

A Mystical Reading of Ḥāfīz's Translation by Robert Bly and Leonard Lewisohn

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Abstract—Robert Bly and Leonard Lewisohn are among the latest translators of Ḥāfīz who have selectively translated thirty ghazals of Ḥāfīz into English. A close investigation of their translation reveals how they have manipulated the original texts to a great extent which results in having merely a mystical interpretation of Ḥāfīz's multi-layered poems. However, due to the literary form of Ḥāfīz's poetry which is ghazal, it can be in praise of different issues such as nature, youth, beloved, loveliness, etc.; in Bly and Lewisohn's translation, most of them have been ascribed to divinity. In other words, by means of translation, they have rendered their own worldview along with their personal reading of Ḥāfīz's poetry. The authors argue that Bly and Lewisohn's translation renders a mystical reading of Ḥāfīz's poetry and presents him as a moral preacher whose poetry is saturated with mysticism and Sufism. Being highly against the American society's materialism, by introducing Ḥāfīz as a mystic and insisting on mystical and spiritual interpretation of his poetry they intend to survive their society from corruption and cater to the moral and spiritual needs of the target culture. Since American literature compared to Persian literature, lacks some repertoire related to mysticism thus Lewisohn and Bly, by means of translation try to provide their culture with a sort of nourishment in order to contribute to the amendment of the society.

Index Terms—Ḥāfīz, mysticism, sufism, translation studies, Robert Bly, Leonard Lewisohn

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the 1980s, translation has become central to comparative literature. Traditionally speaking, translation studies used to be a field concerning problems of linguistic and textual fidelity to the original. During the 20th century, it developed and emerged as a new academic and interdisciplinary field (Apter, 2011, p. 3). Recently, translation studies has veered toward cultural studies and investigates how cultural issues might influence cultural interactions. Thus, in recent years, as comparative literature has declined in significance, translation studies has been gaining ground and it has become a discipline in its own right (Bassnett, 1998, p. 138). The original text through the process of translation undergoes several changes which are mostly due to cultural and linguistic differences as well as the translator's worldview. The translator first acts as a reader who has his/her own interpretation of the original text and inevitably his/her own mindset affects the process of translation. Consequently, the reader of the translated text gets to know the literary work and the author through the translator's point of view.

Among the translators who have translated Ḥāfīz's poetry into English, Leonard Lewisohn and Robert Bly are among the latest ones. The esteemed American poet and author Robert Bly who worked with the great Islamic scholar Leonard Lewisohn, produced a translation named *The Angels Knocking on the Tavern Door* which encompasses the translation of thirty poems of Ḥāfīz. Since Ḥāfīz's poetry is multi-layered, there are a variety of different interpretations for it and every single verse can be interpreted differently but Bly and Lewisohn's have translated Ḥāfīz in a way that has confined its extensive and diverse interpretations to mysticism. In this paper, the authors attempt to have a close reading of the thirty translated poems and locate the verses emitting the mystical attitude of the translators toward Ḥāfīz and his poetry. It has been demonstrated how the verses have been manipulated in the process of translation in order to make them suit the translators' worldview and desire. The authors argue that Bly and Lewisohn's translation renders a mystical reading of Ḥāfīz's poetry and presents him as a moral preacher whose poetry is saturated with mysticism and Sufism. In fact, by introducing Ḥāfīz as a mystic and insisting on mystical and spiritual interpretation of his poetry they intend to cater to the moral and spiritual needs of the target culture and contribute to the amendment of the society.

II. DISCUSSION

A. *God, the Forever Beloved*

There are some assumptions about Hafez's beloveds. Eslami Nadooshan believes that there are three kinds of love or better to say beloveds in ghazals of Hafez: the first one can be one of his contemporaries, the second one is quite faceless and it can be a man, woman, a live person or even a dead one. The third one is the mystical love. (Khoramshahi, 1994, p. 195). In other words, Ḥāfīz's poetry is open to different interpretations and it permits the reader to interpret it

due to his/her own will. Thus, there is no absolute interpretation and no one can confidently assert who is the real addressee of his poem. The beloved has been addressed with different words and expressions in Hāfiz's poetry. The beloved can be either God or an earthly beloved (a man or a woman). But in the translation by Lewisohn and Bly, they have interpreted them all as God. Having a mystical viewpoint toward Hāfiz's poetry, the translators have interpreted any talk of love as attributed to God, namely for them, all the love mentioned in the poems is toward God and it has been translated as divine and sacred; even in describing love they assign it a holy court (harime eshgh) (Hāfiz et al., 2009, p. 55) that is in line with their spiritual interpretation of the poems. In some cases, instead of replacing the word alluding to the beloved with the word "God", they have applied capitalization to attribute it to God and attach divine status to it. For example:

