



ADİYAMAN ÜNİVERSİTESİ SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ DERGİSİ  
ISSN: 1308–9196

Yıl : 13 Sayı : 34 Nisan 2020

Yayın Geliş Tarihi: 09.08.2019 Yayına Kabul Tarihi: 25.03.2020

Araştırma Makalesi

DOI Numarası: <https://doi.org/10.14520/adyusbd.604705>

## ANTI-WAR VERSES IN ENGLISH AND TURKISH POETRY:

### IS WAR A HEROIC DEED OR MURDER?\*

**Mustafa GÜLLÜBAĞ\*\***

**Hasan BAKTİR\*\*\***


#### **Abstract**


*This article attempts to explain how war is delineated in English and Turkish literature by examining examples of the verse by English and Turkish poets who wrote anti-war poems. The poems picked out for this study have been gathered from the World War I poems by Turkish and English poets about the Western and Gallipoli fronts. Some poets of these poems did actually fight in the battlefields, by means of which they reflected not only their feelings but also their actual experiences of the war. Hence these poems are not epics of heroism but the stories of human tragedy that war inflicted on man. Viewing the war as man and soldier reveals the irony war brings about and examining this irony in the verse may reveal the irony of heroism.*

**Keywords:** War Poetry, Gallipoli Battles, Tevfik Fikret, Wilfed Owen, Osbert Sitwell.

---

\* This article was prepared by making use of Mustafa Güllübağ's doctoral thesis and adding new discussions that are not in the thesis.

\*\*  Assist. Prof. Dr., Aydın Adnan Menderes University, Faculty of Science and Letters, Department of English Language and Literature, [gullubag@yahoo.com](mailto:gullubag@yahoo.com), Aydın/Turkey.

\*\*\*  Assoc. Prof. Dr., Erciyes University, Faculty of Literature, Department of English Language and Literature, [hbaktir@erciyes.edu.tr](mailto:hbaktir@erciyes.edu.tr), Kayseri/Turkey.

## İNGİLİZ VE TÜRK ŞİİRİNDE SAVAŞ KARŞITI DİZELER: SAVAŞ KAHRAMANLIK MI YOKSA CİNAYET Mİ?

### Öz

*Bu makalenin konusu savaş karşıtı şiirler yazan İngiliz ve Türk şairlerin şiirlerinden örnekler vererek her iki edebiyatta savaş kaşitlığının nasıl ifade edildiğini açıklamaktır. Bu çalışma için seçilen şiirler Türk ve İngiliz şairlerin Batı ve Çanakkale cephesi ile ilgilidir. Bu şiirleri yazan şairlerden bizzat bu savaşa katılanlar olmuştur. Dolayısı ile bu makalede bahsedilen şairlerden bir kısmı sadece hislerini değil tecrübelerini de yansıtmışlardır. Savaşı yaşayarak anlatan bu şairlerin şiirlerinde ulusal kahramanlık hikayeleri ile birlikte savaşın neden olduğu insan trajedisi de anlatılmıştır. Savaşa bir insan ve bir asker olarak bakıldığında ortaya çıkan ironiyi şiir dilinde yansıtan şiirlerin incelenmesi kahramanlık düşüncesinin de ironik tarafını açığa çıkarabilir.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Savaş Şiiri, Çanakkale Muharebeleri, Tevfik Fikret, Wilfed Owen, Osbert Sitwell.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

It may not be possible for a common combatant of the war to resist the violence and refuse the murder of fellow creatures. Mind of the soldiers is implemented by the national ideology which fosters a special view that legitimises and honours human-violence, or better to say murder committed mostly on common people classified as the enemy of combatants' nation. The present logic of war carefully plays on the public opinion and manipulates the common sense. The pro and post war discourse based on this logic embodies powerful strategies to compensate psychological and moral dilemma of the soldiers in the war and community outside the battlefield. Negative propaganda against the enemy or rival is one of these strategies. It exalts the individuals or nation under attack, which encourages their sense of righteousness by showing negative images of their opponents (Parfitt, 1990: 39). The dominant method of

negative propaganda is “satire” and Bertram Dobell satirises the Germans as ‘bestial creatures’ and ‘mongrel progeny’ suggesting the unification of the Prussia with Germany. Dobell reflects his opinion in “The Prussian Atrocities” on the German aggression as follows:

...bestial creatures in the shape of men;  
One land alone this mongrel progeny breeds –  
Kin to the tribes that herd in cave and den.  
“The Prussian Atrocities”

The enemy [here Germans] is abstracted from every human quality; since they are no longer human beings [‘bestial creatures in the shape of men’], they are threat to mankind. Bestial creature also implies wildness that menaces the civilized man. Harold Monro employs a similar vocabulary to reprimand the German race in his poem “The Poets Are Waiting” thus:

