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Wilfred Owen's Anger Over the Loss of Young Soldiers' Lives in the Poem "Anthem for Doomed Youth"(*)

Amal M. A. Ibrahim

Assistant Professor

English Department, Al Baha University
College of Science and Art Almakhwah

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غضب ويلفريد أوين من مقتل الجنود الشباب في قصيدة "نشيد الشباب المنكوب"

أمل محمد علي إبراهيم
أستاذ مساعد قسم اللغة الانجليزية
جامعة الباحة، كلية العلوم والآداب المخواة

الملخص

تسلط الدراسة الضوء على غضب ويلفريد أوين من فقدان أرواح الجنود الشباب في قصيدة "نشيد الشباب المنكوب". أهداف الدراسة هي إظهار غضب ويلفريد أوين بسبب فقدان أرواح الجنود الشباب، وإظهار الحالة الجسدية والنفسية للجنود بعد الحرب، وإبراز لغة الشعر الحربي مع التركيز على بعض المواضيع، مثل: المعاناة والموت والعنف ورعب الجيش واليأس الذي قدمه الشاعر. واستخدم البحث المنهج الوصفي والتحليلي لفهم رسالة أوين حول رفضه تشجيع الجنود الشباب في الحرب. ووفقاً لخلاصة الدراسة، يجب إيلاء اهتمام أكبر لأولئك الذين يدافعون عن وطنهم، ويجب الاعتراف والتقدير لتضحياتهم عندما يموتون في الحرب. ويجب مراعاة الحالة النفسية لهؤلاء الجنود.

الكلمات المفتاحية: ولفريد أوين، شعر الحرب، الجنود، الشعراء، العبيثية.



Wilfred Owen's Anger Over the Loss of Young Soldiers' Lives in the Poem “*Anthem for Doomed Youth*”

Amal M. A. Ibrahim

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Abstract

The study highlights Wilfred Owen's anger over the Loss of Young Soldiers' Lives in the Poem “*Anthem for Doomed Youth*”. The objectives of the study are to show the anger of Wilfred Owen over the loss of young soldiers' lives, to show the physical and psychological state of the soldiers after the war, and to highlight the language of war poetry emphasizes some topics, such as suffering and death, violence, terror by the army, and hopelessness presented by the poet. The paper used a descriptive and analytical methodology to comprehend Owen's message about his refusal to funeral young soldiers in war. According to the study's conclusion, greater consideration must be given to those who defend their country, and their sacrifice when they pass away in war has to be recognized and appreciated. Consideration must be taken of the psychological state of those soldiers.

Keywords: Wilfred Owen, war poetry, soldiers, poets, absurdity.



Introduction

According to Webster's Dictionary, poetry is defined as writing that uses meaning, sound, and rhythm to create a specific feeling through a concentrated creative awareness of reality expressed in language choices and patterns. A literary genre known as "War Poetry" emerged during the First World War. It is a reminder of the harsh reality of soldier life during the "First World War." The majority of the war poets were young men who fought in the Western Front trenches either as soldiers or as volunteers. War poets addressed moral dilemmas such as bravery or cowardice, duty or guilt, pride in one's country or one's existence, and life or death in their poetry. Because soldier poets portray the futility of war rather than its severity, war poets, also known as trench poets, are referred to as "Anti-war poets." They saw the horrors of contemporary battle, anything that causes horrors, to humanity, animals, wire fencing, chemical attacks, shell shock, and machine guns. They also experienced the boredom, pointlessness, and despair of trench life. While some of them survived the conflict with bodily and psychological wounds, others were killed in war. The following is a list of the most well-known anti-war poets who were both active participants in the war and observed the cruelty committed in the war: Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Graves, Issac Rosenberg, Rupert Brooke, and Edward Thomas. War poetry is a strong and persistent genre of literature that can help in gaining knowledge and compassion for the struggles of people living through times of conflict. We can also examine and evaluate the reasons behind and consequences of violence and conflict by analyzing war poetry. Poetry about war can also inspire us to work toward achieving peace and justice in the world. The study is to display the anger of Wilfred Owen over the loss of young soldiers' Lives in his poem "Anthem for Doomed Youth". The study demonstrates what happened to dead soldiers who had not been buried after their bloodshed and who had been left dead on the battlefields like animals in slaughterhouses. War has been defined by Webster's Dictionary as an open, declared hostile military conflict between states or nations, or as an extended duration of such conflict. This reflects a unique political-rationalistic perspective on war and conflict, which argues that war needs to be publicly announced and committed by governments. There exist multiple minor, self-imposed restrictions, such as international law and traditions, which are hardly noticeable but do not significantly affect the use of force. War aims to force