تا کار خود ز ابروی جانان گشاده‌ایم» «بر ما بسی کمان ملامت کشیده‌اند

(Hāfiz, 1983, p. 728)

"People have aimed the arrow of guilt a hundred times

In our direction. With the help of our **Darling's** eyebrow,

Blame has been a blessing, and has opened all our work." (Hāfiz et al., 2009, p. 3)

«چو مستعد نظر نیستی وصال مجوی که جام جم نکند سود وقت بی بصری»

(Hāfiz, 1983, p. 905)

"Because you aren't worthy of the side glance

Of the Darling, don't try for union. Looking directly

Into Jamshid's cup doesn't work for the blind." (Hāfiz et al., 2009, p. 53)

«حال ما در فرقت جانان و ابرام رفیب جمله می داند خدای حال گردان غم مخور»

(Hāfiz, 1983, p. 516)

"God knows our whole spiritual state: separated

From **Him** and punished by rivals. Still do not

Sink into sadness. God is the one who changes conditions." (Hāfiz et al., 2009, p. 14)

Jan ān (sweetheart; جانان) is a widely used word for referring to the beloved in Persian literature. It can be interpreted differently; some might consider it as an earthly beloved while for others, it might refer to God or any divine love. Since for Bly and Lewisohn, the beloved is always divine this word is translated as "Darling" (with capitalized D) and somewhere else, the same word is replaced by the pronoun "Him" (capitalized H). In fact, the translators in order to ascribe the love to God instead of translating the word jan ān have replaced it with a pronoun to limit the interpretation of the verse and reinforces the argument that for the translators the beloved is always divine.

The following verse is another example that shows the translators' intend to prevent any probable interpretation which might be far from their own.

هر چند که دورم از تو که دور از تو کس مباد لیکن امید وصل توام عن قریب است

(Hāfiz, 1983, p. 144)

"I may be a long way from you. Oh, **God**,

I don't want anyone to be distant! But I know

There is possibility for a close union with you." (Hāfiz et al., 2009, p. 11)

While in the above-mentioned verse, the poet by using a pronoun (تو: you) addresses his beloved, in translation, the word "God" is mentioned instead of the pronoun as if the poet is addressing God and he is the single addressee. On the contrary, the original verse is open to further interpretations; the addressee can be anyone else instead of God. Because in the original verse there is no specific hint that limits the addressee to God; it is possible that Hāfiz is addressing his earthly beloved not necessarily God.

«آنچه او ریخت به پیمانه‌ی ما نوشیدیم اگر از خمر بهشت است و گر باده‌ی مست

خنده‌ی جام می و زلف گره گیر نگار ای بسا توبه که چون توبه‌ی حافظ بشکست»

(Hāfiz, 1983, p. 60)

"Whatever **God** had poured into our goblet

We drank, whether it was the wine

Of heaven or the wine of drunkenness.

The laughter of the wine, and the disheveled curls

Of **the One We Love** . . . How many nights of repentance—like

Hafez's—have been broken by moments like this?" (Hāfiz et al., 2009, p. 8)

There is no explicit reference to God in the original verses. It is mentioned as a pronoun, however the translators have replaced it with a noun "God" while there can be other possible interpretations for the pronoun (he/she: او). At least it could be translated as "she" or "he" to save the ambiguity of the original text. On the other hand, in the second verse, the word نگار (negār; sweetheart) is mentioned which is a prevalent metaphor in Persian literature for the beautiful beloved; the translators in order to shift the focus from an earthly beloved to a divine one, have translated the word negār (نگار) as "the One We Love"; it is in line with the replacement of the pronoun (او) with "God" in the previous verse. In other words, the translators by using the pronoun "we" are putting emphasis on a thing that belongs to everyone and it is desirable for them all. Therefore, the whole sense of the verse is changed as if it is about the

collective love that can be interpreted as God not an earthly beloved. The following verse is another example for the spiritual interpretation of love by the translators:

«به یمن همت حافظ امید هست که باز
 آری آسامر لیلای لیلۀ القمری»
 (Hāfiz, 1983, p. 905)

“Because of the good offices of Hafez, we can
 Still hope that on some moonlit night we’ll

Be able to enjoy **our love conversation** once more.” (Hāfiz et al., 2009, p. 54)

The second part of the original verse is Arabic meaning that (there is hope that) I can see again the traces of my beloved (Laila) in the night’s path. The word لیلای (Laila) is used for the beloved who is a desirable woman. In other words, the verse is about hoping to visit the beloved once again. But in the translation there is no talk of the beloved not to mention the earthly beloved. It is translated as a collective longing to enjoy the “love conversation” once more and it is not assigned who the addressee of the “love conversation” will be. Although there is a first person verb in the original verse, it has been modified to “we” and “our” in the translation in order to describe this love and the enjoyment of the company of the beloved as public not personal.

«ای پادشاه حسن خدا را بسوختیم
 آخر سوال کن که گدا را چه حاجت است»
 (Hāfiz, 1983, p. 84)

“Oh, **Lord of Divine Loveliness**, we have been
 Burned to a crisp. Come now, ask of us

What is it a destitute and beggarly person needs?” (Hāfiz et al., 2009, p. 37)

However due to the literary form of Hāfiz’s poetry which is ghazal, it can be in praise of many different issues such as nature, youth, beloved, loveliness, etc. (Sham ũa, 2007, p. 16); in Bly and Lewisohn’s translation most of them have been ascribed to divinity because as discussed earlier, they consider Hāfiz as a mystical poet whose poetry is in praise of nothing but divinity. Thus, they have attributed not only the love to God but also any praise of loveliness has been given a divine aspect. For example, the above-mentioned verse praises the beauty and loveliness of the addressee but in translation the addressee is specified as God and the loveliness is described with the adjective, divine.

B. The Omission of Pedophilia

In pre-modern and early modern society of Iran an adolescent who is in his early twenties with the first trace of a mustache and before the full growth of beard and mustache was recognized as the utmost beauty. The first traces of a mustache (khat) signaled the beginning of his adult manhood and the movement from being an “object of desire” to a “desiring subject.” In fact, love and desire were associated with beauty and they could be brought about by either a beautiful male or female. In other words, gender is irrelevant to love and beauty; while the same adjectives were used to describe both male and female bodies, even male beauty and male eroticism used to be recognized as the superior sentiments. In Persian literature, ghazal is the most celebrated genre for the expression of male homoeroticism (Najmabadi, 2010, pp.15-17). The issue of pedophilia is one of the cultural concepts that is prevalent in Hafez’s poems. Undoubtedly the beloved of Hāfiz’s poetry is male. In fact, homoeroticism was a prevalent custom at the time, it was even seen in monasteries and convents (Sham ũa, 2002, p. 167). The translation of this issue requires being highly familiar with the Persian language, literature and the culture of that time. The issue of pedophilia is omitted as much as possible in Bly and Lewisohn’s translation of Hāfiz. In other words, the translators intended to render a mystical interpretation of Hāfiz and introduce him as a mystic whose poetry is intertwined with merely mystical and spiritual issues. In fact, they have done their best to fudge and bowdlerize every single sign of praising and longing for the earthly beloved. But in some cases that there are conspicuous references to an earthly beloved that cannot be neglected; they preferred to attribute it to a beautiful woman instead of a young boy. The below-mentioned verses are the first three verses of the 22th ghazal according to Khanlari’s edition. In these verses, the beloved’s posture is described while he/she is marching to the poet’s bedside.

«زلف آشفته و خوی کرده خندان لب و مست
 پیرهن چاک و غزلخوان و صراحی در دست

نیم شب دوش به بالین من آمد بنشست
 نرگش عریبه جوی و لبش افسوسکنان
 گفت کای عاشق دیرینهی من خوابت هست»
 سر فراگوش من آورد به آواز حزین

(Hāfiz, 1983, p. 63)

“Her hair was still tangled, her mouth still drunk
 And laughing, her shoulders sweaty, the blouse
 Torn open, singing love songs, her hand holding a wine cup.
 Her eyes were looking for a drunken brawl,
 Her mouth full of jibes. She sat down
 Last night at midnight on my bed.