Hefty barbarians,  
Roaring for war,  
Are breaking upon us;  
Clouds of their cavalry,  
Waves of their infantry,  
Mountains of guns.  
“The Poets Are Waiting”

Desecration is another strategy that may spiritually and morally motivate the soldiers to fight against the enemy. For instance, when the first Crusade started, medieval public and soldiers had been convinced of the salvation of the soul and of the Holy Land concurrently. The Church [Roman Church] needed a political union in Europe thus developed so called holy-salvation-logic based on Muslim-Christian dichotomy that may compensate the social and political

conflicts in the continent. This attitude has been transformed, endured, retained and diversified in Muslim-Christian relations since then. When World War I begins, the dichotomy between Christian-English public and its Muslim-enemy, Turks, emerges again. The enemy-nations may also use a political manoeuvre as another strategy to justify the violence. For instance, at the outbreak of World War I, the countries at issue, the Ottoman Empire and England, developed different attitudes towards the war. From the English standpoint war was the violation of the international agreements, and to defend the English cause was a matter of prestige and honour. For the Ottomans it was a matter of national and imperial existence. Dehumanization or desecration is also part of the war-logic which always serves to the national-propaganda discourse. Propaganda, politically, is half the splendour in the war. It is an effective means to blind the wisdom and refuse the common-sense. Very few people in the country and a few soldiers in the battlefield have a glimpse to overlook the war-logic and develop humane attitude against the blinding propaganda. This paper aims to explore and discuss how some of the British soldiers of the World War I attempt [in their accounts] to expostulate and explore the logic and violence of the war.

## **2. HEROISM AND GLORY IN THE WAR ARE MEANS TO THE END**

In “Dulce Decorum Est”<sup>1</sup> Wilfred Owen alludes to the Horace’s odes that flatter bravery and dying for one’s country. In fact, Horace has never been a real soldier and acted in compliance with what he urges in his Odes. Therefore, Horace receives harsh criticism from Wilfred Owen for his promotion of war. Müzehher Erim narrates Horace’s war experience thus:

---

<sup>1</sup> It is sweet and honourable.

Under the influence of Brutus, he turned to be a fiery Republican. He went to Asia Minor together with Brutus (Satirae 1, 7) and we learn that as a supporter of Brutus he went together with Brutus and Cassius to join the civil war made against Octavianus and Antonius as “tribunus militum” and he fought in Philippi (42 BC). In one of his poems (Odes II, 7, 9 . . .), he makes fun of himself narrating how he escaped from the war throwing his shield aside. . . . His nature was not fit to be a soldier (1987: 144).

On the other hand in his Odes he promotes the war, especially in ‘Ode 2’, as Erim puts it “he advises ‘virtus’ i.e. to be brave; fortitude, not to be scared of dire living conditions and that it is good and honourable to die for one’s country . . . In ‘Ode 5’, he flatters and advises bravery and the love of country” (1987: 151). The details expressed in “Dulce Decorum Est” reveals the fact that Owen is quite knowledgeable about Horace and his biography; also with a critical eye he judges the ideological discourse that encourages soldiers to take part in the war. The poem is full of violent imagery which reveals the filth, horror, suffering and helplessness of the soldiers at war to the reader. Then Owen explains how these young people take part in such a ruthless act, and blames Horace for promoting bravery in battlefield and education system that supports the war ‘with such high zest’. The horrific imagery is basically established on gas shelling and the dying comrades who are slow to fit their helmets on in time. Owen draws a sharp contrast between ‘such high zest’ and the actual reality he experiences helplessly. The concluding stanza pictures the violence in all its nakedness:

If in some smothering dreams you too could pace  
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,  
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,

His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;  
 If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood  
 Come gargling from froth-corrupted lungs,  
 Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud  
 Of vile, incurable sores on *innocent tongues*<sup>2</sup>,—  
 My friend, you would not tell with such high zest  
 To children ardent for desperate glory,  
 The old lie: Dulce decorum est  
 Pro patria mori<sup>3</sup>.  
 "Dulce Decorum Est"

The word choice and construction of the poem are rather suggestive, the poisoned soldiers are not stretched into an ambulance or in a wagon but they are 'flung' in the wagon. Syntactically 'if you could hear' adumbrates that it is highly improbable for an ordinary reader to hear such 'gargling' sound and to know what true war experience is. Owen stealthily accuses the ones at home, and warns the younger generation against the fooling of education system. In this context 'children' as a word choice is important, and in addition to this the younger generation, due to their lack of experience, are reckless and as Owen terms it 'ardent for desperate glory'. Despite his bitter tone against the established ideology, he never lacks compassion for his brothers in arms. The wounds caused by the gas are 'incurable sores on innocent tongues', and 'innocent tongues' suggests that these soldiers are so young and inexperienced that they may not have sinned; yet they have to die in this war, which immediately associates Mehmet Akif Ersoy's lines in "To the Martyrs of Çanakkale" that state:

---

<sup>2</sup> Our italics.

