brooke's work, death feels meaningful, even dignified, says Fussell – like giving your life means something real (Fussell, p.61). Much of today's academic debates echo that idea without questioning it. Yet while Fussell captures how people felt during war years, he pays more attention to changing headlines than the hushed doubts tucked inside lines. The poems hint at an afterlife, but never really open the door wide. Fussell gives clear thoughts, though these miss some hidden parts of Brooke's view on existence. Still, openings stay open where understanding could sprout.

Brian Gardner in *Up the Line to Death: The War Poets 1914–1918*, and Jon Stallworthy in *The Oxford Book of War Poetry*, reflects the same ideas worn through long years. Different eyes, different pains – they stack beside each other, building something closer to truth. Sacrifice weighed in silence, memories clinging past silence, sorrow rooted deep and self bound tight to nation without choice (Gardner, 1964; Stallworthy, 1984). At

first glance, Brooke rises distinct, his poems glowing like untouched flags before storms. For example, his poem “The Soldier,” often read alongside “The Dead,” frames death less as a stop and more as stepping into a wider existence.

When reading these poems, a few people notice how strong patriotic feeling runs through Brooke’s words. Rather than separating body from earth, the soldier becomes part of it – death feels more like joining than ending. In “The Soldier,” the dead person sinks into the land, not lost but fixed there instead. Way back in 1964, Gardner saw this pattern; decades after, Stallworthy spotted it too – a quiet connection among war-time lines where grief wraps around nation and memory alike (Gardner, 1964; Stallworthy, 1984). Giving one’s life grants them permanence which shows up again and again in early combat poetry.

These interpretations stick close to pictures and symbols, hardly ever probing what such notions actually mean. Because Brooke treats death as meaningful, yet almost nobody considers how that alters the idea of living itself. His poems not only celebrate sacrificing one’s life but also imply that existence assumes new dimensions when breathing ceases. As opposed to being transient, identity floats into ideas, mountains, and stories shared. According to him, the transformation is from matter to sound wave.

It becomes more evident how Brooke differs from Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon. They expose the horrors of war in a way that is not quite usual. This literary movement appeared in 1920, but the works were so far from being proud; all that was left was madness that burned through it (Owen, 1920; Sassoon, 1920). The pain in Owen’s writings goes deeper – damage that still exists, agonizingly meaningless. The idea of sacrificing one’s own life for his country did not stand up to reality.

There is, of course, Brooke, who is consistently portrayed opposite to Owen and Sassoon as if spirituality is opposed to despair. However, this poem demonstrates what happens to the war poetry at some point in time; yet, it tends to downplay the significance of the role played by Brooke. Focusing solely on similarities would prevent one from recognizing the calmness. It is not the absence of cruelty but attaining peace of mind through elevation of soul.

Beyond the end, Brooke sees dying as movement. Poems like “Peace,” “Safety,” and “The Recruit” link escape to cleansing, to root’s penetration into the ground, which is movement coming from within. The flesh gives out but dying takes one further toward breath of its own. Life proceeds, downward, regardless of quietness. Grave is no conclusion, but a turn toward what comes next.

Instead of focusing on some very apparent concepts like duty, sorrow, or homage, Brooke explains how they have a broader human dimension to them. As soon as one starts thinking about memory in terms of the recollection of people, one is always conscious of honoring the dead as opposed to the living. Tied to trees, soil, or rivers – nation appears this way in Brooke’s poems. Not apart, but breathing alongside the wind of their homeland.

What fades doesn't disappear – it sinks into roots instead. Through water, it travels on. That's not what death means here. It shifts, takes another form. Not the end – movement slips inside. Quiet holds a seed that shifts later.

Some people who read Brooke understand his ideas and the time he lived in but not many people look at how he changes what people think about dying. Death is not the end of something in his poems. It actually changes and keeps moving in some way. This change is important. It helps us understand his poems better. It also helps us see what people write about war in a different way.

The closer examination of this section of Brookes work makes us rethink our idea of him. Not only as an poet who had been focusing on people's hopes during times of war but also as an individual thinking thoroughly about the nature of living and the events following one's death. We understand now that Brooks himself lost people close to him and his belongings in these events. He reflects upon his losses in his poetry; however, he makes use of them. Brookes seems to believe that there is something that exists beyond our lives after we die. It is mentioned by Brookes focused in the past when studying Brookes. When viewing Brookes work from this lens it is possible for us to gain new idea of his poetry and theories focusing on life and death.

