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Abstract: This article explores the reconfiguration of world poetics by the Iranian poet and translator Ahmad Shamlu (1925-2000). Working at the intersection of global modernism and translation studies, we trace the formation of a Persian modernist poetics of solidarity on the basis of translations from so-called third world literatures and show how Shamlu's political aesthetic traverses national borders to embrace ignored and marginalized poetic traditions. Instead of relying on French and other European modernisms to reinvigorate his national literature, Shamlu made available to his Iranian contemporaries a broad panorama of world literature that brought together Global Southern literatures, modernist poetics, and transnational political commitments. In tracing the literary and political forms taken by Shamlu's global solidarity, this article develops a post-Eurocentric framework for the study of Iranian literary modernism.

Keywords: translation, solidarity, poetry, Iran, modernism, Global South, third world, Ahmad Shamlu, internationalism, politics and literature

The Translational Horizons of Iranian Modernism: Ahmad Shamlu's Global Southern Literary Canon

In their quest for an indigenous modernism, Iranian critics have tended to underrate the impact of translation in shaping modern Iranian literary consciousness.[1] While a number of Iranian critics have explored the links between modernism and translation,[2] much remains to be done to overcome the legacy of the reduction of Iranian modernity to translation from European languages. As Yazdi and Mozafari have noted, "Western benchmarks, modalities, and timelines have been employed regularly to explain the history of modern Persian literature—and with astonishing currency and success" (2019, 1). As a result of these ill-suited rubrics, we are only beginning to develop a theoretical framework for assessing the significance of translation in Iranian literary history. Drawing on the translational aesthetics of the pioneering modernist poet

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[1] See Nima Yushij 1976; Baraheni 1985; Azadibougar 2010.
[2] See Haddadian-Moghaddam 2014; Shafiʿi-Kadkani 2011; Farhadpour 2009; S. M. Alavi 2013.

and translator Ahmad Shamlu (1925-2000), this article considers the role of translation in shaping Iranian literary modernism at a juncture when European aesthetic norms had already been internalized and poets were in search of more global frameworks. Although traditional literary forms and themes underwent drastic revisions as they accommodated European models, the role of translation in shaping modern Iranian literary consciousness has yet to be systematically documented.

Beginning with the late Qajar period, Iranian poets have used different styles and idioms to render European and Anglo-American texts into Persian. As a result, modernist Persian poetry is an eclectic literary system, replete with many different movements: symbolism, surrealism, postmodernism. In the earliest stages of modern Persian translation, French literature exerted the strongest influence.[3] While Jean de la Fontaine and the classic texts of French Romanticism served as models for late Qajar and early Pahlavi poets during the first decades of the twentieth century, French symbolism and surrealism dominated Persian modernism during the 1950s and 1960s.[4] Further engagement with these histories would make it possible for scholarship on Iranian modernism to consider the formative role of translation in bringing about literary modernism from a point of view internal to Iranian literary history. One place to begin would be with the maverick poet Nima Yushij (1897-1960), the so-called father of modernist Iranian poetry. Nima maintains that "European influence in our literature is received irregularly and imperfectly due to the form [*tarz*] and the style [*uslūb*] of our poems." He notes that "translations of Molière's comedies appear in our [modern Iranian] poetry before anything else" (Nima Yushij

[3] In post-1979 years, this tendency has inclined toward Anglo-American influences, most notably for the significant propensity for English as the second language of education in modern Iranian schooling.
[4] See Shams Langroodi 1998.

1976, 81).[5] Nima's account shows how literary influence becomes productive only when the target literature can find common ground with the source literature.

We aim here to further this line of inquiry by examining Shamlu's break with the classical past, and then turn to his efforts to reshape the canon of world poetry within Iranian modernism. Finally, we explore Shamlu's theory of translation in relation to his conception of third-world solidarity. Each stage in Shamlu's development as a poet and translator reflects the process through which he extended Iranian readers' global horizons. Throughout, we consider how Shamlu's political aesthetic traverses national borders to embrace poetic traditions that have been ignored or marginalized by modern European and Anglo-American literary systems.

Globalizing Iranian Modernism

Shamlu named his landmark anthology of world poetry *Like an Endless Street* (*Hamchūn kūcha-yī bī intihā*, 1973), after Paul Éluard's poem "À mes amis exigeants [For my Exacting Friends]" (1947).[6] Shamlu does not mention how he managed to translate from so many languages, including English, French, German, Spanish, Russian, and Turkish. The poems are believed to have been translated into Persian via a French intermediary text, although scholars have disputed Shamlu's knowledge of these languages.[7] At the outset, he acknowledges the role played by the "great masters" of world poetry in awakening Iranian literary consciousness. Referring derisively to the three core genres of classical Persian poetics, Shamlu declares that "poets like [Paul] Éluard, [Federico García] Lorca, [Robert] Desnos, [Pablo] Neruda, [Nâzım] Hikmet, [Langston] Hughes, [Léopold Sédar] Senghor and [Henri] Michaux revealed different capacities of language and different aspects of its prism, and flew us from the dingy prison of

[5] The work was first published in book form in 1956, and in serial form in 1940 in *Mūsīqī* magazine.
[6] The following lines from Éluard's poem are used as an epigraph to Shamlu's anthology: "Mais si je chante sans détours ma rue entière/ Et mon pays entier comme une rue sans fin/ Vous ne me croyez plus vous allez au desert."
[7] See Ebrahim Golestan in his interview with Mehdi Yazdani Khorram in Yazdani Khorram 2008, 11; or Shafi'i Kadkani 2011, 527.

qasīda, *ghazal* and *rubāʿi*" (Shamlu 1973, 21). Contrasting his approach with that found in the thirteenth century manual on Persian poetics by Shams-i Qays, *al-Muʿjam fī maʿāyīr-i ashʿāri'l-ʿajam* (Compendium on the Measures of Persian Poetry, c. 1220-1), Shamlu describes classical Persian poetry as "vain repetitions." He claims that it is the modern sources of world poetry rather than classical Persian manuals that facilitate the "appreciation of great masters like Hafez and Rumi from a fresh vantage point" (1973, 21).

Shamlu's rejection of classical Persian poetics typifies the modernist transformation of two poetic systems: classical Persian, dominated by the strictures of classical prosody (*ʿarūz*). and the first modernist wave, dominated by French Romanticism. In this new iteration, foreign poetic norms supply the repertoire for resisting coercion by past poetic conventions.[8] In both the political and literary senses, Iranian modernity has been defined through conceptual metaphors that have required the transgression of norms, broken with conventional frameworks, and helped to bring about revolution. Within Shamlu's poetics, Iranian literary modernity is conceptualised as a constantly changing battlefield in which past and present compete with each other, the first representing a tradition dating back over a millennium, and the second representing a desire for revision in light of foreign importation, that takes into account dialogues with contemporary poets from around the world.

The subtitle of Shamlu's anthology—"A Selection of the Poems of the World's Great Poets [*guzīna-yī az ashʿār-i shāʿirān-i buzurg-i jahān*]"—reflects his preoccupation with canonicity. Shamlu's authoritative if revisionist canon is characteristic of the 1960s Iranian cultural milieu, and is introduced in his short preface to his anthology. Here he refers to the classical Persian poets Rumi and Hafez as *khudāyān* (meaning both "gods" and "masters")

[8] For patterns of literary change in Persian literary system, see Karimi-Hakkak 1995 and Talattof 1999.

(1973, 25). Much like the Orientalist discourse that, as Edward Said has shown, was shaped through "a process of selective accumulation, displacement, deletion, rearrangement, and insistence within what has been called a research consensus" (1978, 176), Iranian modernism, including Shamlu's, was shaped by the antecedent force of authority. Such antecedent authority generates the "anxieties of influence" that haunt modernity in its many different inceptions around the world. As part of this process, modernity and tradition come to be dichotomized and separated from each other. As Shamlu revised modernism's canon for an Iranian readership, new forms acquired authority while old forms were made to appear obsolete.