<sup>3</sup> It is sweet and proper to die for one's country.

Wounded by the *innocent forehead*<sup>4</sup>, lying flat on the ground,  
O God! how many suns set in for the sake of a crescent,<sup>5</sup>  
“To the Martyrs of Çanakkale”

Like Owen’s comrades, Akif’s soldiers are innocent and young, so much so that, Akif holds them up to the level of the sun. Their innocence comes from their youth; yet their death is due to the incomprehensible nature of the war. In this context, Both Owen and Akif focus on the ideology that encourages ‘the innocent’ into war and their eventual death. Consequently, Owen’s basis is ‘Dulce decorum est pro patria mori’, and in Akif’s case ‘the crescent’ itself. Neither European humanism [highest form of human civilization] nor holy Abrahamic religions [always reject any form of violence] could find a way to prevent this bloodshed. Soldiers are transformed into modern ‘Christ’s’ who are sacrificing their lives for their friends. Violence is transformed into heroism and the dying comrades add glory to the bloodshed as long as surviving soldiers have a faith in divine ideals. The idea of high civilization and divine ideals are employed as part of war-propaganda to compensate the violence. Soldiers are scapegoats for the salvation of the country and nation. Religion and faith are to be interpreted to the ends that war demands. John Purkis introduces the ideology of sacrifice as follows:

The difficulty in reconciling the apparent pacifism of Jesus, as presented in the New Testament, with the needs of the modern state has always been present. Later on, Edmund Blunden, who had a Christian education, used Article 37 of the Church of

---

<sup>4</sup> Our italics.

<sup>5</sup> Yaralanmış temiz alnından, uzanmış yatıyor;

Bir hilal uğruna, ya Rab, ne güneşler batıyor! (Doğrul, 1982: 426)

*An alternative translation by S. Tanvir Wasti reads thus: Outstretched he lies there, shot right through his spotless brow,/ For this Crescent O Lord, what suns are setting now.* (Tuncoku, 2000: 189)

England as the epigraph to his Great War memoirs, *Undertones of War*. 'It is lawful for Christian men, at the commandment of the Magistrate, to wear weapons, and serve in the wars'. This terse directive, surely used ironically by Blunden, who knew what he was talking about, seems to gloss over a number of pertinent objections, and in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with a population largely unused to war, considerable efforts had to be made to re-align the teachings of Jesus to fit the demands of modern warfare. A huge number of volunteers would be required, and not all of these would return alive (1999: 42).

Another ideologically glossed over verse from Bible is "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (St. John 15:13). Yet there was some sort of error in the formulation of this verse to fit into modern warfare, Purkis puts forward this as follows:

It was not made clear how bayonets, grenades and other offensive personal weapons were to be used by the Christian combatant in the act of 'laying down one's life'; what was portrayed was an act of sacrifice. Nor was it explained how the use of large-scale means of destruction such as artillery fitted in to this concept; these were simply background noise, like the sound-effects of a play. The casualness of death produced by such explosive devices was a problem and seemed to have no meaning; the God who cared for the fall of a sparrow could hardly intervene on these occasions. One begins to realise why, later on, the troops fell back upon fatalistic beliefs: 'That shell will only hurt you if it's got your name written on it' (1999: 43).



High ideals and divine ordeals could not compensate human violence. There is no wisdom to fit in the actual warfare. As the war goes on the number of deaths and casualties increase, and the voice of criticism grows bitter. This is a war of machinery and industry, in other words the nature of war has changed from chivalric one into modern warfare of machinery. As a consequence of industrialism there are manufacturers of munitions and machinery. Naturally, they make their living through what they produce, and the continuation of the war means the continuation of their high income. Osbert Sitwell remarks in his poem "The Modern Abraham" pointing out such war profiteers, making a comparison to Abraham, the prophet. Prophet Abraham had to sacrifice only one of his sons; yet this war claims almost everyone who is eligible to be soldier. Therefore those who have sons are quite different from Prophet Abraham. In this respect, the title of the poem is rather striking, especially in terms of large number of human sacrifice the war demands. The persona is the modern Abraham, the way Sitwell narrates falls into bitter satire on the war profiteers. Sitwell's poem "The Modern Abraham" of 1917 reads thus:

His purple finger clutch a large cigar –  
Plump, mottled fingers, with a ring or two.  
He rests back in his fat armchair. The war  
Has made this change in him. As he looks through  
His cheque-book with a tragic look he sighs:  
'Disabled Soldiers' Fund' he reads a fresh,  
And through his meat-red face peer angry eyes –  
The spirit piercing through its mound of flesh.

