

20th Century Humanities

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Compare and Contrast of Lee Millers' *Buchenwald* and Pablo Picassos' *Guernica*

This writing will make known to you the differences and things in common in these two canvas/photograph. The canvas being compared and contrasted is *Guernica* by Pablo Picasso, and the photograph is *Buchenwald* by Lee Miller. These two pieces have many things in common, but also many things that make them differ from each other; the compare and contrast of these two pieces is to help others look at the pieces in different ways. When two pieces are being compared and contrasted you see the things in common and also the things that are completely different; which in my eyes helps others look to see things in a picture or canvas they would have never seen before. Social Realism was used in the war era like World War II to emphasize political brutality in the art work done by Lee Miller titled *Buchenwald*. In this piece I would like to compare *Buchenwald* to the *Guernica*; I would almost say that the *Guernica* looks as if it is making fun of World War II because of the irregular shapes and figures in the piece. To me though it seems as if Pablo's piece is a nicer way of showing citizens the brutality of World War II unlike Miller's piece; where he just shows the straight up truth about the brutality of World War II. Out of both pieces there are so many differences, but I would definitely choose Pablo's work of art to show off because it has the meaning of the brutality of the war without showing the horrific bodies and blood. They obviously both have the same meaning behind their

pieces, but the way they show their meanings are two very different ways; which makes the artist unique.

Showing the differences of these two pieces of art will be very easy and that is why I chose to contrast them first because both artists have different ways of showing the significance and brutality of World War II. *Guernica* seems as if it is making fun of World War II. Whereas *Buchenwald* shows the true brutality of the War in this era. In contrasting these two pieces they are very different in many ways; for example *Guernica* looks as if it's making fun of World War II because of the shapes and movement in Pablo's canvas. Although *Buchenwald* has more of a serious image showing the brutality of World War II. In Pablo Picasso's piece *Guernica* the shapes seem as if someone just put them on there not meaning anything from it. That is why I believe that he is just making fun of the War era because of the way he used the shapes in his piece. Then when I read about it I understood it was Picasso's way to demonstrate the World War II era in an artistic way. It's a different approach that he used to describe and show aspects from World War II, but Pablo is not a normal artist he is very different which makes his art unique and his works of art interesting to others.

Lee Miller's photograph *Buchenwald* is a more serious photograph showing the true horror of what the war era actually consisted of. *Buchenwald* was a very brutality picture from this World War II era, but it shows the viewers a more fatal picture of what it actually looked like and how horrifying it was. Also to show and possibly emphasize that others should be happy that those people in the picture had fought for us and lost their lives. Also showing a numerous amount of people had died and the way they were piled up made it seem as if they weren't cared about they were just another body that was in the way. That is why it seems as if there are so many reasons for the brutality in this picture giving it so many meanings, but as for me that is the

meaning I am getting from it. All people see things in different way, and that is why I believe compare and contrast shows them there are different views to everything in the world now a days. These two pieces are very different in many ways because the artists may have different meanings for each piece. Also the viewer might perceive it different than the artists meaning for each piece.

Buchenwald and *Guernica* both have the same meaning behind them, but it's the way that they are perceived by a person that makes them have different meanings. Yet there are many things in common with these two pieces of art that make people see more similarities than differences. For example when I first saw both pictures I did not see anything similar, but then I read about both pieces and looked at *Guernica* again realizing that they both did have the same meanings; it is only the way you perceive the pieces that gives them different meanings. They both have similarities because they are both based off the effect of what had happened in the World War II era. You have to look at the pictures after you read about them because the only difference is the way they go about showing the true colors of World War II. To me I do not see any difference other than the way I perceive it because they are both just trying to show the era of World War II and the effects that it had, but also seems as if *Guernica* shows the process of World War II whereas *Buchenwald* shows the after effect of World War II. Like said before though it can be different for others because it is the way that one perceives something to make it have different meanings or visions of a picture/canvas. For example they both show the massacre of World War II, but *Buchenwald* shows the depth and brutality of the War. In that case they still are similar it is just that piece goes more into depth. *Guernica* goes more into depth because of light/dark effect that Pablo Picasso uses to create contrasts in his canvas. Even though one piece

goes more into detail or depth does not mean that they are not alike because they both are still describing the effects of World War II era.

In this writing you will understand why people sometimes see more comparisons than contrasts or possibly even more contrasts than similarities. Possibly even seeing that they do not have any differences or have any similarities. It is not the picture it's the eye of the viewer who determines what they see within both pieces. Also tells you about the things that the viewer (me) saw in those two pieces; which was the differences between *Guernica* and *Buchenwald* and also the similarities that the two pieces have in common. I think *Guernica* is more of a setup piece of art to show what happened during World War II whereas *Buchenwald* is the after effect just showing the devastation and brutality of what had actually happened. It is quite drastic to see that even though *Guernica* is just shapes together showing what happened during the war the *Buchenwald* is a picture taken of the pile of dead bodies which makes it quite gruesome and horrifying to know that many people had died. So the similarities between these two pieces would be the fact that they both showed the heroic significance of World War II, and the difference is the way that both pieces are made; *Guernica* is just shapes put together making it look like World War II and *Buchenwald* is just the brutal picture of the dead bodies piled up. As said before though people always see things in different ways you can just get a glimpse of an idea at what these two pieces are about. Or even if you just read about the pieces and then saw them it would probably change your perspective on the pieces. No two pieces by different artists will ever be completely the same it's in the eyes of the viewer, and that can always change. These contrasts and similarities are how I perceive these two pieces in my opinion and point of view.