The recent global turn in modernist studies reveals diverse ways of overcoming the segregationist tendencies and hierarchies that have historically framed the study of European modernisms.[9] Mao and Walkowitz map the expansion of modernist studies in temporal, spatial and vertical dimensions, as they reconfigure structures of modernist time, geography, and registers beyond Eurocentric and Anglo-American canon (2008, 737-748). "The structure of imperialism," notes Fredric Jameson, "makes its mark on the inner forms and structures of that new mutation in literary and artistic language to which the term 'modernism' is loosely applied" (2007, 152). In evoking the imperialist "strategy of representational containment" (2007, 156) that suppresses the humanity of colonised peoples, Jameson discerns a shift in the axis of otherness during the period between the first and second world wars, marked by the neo-colonialist restructuring of imperialism toward a mode of economic subordination. At the same time, the efforts of Jameson and other literary theorists to resituate the Global South within the

[9] A few representative landmark works include Wollaeger and Eatough 2012; Moody and Ross 2019; Hayot and Walkowitz 2016. For further explorations of the global turn in modernist studies from a Persianist perspective, see Gould and Tahmasebian 2019.

global literary system have been fraught with controversy.[10] Aijaz Ahmed has argued with particular lucidity that Jameson's effort to lift the phrase "third world" from its original polemical context and to "claim it as a basis for producing theoretical knowledge …misconstrue[s] not only the phrase itself, but even the world to which it refers" (1987, 4).

Within this contemporary juncture—wherein the "third world" is increasingly a subject, and not only an object, of critique, and the rubric has been displaced by "Global South" in much postcolonial theory—it is worth revisiting Shamlu's reconstruction of Global Southern literature for an Iranian audience. We will see that, as Ahmed insists in his critique of Jameson, there is no "'third world literature' which can be constructed as an internally coherent object of theoretical knowledge" (1987, 4). At the same time, a close reading of Shamlu's interventions in the domain of translation will help us better grasp the productivity of the concept of third world literature when used for polemical ends, including, in Shamlu's case, to revise the canon of Iranian modernism.

Among his many accomplishments, Shamlu crafted a poetics that captured and critiqued Pahlavi authoritarianism, American Jim Crow, and fascism in Greece (1939-1945) and Francoist Spain (1967-1974). By translating poets from a range of so-called "minor literatures" including Ovidio Martins and Gabriel Morano (Cape Verde), Zoltan Zelk (Hungary), Yeghishe Charents (Armenia), Jure Kaštelan (Croatia), Erich Fried (Austria), and Nâzım Hikmet (Turkey), Shamlu developed an activist voice for Iranian modernism. Instead of relying on the elitist aesthetic norms of European modernism to reinvigorate literature (as Iranian literary translators have aimed to do since the constitutional movement of 1906), Shamlu's concept of world poetry conjoined a global politics of resistance to a metropolitan modernist poetics." Shamlu's poetics

[10] Most notably Jameson 1986.

of commitment has widely featured in scholarship on modern Iranian literature. We add to this body of work a close consideration of Shamlu's process for translating and reconstructing a third-world literary canon for an Iranian audience.[11]

Shamlu's poetic modernism critiques oppressive elements within the Iranian tradition as well as within foreign colonial discourses. His poetics of resistance is historically significant, and his approach to poetry translation is among the most influential forces within the history of Iranian literary modernism. In the years leading up to the Islamic Revolution of 1979, Iranian poets turned away from the canons of modern European poetry and began to engage systematically with Latin American, African, Middle Eastern, and Far Eastern literatures. Global solidarities among intellectuals and poets opposed to imperialism were increasingly evident in the poems poets chose to translate and the ways in which they translated them. In the Iranian context, and throughout much of the formerly colonized world, poetry translation merged a transnational literary identity with an anticolonial agenda. These epistemic, geographic, and political developments are distinctively expressed in the translations of Kurdish, Azeri and Baluch writers such as Latif Halmat, Murtuz Negahi, and Qalandar Dadsha that appeared in the weekly *Kitāb-i jumʿa* (Friday Reader), edited by Shamlu (see **Table 2**). These underappreciated texts are also crucial for understanding the history of what has been called "third world poetics."[12] The following pages examine Shamlu's involvement with world poetry on three levels: first, as a poet and critic, rewriting the history of Iranian literature; second, as a translator of world poetry who developed unique strategies for this corpus; third, as a literary editor. We begin by examining Shamlu as a canon maker and as a canon breaker. Then, we review his

[11] For an earlier discussion of Shamlu, see S. J., Alavi 2013, 90-121.
[12] See Gohar 2008.

legacy as a translator. Finally, we examine his editorial labours to put Persian poetics on a new footing, and to align it with a newly emergent Global Southern canon.

Shamlu as Canon Maker and Canon Breaker

Among his many achievements, Shamlu founded a strand of modernist Persian poetry known as *shiʿr-i sipīd* (blank—literally "white"—verse), which significantly diverges from Nima's poetic style by radically abandoning the conventional (*ʿarūzi*) rhythms of classical Persian prosody. In modern Persian poetics, *shiʿr-i sipīd* refers to a poem that is rhythmic (though not in terms of classical prosody) and does not have rhyme (*qafiya*).[13] Nima modfies classical prosody by creating poetic lines of unequal length, irregular rhythmic patterns and inventive rhyme patterns. Shamlu, however, abandons rhyme and rhythm completely. With fifteen volumes of poetry published from 1945 to 2000, Shamlu is one of the most prolific, most widely read, and most influential Iranian poets of the twentieth century. His first collection of poetry, *Forgotten Melodies* (*Āhang-hā-yi farāmūsh-shuda*, 1948), was later condemned by the poet himself as a "shameful burden [*bār-i sharmsāri*]." In the notes to his collected poems, Shamlu lamented what he described as his "childish mistake of publishing a handful of loose poems, worthless sentimentalist pieces" (Shamlu 2003, 1057). He never included the title of his first publication in his bibliography while he was alive.

Shamlu's second collection, *Irons and Emotions* (*Āhan-hā va ihsās*, 1953), was banned and burned in the printing-house by order of Tehran's military governor in early 1950s. Shamlu had been a political activist, and had been arrested and imprisoned several times, since the age of eighteen. He was jailed in a Soviet prison in Rasht in 1943 for activities against the Anglo-Soviet invasion and occupation of Iran. He was arrested by Azerbaijani Democratic Party forces in

[13] For a detailed study of this poetic style, see Fani 2017.

Urmia and led in front of a fire squad in 1945, following which he was released. After the 1953 US and Britain-led coup that resulted in the overthrow of Prime Minister Mossadeq, Shamlu was arrested again and imprisoned in Tehran's Qasr prison for one year.

Irons and Emotions is comprised of three long poems: 1) "Sea Bird [*Murgh-i daryā*]" (1948) is a poem in the tradition of Nima, centring on night as its symbolic core, an indirect critique of Iranian society's silence regarding the political oppression of the time ; 2) "For Blood and Lipstick [*Barā-yi khūn va mātīk*]" (1950) is a modern poetic challenge (*muʿāriza*) to Mahdi Hamidi Shirazi (1914-1986), a fervent critic of Iranian modernism and a representative (for Shamlu) of the sentimentalist apolitical poetry of his era; 3) "Elegy [*Marsīya*]," is dedicated to a little-known activist named Nowruz ʿAli Ghuncheh who was imprisoned while working in the oil industry. Shamlu later recollected his "ideological shift [*taghyīrāt-i fikrī va maslakī*]" and recalled how he had been "suddenly awakened." "I felt commitment [*taʿahud*]," Shamlu wrote, deploying a variant of the lexical term (*mutuʿahid*) used to describe a new poetry movement, *shʿir-i mutuʿahid* (committed poetry), of which he was a part, "to the core of my bones. *Forgotten Melodies* should have been disavowed and condemned as a great sin" (2003, 1058).

