

Synopsis

This dissertation seeks to explore the scriptural and the sculptural aspects of Isaac Rosenberg's poetry and the way these elements shaped and determined his objective and impassive outlook regarding the First World War. Siegfried Sassoon was the first to notice these elements in his Foreword to *The Collected Works of Isaac Rosenberg* (1979). He commented that the 'scriptural and sculptural are the epithets I would apply to him.' However these two aspects of Rosenberg's poetry have not been dealt with adequately. Rosenberg's reputation rests chiefly with some of his exceptional war poems such as "Break of Day in the Trenches", "Dead Man's Dump" and "Louse Hunting" which have been widely anthologized over the years. The detached and mature manner with which he tried to explore the phenomenon of war had always been appreciated but the actual causes of such an outlook were never explored. This study tries to delve deep into the scriptural and the sculptural elements of Rosenberg's poetry because these were the very elements which served to shape his poetic make up even before the onset of the First World War.

The thesis is divided into four chapters. In the first chapter, an overview of the intellectual and artistic environment prevailing in Rosenberg's times is given in order to put him and his work into perspective. In the second chapter, the focal point is the scriptural aspect of his poetry. In the third chapter, textual analysis of Rosenberg's poems is done keeping in mind both the technical and thematic aspects in order to highlight the sculptural element and the fourth chapter deals with the analysis of his war poems.

The study is intensive and the method employed is the case study approach. Therefore it is a qualitative analysis trying to establish a causal relationship between various factors. The thrust of the argument is to highlight the point that the scriptural and the sculptural elements are evidently dominant in Rosenberg's poetry. They were the outcome of Rosenberg's unique position in society as that of a highly aware individual having artistic tendencies. His being a Jew also had a great influence on his outlook on life. Consequently these two aspects had a profound effect on his war poems as well. This dissertation is an attempt to explore those very aspects/causes which went on to make Rosenberg a unique poet in the comity of other war poets.