




Reading Asaf Halet and Wilfred Owen Comparatively

Asaf Halet ile Wilfred Owen'in Karşılaştırmalı Bir Okuması

Araş. Gör. Dr. Halil İbrahim ARPA ¹

Abstract

This study examines Wilfred Owen's *The Parable of the Old Man and the Young* and Asaf Halet Çelebi's *Abraham* with *Quran* and *Bible*. By comparing rulers in World War I with Prophet Abraham's fatherly figure, Owen stresses that young soldiers are sacrificed on the battlefields for nothing. After a mystical inner journey, Çelebi discovers that his heart is far from the devotion and trueness of Abraham. This spiritual distance is like Owen's rulers leaving wisdom behind for political goals. While the father figure in his poem builds a fictionalised order, Çelebi's inner world is after the real and true one. Based on Lacan's symbolic order, this study compares the secular order of the European rulers and the religious order of Abraham who rejects the secular order of the Nimrod and founds his own. While doing this, Foucault's, Baudrillard's and Deleuze's works are drawn on. Firstly, religious backgrounds giving information about Abraham to the poets are investigated in detail, then the two poems are compared in this way. On this score, the parables of Abraham in *Quran*, *Old* and *New Testament* will be examined. Because there is not such a study for Çelebi's *Abraham* and Owen's poem is not examined by such a comparison; this study tries to serve a fresh reading.

Keywords: Asaf Halet Çelebi, Wilfred Owen, Prophet Abraham, symbolic order, fictionalized order, true order

Paper Type: Research

Öz

Bu çalışma Wilfred Owen'in *İhtiyar Adam ile Gencin Kıssası* ve Asaf Halet Çelebi'nin *İbrahim* şiirlerini *Kuran*, *Eski* ve *Yeni Ahit* ile birlikte ele alır. Owen, Hz. İbrahim'in baba figürü ile Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nın yöneticileri arasında bir karşılaştırma yaparak genç askerlerin savaş meydanlarında bir hiç uğruna kurban edildiğini vurgulamaktadır. Diğer bir yandan, Çelebi sufi içsel yolculuğu sonucunda onun kalbinin İbrahimi teslimiyetten ve doğruluktan uzak olduğunu farkına varır. Bu manevi mesafe, Owen'ın politik emelleri uğruna erdemleri geride bırakmış Avrupalı yöneticilerin haliyle benzerlikler göstermektedir. Onun şiirindeki bu baba figürü kurgulanmış bir düzen kurarken, Asaf Halet'in iç dünyası gerçek bir düzen peşine düşer. Lacan'ın sembolik düzeni üzerine bina edilen çalışma, savaş dönemindeki Avrupalı yöneticilerin seküler düzenini ve Hz. İbrahim'in Nemrut'un benzeri düzenini reddederek kendi dini düzenini kurmasıyla karşılaştırır. Bunu yaparken, Foucault'nun, Baudrillard'ın ve Deleuze'ün eserlerinden yararlanılmıştır. Öncelikle, her iki şaire Peygamber Hz. İbrahim bilgilerini veren dini altyapılar detaylı bir biçimde incelenecek daha sonra ise şiirler bu eksenle karşılaştırılacaktır. Bu minval üzere, *Kuran*'daki, *Eski Ahit*'teki ve *Yeni Ahit*'teki İbrahim Peygamber kıssaları incelenecek ve şiirlerle bağlantıları ortaya konacaktır. Çelebi'nin bu şiiri üzerine literatürde herhangi bir çalışma olmadığından; Owen'ın ise şiirinin bu tarz karşılaştırmalı bir okumayla ele alınmamasından dolayı bu makale yeni ve taze bir okuma sunmaya çalışmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Asaf Halet Çelebi, Wilfred Owen, Hz. İbrahim, sembolik düzen, kurgulanmış düzen, gerçek düzen

Makale Türü: Araştırma

Introduction

¹Çankırı Karatekin Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi, Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları Bölümü, hibrahimarpa@gmail.com

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As the friend of Allah, Prophet Abraham is one of the most influential characters in both *Quran* and *Bible*. In *Quran*, "When his Lord said to him, "Be a Muslim", he said "I submit myself to the Lord of the worlds"" (2008, Al Baqara, p. 131). As a result, "Allah Himself chose Abraham for an intimate friend" (p. 125). He is the symbol of devotion and trueness. Similar to *Quran*, *Bible* says that "And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God" (2008, James 2, p. 282). In *Genesis*, chapters on Abraham begin with the description of the Promised Land where he has God's words for him after whom "...shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (2008, Genesis 12, p. 12). After the death of his father, Abraham leaves his nation and country to make his own seed and land:

Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed (2008, Genesis 12, p. 12).