They should not ask me to subscribe again!  
Consider me and all that I have done –  
I've fought for Britain with my might and main;

I make explosives – gave a son.  
 My factory, converted for the fight  
 (I do not like to boast of what I've spent),  
 Now manufactures gas and dynamite,  
 Which only pays me seventy per cent.  
 And if I had ten other sons to send  
 I'd make them serve my country to the end,  
 ...  
 "The Modern Abraham"

Like Owen, Osbert Sitwell's word choice is hand-picked. To suggest the wealth accumulated through the war, he uses the imagery of "fatness/plumpness". Smoking 'cigar' is an allusion to prosperity, and colour of fingers is strikingly 'purple' for purple suggests "kingliness/royalty", also signifies wealth and authority. The armchair is not an ordinary one but it is 'fat' and his complexion is 'meat-red', the finger is both 'purple' and 'plump'. Sitwell satirises the persona as the persona looks at the cheque for 'Disabled Soldiers' Fund' 'with a tragic look he sighs'. He is far more ardent than Prophet Abraham, who vowed to sacrifice his only son, for he can sacrifice 'ten other sons' to 'make them serve my country', rather than 'the country' or 'their country' for he himself is the one who gets the most of the country, not those who fight and die, therefore this is "his country" not any other's. English poets seem to have focused on the religion as war propaganda, and on hypocritical attitude of militarists and politicians. Apart from this, they observed the opponent forces as "barbarians" or "Huns". However, Fazıl Hüsnü Dağlarca takes a different standpoint to observe the clashing armies and cannot find an explanation for the reason why these forces clash. In his poem, there is an "ever present soldier figure" whom he calls 'erdede' who comments on the on-goings in the war. The

poem 'Erdede Has Been Observing' puts stress on the fact that both sides believe in the same God, but they kill one another:

The same bread the same water  
 Our God is not different.  
 That came from Senegal, other from India  
 That from France, this from England, that from Australia  
 The same bread the same water,  
 Our God is not different.<sup>6</sup>

The same bread the same water  
 Our God is not different.  
 Other's feet have blown away, other's head.  
 Other's one arm mutilated, other's eyes are in his hands,

The same bread the same water  
 Our God is not different.<sup>7</sup>  
 "Erdede Has Been Observing"

On the other hand, another Turkish poet Tevfik Fikret has long been against war, and he feels pity, like Owen, on the dying soldiers and hopes human kind

---

<sup>6</sup> Aynı ekmek aynı su  
 Tanrımız ayrı değil.  
 O Senegal'den gelmiş, o Hint'ten  
 O Fransa'dan, o İngiltere'den, o Avustralya'dan  
 Aynı ekmek aynı su,  
 Tanrımız ayrı değil.

<sup>7</sup> Aynı ekmek aynı su,  
 Tanrımız ayrı değil.  
 Ötekinin uçmuş ayakları, başı yok olmuş ötekinin.  
 Öteki bir kolu kopmuş, öteki ellerine çıkmış gözleri,  
 Aynı ekmek aynı su,  
 Tanrımız ayrı değil.

to learn from experience. In his poems “The Fog” of 1902, and “The History of Old Ages” of 1905, he openly rejects war and bravery. He considers such aspects as fooling of discourse, and employs a similar imagery used in ‘Dulce Decorum Est’ which points out the depths of history where bravery emerges. Then Fikret moves onto religious aspect that urges people into the war. He chooses an illiterate soldier without any determination. He narrates his story in such a way that, as Mehmet Kaplan puts it, “somebody who does not have an idea about what sort of attitude Fikret developed against the war and religion does not sense the fine mockery of the epic narrated through the mouth of a devoted warrior (mücahid-i muhlis)” (1995: 185). Principally Fikret is against the war in any way or for any reason altogether, and he cannot find any evidence to prove this war as a war of defence, for this war “is a war entered under the leadership of The Union and Progress Party. . . together with Christians” and “was declared to be a Holy War for the sake of Religion” (Fuat 1995: 80). The poem titled ‘In Presence of Prophet’s Flag’ narrates how God will protect the warriors in this War of Religion with fine irony:

Now I walk, God’s help is the light of my way  
 He does this before I pray for;  
 as long as my prophet’s flag is my shelter  
 naturally the shelter and peace are mine to the last.<sup>8</sup>  
 “In Presence of Prophet’s Flag”

This warrior is so devoted to the cause that it does not matter to live or die as long as he is in the shade of the prophet’s flag. Under the influence of religious indoctrination this warrior believes that he has got supernatural power, and

---

<sup>8</sup> Artık yürürüm, avn-ı Hudâ meş’al-i râhım,  
 bî|hazm ü irâdet;  
 Peygamberimin sancağı oldukça penâhım,  
 elbette benimdir ebedî savn ü selâmet (Uzun, 1985: 372).

even his blood has got deadly effects on the enemy. Fikret is somebody who rejects war totally, so much so that he cannot even find self-defence as a righteous action. His “In Presence of Prophet’s Flag” furtively suggests his anger and condemnation of the war, for this war is not a necessary one and it is under the cover of religious indoctrination. Therefore the persona of the poem is formed in such a way that his obedience and naïveté add vigour to the poem in terms of its critical approach towards the war undertaken together with a Christian country. He draws attention to the fact that this war cannot be a war of religion; and any sort of surrender to a certain ideology must be viewed critically.