In his next poetry collection, *Manifesto* (*Qatʿnāma*) (1951), Shamlu's ideological and aesthetic transformation takes the form of a politico-poetical manifesto that was to set the agenda for the remainder of his poetic career. *Manifesto* consists of four long poems: 1) "To the Red Blossom on a Shirt [*Ta shikūfa-yi surkh-i yik pīrāhan*]," a metaphorical reference to execution by shooting; 2) "Ode to the Man of February [*Qasīda barā-yi insān-i māh-i bahman*]," composed in honour of the anniversary of the murder of the leftist political activist Taqi Arani's in Reza Shah's prison in 1940; 3) "Song of a Man who Killed Himself [*Surūd-i mardi ki khudash rā kushta ast*]," a description of how the poet killed his inauthentic, uncommitted self; 4) and "The

Great Song [*Surūd-i buzurg*]," composed on the historical occasion of the US invasion of North Korea, addressed to and in solidarity with an "unknown Korean comrade, Shen Ju."

In "The Great Song," the poetic subject (the 'I' who addresses Shen Ju in the poem) is variously identified with the heroes, martyrs, and activists of modern resistance movements:

لیکن
رفیق!
شن-چو!
هرگز مبر ز یاد و بخوان
در فتح و در شکست
هر جا که دست داد
سرود بزرگ را:
آهنگ زندهئی که رفیقان ناشناس
یاران روسپید و دلیر فرانسه
استاده مقابل جوخهی آتش سرودهاند-
آهنگ زندهئی که جوانان آتنی
با ضرب تازیانهی دژخیم
قصاب مردهخوار، گریدی
خواندند پرطنین –
آهنگ زندهئی که به زندانها
زندانیان پردل و آزادهی جنوب
با تارهای قلب پرامید و پرتپش
پرشور مینوازند –
(Shamlu 2003, 79)

But
Comrade!
Shen Ju!
Never forget and sing
whenever you can
the Great Song:
The living song
sung by anonymous comrades
the French brilliant brave friends
standing before the fire squad—
The living song
echoed by young Athenians
with the rhythm of the torturer's whip
the vulturous butcher, Grady—
The living song
played in prisons
by brave free (*āzāda*) prisoners of the South
on the strings of their beating hopeful hearts
passionately.

The entire poem is structured around anachronistic collocations of people, places and times, within a poetics marked by anonymity. Unnamed "French friends," Athenian communists tortured and murdered during the Greek civil war (1945-1946), and sites of human suffering and

torture, concentration camps, execution squares and prisons are summoned to create a mytho-political space-time shared by Iranian, European and East Asian "friends." Shamlu's history of disasters merges imprisoned Southern Iranian workers with the members of French resistance, with North Korean guerrillas who resisted the US invasion, and assassinated Greek communists. On the opposite side of the polarity at the heart of Shamlu's political mythology, Adolf Hitler, American diplomat Henry F. Grady and the brain-eating evil figure of Iranian mythology, Zahhak, converge on Downing Street, a focal point for geopolitical realignments in the post-WWII context:

شن-چو
بخوان!
بخوان!
آواز آن بزرگ دلیران را
آواز کارهای گران را
آواز کارهای مربوط با بشر، مخصوص با بشر
آواز صلح را
آواز دوستان فراوان گمشده
آواز های فاجعه بلزن و داخاو
آواز های فاجعه‌ی ویی‌یون
آواز های فاجعه مون واله‌ری‌ین
آواز مغزها که آدولف هیتلر
بر مارهای شانه‌ی فاشیسم می‌نهاد،
آواز نیروی بشر پاسدار صلح
کز مغزهای سرکش داونینگ استریت
حلوای مرگ برده‌فروشان قرن ما را
آماده می‌کنند
(Shamlu 2003, 80-81)

Shen Ju!
Sing!
Sing!
The song of those master braves
The song of hard tasks
The song of human tasks
The song of peace
The song of many lost friends
The song of the disastrous Belsen and Dachau
The song of disastrous Lyon[14] (*sic*)

[14] A precise transcription of the Persian is *Viyon*. Shamlu describes the word, in a note, as "an old prison in Northern France where Germans imprisoned French Resistance forces and executed groups of hostages, in retaliation for assassination of German officers" (2003, 1060). As there is no *Viyon* corresponding to this description, we use here Lyon, a city linked to Klaus Barbie, known as the "Butcher of Lyon" for having personally tortured prisoners belonging to the French Resistance. Shamlu elsewhere identifies "the unnamed French friends" as the hostages executed by Germans "whose death-row letters are published as *Letters of the Executed*" (2003, 1059). Shamlu is

> The song of the disastrous Mont-Valérien
> The song of brains
> Adolf Hitler placed before the snakes on the shoulders of fascism
> The song of the power of the peace observers
> who prepare
> food to be eaten at the feast of the death of our century's slave-merchants
> from the tyrant brains on Downing Street.

In "Song of a Man Who Killed Himself," Shamlu's solidarity extends to those who fought in the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). He builds on Lorca's contrast between the poet and the dictator in relation to Franco's military dictatorship:

> با ساز یک مرگ، با گیتار یک لورکا
> شعر زندهگی‌شان را سرودند
> و چون من شاعر بودند
> و شعر از زندهگی‌شان جدا نبود.
> (Shamlu 2003, 67-68)

> With the instrument of a death, with the guitar of a Lorca
> they sang the song of their life
> and were poets like me
> and their poems were not separate from their life.

Elsewhere, Shamlu states: "I showed him Franco/ And Lorca's coffin/ And his tincture of blood on the wound of the bull ring" (2003, 73). Lorca's martyrdom in the hands of Franco's regime is evoked in the context of the reminiscence of his former alienated, uncommitted poetic persona who "spoke in the language of the enemy" (2003, 70). This opposition is contextualised in a dissolved space-time in which the riots and uprisings of pre-revolutionary Iran recur: Qadikola, a village in Northern Iran where "Feudals dispatched their men to murder the activists in other regions" (2003, 1059), Brigadier General Zanganeh's resistance to the Russian-supported Azerbaijani Democratic Party's invasion of Urmia in northwestern Iran in 1945, and oil industry workers' strikes and demonstrations that took place in Abadan, Aghajari, Bandar Maʿshur (present-day Mahshahr) and Isfahan during 1946.

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here referring to the Persian translation of *Lettres de fusillés* edited by Lucien Scheler (Paris: Editions France d'abord, 1946), which he mistakenly indicates is edited by Louis Aragon.

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Shamlu's global poetics of solidarity rejects temporal and spatial hierarchies. His poetic system is structured by a perpetual effort to foreground marginal identities. Solidarity as the dissolution of borders centrally figures into this decentring process. Not limited to ideologically marginalized subjects, this decentring has a radical structural aspect in Shamlu's poems and translations. In classical Persian poetics, the poem is modulated on a returning effect that occurs at the end of each line, called *qāfiya* (rhyme). Nima and his modernist followers, including Shamlu, abolished the use of conventional end rhymes in their poems. Nima introduced asymmetry into Persian poetics by lengthening and shortening of the poetic line. Nonetheless, *qāfiya* as recurrence and return is preserved in an irregular manner at the end, not of each line but of groups of lines of Nima's poems. Shamlu's negative epic poetics displaces the rhyme effect from the end of the poetic line to its beginning, a feature that is uncommon in classical Persian metrics. For example, words and phrases such as *qāfiya* (rhyme), *to nimīdānī* (you don't know), *insān* (human), *shiʿr-ī ki* (a poem that), *ustukhān* (bone) generate a complex rhyming effect the poem "The Ode for the Man of February," in praise of the murdered political activist Taqi Arani:

و شعر زندگی او، با قافیه خونش
و زندگی شعر من
با خون قافیه‌اش.
(Shamlu 2003, 67)

And the poetry of his life, with its rhyme of blood
And the life of my poetry with the blood of its rhyme.