After God's command, Abram (name of Abraham before blessing) takes the road with his wife, Sarai, and his nephew Lot who lands on Jordan [Sodom] after a quarrel between his and Abram's herdsmen). Through Canaan, he arrives the holy land where God promises that he will bless Abram and his people. Border of the Promised Land is described by God as follows:

In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites (2008, Genesis 15, p. 16).

In *Quran*, Prophet Abraham is forced to leave his place and his people because he makes idols of non-believers into fragments. Consequently, they decide to punish him by burning, but Allah saves the Prophet and gives him Prophet Lot and a new land which is blessed by him: "And We delivered him and Lot, and brought them to the land which We had blessed for all mankind. Then We bestowed on him Isaac and Jacob as a grandson and We made each of them righteous" (2008, Al Anbiya, p. 162). Abraham's father, on the other hand, is one of the non-believers to the only God and he is mentioned as a server of other gods in *Old Testament*: "And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods" (2008, Joshua 24, p. 293). In *Quran*, his father is also narrated as a polytheist who believes in "other gods" in the shape of idols who are not referred by *Bible*. Abraham is dismissed by his father when he rejects the idols and worships Allah. In return, Abraham is rewarded with two sons and they (Isaac and Ishmael) are highly honoured and given mercy. They will become future prophets:

And relate in the Scripture of Abraham, surely he was a righteous man and prophet. When he said to his father, "O my father, why do you worship those things which do not hear, nor see, nor avail you anything? O my father! I have received the knowledge that you have not got, so follow me; I will guide you to the right way. O my father, do not worship Satan, for Satan is disobedient to the Merciful. O my father, I fear that a scourge will fall upon you from the Merciful, and you will become one of Satan's friend". He said, "O Abraham! Have you renounced my deity? If you do not desist, I will surely stone you, so get away from me a long while". Abraham said, "Peace be upon you! I will ask forgiveness of my Lord for you, for He is ever gracious to me. I forsake all of you as well as those whom you pray besides Allah; and I will pray to my Lord, and my prayers to my Lord will not be in vain. Accordingly, when he left them and they worshipped besides Allah, We bestowed on him Isaac and Jacob, and We made each of them a prophet. And We bestowed on them Our mercy and we granted them true high renown (2008, Mary, p. 152).

According to *Quran*, Prophet Abraham is a man of truth who realizes the oneness of God and his realization is thanks to the knowledge granted by Allah. He tells his disbeliever father: "O my father! I have received the knowledge that you have not got, so follow me; I will guide you to the right way" (2008, Mary, p. 152). In *Old Testament* his trueness is also mentioned by which God promises him to grant the determined lands:

And foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give it, I say, to his seed, and hast performed thy words; for thou art righteous... (2008, Nehemiah 9, p. 589).

Both *Old Testament* and *Quran* share the point that becoming a man of truth is the motivation underlying his departure from his homeland and people of his own. But they differ on other points. On one hand, *Quran* is more detailed by the reason why Prophet Abraham leaves his country and his people. On the other, *Old Testament* is referenced for the issue of holy land of which condition continues to be focus of many arguments in the Middle East.

New Testament agrees with *Old Testament* on the subject of trueness of Abraham by saying: "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (2008, Romans 4, p. 193). However, they differ on evaluation of the promise. For *New Testament*, the promise cannot be legated on account of race. It is stated that "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith"(2008, Romans 4, p. 193). Moreover, *Galatians* declares that "For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise" (2008, Galatians 3, p. 235). It is claimed that the inheritance of the promise is legated to people by faith: "So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham" (2008, Galatians 3, p. 235). At last, it is seen that the heritage reaches to Prophet Jesus and his seeds which provides a solution to the problem of inheritance of the promise: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (2008, Galatians 3, p. 236). Yet, *Quran* separates from both *Old and New Testaments* for the heritage by saying: "Surely, the nearest of people to Abraham are those who followed him and this Prophet. Allah is the Protector of only those who are believers"(2008, Al Imran, p. 34).

Both *Quran* and *Bible (Old and New Testaments)* are common in the point of Abraham's trueness is because of his belief in Allah. Besides, his devotion to Allah is tested by his sacrifice his own son as the command of his Allah. Although the name of the son who is about to be sacrificed is clearly seen as Isaac in *Bible*, Ishmael is that son for Islamic belief. Even if no name is mentioned in *Quran*, commentators use the name of Ishmael in parenthesis. One of the reasons for such comments is probably because of the order of priority: the very first verse after the story of sacrifice is "And We gave him the good news of Isaac, a prophet of the righteous" (2008, As Saffat, p. 223). The other reason is that after Abraham is saved by God from the idolaters and commanded to change his place, he wants to be granted a child for the first time just before the sacrifice story:

They said, "Build for him a furnace and cast him into the blazing fire!" Thus did they scheme against him, but We abased them all. Abraham said, "I will take refuge with my Lord; He will surely guide me. O My Lord! Grant me of the righteous." So We gave him good news of a gentle son (2008, As Saffat, p. 223).