She put her lips close to my ear and said
 In a mournful whisper these words: “What is this?
 Aren’t you my old lover? Are you asleep?”” (Hāfiz et al., 2009, p. 7)

Although Lewisohn and Bly by using possessive and personal pronouns (her and she) have underscored the femaleness of the beloved, some previous translators like Clarke have described the beloved as a young boy: “Tress

disheveled; sweat expressed; lip laughing; intoxicated; Garment rent; song-singing; goblet in His hand ;Eye, contest-seeking; lip lamenting Came, at midnight, last- night, to my pillow; sate .To my ear, He brought His head; in a low soft voice, Said: "O my distraught Lover! Sleep is thine ." (Hāfīz and Clarke, 1891, p. 111) In the above-mentioned verses the beloved is described by highlighting their human aspects and it is not logical to be attributed to God, in such cases in the process of translation, by adding some words to the original verse translators have insisted firstly on the femaleness of the beloved and secondly the divinity of the love and the beloved. For example:

«لب و لعل و خط مشکین چون اینش هست آتش نیست
بنازم دلبر خود را که حسش آن و این دارد»
(Hāfīz , 1983, p. 250)

“Reddish lips and the musky down on the cheek—

She may have this, and not have that, **like many women.**

I praise my darling, whose beauty has both this and that.” (Hāfīz et al., 2009, p. 55)

«زیر شمشیر غمش رقص کنان باید رفت
کان که شد کشته‌ی او نیک سرانجام افتاد»
(Hāfīz , 1983, p. 230)

“Whenever the **Divine One** waves **her** saber of sorrow

We’ll have to dance wildly, because whomever

She kills will end up with a good situation.” (Hāfīz et al., 2009, p. 58)

Being illustrated as carrying a saber, the beloved is described as being bellicose who has power over the lover to the extent that she is able to kill him if she wants. There are lots of other examples in Classic Persian Literature that the beloved is described as a warrior who knows horse riding, shooting and archery who attends the midnight parties with men, drinks, dances, and comes back home at midnight who never tolerates men’s oppression and even she wrangles and altercates with them (Sham ũa, 2002, pp. 258-259). But such descriptions are in sharp contrast with the real women of that time who were secluded from the society and were quite subordinated to men. Thus, these verses cannot be about a female beloved of that time. Regarding Lewisohn’s numerous researches concerning Sufism and eastern mysticism his acquaintance with pedophilia and homoeroticism in Classic Persian Literature cannot be ignored, nevertheless he and Bly have decided to fudge it in the translation on purpose. Because they found this issue in complete contrast to Hāfīz who-they believe- is an aref (mystic), whose poetry is immersed in mysticism.

C. Sufi and Mystic Issues

«غلام همت آنم که زیر چرخ کیبود
ز هرچه رنگ تعلق پذیرد آزاد است»
(Hāfīz , 1983, p. 90)

“The man who can walk beneath the blue wheeling

Heavens and **keep his clothes free of the dark**

Of attachment—I’ll agree to be the slave of his high will.” (Hāfīz et al., 2009, p. 29)

The whole gist of the verse is about admiring a person who is free from whatever takes the color of attachment. The translators have rendered a rather bizarre translation, though. Not only does the translation seem so far from the source text, but also it seems strange in the target language because it sounds like an illogical phrase. Translators’ Sufism background, especially Lewisohn who has written books on Eastern Sufism, has resulted in such a translation. According to Sufi tradition, Sufis used to wear dark blue robes. According to a folk belief the dark blue color of the sky has influenced the color of Sufis’ robes. In fact, it alludes to their dependence and attachment to the material world (Khaleq ũ 2000, p. 101). In other words, because the sky is one of the world’s material components thus attributing the color of Sufis’ robe to the color of the sky alludes to their connection with the material world. On the other hand, Hāfīz’s poetry is saturated with his abhorrence toward Sufism because he considers them as hypocrites who pretend to be ignorant of the material worlds while they are quite dependent on it (Hassour ũ 2011, p. 11). As discussed earlier, the translators have a presupposition about Hāfīz . They believe Hāfīz is a real mystical poet (aref) who is against pretentious mannerism of Sufism. Hence, although in this verse there is no conspicuous reference to Sufism and nothing is mentioned about the relevancy of this verse to Sufism in most of the illustrations, the translators have amalgamated both Hāfīz’s abhorrence of Sufism with the negative folk belief about the color of Sufi’s robes. In other words, having a rich background of Sufism and Hāfīz’s poetry has affected the translators’ interpretation of this verse.