Another aspect of this negative epic is the recurrence of suppressed historical names (of the martyred heroes and anonymous revolutionaries): Nowruz ʿAli Ghuncheh, Shen Ju, the unnamed "French friends," Qadikala.

Because of its recurring sonic effect, *qāfiya* was associated with tradition as an eternal return of the same. Perhaps for this reason, modernist interventions into classical poetic form systematically rearranged end rhymes. Nima stands midway between the classical tradition's

absolute adherence to rhyme and the younger generation's wholesale rejection of it. Although end rhymes in their classical sense are missing from Nima's poetry, *qāfiya* is nonetheless evident in Nima's irregular poetic lines. In his reflections on poetics, Nima insists that *qāfiya* is essential to a poem's construction: "What would be in a poem without *qāfiya*?" Nima asks and replies: "An empty bubble! A poem without rhyme is like a person without bones; rhythm without beats, like old poems" (Nima Yushij 1945, 70).

While an examination of Nima's unconventional approach to *qāfiya* is a desideratum for scholarship on Persian poetics, of relevance here is Shamlu's displacement of the end rhyme to the beginning of the poetic line. This displacement generates a repetition effect, in harmony with the poem's thematic "return of the repressed," while avoiding its predictable return to the status quo. Placing the *qāfiya* at the beginning of a line directs the reader's attention to the repetition. Instead of ending with the same expected sound and recapitulating classical form, poems such as "The Great Song" open with repetition, which dominates the totality of the poem. Such repetition, which is also evident in "To the Red Blossom on a Shirt [*Tā shikūfa-yi surkh-i yik pirāhan*]," "Song of a Man Who Killed Himself" and "Ode to the Man of February," informs Shamlu's poetics of global solidarity. As a modernist poet, Shamlu confronts multiple sources of oppression: capitalism and fascism on a global scale, alongside oppressive aspects of traditional Iranian culture.

In other poems, such as "For Blood and Lipstick" (1950) and "The Last Word [*Harf-i ākhar*]" (1952), Shamlu synthesises the many forms of resistance in which he is engaged. As representatives of the new "committed poetry [*shʿir-i mutuʿahid*]," these poems intermix poetics and politics, making of political commitment "a test for authenticity" and "full involvement in

the call for action."[15] Aestheticism and art for art's sake are juxtaposed to the political ideologies of fascism and imperialism. The poet is assessed not only by his poetic skills but also by his conduct and his character, which cannot be separated in Shamlu's aesthetics. "For Blood and Lipstick" condemns traditionalists as "imitators [*taqlīd-kār*]," "clowns [*dalqakān*]" and "beggars [*daryūzagān*]." "Let love/ decay thus like a corpse in the coffin of your poetry/ You ludicrous imitator of Qaʿani!" the poet declares, referring to the Qajar poet known for the recondite complexity of his verse (Shamlu 2003, 32). The traditionalist's blindness to suffering on the global scale legitimises the poet's condemnation:

زیرا که دوستان مرا
زان پیش‌تر که هیتلر – قصاب «آوش‌ویتس»
در کوره‌های مرگ بسوزاند،
همگام دیگرش
بسیار شیشه‌ها
از صمغ سرخ خون سیاهان
سرشار کرده بود
در هارلم و برانکس
انبار کرده بود
کند تا
ماتیک از آن مهیا
لابد برای یار تو، لب‌های یار تو!
(Shamlu 2003, 30-31)

Because
long before Hitler—the butcher of Auschwitz—burned my friends
in death chambers,
his other companion
had filled many bottles
with the red gum of the blood of Black people
stored
in Harlem and Bronx,
perhaps
to prepare lipstick
for your beloved, for your beloved's lips!

In "The Last Word," a poem written to commemorate the Russian modernist Vladimir Mayakovsky (d. 1930) and dedicated "to those who try to guard old graveyards" (287), Shamlu compares himself to the Soviet poet. "Not long ago I sacrificed my foreign self (*ajnabī-yi*

[15] See Mikhail 1979. For committed poetry in Persian, see Talattof 2000.

khīshtan), like Vladimir who sacrificed all himself" (Shamlu 2003, 287)," he intones, directing his most fervent attacks at classical poetry:

چرا که شما
مسخره‌کنندگان ابله نیما
و شما
کشنده‌گان انواع ولادیمیر
این بار به مصاف شاعری چموش آمده‌اید
که بر راه دیوان‌های گردگرفته
شلنگ می‌اندازد.
(Shamlu 2003, 288)

For you!
The idiot who made fun of Nima;
And you!
Murderers of all Vladimirs
are facing this time a stubborn poet
galloping
on the roads of dusty poetic works.

Referring to the *musammat*, a stanzaic poetic form with multiple rhyme patterns, Shamlu writes: "Nevertheless (O junk sellers!)/ Nevertheless/ I have not dedicated a sheep-*musammat*/ To the doorkeeper of the lousy tomb of Saint Classicism" (2003, 290).

The convergence of global solidarity and classical aesthetics in Shamlu's poetics results in a revision of the classical Persian literary canon. In "The Last Word," the poet asserts that he is "born in the veils of the great meeting's manifesto/ … In order to inscribe the people of history's eye on the word of all divans/ The people whom I love" (2003, 289). Shamlu rewrites tradition to better represent the demands of a demographic that had been erased from it: the people (*mardum*). This democratic decentring remained intrinsic to Shamlu's modernism through his literary career, as seen in his controversial reconfigurations of Ferdowsi and Hafez, two canonical figures within the classical Persian literary system, four decades later. In a lecture delivered at the University of California, Berkeley in 1990, Shamlu contends that historical manipulation is a strategy characteristic of all tyrants (*jabbārān*) (Shamlu 1990, 17). He further argues that Ferdowsi joined with the oppressor in presenting Zahhak in his *Shāhnāma* (Book of Kings), as an originally Arab villain who committed both patricide and regicide by murdering his

father and King Jamshid, ruling the world as a tyrant for a millennium, and ordering the murder of two young men every day to feed the snakes growing from his shoulders. In the end, Zahhak's rule came to an end due to a popular rebellion led by Kaveh the blacksmith.

In Shamlu's alternative narrative, Zahhak's plebeian commitments, which caused him to rebel against Jamshid's caste system, were misrepresented by Ferdowsi. Zahhak, according to Shamlu, was the only monarch in the *Shāhnāma* who, coming from a lower social class, could not claim: "I am the King with a divine halo (*farra*)/ From both princely (*shahryārī*) and priestly (*mūbadī*) origins" (Shamlu 1990, 31).[16] Alluding to parallels with the 1953 coup and Kaveh's populist rebellion, Shamlu presents the uprising against the tyrant as "a reactionary coup to restore the power to the past exploitative conditions" (1990, 35). For Shamlu, every literary canon manipulates the historical record to promote certain ideological interests. As John Guillory has argued in the context of American literature, canonicity distributes "cultural capital" across social institutions, such as schools, and regulates access to literacy, and to education.[17] Such conceptual discussions of the embeddedness of the canon in cultural capital highlight a blind spot within theories of literary production that separate art from its social context.

Another instance of Shamlu's rewriting of canon is his controversial edition of Hafez's poems, first published in 1975. In Shamlu's preface, the fourteenth century Iranian poet, known in the Persian tradition as "the divine tongue [*lisān al-ghayb*]," is depicted as a "poor infidel libertine [*qalandar-i yik-lā-qabā-yi kufr-gū*]" (Shamlu 1975, 2) who rejected the rule of corrupt monarchies and the hypocritical Muslim clergy. Both Shamlu's preface and his editorial interventions in Hafez's ghazals were harshly criticised following its publication. The influential and widely-respected Iranian theologian Morteza Motahhari (d. 1979), who contended Hafez

[16] Shamlu is here citing Abu'l-Qasem Ferdowsi, *The Shāh-nāma (Book of Kings)*, vol.1, edited by Jalal Khaleqi Motlaq (New York: Bibliotheca Persica, 1988), 41.
[17] See Guillory 1993.

could only be understood with the mediation of Islamic mysticism, criticised Shamlu's materialistic critique and argued that it degraded Hafez's Sufism.[18] Shamlu's preface was banned from publication in all post-1979 editions of the book.