After a safe arrival to Canaan, good tidings of children who are expected for long years by old Abraham are informed to him. In spite of this long awaiting, his devotion to the only God is tested one more time through one of his children. The sacrifice story in the *Quran* is narrated as follows:

O my Lord! Grant me of the righteous. So We gave him good news of a gentle son. When the boy reached the age to work with him, Abraham said to him: "My son! I have dreamt that I am sacrificing you. Now tell me what you think of it." He said, "My dear

father, do what you are commanded. You will find me, if Allah wills, of the patient." And when they had both submitted to Allah's will and Abraham laid down his son upon his face, We called out to him, "O Abraham! You have surely fulfilled your vision." Thus, do We reward the righteous. Surely, this was a manifest trial. We ransomed his son with a noble sacrifice, And bestowed on him the praise of later generations: "Peace be to Abraham." Thus do We reward the righteous. Surely, he was one of Our believing servants (2008, As Saffat, p. 223).

On the condition that Prophet Abraham obeys Allah's command and attempts to sacrifice his son for Allah, Prophet Abraham is rewarded with fame among later people and he is heralded with another son, Isaac, with whom they are blessed together. But, their seeds are not blessed as a nation: "And We blessed him as well as Isaac. Among their offspring were some who did good deeds, and others who were clearly unjust to their own souls" (2008, As Saffat, p. 223).

The sacrifice story of *Genesis* begins with God's words to him in a dream which is narrated by placing Isaac to the centre of the story: "And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest..." (2008, Genesis 22, p. 23). The sacrifice story in *Genesis*:

And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen (2008, Genesis 22, pp. 23–24).

As a response to his tested devotion, Abraham is blessed one more time after being blessed thanks to leaving the non-believers in his homeland:

And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice (2008, Genesis 22, p. 24).

Although Abraham has two first-born sons from different wives, Isaac is the son on whom the covenant of God with Abraham is left in the *Bible*:

Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations; Even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac; And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant, Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance; When ye were but few, even a few, and strangers in it. And when they went from nation to nation, and from one kingdom to another people... (2008, 1 Chronicles 16, p. 505).

Consequently, while both *Quran* and *Old Testament* have similar parables for the reason why Abraham is blessed, they are different in the matter of his seeds after him. Abraham is not only heralded of the lands by God but also of his seeds that are promised to be blessed in *Genesis* in return for his keeping God's charge, commandments, statutes and laws:

And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws (2008, Genesis 12, p. 29).

Unlike the verse of *Genesis* about the covenant; “And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (2008, *Genesis* 12, p. 12), Allah says in *Quran* that “My covenant does not include the transgressors” (2008, *Al Baqara*, p. 15). So, it is understood that the covenant does not cover all descendants of Abraham:

“And remember that when his Lord put Abraham to test in certain things and he fulfilled all of them. He said, "I will make you the leader of men." Abraham said, "And what of my offspring?" He said, "My covenant does not include the transgressors"” (2008, *Al Baqara*, p. 15).

Even if it is said in *Quran* that “Surely, Allah chose Adam and Noah, the family of Abraham and the family of Imran above all the people of the world” (2008, *Al Imran*, p. 33), the whole descendants are not blessed: “And We gave him good news of Isaac, a prophet of the righteous. And We blessed him and Isaac. Among their offspring were some who did good deeds, and others who were clearly unjust to their own souls” (2008, *As Saffat*, p. 223). Moreover, it is mentioned that many of the descendants are far away from Allah’s blessings in the 26th verse of the 57th Surah: “And We surely sent Noah and Abraham and bestowed on their descendants prophethood and Scriptures. Some were rightly guided, but many were transgressors” (2008, p. 271).

As a consequence, even if *Quran* and *Bible* shares some common points on Prophet Abraham’s trueness and his devotion to Allah, *Quran*, *Old Testament* and *New Testament* are completely opposed in the matters of the context of the covenant whether it covers the whole Jewish descendants or who believes in Jesus Christ or who has faith in Prophet Muhammed. These religious background information bases both Asaf Halet Çelebi’s Abraham and Wilfred Owen’s *The Parable of the Old Man and the Young*. While Çelebi draws on Prophet’s parable on idols in *Quran*, Owen refers to Genesis for the sacrifice parable in *Old Testament*. Both poets metaphorize the parables to be able to give their own messages to the reader. Even though Owen tries to depict fictionalised outside order, Çelebi strives to build his own inner order. The study firstly investigates Owen’s moral criticism, then examines Çelebi’s search for a peaceful heart. Lastly, similarities and comparisons between the poems are revealed in the conclusion.