Brooke has an affection for war poetry, but not in the same way as those who write of it such as Owen or Sassoon. Brooke grab his own path along side them. While many poets in the post war focuses on about the harsh realities of war – the trenches, the wounds and the thick mud clinging to the boots of soldiers, Brooke's mind wanders elsewhere. Further than the flesh, more than the breath, into that which remains after we have gone from the earth.

To sum it up, the things that Paul Fussell wrote in 1975, Brian Gardner wrote in 1964, and Jon Stallworthy analyzed in 1984, along with the poems that Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon published around 1920, are essential for understanding war poetry (Fussell, 1975; Gardner, 1964; Stallworthy, 1984; Owen, 1920; Sassoon, 1920)

The poems of Brooke (1915) do not illustrate how he relates death with questions about life. It is, therefore, important to understand the ways in which Brook portrays death into his poems. Death is depicted by Brook not as an end of something but as a transformation. Such an approach to study the poems of Brooke enables us to better understand them and find aspects unnoticed by other critiques of Rupert Brook.

3. Theoretical Framework and Methodology

This study evolves meanings through close reading how ideas unfold and explore and what words suggest in his poems. Viewed with Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1762) concept in his book, *The Social Contract*, this framework is supplemented by his ontological philosophy that surrendering individual rights to the collective maintains true freedom. It constitutes a National Character that preserves identity against foreign influence through

culture and institutions. His views on the relationship between religion, politics and power for human survival and adaptation carry a significant framework to analyze how Rupert Brooke's (1915) poetry elevates sacrifice and death, mythologizing the soldier image. The work investigates how concepts of immortality and national identity are created rather than merely portrayed by fusing ontology with myth-making critique.

As Victor Gourevitch (2018) remarks in his book, Rousseau: *The Social Contract and Other Later Political Writings* that he assigns "pride of place to morals (*moeurs*) broadly speaking, the beliefs, habits, and practices which characterize and continually re-enforce a given people's distinctive way of life, (Gourevitch, p.xxix). By paying careful attention to words, this study attempts to explore the acceptance of death for nationalism within poems. By carefully examining texts, deeper layers of images and themes become apparent through the examination. The revelation gained results from pausing to consider those things that lie between the lines. It is only by taking time with language that meaning can develop and insights revealed.

The analysis is grounded in an Rousseau's (1762) ontological framework, which is used to explore Brooke's (1915) poems through a lens that treats existence as shifting, not fixed. Because of this, death appears less like stopping and more like changing shape within his verses.

This review engages six pieces: "The Soldier", "The Dead", "Peace", "Safety", "The Recruit", and "The Dead Soldiers". Each one steps into war's experiences through moments of loss, giving oneself and who belongs where during World War I

Close reading helps uncover details like word choice, visuals, one repeated idea after another. Patterns show up where dying links to change, ongoing life, a kind of hidden mark left behind. What stands out most is how poems build their message, line by line and verse by verse. A look at death shows it becoming something lasting, tied closely to who a nation believes itself to be and what it recalls. Through Brooke's poems, dying shifts meaning – life extends past flesh when last breath leaves.

4. Textual Analysis

4.1. "The Soldier"

Brooke (1915) in his poem, "The Soldier" portrays the death of the soldier not as futility rather something never ending. It does not make an end, but it continues into endlessness. The identity does not die, though, it changes its form. In this way, the soldier is not dead, he has simply moved onto some other domain. Through land, mind and the memory of people, life oversteps flesh and bones. That which is fundamental continues to exist without being able to breathe. A person merges into broader forms of existence, not physically present but always there. The following verses echo the sublimity of sacrifice,

"That there's some corner of a foreign field

That is for ever England." (Brooke, 1915, p. 9)

These lines describe how “out here, the soil contains what once moved among us. When a grave is dug far away from his land, the earth becomes his own.” He belongs to the place where he is buried, despite the fact that he died. It is in death that one’s belongings stretch beyond the borders of the land. Furthermore, Brooke introduces a spiritual way of living that extends beyond physical renewal. The continuity of the self is reinforced in the lines:

“A pulse in the eternal mind, no less

Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given.” (Brooke, 1915, p. 9)

This timeless awareness, of the sacrificing soldier, holds the self beyond seconds ticking by. Inside this space, the warrior’s memories do not vanish. Instead, they settle into something wider, older. What feels like an end turns out to be movement, shifting form without losing shape. Existence stretches, it does not break. The poem treats dying like shedding weight – lightness follows when the soul slips past flesh. Instead of sorrow, Brooke ties passing on to calm, grace, to something earned. That mindset grew from wartime spirit back in 1914, when giving one’s life felt noble, full of direction. Yet, under that public belief runs a quieter truth, the self outlives bone through, remembrance, land, signs left behind. Fussel (1975) remarks as following, “ Brooke asserts in “The Soldier,” one of England’s main attractions is that she provides “flowers to love” (p.264)”