Although Shamlu's edition of Hafez has been criticised on historical and textual grounds, it is of significant value in shedding light on Shamlu's understanding of modernist poetics as political praxis.[19] In his edition of Hafez, Shamlu reconfigures the Persian literary canon. Bringing Hafez into closer alignment with his politically committed aesthetics, Shamlu attempts to replace prevalent mystical interpretations of his ghazals with the political and social core of Hafez's poetics (Shamlu 1975, 2). Shamlu also insists that the widely-accepted sequence of Hafez's verses should be revised, and asserts that Hafez denies the afterlife (*maʿād)*, one of the main tenets of the Islamic faith (Shamlu 1975, 9). Old meanings are systematically problematised within a new socio-historical present. While canonicity is often treated as an atemporal phenomenon, Shamlu's concept of canonicity focuses on its continual transmission, translation, and retranslation as part of its contribution to world literary history. This effort to resist the untranslatability that tradition prescribes with respect to its canon is a distinctive feature of Shamlu's modernist poetics, and can be compared to Trotsky's concept of culture as a mode of "permanent revolution."[20] Trotsky understood artistic creation as "a complicated turning inside out of old forms, under the influence of new stimuli which originate outside of art" (Trotsky 2005, 156). For Trotsky as for Shamlu, poetry generates narratives that counter the apparatus of domination, and reveals the alienation intrinsic to tradition itself, as a centripetal force bearing within it the seeds of its own destruction.

Translating (Third) World Poetry

[18] See Motahhari 1980.
[19] See for example Khoramshahi 1984.
[20] See Bird 2018.

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Having discussed Shamlu as a canon maker and as a canon breaker, we now turn to his translations of world poetry. In particular, we focus on Shamlu's strategies for translating texts that appear to resist translation and for revising the canon of world poetry through domesticating translation strategies and the programmatic inclusion of writers from so-called "minor literatures." Shamlu's landmark anthology of world poetry introduced Iranian readers to major world poets such as Langston Hughes, Octavio Paz, Federico Garcia Lorca, Nâzım Hikmet, Yannis Ritsos, Jacques Prévert, and Paul Éluard. At the same time, although it is not quite inferable from his subtitle, *An Anthology of the Poems of the World's Great Poets*, Shamlu includes within the rubric of "greatness" a considerable number of lesser-known, non-metropolitan poets, including Ovidio Martins and Gabriel Morano (Cape Verde), Zoltan Zelk (Hungary), Yeghishe Charents (Armenia), Jure Kaštelan (Croatia), Erich Fried (Austria), and Nâzım Hikmet (Turkey).[21] Like other postcolonial and anticolonial modernists, including those he translated, Shamlu turned modernist forms "to political ends."[22] The poets he chose to translate, along with the lexicon he drew on to integrate their works into Persian modernism, reveals the role of political solidarity within his translational aesthetic. By translating poets from a range of so-called "minor literatures," Shamlu developed an activist idiom for Iranian modernism.[23]

When he selected canonical poets such as Yannis Ritsos and Lorca for translation, Shamlu's prefaces dwell on the poets' politics. In the preface to his 1981 translation of Ritsos's *Eighteen Short Songs of the Bitter Motherland* (1974), Shamlu introduces Ritsos's poems as

[21] Many of the original poems on which Shamlu based his translations (including by Kaštelan, Hikmet, and Fried) are found in *The Penguin Book of Socialist Verse,* ed. Alan Bold (London: Penguin, 1970). Although Shamlu does not reference this source, the selection of poems suggests that he encountered the texts in this volume.
[22] See Wollaeger 2012, 8.
[23] The concept of "minor literature," introduced by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, in Deleuze and Guattari 1975 and further developed by Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih (in Lionnet and Shih 2005), has been extensively applied to translation studies by Theo D'haen, for example in D'haen 2012, and D'haen 2016.

"authentic instances of the poetry and music of resistance during Greece's eight-year Regime of the Colonels" (Shamlu 2005, 316). The political context and theme highlighted by Shamlu contrasts sharply with the approach to the same poet adopted in Bijan Elahi's 1975 translation of Ritsos during Elahi's editorship of *Tamasha* (1949-1979), a literary magazine for which he curated a section entitled "Poetic Experiment [*tajruba-yi shiʿr*]," focusing on aesthetic experimentations in modern European poetry. Yannis Ritsos, Fernando Pessoa, Osip Mandelstam, Guillaume Apollinaire, Sylvia Plath, Giuseppe Ungaretti, Arthur Rimbaud, and Jorge Luis Borges all featured in various issues in this section, and Elahi in his capacity as editor never once mentioned these poets' political views or circumstances. Shamlu also translated poems by writers best known as novelists, such as William Faulkner and Gabriel Garcia Marquez. For these prose writers, the political content of the poem was an even more decisive factor than it was in cases where he translated writer best known as poets.

Shamlu and Elahi were arguably the most influential and innovative poet-translators of twentieth century Iran. The contrast between their approach to world poetry is also evident in their translations of Lorca, another poet whom, alongside Ritsos and Éluard, both poet-translators worked on. Shamlu's renowned translation of Lorca introduces the Spanish poet as a political activist and martyr, an idiom much favoured in Iran in the turbulent years following the 1979 revolution.[24] Elahi's translation of Lorca's poems from a decade earlier (1969) was dedicated to the "poets and poetry translators of the homeland [*shāʿirān va shiʿr gardānān-i vatan*]" and was appended with Lorca's writings on Spanish concepts of the imagination, inspiration, including *duende* (roughly, 'spirit') and *cante jundo* (deep song) (Elahi 1969). Instead of relying on European modernist norms to reinvigorate his national literature (which has

[24] Lorca 1980.

been among the primary aims of Iranian literary translation since the constitutional movement of 1905-1911), Shamlu's concept of world poetry conjoins a global politics of resistance to a modernist poetics. The shared historical experience of anticolonial resistance was a condition for Shamlu's translational and transnational poetics of solidarity. The poetics that developed from these concerns was attuned to a range of global and historical injustices: the Jim Crow regime in the United States (in his translation of Langston Hughes), fascism in Greece (in his translation of Ritsos) and fascism in Francoist Spain (in his translation of Lorca).

Perhaps more significant than the inclusion of certain poems in Shamlu's anthology is the exclusion of others. In the preface, Shamlu explains why he was not impressed by several of the most brilliant names of modernist European poetry. Poets such as Pierre Reverdy, Jean Cocteau, Saint-John Perse, and Jacques Audiberti, whom he encountered on the pages of the preeminent US magazine *Poetry* (founded in 1912 by Harriet Monroe), appeared to him strange and unpleasant: "A mind petrified in Saʿdi's *Būstān* and Abu Hafs Sughdi's verse [*nazm*] was not ready to appreciate poems that required a living dynamic culture," he wrote. Even the Russian poet Mayakovsky was in Shamlu's view merely a "teacher of commitment [*taʿahud-āmūz*]" and not a "teacher of poetry [*shiʿr-āmūz*]." Charles Baudelaire, Paul Verlaine, Fernand Gregh, and Jules Supervielle also did not engage Shamlu's imagination (Shamlu 2005, 22). A considerable proportion of French metropolitan modernism, typically a staple of most anthologies of world poetry, is excluded from Shamlu's anthology, in order to free up space for poets from minor literatures. However, even according to these restrictive criteria, Éluard still merits inclusion. Shamlu states in the introduction that his immersion in Éluard's poems led him to discover "the essence of poetry and the language of pure poetry" (2005, 24). Where Shamlu's translations of Éluard are concerned, the French poet's role in the French Resistance to the Nazi occupation is

highlighted by Shamlu in a note to his translation of Éluard's 1946 series, "Seven Poems of Love in Wartime" (2005, 439).