1. Methodology

This article makes a contextual reading. Rather than analyzing themes of the two poems just as New Criticism does, the study reads the religious backgrounds of Asaf Halet Çelebi and Wilfred Owen. By drawing on the works of Jacques Lacan, Jean Baudrillard, Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze, this article compares *The Parable of the Old Man and the Young* and *Abraham*. The parables about Abraham in *Quran*, *Old Testament* and *New Testament* are examined. Thanks to this contextual reading, this paper is after an original contribution to two poets and studies about Prophet Abraham.

2. The Parable of the Old Man and the Young

With Rupert Brooke and Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen is the voice of World War I of which emblem in poetry is ‘trench’ because, unlike World War II, the first war is mainly on land and trenches are the basic strategies for fighting. Though died as early as the age of 25, he may be the first when war poetry is uttered by someone in literary fields. As a lieutenant, he joins the battle of the Somme in 1917 where “in the middle of March, Owen fell through a shell-hole into a cellar and was trapped there for three days. This experience is assumed to have contributed to the dark images of an underworld in many of his later poems”(Bloom, 2002, p. 10). During the war he comes down with shellshock as a result of severe fighting among the nations many of which share the same religion:

This turned out to be one of the most fortunate events of Owen’s brief life. His doctor believed Owen had lost contact with real life; the doctor sought to re-establish this

connection by means of a “work-cure.” Owen’s work involved contributing to—and eventually editing—the hospital magazine, *The Hydra* (Bloom, 2002, p. 12).

After this mental case, he returns to Britain to heal and meets there famous poet Siegfried Sassoon who invokes him to write his wartime feelings. In 1918, Owen returns France to be granted the Military Cross and he is killed during the battle at Western Front one week before the armistice between the fronts is announced. He could not see the materialization of the peace but had witnessed the first worldly war in that “before the collapse of Germany followed by the armistice of November 11, 1918, some 8,700,000 lives had been lost (including 780,000 British—virtually a whole generation of young men) and the prolonged horrors of trench warfare had seared themselves into the minds of survivors” (2012, p. 2016).

As he was born, the transition from Victorian attitudes in literature to modernist manifestos began step by step. Avant-gardism, imagism, vorticism, futurism, cubism and symbolism were all columns of modernist revolution against the age of Queen Victoria. The era he wrote his poems was the time of a materialist age. Just as modernists explore for innovation and invention in literature, Owen searches for an alternative with his romantic and religious style in poetry which is encircled with canons and rules of tradition. Still, “innumerable allusions bear witness to his wide reading in the Romantic/Victorian tradition, and the influence of Georgian contemporaries is also evident—Monro, Gibson, and Graves, as (obviously and pre-eminently) Sassoon” (Norgate, 1989, p. 519). “Believing like Wordsworth that poetry arises from ‘emotion recollected in tranquillity’, he sent his mind back to the experiences he had undergone at and near the front earlier in 1917” (Hibberd, 2019). With John Keats, William Butler Yeats affects his writing style. On the other hand, Bloom alleges that Yeats’ reaction to Owen’s poesy is undermining because what Owen makes people remember is what Yeats wants to forget:

Though William Butler Yeats was a considerable influence upon Owen, the great Anglo-Irish poet manifested a singular blindness towards Owen’s work. Omitting Owen from *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse*, Yeats defended his decision by calling Owen “unworthy of the poet’s corner of a country newspaper” because “he is all blood, dirt, and sucked sugar stick” (2002, p. 9).

After all, he finds his style by meeting with Sassoon and his satiric and realistic reaction against the war. For Seamus Heaney “this brave and tender poet has haunted the back of the literary mind as a kind of challenge” (1990, p. xiii). From his own words, his poesy is described as follows:

This book is not about heroes. English Poetry is not yet fit to speak of them. Nor is it about deeds, or lands, nor anything about glory, honour, might, majesty, dominion, or power, except War. Above all I am not concerned with Poetry. My subject is War, and the pity of War. The Poetry is in the pity. Yet these elegies are to this generation in no sense consolatory. They may be to the next. All a poet can do today is warn. That is why the true Poets must be truthful. If I thought the letter of this book would last, I might have used proper names; but if the spirit of it survives – survives Prussia – my ambition and those names will have achieved themselves fresher fields than Flanders (Owen, 1986, p. 5).

The war has a great burden over his shoulders. German historian and political writer Henry von Treitschke, nonetheless, describes the role of a writer in society and thus frames borders of their poesy:

What a disaster for civilization it would be if mankind blotted its heroes from memory. The heroes of a nation are the figures which rejoice and inspire the spirit of its youth, and the writers whose words ring like trumpet blasts become the idols of our boyhood and our early manhood. He who feels no answering thrill is unworthy to bear arms for his country (1916, p. 67).