our will to act on the enemy by using force. In this case, physical force through conflict, as moral authority, can only come from the state and the law. Logically, the main objective of war is to weaken the enemy to achieve our goals. The aim, which rejects the objective as disconnected from it, takes its place. The study seeks to highlight the anger of the war poet Wilfred Owen at young fighters who die in battle and are not honored as war heroes or shown gratitude. According to Das (2007), the language of war poetry highlights a variety of themes, such as suffering and pain, death, harassment of soldiers, violence, destruction, and uproar against mechanized arms and weapons. Modern war poetry portrays the scenes of trenches, smoke, bombardment, attack, bloodshed, ugliness, and death.

According to Eagleton (1948), war is a tool that can be used, for good or bad, to achieve a goal. Every human community needs war for reasons, some of which have been acknowledged by humanity as being honorable objectives. It has been used to settle disputes, uphold justice, and redress wrongs, all of which are essential functions. For these reasons, it is possible to say without exaggeration that no more illogical, cruel, wasteful, or unfair system has ever been created, yet this does not alter the truth. According to international law, war, in theory, can only occur between states or other sovereign political entities. Therefore, the greatest degree of political organization can settle disputes through war. According to Aron (1966) the majority of people who have supported war as a sociopolitical phenomenon have also adopted as their central tenet that there is a fundamental distinction between domestic conflicts, for which there are usually means of achieving a peaceful resolution, and international conflicts, which take place in a state of chaos. Wars have been shown to directly involve governmental entities like the military and foreign office. States' lives and deaths could be in danger since war is conducted on a global basis. In the common definition, according to Joseph (2003), war is a conflict between political parties that involves battles that last for a long time and are significant in scope. Sociologists typically only use the term to describe these conflicts when they start and are handled in socially acceptable forms. They view war as an official practice that is authorized by law or custom. The word is typically only used in conflicts where the opposing parties are sufficiently evenly matched in strength to make the outcome unknown for a while. Armed disputes involving large states are typically referred to as pacifications, military expeditions, or



explorations; those involving minor states are referred to as interventions or retaliations; and those involving internal factions are referred to as rebellions or insurrections in these instances if there is resistance. Rohlf (2010) mentioned that there are two primary schools of contemporary thinking about the origins of war. One assigns war to specific basic biological and psychological traits or urges, whereas the other assigns it to particular social structures and relationships. Regarding whether war is preventable, there are believers in both schools. Some facts about the poet's life experiences and primary concepts will be revealed. Because of the devastating war conflicts that occur in many different nations and regions, the field of war poetry has given rise to horrible conditions in the world today to reflect some experiences that faced some war poets. Reisman (2011) mentioned that English poets who fought in that warfare produced some of the most outstanding poetry about real combat written by real men in the army. According to Abdul Muttaleb and Hamadneh (2023), not only is Wilfred Owen's poetry a literary phenomenon, but it also serves as a warning to the world about war and its terrible effects due to the signals of agony and horrors of war that are represented in his poems. This vision concerns all war poets who suffered horrors and insecurity during the First World War.

Lewis (1965) claims that Owen is motivated to select his war's theme for perfection by a revolution and a force in his mind. His development, family, and life experiences seem to have had the greatest impact on how imaginative he has become. A comprehensive examination of Wilfred Owen's poetry, viewed from its textuality, historical-biographical, and moral-philosophical perspectives, reveals him not only as a poet of war but, more crucially, as a poet against war and its horrors. This analysis goes beyond all critical opinions about Owen as a poet, soldier, and human being. Ngide (2016) mentioned that by portraying what Owen himself refers to as "The Pity of War," Owen uses his firsthand description of the horrifying and terrible experiences of soldiers who are dying like cattle defending their countries. War spread every war. Some Arabic poets also wrote war poems. According to Warren (2022), some Arabic poets like Abu Al-Tayyib Al-Mutanabbi wrote about war, who said:

Horses are of no use
to noblemen or cannas
if there are no noblemen above them
Brother, war has exhausted her.