«طفیل هستی عشقت آدمی و پری
ارادتى بنما تا سعادتى بیری»
(Hāfīz , 1983, p. 905)

“Both human beings and spirits take their sustenance

From the **existence** of love. The practice of devotion

Is a good way to arrive at happiness in **both worlds.**” (Hāfīz et al., 2009, p. 53)

In the preface to the translation, the translators have explicitly stated that they have largely benefited from Khanlari’s edition of Hāfīz (p. 69). Their reliance on Khanlari’s edition is conspicuous especially in translation of the ghazal to which the above verse belongs. In the case of this ghazal, Khanlari’s edition not only presents the verses in a different order but it also includes some verses that are missed in other editions and lacks some verses that are in other editions. The translators have been mostly adherent to Khanlari’s edition; the order of the verses is observed besides the exact verses being mentioned in Khanlari’s edition are translated. But there is a single deviation; in the above-mentioned verse that is the first verse of this ghazal. The word (مستی) *masti* (intoxication) is mentioned in Khanlari’s edition

although in most of the editions such as Ghazvini, Neysari, Eyvazi, and Saye “*hasti*” (existence) is used (Hamidiyan, 2010, p. 3854).

Javid (1996) believing *hasti* هستی (existence) is the better choice for the verse, states that “*hasti*” must be the most likely choice for this verse because the whole gist of the verse using this word is in accordance with Hāfīz’s worldview whereby “Love” is seen as the main purpose of existence and creation. In fact, in this verse Hāfīz refers to a mystical theme that the Eternal Beauty (جمال ازلی: *Jamal e Azali*), God’s beauty, intended to be known and loved. In other words, “Beauty” without “Love” was a commodity without a market. One has to see the manifestation of “Beauty” with “Love” and watch the marvel of Eternal Beauty. Thus, the purpose of existence is “Love.” He who does not know “Love” and does not understand it has not understood the secret of creation and has not understood the purpose of being and his life is meaningless (p. 597). The whole verses of this ghazal are concerned with “Love” and as it was discussed in the previous section, the translators have interpreted all the love mentioned in Hāfīz’s poetry as divine love and attributed it to God. Thus, although the reliable edition for them is Khanlari’s and Khanlari has chosen the word “*masti*” instead of “*hasti*”, by translating “*hasti*” (existence), they have intentionally deviated from Khanlari’s because the gist of the verse including “*hasti*” is in better accordance with their own worldview; they believe Hāfīz was a mystical person and his poetry is the manifestation of mysticism. Therefore by choosing and replacing *hasti* with *masti* they are engaged in manipulating the verse and consequently asserting clearly their own viewpoint. They even go further in manipulation by adding the phrase “both worlds” in the translation which is not mentioned in the original verse. By adding it they assert that in order to enjoy happiness in this world and in the hereafter (both worlds), one needs to show devotion and attention to love.

There are also other infidelities to Khanlari’s edition in order to manipulate the interpretation of the verse. For example the following verse:

«ما درس سحر در ره میخانه نهادیم محصول دعا در ره جانانه نهادیم»
(Hāfīz, 1983, p. 744)

“We have turned the face of our dawn studies

Toward the drunkard’s road. The grace earned from our prayers

We have turned over to the road of the Beloved.” (Hāfīz et al., 2009, p. 15)

There is a deviation from Khanlari’s edition in the first translated part of the verse. According to Khanlari, it should be (ما حاصل خود در ره خمخانه نهادیم) (we have turned the face of our achievement toward the tavern). But the translators preferred to use dawn studies (dars e sahar: سحر) instead of “our achievement” (hasil e khod: حاصل خود). Dars e sahar refers to theologians who used to study and practice their religious lessons in the early morning and that is why it is called dawn studies (dars e sahar; a lesson to be studied in the early morning.) Because the subject of the verse is “we” by replacing “achievement” with “dawn studies” it insinuates that Hāfīz himself used to be among the theologians who used to study their religious lessons. In fact, by replacing “dawn studies” Hāfīz is characterized due to translators’ desire, as a religious and mystical person.

