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**21F.031 Response Paper 2/10**

The Italian futurists saw war as the world's only hygiene. Some argue that Ernst Junger's writing on the inner experience of combat (for example, in *Storm of Steel*) participates on the futurists' celebration of military and modern technology. Do you agree? Substantiate your argument with citations from Junger's writing.

Junger's *Storm of Steel* describes, in unemotionally colored dialogue, his experiences during the fighting of World War I. The futurist claim that war is the "world's only hygiene" is substantiated by Junger's remembrances. Junger's writing shows nonchalance towards war, viewing it as a force that exists for its own purpose.

Throughout the war, Junger almost casually describes his experience. Although he brings up the horrific scenes like the "dead with dislocated limbs...and the hideous colors of decay," (*Storm of Steel*, p 23) he spends vastly more time describing the good times he has with the other soldiers, and other ordinary day to day activities. Describing daily trench warfare, he tells the almost farcical story of the trading with the English. The absurdity of the "solemn declaration of war" (*Storm*, p 52) shows Junger's seeming indifference towards the killing nature of war.

Even when on a crazed killing rampage at the start of the great offensive, Junger describes how the desire to kill "winged his feet" (*Storm*, p 255). All throughout the book, Junger speaks of war in a light tone, describing the efficiency with which the various types of shells killed men, rather than focusing on the extremes of death itself. Also, the story of the King of Q (*Storm*, p 50) shows his focus on things other than the horrifying aspects of war. In this way, the lack of focus on war's less admirable qualities participates on futurist claims to the efficiency and celebration of war.