For him, a writer is a tool for the State of which sustainability is also bound to the writer's repeating myths and canons of the country whether it is true or not. However, Owen is after reality and he draws attention to it through his poems. He rejects being a trumpet to invite civilians to war. His pacifist stand also appears in the writings of Virginia Woolf when the Second World War blows out. She opposes the war and becoming the tool of any kind of Fascism inside or abroad by saying that "there is another way fighting for freedom without arms; we can fight with the mind" (2009, p. 2). Thinking is her and Owen's fighting. Dylan Thomas describes his literary endeavour:

And that it is the preface, by Wilfred Owen, to a volume of his poems which was to show, to England, and the intolerant world, the foolishness, unnaturalness, horror, inhumanity, and insupportability of war, and to expose, so that all could suffer and see, the heroic lies, the willingness of the old to sacrifice the young, indifference, grief, the soul of soldiers (1954, p. 75).

He rejects Treitschke's notions for poets who are just materials and tools of the war to stress 'glory, honour, might, majesty, dominion, or power' except the War and its pity. What he tries to do is to narrate the true nature of war in that people suffer and the alleged patriotic notions do not heal or return the dead to life again. His realistic view of poetry aims at a didactic principle which is warning people by demystifying the myths attributed to the war. "The war becomes his subject while he is literally making others subject to him" (Corcoran, 2007, p. 90). He does not narrate war heroes, commanders or generals and does not praise the nation in his poems. Instead, he tries to pen what really happens to young Christ-like sacrificed soldiers in the battleground. There are no more glorious words in his poetry like many of his colleagues but words with agony, pity and sorrow. With help of ironies and satire, he criticizes the social identity and hegemony dictating poetry to become a tool of the war. War is no more a thing that should be boasted, but it is execrable. Sassoon's *The Death Bed* expresses Owen's criticism much more clearly: "He's young; he hated War; how should he die/ when cruel old campaigners win" (2021).

Edith Sitwell's *Still Falls the Rain* thematises healing powers of faith in God: "Blind as the nineteen hundred and forty nails/ Upon the Cross" (Sitwell, 1940) Just like him, Owen uses religious references based on the *Bible* for his didactic purpose to make not people "dies as cattle" as in *Anthem for Doomed Youth* (Owen, 1986, p. 13). He opposes "desperate glory" (1986, p. 17) the war makes the nation win in *Dulce et Decorum Est*. For him, there is no winnable war after his experiences in the war field. Winning a war is "the old lie: dulce et decorum est/ pro patria mori" meaning someone's death for his own country is not suitable nor nice. Rather than heroic deeds, nationalist slogans or romantic idealism used by his contemporaries, Owen depicts the real and true experiences during the war. Even if it is said by propaganda that red blood must be spilt for the continuation of the green lands of England; Europe turns into a *Waste Land*. Against this old-fashioned patriotic ideology, Owen feels the responsibility of opposing the propaganda both in society and literature with his poetry warning people for the true nature of the battle. By doing this, he bases religion to arouse the interest of the whole Europe. Even though Owen loses his concentration on divine belief in his later years, his religious sensitivity comes from his early childhood:

Under the strong influence of his devout mother he read a passage from the Bible every day and, on Sundays, would rearrange her sitting-room to represent a church. Then, wearing a linen surplice and cardboard mitre she had made, he would summon the family and conduct a complete evening service with a carefully prepared sermon (Stallworthy, 2017).

The poet uses religious references as typologies to symbolize soldiers on the battlefield like Christ or Isaac. Rivers asserts that there is an "alteration of the original title from *The Parable of the Old Man and His Son* to *The Parable of the Old Man and the Young*" (2015, p. 122). There, young represents young soldiers sacrificing themselves at the battlefield for the

sake of their people. He rewrites the sacrifice parable of Isaac by changing Biblical words 'altar and woods' with parapets and trenches to depict the soldiers' place of sacrifice on the war ground. Isaac is the soldier in the trench now, but there is no one to save him like God. Instead, the offspring of Isaac kills each other in the Great War as if Abraham slays his son. "But the old man would not so, but slew his son, /And half the seed of Europe, one by one". By these two lines, Owen criticizes the mentality of the war in that the children of Abraham act not like their great grandfather but slay each other. In the poem, Abraham symbolizes the rulers of Europe who put children of their nation into the battlefield and sacrifices them in the 'parapets' and 'trenches' for the sake of patriotic and nationalist propaganda. Still, the blood of sacrifices do not make the lands of Europe green but turn them into *Waste Land*. While young soldiers yield just as Isaac with devotion, the father figure betrays the sons, unlike Abraham. The new father figure of Europe is now constructing a Symbolic Order which dictates a social identity to personality. By the time Owen comes across the trauma of real in the battlefield, he wakes from the dream built by the father figure and begins to decode latent meanings of the structured dream in his poetry. By metonymy and metaphor, he condensates and displaces figures in two forms: one is the Church and the other is the rulers. Against this phallogocentric order in that phallus functions as the transcendental signifier of authority and power, Owen chooses marginalization by standing outside this order with his objection and criticism in his poems. As the curtains of ideology discloses, his eyes see the manifest meanings of the designated order after being mentally disabled by shellshock. His illness becomes his cure, his dreams become his reality.