Overall, “The Soldier” presents death as an ontological transformation in which the borderline of the self are continued rather than sweeping. Through the connection of body, land, and consciousness, Brooke builds up a vision of eternity grounded in persistence. The poem ultimately reconsiders mortality as a passage into surviving existence, where the self is modified but metamorphosis is meaningful forms beyond physical limits. The poem depicts the ritual of myth-making through which the soldier is transformed into a sanctified symbol. The soldier’s death is neither depicted as a tragedy nor a loss, but rather as a transcendence. Brooke’ views align with Rousseau’s ideas of patriotism as he believes that, “enlightened patriotism” (Poland ix [3]), is the most direct form of public-spirited devotion to the common good. It is the passional surrogate of practical wisdom” (Gourevitch, 2018, p.xxx).

4.2. “The Dead”

In one of his another poem, “The Dead” , Brooke (1915) shapes dying into something that shifts how life is seen. Instead of focusing on absence, the poet points toward gifts left behind by those who served. Because they sacrifice themselves, their loyalty echoes long after breath stops. Their bodies vanish yet presence lingers differently now – through stories told, beliefs held, shared ways of seeing. What once was flesh becomes part of how others understand being alive. The poet conveys this idea clearly in the lines:

“These laid the world away; poured out the red
Sweet wine of youth; gave up the years to be.” (Brooke, 1915, p. 7)

Here, “the wine of youth” symbolizes energy and vitality that is sacrificed happily by these soldiers. But at the same time, there is no sadness involved in this sacrifice because the shortness of life becomes an action that echoes across the ages. Death acts as a shortcut through which one life merges into another bigger, eternal life. However, the poem does not make the ending sad. Instead, it transforms into a meaningful process that gives importance to short-lived lives. Death in this case becomes a process through which a person’s life attains significance in a bigger plan of things. This is further emphasized by the poem as it associates death with sublime and heroic concepts such as dignity and honor. This is evident in the lines:

“Honour has come back, as a king, to earth,
And paid his subjects with a royal wage.” (Brooke, 1915, p. 7)

Floating within these images, Brooke (1915) reveals the way in which the spirit of a dead soldier can resurrect old truths, keeping them alive despite the physical loss of their bodies. No longer physically visible but present through another form since what they stood for lives on.

In short, “The Dead” makes sense of death as transformation through the process of sacrifice to persistence. In this poem, the soldiers are turned into martyrs, creating the myth about nobleness of deaths and immortality. This creation of myths is related to Herbert’s (1965) views about the heroes’ humanity.

4.3. “Peace”

In this poem, death is something transformed and purified in Brooke’s (1915) and the martyr attains eternal peace and neither completed nor lost. The idea of war was initially perceived as justified and noble at the time of the poem’s composition when war had just begun. However, beyond the rhetoric of sacrifice and duty, there is another concept lurking – the notion of death not being the ultimate end. Rather, it transforms into a state superior to what we normally experience and becomes a way towards eternity. From the beginning of the poem, the mood is one of appreciation and acceptance, thus putting a positive spin on war and death, as illustrated by the following lines:

“Now, God be thanked Who has matched us with His hour,
And caught our youth, and wakened us from sleeping!” (Brooke, 1915, p. 5)

These lines suggest that something moves when life succumbs to bombardment. It is not just a matter of fate or luck, but of will power, which drives individuals towards action. Clarity emerges out of violent experiences, while before there was a time filled with nothing but emptiness. One wakes up once everything comfortable has been stripped away from him. Dying here is no death; it is a transition to visibility. To be means not to be comfortable but to be aware.

Besides, death in Brooke's (1915) poems represents the cleansing of the human spirit from its moral frailty and vanity. This can be seen in the following lines:

"Washed clear of all the little emptiness of love,

The sick hearts that honour could not move." (Brooke, 1915, p.5)

A shift happens when mortality enters the picture – cleansing follows, then renewal. Shallow feelings, called here a "little emptiness of love," fade alongside minor emotional ties. What remains at first are weakened states, labeled as "sick hearts," showing inner frailty. Exposure to conflict, along with facing death, strips away such imperfections. As a result, a clearer way of being becomes possible. Dying does not represent an ending but rather a filter, whereby identity is made lighter. Identity grows out of loss; knowledge arises out of erasure. The way Brooke treats death in "Peace" is not restricted to patriotic rhetoric. While the poem successfully conveys the desire to take part in warfare, the central theme of the poem grapples with timeless questions regarding existence. In this poem, death is viewed not as an end but as purification, as if emerging out of sleep, or transformation so profound that it alters one's identity. It aligns with the concept of Herbert's (1965) idealizing heroes and myth-making process. So as to say, death in "Peace" is portrayed as a metamorphosis of existence from one that is flawed and improper into one that is pure and magnificent. In this poem, through the themes of regeneration and purification, death serves as a path toward the persistence and knowledge. Death as a means of rebirth was what this poem had actually done.