The impact of war on young soldiers who died on the battlefield, remains there for an extended period, and are not revered, buried, or remembered as heroes is the subject of my paper objectives of the study are:

- 1- To show the anger of Wilfred Owen over the Loss of young soldiers' lives
- 2- To show the physical and psychological state of soliders after war
- 3- To highlight the language of war poetry which emphasizes some topics, such as suffering and death, violence, terror by the army, and hopelessness.

Methodology

Most of the data used in this study was taken from pre-existing sources, which made it easy to analyze and draw significant conclusions. Public and private websites, journals, and articles are some of the data sources. When a study aims to accomplish specific goals based on earlier research, and there has been a significant amount of work done on the research subject. The researcher used a descriptive and analytical approach to the poem "*Anthem for Doomed Youth*". written by Wilfred Owen to show the anger over the loss of young soldiers' Lives in the Poem. The researcher tried to highlight some themes, such as suffering and death, violence, hopelessness, and terror suffered by soldiers which showed the poet, 's anger.

Literature Review

Significant changes in many areas of life for people were brought about by World War I, commonly known as The Great War. Despite being the most fatal conflict in human history due to its high death rate and usage of the most advanced weapons, it had a significant impact on literary production Martin (2012) mentioned that while Owen in the hospital due to shell shock, Owen writes about the gore and misery of warfare and expresses his fury at the senseless deaths of several troops who refused to talk about the honor of war out of patriotism. The Victorian era's literary style gave way to a more realistic and coarse portrayal of the horrors of battle in literature, while an unusual disease known as shell shock—which was closely linked to combat—was identified. The literary style used by two war poets, Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen, may be understood by understanding the clinical signs of shell shock, a mental condition that is examined in

Acording to Hipp (2005) mentioned that like Sassoon, Owen was a soldier who experienced great distress by the fighting and wrote several pieces about



the horrors of the Great War. Owen and his colleague Sassoon have a close relationship. This poet was able to write several poems about wartime incidents, including *Indeed*, the latter had a strong and beneficial impact on Owen, enabling him to express the meaninglessness of the struggle and the awful crimes that ultimately took place while he was serving in the army. Owen "wrote to tell the truth: the honest, vivid, horrific truth about modern warfare," which was the most essential aspect and showed his anger toward soldiers who died like cattle. "*Anthem for Doomed Youth*" demonstrates Owens's first poetic approach to addressing these issues and describing the terrible horrors and anger of war that one cannot forget. He doesn't discuss war explicitly in this poem; instead, he criticizes the killing of a generation of young men and describes his personal experience of the sorrows of death all around him through a sequence of horrible pictures.

Results and Discussion

Wilfred Owen was raised in Birkenhead and Shrewsbury and was born in Oswestry on the Welsh border in 1893 and was one of the best voices of the First World War. 1918 saw Owen's passing. In his lifetime, only four of his poems were published; as a result, he was largely forgotten at the time of his death. Even yet, he had dabbled in verse as a child and had always been determined to be a poet. Teaching in Bordeaux and Bagnères-de-Bigorre, France, from 1913 to 1915, he worked on the rhyming patterns that would eventually become a distinctive aspect of his poetry, but it wasn't until the summer of 1917 that he discovered his true voice. In 1915, Owen enlisted in the British Army. He was forced to return to Britain due to shell shock during his first active duty missions at Serre and St. Quentin from January to April 1917. He had the opportunity to meet one of his literary heroes, Siegfried Sassoon, while receiving treatment at the Craig Lockhart War Hospital in Edinburgh. Sassoon provided him with suggestions and motivation to use his combat experiences as inspiration for his poetry. Wilfred Owen, who grew up in Birkenhead and Shrewsbury, and was born in Oswestry on the Welsh border in 1893, was one of the best voices of the First World War. The year 1918 saw Owen's death. Only four poems were published in his life. As a result, he was largely forgotten at the time of his death. However, he had dabbled in poetry as a child and was always determined to be a poet. He taught in Bordeaux and Bagnières-de-Bigorre, France from 1913 to 1915, working