«به خواری منگر ای منعم ضعیفان و نعیمان را که صدر مجلس عزت فقیر ره نشین دارد»
(Hāfīz, 1983, p. 250)

“Do not disparage the weak and the skinny. Remember that,

You men of wealth. We know the one given the chief seat

In the Gathering is the **sadhu** sleeping in the street.” (Hāfīz et al., 2009, p. 55)

This verse is concerned with the contrast between destitution and affluence. It addresses the opulent not to regard the poor with contempt because the chief seat of honor belongs to poor people. In other words, while the destitution and the affluence discussed in the original verse is regarding material possession, the translated verse alludes to mystical and spiritual poverty. By translating the word *faqir* (فقیر) meaning a poor person to “*sadhu*” which means a Hindu mendicant ascetic, the translators assigned poverty a spiritual status as if the original verse is concerned with assigning the chief seat of honor to mystics and ascetics. Many think of poverty as an integral part of Sufism and mysticism. As if the necessary condition for being among mystics is poverty and being poor. But in fact the poverty discussed in Sufism and mysticism is not the material poverty it means we are all poor creatures who do not have any possessions compared to God. Because God is the ultimate owner of us and this world. According to mysticism, the real poverty unfolds in comparison to God who is the real owner. That is why mystics not only consider themselves as poor people but also they praise poverty because to them, it means not being proud and arrogant for having any property for we are all nothing against God (Goharin, 2003, p. 172). The translators have made the same mistake about Sufi beliefs and have misinterpreted poverty in Sufi traditions. Choosing such a word shows their misinterpretation of the issue and it alludes to the fact that their mystical worldview affected their translation.

D. Leader-disciple Relationship

«گفت حافظ لغز و نکته به یاران مفروش آه از این لطف به انواع عتاب آلوده»
(Hāfīz, 1983, p. 844)

“The Great One replied: “Just cut out selling your friends

These subtle ideas.” “Hafez,” I said,

“The grace of the teacher is often stained with rebukes.” (Hāfīz et al., 2009, p. 6)

Persian language structure permits the use of a verb without its subject. In Ḥāfīz's poems while there are lots of verbs without specific subjects, Lewisohn and Bly have specified a subject to each of them in their translation. For example, in the above-mentioned verse, the words "the teacher" and "The Great One" are added to the verse in the course of translation. Adding these words gives the verse a hierarchical atmosphere; as if there is a leader who guides his disciples and gives them advice. Being a disciple and having a leader or master is one of the fundamental basics of mysticism and Sufism. In fact, the master leads, guides and teaches his disciples to step in the right direction. On the other hand, the master is quite respected for the disciples who are obedient to. In this verse, the translators by adding words have introduced Ḥāfīz as a disciple who is under the guidance of a great teacher (master).

E. Didactic Title

Like Classical Persian poems, Ḥāfīz's poems lack any title. They are recognized using their first verse. Since Ḥāfīz's poetry encompasses different issues and ideas, it cannot be summarized in a mere title. Before Ḥāfīz, Persian ghazal was only concerned with the issue of love. Ḥāfīz was the pioneer who brought a new spirit into ghazal. His ghazals are an amalgamation of several issues such as religion, mysticism, love, social and cultural issues (Korramshāhi, 1994, 115). In other words, a variety of ideas and issues are posed in a single ghazal thus, giving a title to it is not logical. Though Ḥāfīz's poetry lacks any title, Bly and Lewisohn, have designated an individual title for each translated poems of Ḥāfīz. The given titles are taken most of the time, from the verses of the poem itself. In fact, the given titles are in accordance with translators' attitude towards Ḥāfīz, namely the titles impose translators' interpretation of Ḥāfīz to the readers and also confine the semantic scope of the poem.

As each verse of a ghazal has its own independent idea, due to a lack of consistency giving a single title to it is not possible because some ideas are ignored. A close investigation of the chosen titles reveals the translators' view toward Ḥāfīz. They considered him a moral preacher who is under the guidance of a master (pir پیر) and is in touch with the unseen. Some of the titles are: Some Advice, Do Not Sink Into Sadness, Conversation With the Teacher, What Do We Really Need?, The Angels At the Tavern Door, Gabriel's News, etc. By choosing such titles it can be deduced that the translators have paid attention only to mystical and didactic issues in Ḥāfīz's poetry while it is saturated with a variety of different ideas.

