“The Missing of Somme”- Highlights

* The book opens with the sentence: “Every family was touched by the war and every family has an album like this”
* The sentence conveys to the reader the noveler’s approach to Great War
* He describes an old family album and moves on to more general reflections on the photography, memorials, and literary testaments of the war.
* So, Dyer’s approach to war was like a historian in reverse
* He argues that “the Great War urges us to write the opposite of history: the story of effects generating their cause.”
* Dyer wrote that the First World War was a war in which memorializing was carried out even as it raged on
* Indeed he argues his consideration saying: “The war, it begins to seem, had been fought in order that it might be remembered, that it might live up to its memory.”
* So, through this collation of art and history, “The Missing of the Somme” articulates two subjects: the remembrance and representation of war.
* In Dyer’s opinion “The issue is not simply the way the war generates memory but the way memory has determined the meaning of the war.”
* In his book Dyer confesses that he wanted to write a book that was not about ‘the War itself’ but the effect of the idea of the War on his generation.
* But his attempt to mediate the Great War becomes an impossible desire to impose meaning retrospectively, and perhaps even to alter history; indeed in one of its many threads, Dyer’s book attempts to retrieve, by mingling imagination and facts, the 73,077 soldiers who perished along the banks of the river Somme in 1916
* Dyer’s intent here is not to convey facts but to comprehend the ways in which wartime memory is used and abused, corrupted and constructed, fought against and submitted to
* Therefore, “The Missing of Somme”, in Dyer’s mind, has the task to reflect new generations about the wars because they have a detached view than eldier generations about it
* So, from the previous point, the reader may understand that Dyer wrote “The Missing of Somme” in order to make a different image of war in young people’s mind.