on rhyme patterns that eventually became a distinctive aspect of his poetry, but it was not until the summer of 1917 that he discovered his true voice. In 1915, Owen joined the British Army. He was forced to return to Britain due to the trauma he suffered during his first active duty tour of Surrey and St Quentin from January to April 1917. He had the opportunity to meet one of his literary heroes, Siegfried Sassoon, while receiving treatment in the Craig Lockhart War. Hospital in Edinburgh. Sassoon gave him suggestions and incentives to use his combat experiences as inspiration for his poetry. Wilfred Owen was a young poet whose vibrant poetic essence was beginning to blossom, and World War I was fiercely breaking out. Wilfred joined the Allied forces on the Western Front.

The young poet's feelings and his senses were shaken. He suffered a nervous breakdown and was sent for treatment to one of Scotland's military hospitals. There he meets Sassoon, a prominent poet, and a close friendship develops between them. Sassoon advises him to document the brutality of war in his poems. Owen was a soldier in the First World War and one of the most well-known anti-war poets of the era. The most significant of his five poems, which were only published during his lifetime, were released after his death. His most significant poems are Futility, Strange Meeting, Anthem for Doomed Youth, Dulce et Decorum Est, and Insensibility. He depicted the terrifying trench warfare and the miserable shadow of soldiers' lives in his poetry. Owen writes his poems depicting the horrors of war. His poems are classified as among the greatest war poems. This shows how war poets reflect their bitter experiences of the First World War. According to Kendall (2007) Owen utilized poetry as a form of treatment. Psychologically, he sought to forget the traumatic experiences that the poetry themselves are based on. Owen's war poetry lies "in pity," as he put it, for friend and foe alike. He supported this idea by stating that the best war poetry combines bitterness and nostalgia because it was perceived as emerging from the great disillusion of the First World War.

In this poem, Anthem for Doomed Death, Wilfred Owen, displayed English troops who lost their lives in the First World War were portrayed as having died in such huge numbers that a great number of their corpses were never recovered. According to Perrine (1992) the octave, which contains the first eight lines of a classic Petrarchan sonnet, provides insight into the death



that these First World War troops experienced. Owen uses this metaphor to make his point about war and the fate of the soldiers. Instead of having their funeral ceremonies or acknowledgment of their sacrifice, they were placed to rest there without any individual and private funeral ceremonies, far from their families. The corpses of these brave troops who protect and defend our homelands were like cattle floating in slaughterhouses. This proves the anger of Wilfred Owen with the death of the young soldiers in this miserable way.

Anthem for Doomed Youth

By Wilfred Owen

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?

— Only the monstrous anger of the guns.

Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle

Can patter out their hasty orisons.

No mockeries now for them; no prayers nor bells;

Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,—

The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;

And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?

Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes

Shall shine the holy glimmers of goodbyes.

The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;

Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,

And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds (In Ferguson and Stallworthy, 2005, 1386 L1-14)

The the physical and psychological toll of war affects both those who participate in it and those who do not. The worst psychological effects of war are post-traumatic stress disorder, hopelessness, and anxiety, whereas the worst physical effects are death, injury, famine, disease, and disability. This belief agrees with Vella, (2003), who states that Owen gives the comprehensive depiction of war he can by capturing not only the physical context of battle and its devastating effects on the unfortunate soldier, but also a sense of loss, a sympathy for human suffering, and ultimately, a keen perception of tragic intensity. Even in a state of grief, warriors frequently



reflect on the good times from their time in high school and college. Painful memories of better times emerge. They are also separated from their families and homes. Their hearts are broken by the memories of their loved ones. Soldiers often want to reach out to their loved ones and share their sorrow with them, but they are deprived of these chances because of their duty to their country. They suffer the loss of all the small pleasures in their family while being in a war, being apart from their loved ones. They are unsure about whether they will be able to be with their families when they come home, and there is no promise that they will return home when they want to. The brutality of war destroys soldiers, instills terror, and causes emotional suffering in both soldiers and society.