Lewisohn and Bly's translation encompasses merely 30 ghazals while the whole Divan has around 500 ghazals and the translation of these 30 poems is actually their own interpretation of Ḥāfīz. They have introduced him as a moral preacher whose poems maintain didactic instructions. Consequently, if foreigners who are not familiar with the Persian language decide to read Ḥāfīz's poetry choosing Lewisohn and Bly's translation they will definitely get to know Ḥāfīz and his poetry filtered through the translators' worldview. In other words, the readers comprehend Lewisohn and Bly's version of Ḥāfīz. Ḥāfīz's poetry is multi-layered thus it can be interpreted differently. According to Kanaai (2016), ambiguities are major characteristics of Ḥāfīz's poetry hence, it is possible for every reader to interpret it in accordance with his or her own understanding (p. 449). Since Shafiy (2018) claims, never does art present a single meaning and interpretation (p. 419), therefore, there is no predetermined interpretation for any of Ḥāfīz's ghazals and his poetry is open to any kind of reading and interpretation. But the translators have only considered the mystical aspect of it and even in some cases as discussed previously, some elements emitting readings in contrast to their interpretation are omitted or it is better to say they have been manipulated to be in accordance with the mystical interpretation of the translators.

Whether Ḥāfīz was an "aref" and his poetry should be interpreted as secular Persian court poetry or whether it should be interpreted in a mystical and Sufi remains a controversial issue. Yarshater believes whether it is possible to call Ḥāfīz an "aref" or not depends on the application of this term. If it refers to a person who possesses wisdom and insight about human destiny and life who is a true man of devotion and purity of heart, such an epithet completely suits him. He purports that Ḥāfīz did not belong to any certain "Order" or the circle of a Sufi mentor. Besides, Sufi's faith in saints who were capable of performing miraculous deeds is far from the clarity of his mind. Thus, in this sense "aref" is a misnomer epithet to be given to Ḥāfīz (Yarshater). On the contrary, Khorramshahi (1994) believes that undoubtedly Ḥāfīz was an "aref" and all those mystical expressions and references to mysticism and Sufism cannot be recognized as aesthetical aspects of his poetry. He continues that Ḥāfīz himself had a mystical and spiritual experience which is reflected in his poetry (pp.179-180). On the other hand, Sham'ā (2009) believes Ash'arite beliefs have emerged in Ḥāfīz's poetry but it has unknowingly been interpreted as mysticism. Since eastern mysticism has grown in the context of Ash'arite thoughts, most of the beliefs and thoughts that these days are considered as mysticism are actually a part of Ash'arite axiom and thinking (p.149). In fact, Divan e Ḥāfīz cannot be considered as mysticism because Sufism and mysticism incorporate a coherent system of theology that holds a worldview but there is no system of theology in Ḥāfīz's poetry. It lacks cohesion, namely its components contradict each other. As main mystical texts, there is no contradiction in Masnavi and The Conference of the Birds (Mantiq-ut-Tayr). Although humanism is missed in Sufism and mysticism, Ḥāfīz's poetry is saturated with humanistic perspectives. There are lots of discrepancies in Ḥāfīz's poetry because he did not have a stable line of thought toward religion; he thought differently in different moments and it has been reflected in his poems. Thus, he cannot be considered as an "aref" because "aref" has a constant firm faith and nothing can shake it. There is no doubt that Ḥāfīz was quite familiar with mysticism and Sufi traditions but there is no basis for taking him as an "aref" (Shafiy, 2018, pp. 369-370). Despite different opinions regarding Ḥāfīz, in fact, it is the translators who have decided to merely reflect Ḥāfīz's mystical aspect. Consequently, by means of translating

Hāfiz's poetry, they have presented their own worldview and have rendered their own personal version of Hāfiz. In this regard, Carl Ernst (2015) states that "Sufi poetry is not defined by the author so much as by the audience." (p. 209) Therefore, Lewisohn and Bly who are clearly the advocates of mystical interpretation of Hāfiz's poetry, have presented him based on their own desire.