In “Holy War” Fikret introduces the fact that war not only kills people and destroys houses but also affects the life of survivors drastically. His poem begins with a criticism of the country’s entrance to the war, for Turkey was newly out of Balkan wars and both soldiers and the civilians were exhausted by the devastation. Fikret puts it in “Holy War” stating:

Alas the burning flame of the war has not yet quenched  
By the war day by day we have been being devastated.<sup>9</sup>  
“Holy War”

These weary people of the Empire are drifted from one war to another by religious discourse, and the civilization has not helped them to develop many qualities. They may seem civilized but, in fact, it is a species that kills each other with refined means. Fikret is careful both in his construction of the poem and word choice, in the original Turkish version of the poem he chooses ‘gebertmek’ rather than ‘öldürmek’, for the latter Turkish word suggests an ordinary action ‘to kill’; yet the former suggests ‘to kill in hatred and cold blood’. Obviously, this

---

<sup>9</sup> Eyvâh ki yanan âteş-i harb sönmedi el’ân  
Günden güne mahvolmadayız kahr-ı vegâdan. (Parlatır ve Çetin, 2001: 669)

war is not a defence against anything but it is a means of getting satisfaction from the blood-shed. Fikret condemns all commanders crying out ‘Hey, party of commanders of peoples, damn on you!’<sup>10</sup>. Then Fikret draws attention to social fact that war brings about, where there are fatherless children: All these martyrs have been sacrificed for no reason,/ Whose children are naked and thirsty in destitution,<sup>11</sup> (“Holy War”). Like Arthur Graeme West<sup>12</sup>, Fikret loses his faith and denies the religious doctrine which advocates that those who die in defence of his country will go to Heaven. This must be reason why he reserves a long part for the dead soldiers, drawing sharp contrast to what is expected to happen to martyrs. In the continuation of the poem “Holy War” Fikret turns back on the social issue of the war. Apart from destitute children, the mothers whose husbands have been killed in battlefields are helpless. Many women turn to be beggars to support both themselves and the fatherless children. More tragically some women turn to offering illicit sex and after certain period of time these women are certified to perform their business legally, which Fikret considers the most disgraceful job. To him the women left behind the scene know that they “cannot stop” the violence. Woman of the war let the victim “lie comfortably in his grave sound and dead/ For [she] applied her business in her house for long/ To meet the needs with her chastity/ Together with an official certificate to reinforce the disgrace (“Holy War”).<sup>13</sup> Though Fikret seems to criticise the entrance of the Ottoman Empire into the World War I, he is against the concept of war as a whole. In his poem “Holy

<sup>10</sup> Zümre-i ser-dâr-ı milel, sizlere lânet! (Parlatır ve Çetin, 2001: 669)

<sup>11</sup> Haksız yere mahvoldu evet bunca şehîdân,  
Evlâdları çıplak ve susuz kaldı perîşân. (Parlatır ve Çetin, 2001: 670)

<sup>12</sup> See the poem titled “God! How I Hate You, You Young and Cheerful Men”

<sup>13</sup> Vazgeç, nene lâzım, onu sen men’edemezsin,  
Yatsın kocası râhat ile zinde ve mürde  
Çoktan beri etmiş bu kadın çünkü evinde  
Sermâye-i nâmus ile te’min-i ticâret  
Bir ruhsat-ı resmî ile tevsik-i rezâlet. (Parlatır ve Çetin, 2001: 673)

War”, he mainly objects the discourse that urges people to take part in this ‘holy act’, and the social aspects that war bring on the civilians. In this context, Fikret differs from both English and Turkish poets; according to him, war is a total human tragedy. This must be the reason why almost every poet who feels the pain and human sufferings in their hearts criticise war. Although their religions are different they feel the same against the destruction of war and they voice their anger in their poems. Siegfried Sassoon and Isaac Rosenberg are Jewish combatant poets who criticize war harshly; yet Christian combatant poets like Wilfred Owen and Robert Graves also delineate the destruction of war in equal measure. All in all, the most prominent criticism seems to have come from either religious poets like Rosenberg, Owen and Graves or irreligious poets like Arthur Graeme West and Tevfik Fikret.