In other words, Owen's war poetry, goes beyond and beyond the typical objectives of "poetry of protest", since it is really above and beyond them. Abdul Muttaleb and Hamadneh (2019) in their article, War Poetry stated that Wilfred Owen as a Soldier and Poet", that his "imagination is overflowing with horrors and bloody war pictures." His imagination was sparked, and his mind was thoroughly gripped by the battle experience my belief goes with Baker (2007) that the terrible experience of war left its mark on the minds and imaginations of poets who experienced the conflict, including Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon, and Rupert Brooke. As a result, these poets were unable to simply produce poetry that glorified nature. Owen, 's creative mind is engaged in evoking and responding to a sense of commitment towards/among a lot of public types all around the world. "**Anthem for Doomed Youth**" was a poem written to express the way the soldiers' corpses were scatted like cattle on the battlefield. Owen conveyed the hilarious view of the "absurd of War" and how young soldiers have died like cattle by using appropriate language and techniques. He wanted to highlight the "absurdity of War" as the primary subject of the poem. Although he made an effort to steer clear of a realistic portrayal of the horrors of war and instead chose to project emotions, realism in this context was considered as having a political connotation to opposing war. When we examine Owen's poem more closely, we can see that it has elements of a conventional elegy and that it addresses a depressing circumstance. The first eight lines of a Petrarchan sonnet titled "Anthem for Doomed Youth," consisting of an octave and a sestet, depict battle actions that replicate the themes of gloom and traditional burial that soldiers are unaware of. Wilfred Owen created an unusual lyric sonnet called "**Anthem**



for Doomed Youth." The poet Owen, a former World War I soldier, reflects on his own experience to compile verses that mourn the loss of young soldiers in this horrible way.

Bailey (2009) mentioned the terrible reality of war and its effects on young men and their families are depicted in Owen's poem "Anthem for Doomed Youth" as a result of his experiences and overpowering sense of outrage toward war. The third-person poem by Owen is structured like a Petrarchan sonnet and rhymes in a manner reminiscent of a Shakespearean sonnet. When read more closely, Owen's poem addresses a somber subject with characteristics of the classic elegy, an octave, and a sestet-length Petrarchan sonnet. When read more closely, Owen's poem addresses a grim situation with characteristics of the classic elegy. The opening eight lines of a Petrarchan sonnet called "Anthem for Doomed Youth," which consists of an octave and a sestet, depict wartime actions that resemble the themes of grief and traditional burial that the soldiers are unaware of. Lines 11 and 12, which rhyme with a bleak declaration at the end, are the only lines in the poem that differ from the Shakespearean rhyme pattern. In his poem Anthem for Doomed Youth," the poet inserts rhetorical questions. To emphasize the subject, establish the impact, and persuade the reader to think about the obvious response, he inserts a rhetorical question to begin each verse. This sonnet-style poem was written in the iambic pentameter. Each rhetorical question is followed by seven lines that provide suitable replies. Likewise, it is recognized for its exceptional use of onomatopoeia. What advantage does it possess for those who "die like cattle" to sound the death knell? His stinging query dehumanizes public figures when compared to those who sacrifice their lives for the sake of their country. What passing bells for those who die like cattle?" the speaker asks as his opening statement. He immediately and firmly repeats his response. No, is the response. These awful alienated creatures do not deserve to die in a church bell-ringing ceremony, at least not in the opinion of this speaker. Of course, the calamities of war have blinded this speaker, and he is still unable to see that every aspect of life also has its horrors and that war is but one of the many horrifying misdeeds that humanity commits against one another. However, he notes that the brave soldier has only "the savage fury of the muskets" and "the quick stuttering rattle of rifles" "to sound their hasty clamor." It is very unlikely that this speaker would claim that those who die at the hands of murderers and thieves receive no spiritual ceremonies



in honor of their lives. According to Mahmud (2009) "Anthem for Doomed Youth" is primarily focused on the horrors of war, which is considered one of the characteristics of war poetry, especially the deaths of young men battling on the front lines. Mahmud's (2009) view goes with my vision of war that causes horror to soldiers and makes soldiers hopeless and pessimistic. Here, Owen can effectively convey his anger at the grief and death of the young men who will not be offered the honor of a funeral while their loved ones continue to mourn their worthless deaths.