In his another *Bible* based poem, *At a Calvary near the Ancre*, Owen condemns writers 'scribes' (2013, p. 37) who are propagandists imposing hate against others. But like Christ's eternal love, soldiers do not die for hate but for love towards their country. On the other hand, just as hiding Disciples of Christ during the crucifixion, priests and politicians leave soldiers alone on the battlefield. Owen revolts against the order again. This structured order is the order building Foucault's prison and mental hospital, Baudrillard's Disneyland, and Deleuze's barracks and police stations. The constructed fiction puts individuals in the vortex of Symbolic Order's realism. This fiction dictates its own truth and most people internalize it either by consent or unconscious. People live in this simulation and ecstasy but rebellious ones like Owen realizes the situation at a hospital. The relation between the real and fiction is so blurred that it is hard to define who is ill or healthy as in Owen's case, and who is criminal or innocent. The real reality is not the thing cultural hegemony designates. For Deleuze "Reality is what is actually going on in a factory, a school, a barracks, a prison, a police station" (2004, pp. 210–211) in which citizens are disciplined. The modern propagandist television is the place of hyper reality where "simulation is the ecstasy of the real" (Baudrillard, 2001, p. 190). In short, Owen revolts against this fatherly figure Symbolic Order that structures the reality. Even though the order may refer his marginalisation as madness that is "a truth to which we had too long remained blind" (Foucault, 2001, p. 229), he must be truthful because "the true Poets must be truthful" and warns people against fiction, hyper reality, ecstasy and simulation of the constructed order.

Foucault quotes a correspondent's description for the modern order that is sent to *La Phalange* journal's 10 August 1836 issue. The cities of Europe are organized just like constructing a military camp:

Moralists, philosophers, legislators, flatterers of civilization, this is the plan of your Paris, neatly ordered and arranged, here is the improved plan in which all like things are gathered together. At the centre, and within a first enclosure: hospitals for all diseases, almshouses for all types of poverty, madhouses, prisons, convict-prisons for men, women and children. Around the first enclosure, barracks, courtrooms, police stations, houses for prison warders, scaffolds, houses for the executioner and his assistants. At the four corners, the Chamber of Deputies, the Chamber of Peers, the Institute and the Royal Palace. Outside, there are the various services that supply the central enclosure,

commerce, with its swindlers and its bankruptcies; industry and its furious struggles; the press, with its sophisms; the gambling dens; prostitution, the people dying of hunger or wallowing in debauchery, always ready to lend an ear to the voice of the Genius of Revolutions; the heartless rich ... Lastly the ruthless war of all against all' (1995, p. 307).

In this modern rational organization, the subjects are trained, 'educated', and disciplined to be integrated into the order/jungle. He defines it by bringing out that "Order is what remains when everything that is prohibited has in fact been prevented. I think this negative thought and technique is typical of a legal code" (2009, p. 46). Owen's poem, then, can be evaluated

as a moral counter-conduct, as a refusal of civic education, of society's values, and also as a refusal of a certain obligatory relationship to the nation and the nation's salvation, as a refusal of the actual political system of the nation, and as a refusal of the relationship to the death of others and of oneself (Foucault, 2009, p. 198).

This plan has changed. The number of the controlled subjects increases by the time they become citizens and then consumers. Thus, power disseminates everywhere and authorizes everyone. What Foucault does is that he fragilise historically constructed and naturalized order.

Structured objective reality tells young men of the country that "women of Britain say 'Go!'" Placing all of the women's emotions towards the war to this single call simply means propaganda. Yet, objectivity is manifested by language. According to this objective truth, each woman of Britain wish their husbands to be enlisted in the war. Neither husbands nor wives can become the author of their life. Instead, they are subjected to the constructed order, reality and language. The role of propagandist language places itself also in poetry. For especially the colonization process, James Thomson's *Ode: Rule, Britannia* turns into an anthem for the country by stressing "Rule, Britannia, rule the waves; / Britons never will be slaves" (2021). Because language needs signifiers and signifieds for communication, patriotic verses need to be internalized by the listeners. To strengthen and decorate the discourse poets are the ones who can do this job best. Still, the message the signified gives does not reach Owen but the sign he gets is not 'a wave' or 'a call from women' but 'trenches' in the war causing deaths of many young soldiers. Instead of Prophet Abraham's compassionate language, depicted father figures in Owen poesy use patriotic discourses to trap the young generation of the nation. Rather than using passive signified codes, Owen actively signifies behind the curtain hegemony closes. Signifiers are not the rulers anymore, but poets can also become the sign of a key opening the path towards the real reality.