### 3. CONCLUSION

Critical approaches to war mostly reflect the horrific nature of war-time experiences, which provided an ample space for the employment of imagery to reflect the disgusting side of the war. Imagery enables the reader to visualise what the battlefield conditions are like. Words draw picture as well as touch the heart of man. Behind the images we have poets of different nationalities, backgrounds, outlook and religion. Yet a great majority of them had the sensibility to smell the evil of the war at the very beginning. Wilfred Owen wrote “1914”, a poem that depicted the war “as winter of the world” adumbrating “cold” suggestive of “death”. He feels obliged to take part in this war for two reasons: one to save Keats’ language (Murray, 2011: 141); two to write of the “pity of war”, “that is to say, its tragic reality” (Murray, 2011: 7). His role in this tragic show was to “help these boys — directly by leading them as well as an officer can; indirectly, by watching their sufferings that I may speak of them as well as a pleader can. I have done the first” (Murray, 2011: 160). Like

Wilfred Owen, Isaac Rosenberg wrote "On Receiving News of the War" where he also associated the war with winter "snow", death. He enlisted not for patriotic reasons. "He hated war, and had no wish to be a combatant. Killing people was as abhorrent to natural instincts as it was to the faith in which he had been brought up. He enlisted purely in order to help his family, having been told that half of his pay could be paid to his Mother as a 'separation allowance' (Parsons, 1979: xxiv). He found untimely deaths of young soldiers tragic. In "Dead Men's Dump", the souls of dead soldiers do not shake the leaves of grass; in fact Rosenberg obliquely adumbrates that they are not shaken by the tragedy because no one soldier "saw their spirits' shadow shake the grass/Or stood aside for the half used life to pass/Out of those doomed nostrils and the doomed mouth/When the swift iron burning bee/Drained the wild honey of their youth" ("Dead Men's Dump"). Both man and nature are insouciant to their sufferings. Mehmet Akif and Tevfik Fikret are not combatant poets but they observe the war very closely and think over its evils and outcomes. For Akif, death of a young soldier as tragic as it is to Owen and Rosenberg. Fikret seems to have appalled even at the word of war itself. He sees the war as the mother all evils and considers its social consequences. In conclusion, men who are aware of human potentiality saw the war as a threat for progress and human achievement and rejected it at right at the beginning.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Dağlarca, F. H. (1973). *Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk*. Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu Yayınları.

Dağlarca, F.H. (1999). *İstanbul Fetih Destanı- Çanakkale Fetih Destanı*. İstanbul: Doğan Kitap.

Erim, M. (1987). *Latin Edebiyatı*. İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi.



Fuat, M. (1995). *Tevfik Fikret*. İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları.

Hibberd, D. and John Onion (eds.) (1994). *Poetry of the Great War: An Anthology*. New York: St.Martin's Press.

Kaplan, M. (1995). *Tevfik Fikret: Devir - Şahsiyet – Eser*. İstanbul: Dergah.

Murray, N. (2011). *The Red Sweet Wine of Youth: The Brave and Brief Lives of the War Poets*. London: Little, Brown

Parfitt, G. (1990). *English Poetry of the First World War: Contexts and Themes*. Hertfordshire: Harvester & Wheatsheaf.

Parlatır, İ. ve Çetin, N. (2001). *Tevfik Fikret: Bütün Şiirleri*. Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu Yayınları.

Parsons, I. (ed.) (1979). *The Collected Works of Isaac Rosenberg*. London: Chatto and Windus.

Purkis, J. (1999). *A Preface to Wilfred Owen*. New York: Longman.

Uzun, F. (ed.) (1985). *Rübab-ı Şikeste ve Tevfik Fikret'in Bütün Diğer Eserleri*, İstanbul: İnkılap Yayınevi.

Wilson, J. M. (2009). *Isaac Rosenberg: The Making of a War Poet*, London: Phonenix.

## GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

### Giriş

Savaş şiddet içeren en tehlikeli insan davranışdır. Kendine mahsus mantığı ve söylemi ile savaşın olmadığı durumlarda kesinlikle kabul edilemez bir eylem olan insanın öldürülmesini yüceltir ve meşrulaştırır. Savaşın öldürme eylemini meşrulaştırması ve savaşan askeri kendi cinsinden bir canlıyı düşünmeden ve tereddüt etmeden öldürmeye teşvik etmesinin ardında öldürme eylemini normalleştiren, kurgulanmış bir ulusal-metafizik söylem ağı vardır. Bu kurgulanmış söylem-ağı toplumsal algıyı değiştirmek ve sağduyulu olmayı engelleyecek şekilde kullanılır. Savaş-öncesi ve savaş-sonrası tartışmalarda kendini daha etkili bir şekilde gösteren bu söylem oldukça etkili bir şekilde kurgulanan mantık örgüsü içinde cephede savaşan askerin ve ülkede savaşın etkilerini hisseden kamuoyunun psikolojik durumunu ve toplumun etik değerlerini manipüle eder. Devletin emniyet ve güvenliğinden sorumlu askeri-örgütlenmenin ideolojik bir yansıması olarak metafizik niteliğe bürünen savaş-söylemi farklı stratejiler kullanarak öldürme eylemini meşrulaştırabilir. *Soyutlama* bunlardan bir tanesidir. Örneğin, savaşta düşman olarak tanımlanan asker bütün insani değerlerden soyutlanır ve yaşamı tehdit eden bir yaratığa dönüştürülür. *Kutsallaştırma* bu söylemin kullandığı ikinci bir stratejidir. Ülke ve aynı inanca sahip bireyler tinsel metinler kullanılarak kutsallaştırılabilir. Kutsallık düşmana karşı savaşan asker için psikolojik ve metafizik anlamda motive edici bir güce dönüşür. Ortaçağ Haçlı seferlerinde Vatikan tarafından kullanılan kutsallık söylemi ile insan [Müslüman] öldürmek cennete giden yol olarak tanımlanmıştır. Benzer söylem *Birinci Cihan Harbinde* kullanılmıştır. Türklere karşı savaşan İngiliz askerleri Tanrı'nın buyruğunu yerine getiren ve kutsal Hristiyan topraklarını [İstanbul] kurtarma misyonu olan şövalyeler olarak tanımlanmıştır. Savaşın meşru bir eylem olduğunu anlatmak için *politik manevralar* da kullanılabilir. İngilizler ülkeleri ile hiçbir coğrafi ve sosyal ilişkisi olmayan Türk vatanını istila etmek için Osmanlı Devleti'nin uluslararası hukuku ihlal ettiğini ve İngilizlerin güvenliğini tehdit ettiğini yansıtan politik bir manevra kullanmışlardır. Böyle bir söylem oluşturmak İngilizlerin ülkelerini ve ulusal anlamda güvenliklerini tehdit etmeyen "öteki" [Türkler] ile savaşını meşrulaştırma çabasıdır. Bu kurgu İngilizlerin vahşeti ve yayılmacı [sömürgecilik] siyaset anlayışlarını meşrulaştırma eylemidir. Bu süreçte kullanılan en etkili strateji ise propaganda çalışmasıdır. Savaş meydanı vahşetin ve trajedinin yaşandığı alandır. Propaganda ise politik iradenin vahşeti ulusal bir marş, bir kahramanlık destanına dönüştürdüğü alandır. Savaşta ortaya konan kahramanlığın yarından fazlası propaganda yoluyla üretilen hikâyelerden oluşmaktadır. Propaganda bu anlamda medeniyet birikimini ve sağduyuyu yok eden en önemli aygıttır. Savaş söz konusu olduğu durumlarda ülkedeki insanlar ve savaş meydanındaki askerler düşmanın insan olduğunu unuttur. Savaşta insan

olduğunu unutmayan ve insanlık erdemini koruyan çok az kişi çıkabilir. Bu makalede Türk ve İngiliz şairlerin şiirlerinden seçtiğimiz dizelerle savaşın insana karşı uygulanan bir vahşet olduğunu yansıtan bakış açısını inceledik.

## Yöntem

Bu makalede Türk ve İngiliz şiirlerinden seçtiğimiz metinleri analiz etmek için söylem analizi ve biçimsel yaklaşımları kullandık. Öncelikle savaş-söyleminin kullandığı ikna etme stratejilerini tanımladık. Tanımlanan stratejilerin devletin ideolojik aygıtları tarafından savaşta uygulanan vahşeti meşrulaştırma için nasıl kullanıldığından örnekler verdik. Devletin savaş süresince kullandığı en önemli stratejilerden bir tanesi düşmanı bütün insanı değerlerden *soyutlamak* ve *ötekileştirmektir*. *Ötekileştirme* insanı yok edilmesi gereken bir tehdide dönüştürür. *Soyutlamanın* yanında *kutsallaştırma-söylemi* de savaş süresince kullanılır. Savaş kutsal bir eylem olarak tanımlanır ve bu eylemi gerçekleştirebilen askerler sonsuz bir kurtuluş ile ödüllendirilir. Bu söylem savaşın kutsal bir kahramana, düşmanı vahşeti hak eden bir yaratığa dönüştürür. Siyasi ideolojinin kurguladığı bu söylemler bir propaganda aygıtı olarak kullanılır. Propaganda eylemi içinde insana reva görülen vahşet bir kahramanlık destanı olarak topluma sunulur. Bu makalede savaş-söylemi stratejilerinin ideoloji tarafından nasıl kurgulandığı tartışılmıştır. Bu tartışma yapılırken Türk ve İngiliz şiirlerinden örnek dizeler seçilmiş ve bu şiirler söylem analizi yöntemi ve biçimsel bir yaklaşım kullanılarak incelenmiştir. Savaş-söyleminin nasıl bir propaganda aygıtına dönüştürüldüğü açıklanmıştır.

