

*Persian Literary Studies Journal (PLSJ)*

Vol. 1, No. 1, Autumn-Winter 2012

ISSN: 2557-2322

pp. 41- 58

## **Cultural Translation: A Critical Analysis of William Jones's Translation of Hafez**

**Alireza Anushiravani \***

Associate Professor of Comparative  
Literature

Shiraz University, Iran

Email: anushir@shirazu.ac.ir

**Laleh Atashi**

Ph.D. Candidate

English Literature

Shiraz University, Iran

Email: laleh.atashi@gmail.com

### **Abstract**

The humanist mission of translation is believed to be rooted in the universal humane urge to spread knowledge and to eliminate misunderstanding among people as well as to generate a broader space for communication. What is absent from this philanthropist definition is the workings of power and the political agendas that influence the translator's stance and his/her interpretation of the text that he/she is translating. The translation of an oriental literary text by a scholar who is actively involved in the discourse of colonialism would be an ideologically pregnant text, and a rich case study for cultural translation. Sir William Jones, an English philologist and scholar, was particularly known for his proposition of the existence of a relationship among Indo-European languages. Jones translated one of Hafez's poems—if that Shirazi Turk—into English under the title of "A Persian Song of *Hafiz*." His Translation denotes a large cultural formation that emerges through the encounter between the colonizing West and the colonized East. In this paper, we have examined how Jones's Western perspective affects his translation of Hafiz's poem and changes its spiritual and mystic core into a secular and profane love.

**Keywords:** Hafiz, William Jones, cultural translation, westernization, orientalism, appropriation

---

Received: July 21, 2012

Accepted: Oct. 09, 2012

\* Corresponding author

*The "Turk of Shiraz" seems to fail as a poem not because of any lapses in its rhythm, sound effects, the vitality of its images, the freshness of its conceits, or the force of its statements- -it may be flawless in those terms--but because its organization of theme and imagery does not conduce to the singleness of impression which is associated with poetic statement. (Hillman, 1975, p. 178)*

### **Introduction**

One of the problems faced by the Western translators when they approach the poetry of Hafez is the cultural encounter between East and West and their differing horizons of expectations. What constitutes the poetic ideal in Eastern poetry is different from its Western counterpart, hence Hillman's dismissal of the translation of Hafez's poem as a failure. Hillman made this value judgment in 1975 when colonialism had become a part of history but still the Western stereotypes of the Eastern literature's imperfection as contrasted with the "norms" established by the Western literature are quite evident. Davis (2004) in order to delineate the collusion of two cultural grids compares Hamlet's advice to the actors and Ayyuqi's definition of a poet: Hamlet wants the players "to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature; to show . . . the very age and body of the time his form and pressure," and the eleventh-century poet Ayyuqi believes that "a poet is like the woman who beautifies a bride before her wedding ceremony" (pp.315-316), based on Davis's comparison the Western artists hold the banner of representational and mimetic art while the Eastern artists believe in the mission of art as ennobling and idolizing the banal world.

Davis seems to have a genealogical analysis of Western and Eastern aesthetics. However, to many 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century European scientists the genes of a species were referred to with an objective pose, to dis/prove the inner worth of a species or a nation or geography. Such a treatment did not leave the discourse of literature untouched. Eastern literatures were approached by Western scholars who tended to dismiss what was not the same as Western literature and this attitude can be rooted in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century discourse of orientalism at the heart of expansionist adventures of Europe. Sir William Jones

was an English philologist and scholar particularly known for his proposition of the existence of a relationship among Indo-European languages. Jones translated one of Hafez's poems—if that Shirazi Turk—into English under the title of "A Persian Song of *Hafiz*". His Translation denotes a large cultural formation that emerges through the encounter between the colonizing West and the colonized East.

The humanist mission of translation is said to be rooted in the universal humane urge to spread knowledge and to eliminate misunderstanding among people as well as to generate a broader space for communication. What is absent from this philanthropist definition is the workings of power and the political agendas that influence the translator's stance and his/her interpretation of the text that he/she is translating. The translator cannot stay detached from the society in which he/she is dwelling, and is chained in the web of discourses that decide the marketability, reception, objectives and the audience of his translation. Gideon Toury (1978) describes the prerequisites of becoming a translator:

Translation activities should be regarded as having cultural significance. Consequently, 'translatorship' amounts first and foremost to being able to *play a social role*, i.e. to fulfill a function allotted by a community—to the activity, its practitioners, and/or their products—in a way which is deemed appropriate in its own terms of reference. The acquisition of a set of norms for determining the suitability of that kind of behavior and for maneuvering between all the factors which may constrain it, is therefore a prerequisite for becoming a translator within a cultural environment. (p.83)

From Toury's delineation of the factors influencing the act of translation, we can deduct that the translation of an oriental literary text done by a scholar who is actively involved in the discourse of colonialism would be an ideologically pregnant text, and a rich case study for cultural translation. Bassnett (2007), herself a comparatist, agrees with Toury's emphasis on cultural grids and notes that the focus of translation studies has shifted from evaluating two or more translations of one text into an in-depth cultural analysis of one

single translation. Sir William Jones, the much esteemed British scholar introduced Hafez to Westerners by translating this very poem and calling it "A Persian Song of Hafiz." However, it is important to have a critical review of Jones's reading of Hafiz and to analyze the influence of his colonial stance on his translation/interpretation of Hafiz.