Lefevere and Bassnett (1998) claim translations, especially from third world languages into English are slanted toward English because every foreign and exotic issue is standardized (p. 4). In other words, they believe when third world literature by means of translation enters into western culture it passes through a domestication process in order to prevent any probable violation that might be caused by the entrance of the foreign literature to the nation (Lefevere, 2014, p. 2). But this claim is not always applicable; for example, in the translation of Hāfiz by Lewisohn and Bly in numerous cases the translation is slanted to Persian, not English though Persian in comparison to English is considered as a third world language. The translators have done their best to reflect eastern mysticism and Sufi traditions in the translation although it has made the translated text seem strange and exotic to the foreign readers. As discussed previously, in the translation they have overindulged to introduce Hāfiz as a mystical poet although the translation of some mystic traditions and issues might hinder the comprehension of the poem because it is too far from the culture and the context of the 21st century western reader. Although Hāfiz can hardly be considered as a mystical poet -his poetry to a great extent is about his social and political life; his poetry is the mirror of his time; he criticizes the king and hypocritical people (Sham ša, 2009, p. 110) - by highlighting mysticism, they have translated Hāfiz in a way that fits their desired function to fill a gap in the target system.

Lefevere and Bassnett (1998) state that a translation can affect the target system as long as there is a gap in that system which reflects a particular need. In this regard, they continue that the distribution of a foreign text by means of translation relies on three factors: need(s) of the reader, patron and "the relative prestige of the translating and translated language (pp. 60, 44). Since the translators' view contradicts the dominant materialism spirit of the country and era and they are critical about it,¹ thus they have manipulated the original text to cater to the American society's spiritual needs, namely Hāfiz's mystical translation in America seems to act as a safe spiritual asylum. Besides, as Evan-Zohar (1990) purports, as long as a literature is "young" or "peripheral", translation from other literatures answers its need; because it is young and cannot yet establish its own new literature in all fields. Thus, the experience of other literature is quite beneficial for it (p. 48). American literature is not peripheral but it is new compared to Persian literature and it lacks some repertoire related to mysticism thus it needs nourishment from other literature by means of translation and at the same time benefits from it as a weapon against the prevalent materialism of the society and seeks an amendment.

III. CONCLUSION

In this paper Hāfiz's translation by Lewisohn and Bly from a mystical point of view has been investigated. The translators in some cases by manipulating the verses have insisted and highlighted mystical aspects of Hāfiz's poetry. Although there are a variety of different interpretations for Hāfiz's poetry, they have all been ignored except mysticism. In other words, by means of translation they have rendered their own worldview along with their personal reading of Hāfiz's poetry.

Although there are different assumptions regarding the beloved of Hāfiz's poetry, Lewisohn and Bly have interpreted it as God. In fact, they have ascribed any talk of love in Hāfiz's poetry to divinity. In some cases, they have applied capitalization in translating the words that refer to the beloved and have given it sacred and divine spirit. Besides, in some other cases the word "God" is explicitly mentioned and has replaced a noun or pronoun in the original poem that refers to the beloved in general. The issue of pedophilia is one of the cultural concepts that is prevalent in Hafez's poetry. This issue is also filtered through their translation and it is omitted as much as possible to prevent demonstrating Hāfiz's beloved as a male. Although they have done their best to fudge and bowdlerize every single sign of praising and longing for the earthly beloved, in some cases where there are conspicuous references to an earthly beloved; they preferred to attribute it to a beautiful woman instead of a young boy. In fact, it is possible to attribute the addressee and the beloved in Hāfiz's poetry to God while it can also be interpreted as an earthly beloved. In other words, it is open to different interpretations but Lewisohn and Bly's version of Hāfiz is confined merely to the mystical aspect and prevents Hāfiz from being labelled a pedophile.

Being highly familiar with eastern mysticism and Sufis traditions, the translators have translated the mystical issues quite intact; they have paid meticulous attention to details to the extent that sometimes it has resulted in introducing Hāfiz as a mystical poet although the translation of some mystic traditions and issues might hinder the comprehension of the poem for foreign readers. The translation of Hāfiz across America by Bly and Lewisohn is a fascinating example of the intricacies of intercultural transfer. Hāfiz was perceived as an emblem of spirituality and challenged the dominant materialism. The Hāfiz who found his way into America was essentially seen as a preacher, whose texts are saturated with moral issues, didactic features, and advice. Regarding the translators' background and their view toward today's

¹ In the 250th ghazal (Khanlari's edition) in the fifth verse, Hāfiz asks the reader not to sink in sadness even the flood of death sweeps away the foundation of existence but Bly and Lewisohn, have interpreted the flood of death as the flood of materialism: "Even if the flood of materialism Drowns everything, do not sink into

Sadness, because Noah is your captain." (Lewisohn and Bly 13)

materialism they by means of such a manipulation, might have intended to have an impact on the target system while using translation as an influential force for making social changes and catering to the spiritual needs of the materialistic society.

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