At the beginning of the preface to his world poetry anthology, Shamlu raises the issue of Iranian cultural authenticity in relation to translation and European modernism. Persian poetry, he writes, "has impacted literary culture far beyond its borders. But it cannot be denied that…this poetry owes its awakening…to the great poets of other lands and other languages" (21). According to Shamlu's account, the formation of the poet's subjectivity is intrinsically linked to translation. The formation of a poetic self through immersion in foreign poetry is evident in Shamlu's own poetry as early as his above-cited *Manifesto* (*Qatʿnāma,* 1951), in which the poet summons Mayakovsky ("Murderers of all Vladimirs/ are facing this time a stubborn poet/ galloping/ on the roads of dusty poetic works" and Lorca ("With a lyre of death, with the guitar of Lorca/ they sang the song of their life/ and were poets like me/ and their poetry was not separate from their life") as his poetic avatars.

Such identifications mask the poet's self in foreign poets' personas and legitimate his violation of traditional poetic norms by asserting solidarity with non-Iranian rebel-poets. They also set the stage for the poet's translations, which he terms "reconstructions [*bāz-sāzī*]" in striking anticipation of his contemporary Bijan Elahi, who similarly conceived of translation as an act of recreation (*bāz-āfarinish*) (2019, 64-65). In Shamlu's translated texts, the otherness of the non-Iranian poet is dissolved into a diction that is recognizably that of Shamlu. An elevated, lofty language is used by Shamlu as translator, even when such a register is not present in the original, as for example in his rendering of the word *allumette* in Jacques Prévert's French poem "Paris at Night" (with the title in English in the original) by the elaborate Persian phrase *chūba-yi kibrīt* (match for striking a fire) when the simpler *chūb kibrīt* would have been more standard

(Shamlu 2005, 342). All traces of the foreign, and all anxieties of influence, are eliminated from the translated text.

A major challenge in studying Shamlu as a translator is presented by his limited knowledge of the languages he translated from (a quality he shared with many of his fellow Iranian translators). Critics have treated Shamlu's translations as revisions of prior translations or as co-translations in which Shamlu had a subsidiary role. Shamlu's co-translations of Langston Hughes's with the film director and critic Hasan Fayyad and his co-translations of the Japanese haiku are cases in point.[25] Shamlu admits that, as with most of his translations, these are "reconstructed from a language other than the original."[26] This does not mean that Shamlu's translation method was entirely free or independent of the original. Shamlu follows the denotation of the originals, even as he adapts their meanings to the syntax of the target language.

Although Shamlu's ignorance of the source languages renders futile any assessment of his translations according to their fidelity to the original, it can help to account for his domesticating style and his focus, as a translator, on the target language. In a short note to his anthology of world poetry, Shamlu prefers the term "reconstruction" to "translation" to describe his role as editor and creator. He notes that

> as most of these poems are translated from a language other than their original without their authenticity having been verified, I was obliged to reconstruct [*bāzsāzī*] the poems …There is no point in comparing my translations with their original texts. Translating poetry is pointless unless [the translator] reconstructs them in the target language [*zabān-i maqsad*]. It is better that the reader assumes that the poem being read is written by the poet in Persian. (2005, 19)

In theory as in practice, Shamlu's concept of translation as reconstruction regards cultural appropriation as intrinsic to translation.

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[25] See Shamlu 1982. Shamlu's letter to Hassan Fayyad, dated 19 July 1992, accessible at http://poets.ir/?p=1546 (accessed 2 September 2019) is an important resource for his ideas on translation.

[26] In most cases the intermediary language was French; this is an area that await further investigation. When he theorizes translation, Shamlu reflects a sense of anxiety toward the distorted nature of his translations in the target language; see his criticism of Sholokhov's *Quiet Flows the Don* by Mahmud Behazin (discussed below).

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In the preface to *Haiku*, a co-translated collection showcasing the development of this paradigmatic genre of Japanese literature from its inception to modernity, Shamlu distinguishes between two terms for translation in the Iranian literary lexicon, and ascribes to them meanings more fixed than they have received before: *bargardān* and *tarjuma* (Shamlu 1982, 13). Judging by his examples, the term *bargardān* is used when an original poem is rendered in such a way that it can be considered a poem in the target language, according to the poetic standards of the target culture. Meanwhile, *tarjuma* is used to indicate a failure in translation: even when individual words are domesticated, the resulting text fails to become a poem in the target language. *Tarjuma* translates words alone without rendering their poeticity.

Derived from an Iranian and a Semitic root respectively, *bargardān* and *tarjuma* both refer to the same act in Persian and are often used interchangeably to signify translation.[27] *Tarjuma* has a more ancient vintage and is more rooted in classical literary theory.[28] Shamlu however argues for the superiority of the former to the latter. *Bargardān* for Shamlu entails the complete reconstruction and transformation of the source poem into the target poetic culture, in a sense close to the original meaning of *translatio* as "carrying over."[29] Shamlu declares Hafez to be untranslatable and Japanese haiku to be translatable when translation is understood in the sense of *bargardān*. Interpolating American colloquialisms into his exposition, Shamlu further claims that Hafez's poems can only be translated in the sense of *tarjuma*. This second variety of translation, *tarjuma*, renders *kārvānsarā* (caravanserai), a traditional roadside inn, as "motel," *kursī*, a traditional Iranian table, as "winter-table," and *sāqī*, the cup-bearer in classical Persian

[27] For the ancient Semitic origins of *tarjuma* (*tarjama*), see al-Yāsīn, 1952: 28 and Dehkhoda, 1998: 4622. Persian equivalents of *tarjuma* are *bargardān*, derived from *bargardānīdan* meaning "transform." Bijan Elahi uses the derivation *gardānda* in this meaning in his preface to translations of Lorca's poems (1968). He also makes a striking pun on the word in the dedication of the same volume to the poets (*shaʿirān*) and poetry translators (*shiʿr gardānān*). The word is used in the 1972 prefatory note to his translation of T. S. Eliot's *Ash Wednesday*.
[28] For an account of *tarjuma* in premodern Persian literary theory, see Gould 2016.
[29] See Copeland 1995, 106.

poetry, as "barmaid" (1982, 13; English in the original). Rather than reconstructing the source poem, or transforming it into the target language, these renderings domesticate the original. Each rendering is technically accurate, yet fails to convey the broad cultural connotations of the original. While Shamlu cites these domesticating strategies, he appropriates the original poem before situating it in the target language. This is how translation-as-reconstruction (*bargardān*) works for Shamlu, as the perfect and most complete appropriation of the source. It is worth mentioning that this approach to translation echoes that found in the classical treatise of Shams-i Qays (1909, 415-445).

Shamlu's translation of Langston Hughes's poem "Let America Be America Again" (1935) is characterized by a domesticating method, associated by Shamlu with *bargardān*. Shamlu replaces Hughes's "America" with the term *vatan* (motherland), thereby personalizing the text and interpolating his own political views. In the preface to his translation of haikus, completed six months prior to Iran's Islamic revolution in 1979, Shamlu recounts a conversation with an unnamed American friend concerning Hafez's poems. Shamlu's American interlocutor insists on their translatability, provided that a "key [*kilīd*]" to unlock the translation is available. Shamlu recounts this conversation to point out his differences with his American friend and to insist on Hafez's untranslatability. Conceiving translation as a political act, he argues that the American can only understand the complexities of the Iranian soul indirectly, though a distorted paraphrase. Any resulting translation of Hafez into English will therefore be irrelevant to appreciating Hafez in the original. "The lock has no key" (1982, 13) Shamlu concludes.