On the other hand, Prophet Abraham is also a father figure in Islamic belief. In opposition to Owen's view, he is the destroyer of the present order of his time. Moreover, he revolts against two father figures in Harran. Firstly, he disobeys to his own father, then, to the ruler of the state who believe in idols. Abraham arises with God's command to destroy them and invite people to the new order. Asaf Halet Çelebi's *Abraham* handles this issue to cure himself just as Wilfred Owen.

3. Abraham

Asaf Halet Çelebi (b.1907, d. 1958) is one of the leading literary figures of the freshly founded Turkish Republic with his pure and abstract literary style. He is the founder of 'Strange Movement' with Oktay Rifat, Melih Cevdet Anday and Orhan Veli Kanık. This movement rejects the old and traditional ways of poetry and its canons. In opposition to these three poets, Çelebi tries to build tradition again with modernist movements such as surrealism and existentialism. By doing this, he uses modern free verse while drawing on Ottoman poetry, Indian mysticism and Islamic Sufism. He describes his poesy as "an invitation to Nirvana or the story how to reach Nirvana" (2018, p. 269).²

²All the translations are made by me.

On the backside of *Om Mani Padme Hum*, the reviewer describes Çelebi's style as both Eastern and Western. He says that "When West is headed for at full speed in the 1940s, he founded the way of becoming and Eastern reformist" (1993). Uçman details this synthesis with Çelebi's using Ottoman poetry, Sufism and French Lettrism:

He draws the attention of literary community with his new tacit and strange poems found odd by readers and with his first book published in 1939 after a long search. In these idiosyncratic poems which are predominantly mystic, it is seen that aestheticism of Ottoman poetry and French Lettrist's sense of art based on connotations of letters are sometimes combined in his poetry (1993).

This hybridization makes his poetry strange and difficult for readers who may find lots of varying elements in a universal poem:

With Mystic tendency, components of former civilizations and cultures, foreign and archaic words and statements, fantastic imaginations, tales and traces of subconscious he has a strange world of poetry. He presents a different content and voice to Turkish poetry. Because of this characteristic, he has not been easily understood and his poems have been regarded as strange (Kırımlı, 1995, p. 1).

Moreover, his poesy systematizes different stories all around the world whether it is foreign to his culture or not:

Writing original poetries, Asaf Halet Çelebi builds a very large connotation system without neglecting musicality. By using often universal symbols (archetypes), he makes his poetry in a form of former tribes' magicians' ecstasy or a wandering person who dreams or who is hypnotized (Aydemir, 2014, p. 236).

Çelebi is modern in his form but traditional in content. For classic Turkish poetry, a poet is the key opening the secrets of life. Çelebi is well aware of it for his poesy:

By basing a hadith, he tells that shining huge jewel of the Throne are hidden in "treasures which can only be opened by tongues of poets" and says that this jewel is "the genuine poem eluding redundant which is cleaned and revived" (Narlı, 2006, p. 173).

Due to this hybrid and universal style, he writes a poem for the Battle of France. He narrates that "I want to cry by kissing/ burnt children of Paris/ maybe they sleep with my tales" (Çelebi, 1993, p. 41). Just as Wilfred Owen, he cannot remain insensitive to wars. Rather than this poem, this study takes *Abraham* to compare with Owen's *The Parable of Old Man and the Young* due to their common theme, Prophet Abraham.

Prophet Abraham is a figure in the collective unconscious for Islamic, Christian and Jewish societies. The term 'collective unconscious' is firstly used by Carl Jung who is one of the leading scientists in psychology along with Jacques Lacan and Sigmund Freud. Rather than sexual and dream analysis of Freud, Jung takes the repository of beliefs and myths of civilization as his main argument to construct his own discourse. According to this discourse, primitive images, attitudes and beliefs shape the collective consciousness of all cultures. This universal psychological idea finds itself also in fairy tales. Firstly, an adventure begins then the hero is examined before he fights with the evil. Lastly, the hero beats the evil and order in society is constructed again. The welfare of society is thus bound to heroes.

Both Çelebi and Owen draw on the collective unconscious in their society. But as it is seen the quotations above from *Quran*, *Old and New Testaments*, Prophet Abraham brings a disorder against the present order. His society does not accept his invitation and he has to migrate from his homeland. But for his followers (Islamic, Christian and Jewish societies), Prophet Abraham is the sign of devotion and trueness. While he is the example of a true servant of God, the followers mainly forget his life and its messages. Both Çelebi and Owen argue this issue in their poems. Unlike fictionalised order of the hegemony Owen describes, Prophet Abraham is after the real and just order. By destroying idols, he deconstructs the falsely

constructed structure under which lays the selfish desires of the architect. Prophet Abraham realizes the real construction above Pharaoh and his state. Then, he leaves to build a new and true order in a new land.