4.4. "Safety"

Another of his poem titled "Safety", Brooke (1915) sees death as a state of being that does not end, but rather becomes one that is inviolable and free from harm. The life in which he finds comfort seems to be the very thing that makes him vulnerable. This turn flips the usual view: safety does not cling to breath, nor depends on heartbeat. What remains firm comes later, beyond motion, and beyond risk. A silent presence takes shape where disorder cannot reach. At the center of the poem lies the comparison between the uncertainty of life and the stability associated with death. This idea is clearly expressed in the following verses:

"Dear! Of all happy in the hour, most blest

He who has found our hid security." (Brooke, 1915, p. 6)

In these lines, Brooke (1915) imagines death not as a terminal point but rather as shelter. Instead of fear or absence, he frames it as something lasting, untouched by harm. Life, in contrast, appears fragile and its comforts as uncertain. True refuge emerges only after living fades away. This idea is further reinforced in the lines

"Safe, though all safety's lost; safe where men fall;

And if these poor limbs die, safest of all." (Brooke, 1915, p. 6)

Here, the ambiguity becomes clear, paradoxically, even in the midst of crisis and elimination, the soldier is “safe.” The extreme safety is achieved when the body dies. It suggests that physical death removes all accountability. Ontologically, this reflects a transition from a delicate, limited existence to a state of durability and balance. The self is no longer exposed to fear, pain, or worry but exists in a condition that cannot be exposed. “Safety” also shows how people once thought suffering had value during war. Still, beneath its national pride lies a quiet idea about existence. Peace does not come from staying alive, yet from rising past fear. When death becomes the safest state, Brooke turns dying into arrival, something lasting instead of something gone.

Overall, Death becomes something steady and safe. In Brooke’s (1915) view, demise is not an end but a shift into lasting calm. Instead of fear, there is a quiet acceptance and a sense of the self that outlives its body. According to him, the apparent absence from world in form of death, in fact, is a transformation into an eternal presence and a reshaping of soul and body. This kind of passing is less about disappearing and more about finding sanctuary.

4.5. “The Recruit”

This shift in the poem, “The Recruit” unfolds slowly. Brooke (1915) frames death as quiet preparation for lasting presence. As compared to other works where the writer puts focus on death, here he puts his attention on something much before that: the transformation of the self. Rather than the simple change of apparel or status, something very deep is undergoing some kind of change, it is even the essence that has taken a different turn here. The poem constructs the recruit as someone who undergoes inner clarification through discipline, purpose and exposure to a larger national ideal. This shift is captured as following:

“The naked and the hungry, shivering,

Weak, and uncared for, all the years before,” (Brooke, 1915)

The above mentioned lines show that before the war, the man wanders without any purpose, leading a quiet life but not one of importance. The days were colored by an atmosphere of gap which was ambiguous and raw. It is only then when clarity emerges in the form of work. Meaning emerges where none stood before. The transformation becomes clearer once the youth gets maturity as the poem progresses, particularly in the lines:

“He has found his manhood and his youth,

And feels his strength grow with a steady truth.” (Brooke, 1915)

Now different, the recruit sheds his old self, molded instead into someone sturdier, driven by intent. Manhood appears here not as age but as arrival, something earned. Steady truth settles in like light at dawn that shows what matters without noise. Shifts like these

do not arrive overnight; they grow inside moments of trial, particularly when battle shapes perspective.

What stands out is how this change demands giving something up. As the new soldier fits into shared beliefs, private thoughts fade behind group goals. When life ends, it does not vanish – instead it flows on. Discipline has already remade who they are, therefore, stepping into a state past flesh is expected. Death then becomes less an ending and more like transformation. Overall, the recruit moves through change as breath shapes bones. Brooke watches him grow – not fast – just steady, from frail into force. Not gone when finished, only folded deeper because death arrives for rising him up. Purpose of life stays behind even after bones leave ground. Memory carries what bodies cannot hold forever. His life becomes more than motion. It is now meaningful, quiet, endless and his identity becomes emblematic. As Brooke idealizes a recruit serving his nation, Rousseau speaks eloquently about patriotism and also “casts himself in the role of a patriot” (Gourevitch, 2018, p.xxx). In this way, the sacrificing life for the sake of nation becomes an honor and glory which is remembered and one is elevated from the ordinary to the sublime.