## Bulgular

Bu çalışmada Wilfred Owen, Osbert Sitwell gibi İngiliz asıllı şairlerle, Mehmet Akif Ersoy ve Tevfik Fikret gibi Türk şairlerin savaş-karşıtı şiirleri incelenmiştir. Bu inceleme sonucunda adı geçen Türk ve İngiliz şairlerin savaşın olumsuz yönlerini yansıtan düşünceleri etkili bir şekilde yansıttığı görülmüştür. Owen, bu makalede incelenen şiirlerinde [özellikle *Dulce Decorum Est* şiirinde] antik dönem, ortaçağ ve modern Avrupa'nın kurguladığı kahramanlık söyleminin savaşın insana uygulanan bir vahşet olduğu gerçekliğini yok edemediğini göstermiştir. Owen savaşın sömürgecilik adına işlenen vahşeti örtmek için kahramanlık gibi söylemler kullandığını yazar. Bu söylem ulusal sağduyuyu ve insan erdemini köreltir. Bu sayede toplum savaşın kirli tarafını, vahşeti, acıyı, trajediyi ve şiddeti göremez. Savaşın ve hayatları kararan askerler kurgusal bir söylemle yüceltilir. Osbert Sitwell de Owen gibi savaşın kutsal bir eylem olduğu düşüncesini eleştirir. Savaş aslında bir şiddet ve acıdır. Siyasi ideoloji savaşın mekanik bir aygıtı dönüştürür. Modern çağda üretim sürecine katkı sağlayan bir mekanik aygıtı dönüştürülen savaş savunma ve silah sanayi için bir araca dönüştürülmüştür. Savaşta kaybedenler askerler, kazananlar ise silah

tüccarlarıdır. Mehmet Akif Ersoy da savaşta ölen askerlerin çaresiz ve masum kurbanlar olduğunu anlatmıştır. Çanakkale Savaşına katılan genç askerleri anlattığı dizelerinde yaşamın baharında hayatlarını feda eden bu gençlerin bu vahşeti sorgulayacak bir fırsat bile bulamadığını vurgulamıştır. Savaşta ölen genç askerlerin masumiyetine inanan Akif, onları batan güneşe benzetmiştir. Hayatlarının baharında bu masumları ölüme mahkûm eden sömürgecileri lanetlemiştir. Tevfik Fikret de savaşın bir vahşet olduğunu vurgulamıştır. Bir kahramanlık olarak kurgulanan savaşın aslında erkek ve kadın, insanı yok eden bir eylem olduğunu savunmuştur. Savaş kadınları kocasız, çocukları babasız bırakan bir şiddet eylemidir. Askerler aslında sebepsiz yere hayatlarını feda eden çaresiz varlıklardır. Fikret savaşın bir trajedi olduğunu savunarak savaşı yücelten metafizik söylemlere karşı çıkmıştır.

### Sonuçlar

Bu makalede İngiliz ve Türk şairlerin şiirleri kullanılarak savaş meydanında gerçekleştirilen eylemle ulusal ideolojinin kurguladığı savaş söyleminin farklı olduğu savunulmuştur. Cephe mekânsal gerçekliği olan bir yerdir. Bu mekân askerlerin bir diğerini katlettiği fiziksel alandır. Savaş-söylemi ise askerin cephedeki eylemini dilsel bir kurgu içinde propaganda amaçlı olarak dönüştüren zihinsel bir eylemdir. İdeolojik anlamda savaşla ilgili kurgulanan kahramanlık söylemlerinin ve savaşı yücelten ifadelerin büyük kısmı propaganda faaliyetlerinin ürünüdür. Zafer kazanılan bir sonuç değil kurgulanan bir propagandadır. Bu makalede karşılaştırmalı olarak incelediğimiz Türk ve İngiliz şairler savaşta makul olmayı başaran ve insan olduğunu unutmayan çok az sayıda asker ve ulusun aydınları arasında da savaş söz konusu olduğunda insan olduğunu unutmayan çok az sayıda insan olabileceğini göstermiştir. Burada karşılaştırılan şairler cephede verilen savaş ile siyasi savaş-söylemi arasındaki ironiyi şiirlerinde yansıtmışlardır. İngiliz ve Türk şairler Rönesans'ı gerçekleştiren Avrupa medeniyetinin ve İbrani gelenekten beslenen Hristiyan ve Müslüman inançlarının [ki bu inanca göre insan kutsaldır ve öldürmek yasaktır] savaşı ve insana uygulanan vahşeti engelleyemediklerini anlatmıştır.