Çelebi narrates an analogy between Prophet's struggle and his in *Abraham*. After many conflicts, he tries to construct his own order in his heart:

Abraham
Take idols inside me down
With the axe in your hands
Who is placing new ones
In place of the destroyed others again

The sun demolished my ice-house
Huge ices fell down
The Neck of the idols was broken
Abraham
Who is bringing the sun to my home

Beauties walking around Hanging Gardens
Made idols by Nebuchadnezzar
I who embrace timeless gardens
With whom the beauties have stayed
Abraham
Who is breaking my heart
By assuming an idol (1993, p. 10).

His heart becomes the place of polytheism. Just like the name of poetry, he tries to destroy the idols. Still, new ones erect at every turn by saying: "Who is placing new ones / In place of the destroyed others again". In the second stanza, the sun symbolizing God and Islam breaks them into pieces. The place they stay is the "ice-house" of the poet. Even if a home may symbolize a constructed order, it is as fragile as ice that symbolizes polytheism. The last stanza problematizes this construction-deconstruction-reconstruction issue. Repeatedly, his heart and his order are destroyed. As he tries to build it again, it is demolished. The materials he uses for the construction of the home are not solid but thawy. Therefore, the sun melts them. His inside order is not truly structured without finding the real and high order which is beyond the idols he resurrects in his heart.

Conclusion

Finally, building a state does not always mean constructing a phallogocentric order. Parable of Prophet Abraham in *Quran*, *Old* and *New Testaments* narrates such an order against the disorder of the villain ruler. Both Owen's criticism towards the fictionalised order and Çelebi's clamour against his self-fictionalised heart are directly related to the Prophet and his struggle. His devotion and trueness become their touchstone to evaluate what is going on outside and inside. Owen's outer world refers to the fatherly figure of him and Çelebi's inner world cites him as the figure of destroyer of any kind of idols. By moving away from Prophet's parable, the rulers do not only build new fictional orders by destroying the life of young soldiers

in Owen's poem but also erects idols again and again in hearts like Çelebi's. While Owen draws on sacrifice parable in *Old Testament*, Çelebi refers to the idols parable in *Quran* which is narrated neither in *Old* nor *New Testament*.

In a very archetypal way, young civilians are enlisted for war by labelling them as heroes for the welfare of society. By demystifying this war tradition, Owen opposes patriotic discourse hegemony constructs in his poetry. He even questions the ontology of the war by saying in *Exposure*: "What are we doing here?" (1986, p. 19). "For love of God seems dying" (1986, p. 19), young soldiers are slaying each other now while there is a father guarding his son in their religion. Father-like rulers of the society now sacrifice them at trenches not for the sake of God or of the country but of their own selfish desires. Prophet Abraham, on the other hand, leaves his father and his ruler's fictionalised order to mount the only and true order commanded by God to him. In a similar way, Çelebi tries hard to build his inner structure but the idols he erects prohibit him each time albeit his unyielding endeavour. Both rulers in Owen's criticism and the heart Çelebi carries have their own voracious longings for selfhood. While English poet's *The Parable of the Old Man and the Young* is based on the sacrifice parable of Prophet Abraham, *Abraham* of Turkish poet refers to the idol parable of the same prophet. Both poems criticize falsified order whether constructed outside or inside. According to the parables, the true order is the one that is just, non-fictionalised, protective and purifying constructed according to Father's commands. The father roles the rulers imitate in Owen's poesy only build their own worlds for the sake of their own selves for which they wage war and sacrifice the young generation of their country. On the other hand, what Owen makes the reader remember is the messages in the parable of Prophet Abraham and his son. Prophet's fatherly duty is to protect his son and his race in him. In Çelebi's case, Prophet's act is against the false and fictionalised order polytheism mounts. By the time a rival against the order of the Creator erects in heart of the poet, his personal order is demolished. Whereas, Prophet Abraham giving his name to Çelebi's poem, is the one who put idols into pieces. He leaves his polytheist father and his society. For both poetries, building an order whether inside or outside carry such a great prominence that false and fictionalised order destroy the lives of people both physically and spiritually. In this sense, moving away from the parables of Prophet Abraham who is the father of three big religions Islam, Christianity and Judaism make people forget his relation with the Father commanding him to structure an order far from polytheism and selfish desires.

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ETİK ve BİLİMSEL İLKELER SORUMLULUK BEYANI

Bu çalışmanın tüm hazırlanma süreçlerinde etik kurallara ve bilimsel atıf gösterme ilkelerine riayet edildiğini yazar(lar) beyan eder. Aksi bir durumun tespiti halinde Afyon Kocatepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi'nin hiçbir sorumluluğu olmayıp, tüm sorumluluk makale yazarlarına aittir.