In the *Anthem For Doomed Youth* poem, Owen juxtaposes the brutality of a battle with the respectability of a funeral. A hymn of gratitude, loyalty, or nationalism is referred to as an "Anthem," and Owen uses the word sarcastically to criticize the admiration or terror that is shown for the young warriors. The poem deploys rhetorical issues to emphasize the unseemliness of the deaths. The personification and alliteration of weapons increase the brutality of their death further: "the monstrous anger of the guns... the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle". By using the terms "hasty orisons" and choirs, Owen preserves the contrast. Yet, these choirs are characterized as "The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells" rather than the somber sounds associated with hymn chanting. The poem's core theme is a funeral. The poem wonders whether there will even be a funeral. What passing bells will chime in memory of the deceased? No, just rifle and machine gun fire. What kind of funeral pall is expected? Just the gloomy state of spouses and girlfriends. The poet claims that soldiers who "die like cattle" have no ceremonies or celebrations and that their deaths are without "prayer or bells." The speaker regrets the reality that soldiers who lose their lives in battle have no access to spiritual support and are instead left with nothing but the crude and cruel implements of war, "the wailing and maddening choruses of weeping shells;/And the trumpet that calls them from the mournful flames. A lie that crawled out of the guts of Satan is claimed by the poet in this absurd insult to the dying hero's spirit. It is actually through the kind of art that aims to shock while degrading people who deserve respect, honor, and appreciation that the apparent inequity of a soldier dying in battle is realized. It is actually through the type of art that aims to astonish while degrading people who deserve respect, honor, and respect that the apparent injustice of a soldier dying in battle is realized. They were still at home, waiting and anxious, but they weren't even there. It suggests that all of these men are dying and not even



receiving proper funerals, which are regarded to be spiritual ceremonies for those who passed away not dissimilar from the somber religious solace. Here, "the pallor of girls' brows" honors fallen troops, and the grieving women's patient feelings are not different from the gloomy religious relief. It provides solace in realizing that the deceased's loved ones will remember them. The religious and social mourning rituals are calming and elegant in contrast to the brutality of their deaths. In addition to that, long after the war has ended, trauma still exists. The WHO evaluated in 2005 how common mental illnesses were among those soldiers impacted by humanitarian crises like war. In combat zones, those who are still at war or have recently ended, suffer from depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, or post-traumatic stress disorder. It is possible for trauma-related mental health issues to be inherited from one generation to the next, since children of conflict survivors may have increased rates of anxiety and depression. The WHO's evaluation agrees with the objective of the study that war has a physical and psychological impact on soldiers. Owen has displayed through his vision of anger and how soldiers were left on the battlefield without any gratitude or appreciation after their deaths. The most important thing is the psychological impact after war on those who are alive.

Conclusion

Wilfred Owen is considered one of the most distinguished war poets. His aim in writing poetry was to tell the truth, not to give it a romantic, traditional, or dramatic character. Without losing his artistic harmony or allowing hatred to penetrate his works, Owen succeeds in portraying the reality of war –the absurdity, boredom, helplessness, and horror - as well as its futility. In the *Anthem for Doomed Youth*, Owen addresses the meaninglessness of war, as does all of his poetry composed while he was fighting. He shows his anger at how those who die "as cattle" die in a prank of a funeral in the opening stanza, criticizing the whole devastation and chaos of war and its weaponry acting as the bells, prayers, and choir for the dead. This satire implies that battle is pointless, leads to disappointment and Owen shows his anger about the soldiers' funerals on the battlefield are mocking, their loved ones at home honor their deaths with sincere, somber anthems. His poem serves as a memorial to the millions of soldiers who gave their lives in battle.



Recommendation

In the future wars probably go on and destroy soldier's feelings. In order to provide adequate and effective care to upcoming war-died soldiers, additional empirical studies on, promoting, more care are needed.

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