4.6. “The Dead Soliders”

In the poem, “The Dead Soldiers” by Brooke (1915), death works in another manner; not in the sense that it marks a closure but rather as a mode of presence, as something that continues on after the moment of exhaling. The soldiers after their soul leaves their body, continues being through the process of remembering, being identified and symbolized in many ways. These beings cannot be said to exist in silence since they refuse to fade away by their mere presence. While the body may fade, something remains steadfast, unwilling to vanish from sight. Life is expanded to include thought as well as matter. Existence expands its limits and spreads through others who remember without prompting. The gone are still somehow present, shaped now by those who speak their names. The central idea in the poem is that the dead remains actively present through remembrance and emotional connection. This is reflected as following:

“Blow out, you bugles, over the rich Dead!

There’s none of these so lonely and poor of old,” (Brooke, 1915, p. 8)

This verse emphasizes that death transforms the soldiers into something precious and enduring. Becoming more than flesh, the fallen gain worth not measured in days but in weight carried by others. Through giving everything, they shift from brief moments to timeless echoes. In this way, the dead troops are not gone but changed and each name settles into soil deeper than roots ever reach. What was fleeting now stands fixed inside shared stories passed on without pause.

The poem shows how death brings soldiers together in a single endless moment. Instead of staying separate, they blend into one lasting group beyond space and time. It

underlines that being alive is not lost, just changed. They do not breathe or move, yet still exist because their sacrifice shapes histories, thoughts, and memories. Rousseau is of the view that religion is a branch of political right because “no State has ever been founded without Religion serving as its base . . . All polities were theocracies, all religions national and, so to speak, citizen religions: patriotism ennobled and hallowed by divine sanction” (p.xxxiv). What Rousseau argues in prose Brooke presents in the depiction of his heroes who tread bravely on the battlefield where other fear to enter.

Overall, “The Dead Soldiers” shows how dying shifts a person from flesh into something held by shared recollection. Not through force, but through subtle images – honor carved in silence, worth measured in echoes. Brooke suggests life flows onward even after breath stops. Instead of ending, departure becomes another kind of staying, shaped differently yet felt just as real. Death here is not closure, rather it slips into memory like stone wears the mark of rain.

In “The Soldier”, death acts as a process through which the individual is able to combine with the nation. Through land and identity, continuity is gained through death. In “The Dead”, death is portrayed as an act that leads to a life full of meaning when one sacrifices his or her life. In much the same way, “Safety” frames dying as total release and worries fade: what remains is something lasting. Instead of moving forward, “The Recruit” reveals identity being molded over time, shaped toward a kind of presence larger than personal experience. Then again, “The Dead Soldiers” turns to memory, letting those gone stay near through symbols and shared understanding

These poems form one clear picture where dying means shifting from a solitary body to something shared, meaningful and longer-lasting. Not just flags or pride drive Brooke’s view rather he looks hard at what living really means and what might follow after breath stops. Passing away becomes less about vanishing and more about stepping into flow where identity is kept alive through remembrance, country bonds and unseen unity.

5. Conclusion

Across his poems, “The Soldier”, “The Dead”, “Peace”, “Safety”, “The Recruit”, and “The Dead Soldiers”, Brooke (1915) consistently reinterprets death as a process of change rather than a final terminus. However, even though each poem approaches the theme of mortality from a contrasting viewpoint such as that of national identity, sacrifice, purification, protection, development, and remembrance, they still come to a similar conclusion—that is, human life does not cease at the physical level but elevates to sublimity. In this way, both Brooke and Rousseau view the death of soldiers a transformation of mortality to immortality as Rousseau believes, “patriotism and humanity . . . are incompatible virtues in their very thrust” (Gourevitch, 2018, p.xxxvii).

Thus, Brooke (1915) sees dying not as an end, yet more like stepping through a door already open. His view shapes war poems differently, giving them quiet weight others

lack. Death shifts under his words – becomes something fluid, almost familiar. Meaning grows inside it, instead of vanishing at the last breath. The persistence of the dead in the form of memories indicates the process of mythologization of sacrifice, wherein people are made into lasting symbols.

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