By contrast, when Shamlu turns his attention to the Japanese haiku, he relies on an aesthetic rather than nativist explanation to argue for its translatability. "Persian poetry," he writes, "is manifested within the texture of language, while in the Japanese haiku, the object

plays the decisive role and language is merely a medium" (1982, 15). For Shamlu, pleasurable content (*mafhūm*) does not guarantee a good translation; pleasurable expression (*bayān*) is also needed. Form is ideologically weighted for Shamlu. Articulating Shamlu's distinction within the idiom of classical Islamic poetics, we might say that for him, *lafẓ* (wording) is internal to *maʿnī* (wording) and vice-versa.[30] For Shamlu, however, in contrast to premodern literary theorists, the mandate to embody content in expression is satisfied by distinguishing between the language of official culture (*farhang-i rasmī*) and of popular culture (*farhang-i ʿāmiyāna*) (Shamlu 1979b, 72).

Shamlu's aesthetic of untranslatability is political, and bound up with his critique of imperialism, which motivates a turn to the classical Persian canon. By insisting on the untranslatability of Hafez, Shamlu underscores how imperial conquest has failed to supress Persian literature. He further uses Hafez's untranslatability to oppose imperialism as a political and cultural project. On the basis of this (perceived) untranslatability, Shamlu argues that imperialism's aims cannot be achieved. According to Shamlu, translation is "a reservoir of the tragic experience of historical suffering" (1982, 13). Lived experience distinguishes the lay Iranian reader from the educated American. In nativist mode, Shamlu warns would-be American translators of the impossibility—and indeed the danger—of attempting to render a verse from Hafez. [31]

Shamlu's reader—rather than writer—oriented approach to translating world poetry looks beyond the aesthetic experimentation that characterized other schools of Iranian modernism. Over the course of his many translations, Shamlu develops a distinct poetic idiom that mirrors the style of his original writing in Persian. His approach to translation resists the totalizing

[30] For the *lafẓ* / *maʿnī* (Arabic *maʿna*) distinction in premodern Islamic poetics, see Gould 2013.
[31] The debate around Hafez's translatability pursued by Shamlu is further developed by Shafiʿi-Kadkani and Dick Davis, whose writings on the topic are discussed in Gould 2018.

tendencies intrinsic to European modernity, which integrates anything and everything into its orbit, assimilating it into a larger literary system.[32] While recognizing the incommensurability of global solidarity and European modernity, Shamlu posits the absolute translatability of poetry when it is composed in response to global injustice. In other words, the basis of translatability is political rather than aesthetic for Shamlu.

Editing Poetry from the Global South

Having discussed Shamlu's canon making and canon breaking as well as his translational aesthetic, we conclude this consideration of his construction of a Global Southern literary canon in Persian by examining his work as an editor. Shamlu's poetics of global solidarity finds its clearest expression in his editorial interventions for the weekly magazine *Kitāb-i jumʿa* published in Tehran in 36 issues between 1979 and 1980 (figures 1-5), until the final issue was banned from distribution by the commander-in-chief of Iran's army. Warning against new practices of censorship immediately after the 1979 revolution, the first editorial of *Kitāb-i jumʿa* ends with Shamlu's redefinition of the intellectual's responsibility toward Iranian ethnic minorities: "Prepared for death, the army of committed intellectuals (*rowshanfikrān-i mutuʿahid*) has entered into an unequal tug of war. Let their injuries sever as a warning of the attack on all cultural and civic achievements of Iran's ethnic minorities" (1979a, 3)

[32] For European modernity as a totalizing process, see Jay 1984.

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Figures 1-5. Covers for *Kitāb-i jumʿa*, from right to left: No.33 (1 May 1979); No. 29 (6 March 1980); No. 10 (4 October 1979); No. 30 (13 March 1980); No. 25 (31 January 1980). All images taken from http://irpress.org .

Kitāb-i jumʿa contained materials about the revolution, fiction, non-fiction, literary criticism, graphic art, and photography. As shown in **table 1**, Most of the poets chosen by Shamlu for translation were lesser-known communist, anarchist, and revolutionary poets from the Global South, including Cuba, Chile, Argentina, Guatemala, El Salvador, Pakistan, Mozambique, Angola, and South Africa, alongside leftist European poets. Responding to the taste for guerrilla poetry and protest literature among leftist Iranian poets and readers of that period, the poems selected by Shamlu directly reflect on shared anticolonial struggles, imperialism, and capitalism.

Table 1: *Kitāb-i jumʿa* contributions relating to world poetry

Author	**Translator**	**Volume & Year**	**Page numbers**
Nâzım Hikmet (Turkey)	Mohammad Ali Sepanlu	2 (1358/1979)	55
Pablo Neruda (Chile)	-, M.A. S	2, 11 (1358/1979)	57, 8-25
A. A. Voznesensky (Russia)	-, M.S	2, 20 (1358/1979)	60, 30
Dennis Vincent Brutus (South Africa)	Ahmad Karimi Hakkak	2 (1358/1979)	68-71
Agostinho Neto (Angola)	F. Faryad	3 (1358/1979)	76-77
Tadashi Amano, Saburō Kuroda, Kikuo Takano, Shirōyasu Suzuki, Kamimura Hajime (Japan)	Homayun Nur Ahmar	4 (1358/1979)	82-86
Tadeusz Różewicz (Poland)	Mansur Owji	5 (1358/1979)	70-77
W.B. Yeats (Ireland)	N. Parkani	8 (1358/1979)	48
Carolina Noémia Abranches de Sousa (Mozambique)	Abd al-Mohammad Delkhah	9 (1358/1979)	36-37
Yiannis Ritsos (Greece)	Ahmad Karimi Hakkak	11 (1358/1979)	44
Víctor Jara (Chile)	Ahmad Karimi Hakkak	11 (1358/1979)	46-48
Alain Bosquet (France)	Ahmad Karimi Hakkak	11 (11358/979)	48-49
Louis Aragon (France)	Ahmad Karimi Hakkak	11 (1358/1979)	49-50

Patricia Gordon (?)	Ahmad Karimi Hakkak	11 (1358/1979)	51
Shirley Kashof (?)	Ramin Shahrvand	12 (1358/1979)	22
Jesús López-Pacheco (Spain)	Ahmad Reza Ravanbakhsh	12 (1358/1979)	23
Gabino-Alejandro Carriedo (Spain)	Ahmad Reza Ravanbakhsh	12 (1358/1979)	24-26
Bertolt Brecht (Germany)	Parvin Anvar	13, 16 (1358/1979)	64-66, 16-17
Edgar Lee Masters (US)	Hasan Fayad	13 (1358/1979)	67-71
Sahir Ludhianvi, Sardar Jafri, Habib Jalib, Faiz Ahmad Faiz (Urdu poets from India & Pakistan)	Ramin Shahrvand	14 (1358/1979)	59-70
Mari Evans (US)	Ramin Shahrvand	16 (1358/1979)	18
Bert Ward, Bill Eburn, Patricia Gordon (Britain)	Ahmad Karimi Hakkak	17 (1358/1979)	33-36
Odysseus Elytis (Greece)	-	18 (1358/1979)	72-82
Giorgos Seferis (Greece)	Ramin Shahrvand	21 (1358/1980)	25-34
Osvaldo Ramous (Italian-Croatian writer)	Ahmad Karimi Hakkak	24 (1358/1980)	55-61
Ernesto Che Guevara (Argentina)	Fereydun Faryad	25 (1358/1980)	64-65
Otto-Raúl González, Otto René Castillo (Guatemala)	Ahmad Shamlu	25 (1358/1980)	66-69
Alfonso Quijada Urías (El Salvador)	Ahmad Shamlu	25 (1358/1980)	69-70
Antonio José Rivas (Honduras)	Ahmad Shamlu	25 (1358/1980)	70-71
Erdal Alova (Turkey)	Bahram Haq Parast	26 (1358/1980)	32-33
Nicolás Guillén (Cuba)	Ramin Shahrvand, Farhad Ghabra'i	26, 27 (1358/1980)	48-51, 27
Eldridge Cleaver (US)	R. Sh	26 (1358/1980)	52-57
Gail Stokes (US)	-	26 (1358/1980)	58-60
Roberto Fernández Retamar (Cuba)	Farhad Ghabra'i	27 (1358/1980)	27
Luís Veiga Leitão (Portugal)	Ahmad Reza Ravanbakhsh	27 (1358/1980)	56-58
Leonardo Alishan (Iranian-Armenian writer)	-	31 (1358/1980)	48-51
George MacBeth (Scotland)	Azad A. Niam	31 (1359/1980)	62-75
Amrita Pritam (Punjab)	A. N	32 (1359/1980)	99
Vietnamese folklore poems	A. N, S. T	32 (1359/1980)	100-101, 124
Eugène Edine Pottier (France)	A. Sh	33 (1359/1980)	2-3

Ernst Fischer (Austria)	A. Sh	33 (1359/1980)	24-25
Pietro Gori (Italy)	A. Sh	33 (1359/1980)	23-24
A. K. Gastev (Russia)	Ramin Shahrvand	35 (1359/1980)	62-63
Hans Magnus Enzensberger (Germany)	Hushang Barmaki	36 (1359/1980)	58-59
Ho Chi Minh (Vietnam)	-	36 (1359/1980)	100-102

A substantial proportion of the poems selected for inclusion were from the languages of indigenous ethnic minorities within Iran, including Kurdish, Azeri, Baluchi, and Bakhtiyari. Other poems in Persian dealt extensively with the lives of Iranian ethnic minorities. **Table 2** enumerates Shamlu's selection of material relating to ethnic minorities (*shāʿirān-i khalqī*) within Iran, and reveals his editorial investment in providing representation for marginalized Iranian ethnicities. As this table shows, Shamlu played an important role to giving voice to lesser-known poets from minority ethnic groups and in developing the marginalized undercurrents of Iranian poetry, which were produced far from the urban centres of Iranian modernism. Although different in their dimensions and historical contexts, the struggles of Iranian Kurd, Azeris, and Baluchi, each involved the assertion of the right to write and study in a language other than Farsi.

Table 2: *Kitāb-i jumʿa* contributions relating to the lives of Iran's ethnic minorities

Author	Translator	Language	Subject	Volume & Year	Page numbers
Hasan Ali Kaidan	-	Persian	Poem by a Khuzestani poet	1 (1358/1979)	80
Latif Halmat	Jalal al-Din Malekshah	Kurdish	Five poems by a Kurdish poet	6 (1358/1979)	82-85
Murtuz Negahi	Murtuz Negahi	Bilingual Azeri/Persian	Poem by an Azeri poet	9 (1358/1979)	34-45
S. A. Salehi	Gh. Babadi	Bakhtiari	Poem by a Bakhtiari poet	10 (1358/1979)	44-45
Qalandar Dadsha	Abbas Aref Akhar	Baluchi	Two poems by a Baluch poet	16 (1358/1979)	11-14
Javad Zahedi Mazandarani, Mohammad Reza Hosseini Kazeruni	-	Persian	Sociological study of Hormuz Island's fishers ("Water and thirst [*Ab va ʿatash*])	4,5 (1358/1979)	127-123, 104-121
Mohammad Reza Hosseini	-	Persian	Statistical report on slum	12 (1358/1979)	50-64

Kazeruni, Hushang Qalʿeh-Golabi			dwelling in Iran		
Bajlan Farrokhi, Mansur Kia'i	-	Persian	Article about the Lurs' mourning ritual called *chamar*	16 (1358/1979)	90-102
Abbas Garusi	-	Persian	Article about Bushehri vine farmers	18 (1358/1979)	96-113
Ihan Bashguz, Bajlan Farrokhi	Bajlan Farrokhi	English	A study of rain shamanism (*tammana-ye baran* and *baransazi*) among various ethnic groups around Iran	18, 19, 20 (1358/1979)	114-125, 130-141, 113-119
Jean Pierre Digard	Asghar Karimi	French	An ethnographic study of Bakhtiari nomads	21 (1358/1980)	56-69
K. Salaman	-	Persian	Study of Turkmen fishers	35 (1359/1980)	54-61
Nader Hoda	-	Persian	Report on riots in Kurdistan	17 (1358/1979), 28 (1358/1980)	52-60, 106-118
Farrokh Sadeqi	-	Persian	Article about education in vernacular languages	18 (1358/1979)	10-14
Abbas Yusofpour	-	Persian	Ethnographic photojournalism of Minab local market near Hormuz Island	9 (1358/1979)	38-46
Nader Mehraban	-	Persian	Photojournalism of Azeri Shahsavan nomads	12 (1358/1979)	130-135
Piruz Kalantari	-	Persian	Photojournalism of fishers in Chabahar port	16 (1358/1979)	66-70

Conclusion: World Poetry as a Political Project

We have shown here how Shamlu's project of translating world poetry, and of reconstructing a Global Southern literary canon from a range of so-called third-world and "minor" literatures, moves in a different direction from other modernist translational initiatives, also underway within Iran during these same years, that aimed to replace classical frameworks of

Persian poetic expression with fresh literary styles. Enriching the global literary tradition of protest poetry, Shamlu offers translation as a means of transnational emancipation and proletarian internationalism. Inspired by the leftist anthem "L'Internationale" (1871),[33] which Soviet-Iranian poet Abulqasem Lahuti translated for the first time into Persian, Shamlu's translational internationalism integrated world poetry from Africa, Asia, and Latin America with mainstream modernist European canons in the hopes of generating solidarity and bringing about political transformation.

By examining Shamlu's literary endeavors as poet, critic, translator, and editor, we can see how his conception translation as a mode of internationalist solidarity joined forces with his understanding of translation as resistance to imperialism. Within this framework, modernity (*tajadud*) becomes more than a cultural product imported from metropolitan European and Anglo-American centres to under-developed peripheries. While world literature has been moving away from centre-periphery models for decades in its efforts to grapple with problems of scale, the problem of "combined and uneven development" has yet to be conceived from an Iranian perspective.[34] Shamlu's awareness of how the concept of modernity has functioned to exploit non-European nations did not dilute his commitment to overcoming the limitations of the classical Persian tradition. He recognized that Iranian history has been shaped by pressures from foreign and domestic colonizing forces, both of which have impeded the development of Persian modernism. "Exile to the past is far worse than physical exile" (1985, 74) contends Iranian critic Reza Baraheni. As many Iranian authors are keenly aware, Iranian modernism has been

[33] See Lahuti 1954. Shamlu's translation under the title "Surūd-i bayn al-milal" was published in *Kitāb-i jumʿa* (vol. 33, p. 2-3). Both translations are abridgements of the original French text of Eugène Edine Pottier.
[34] Recent work in this direction, much of which uses world systems theory to understand the circulation of literature, includes the Warwick Research Collective (WReC): Deckard, Lawrence, Lazarus, MacDonald, Mukherjee, Parry, and Shapiro 2015; Palumbo-Liu, Robbins, and Tanoukhi 2011.

generated at the meeting point of two counter-forces. The strict domestic traditionalism that regards any innovation as a foreign imposition stands in tension with a global literary modernism that was by and large fixated on the elite foreign literatures associated with metropolitan European geographies.

By contrast with the more placid and apolitical writings of many of his contemporaries, Shamlu's committed aesthetic targets the complicity of aesthetic production in generating and sustaining global inequality, including by perpetuating the cultural capital of canonicity. Hence Shamlu's role as a canon-breaker as much as a canon-maker. Shamlu's resistant poetics of global solidarity expands the temporality and geography of Persian literature by bringing Iran's ethnic minority voices together and with the poetry of authors from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. In broadening the spatial terrain of literary modernism while mapping a global geography for anti-imperial resistance, Shamlu shows how translation can function as a modality of solidarity, helping to dissolve ongoing geopolitical hierarchies of centre/periphery and colonizer/colonized.

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