### **Concretization of the Ethereal**

The objective stance of the scientist and scholar who boasts of detachment and disinterestedness is only a colonial gesture. According to Mackenzie (1995), "here is no such thing as an innocent eye" (p. 53). This sentence means that even seeing is an act of selection informed by many contextual factors. In this case, William Jones' translation is ideologically pregnant and far from innocent. Schroeder (1984) believes that the Hafiz presented by Jones "is simply ...an eighteenth-century Englishman of taste. His voice is the unmistakable voice of a polite rational materialist" (p. 212). Cannon (1998) uses the word "embroidery" to describe Jones's treatment of Hafiz. He points to the first line of the poem<sup>1</sup> translated as:

Sweet maid, if thou wouldst charm my sight,  
And bid these arms thy neck infold;  
That rosy cheek, that lily hand  
Would give thy poet more delight  
Than all Bokhara' vaunted gold,  
Than all the gems of Samarcand. (ll.1-6)

And goes on to argue that this stanzaic translation "started the English tradition of the Oriental dream world of pleasure, opening the literary pluralism and showing the free reworking of the Oriental source that Edward FitzGerald, originally inspired by Jones's writings, was to do so well for Omar Khayyam."(p. 130).

William Jones has turned each line of Hafiz poem into a six-line stanza; changing Hafiz's sonnet into a stanzaic<sup>2</sup> poem is an attempt on the part of Jones to appropriate this Persian poem for Western readers. In the first stanza the translator has apostrophized the "sweet maid," the phrase that Jones has used in

place of "Shirazi Turk". Hafiz uses a wishful conditional sentence to show his unfulfilled desire for the Shirazi Turk, but Jones directly addresses the sweet maid. By apostrophizing the sweet maid, Jones decreases the unavailability of the beloved very often highlighted in Hafiz's and other Persian poets' love sonnets. The apostrophe reveals the presence of the beloved, hence the absence of wishful dreams and daydreams in Jones's appropriation of Hafiz's beloved, because Jones's beloved is not that impossible.

The "Shirazi Turk" has been translated as "Sweet Maid" in William Jones, that is, the local and geographic identity of Hafiz's poem has been deleted and replaced with a timeless source of beauty; therefore, Jones presents to the Western readers a "universal" beloved; an adjective that to the eighteenth century colonialists meant "European". Hafiz prays that the Shirazi Turk, the ethereal beloved, may get hold of his heart. This Hafizian wish has been transformed into such a wish that reminds one of the love poems inherited from Andrew Marvell in which physical love is celebrated: "if thou wouldst charm my sight,/And bid these arms thy neck infold; /That rosy cheek, that lily hand/ Would give thy poet more delight."(Jones, ll. 1-4) Such an emphasis on tactile imagery—touching, hugging, hands and cheeks—brings the affair down to the earth and exaggerates the physicality of the encounter.

Another point of departure from Hafiz in Jones' translation is that *the beloved* is supposed to charm the sight and give the poet delight. It seems that Hafiz has been misinterpreted here: if Hafiz wishes that the Shirazi Turk pays attention to his heart, Jones says that the sweet maid must make an effort to attract the male poet, as if she has to pay the price in order to be loved; therefore, the version of love that we see in Jones' translation is far from the unconditional love of the Persian poet for his beloved. In Persian love sonnets, it is the lover who willingly pays huge prices to get the slightest attention from the beloved. Such expectations, as cherished by Jones, remind one of Sir Thomas Wyatt and his representation of the British masculinity as an upright and demanding man of action that refuses to wait forever and insists that the lady pay her dues. Such expectations would sound bold to the Persian poet who is influenced by the cult of Sufi poetry and who can't help desiring the beloved which is the source of perfection.

### Traces of the British History in Jones's Translation

Hafiz's boasts of giving Samarcand and Bokhara for the beauty mole of the beloved. The two geographical areas are rich but the fact that Jones has added and hence highlighted the gold and gems and hence the material wealth of the areas reveals the Benthamite endorsing of utilitarianism, and the consequent mamonic outlook. The payments in return for enfolding the neck of the beloved and receiving delights of her lily hands makes bare such a concrete and material exchange between the poet and the sweet maid that cannot be found in Hafiz' poetic landscape. Apart from the materialism at the heart of such a treatment of Hafiz, there can be traced a tendency to highlight the opulence of the East and its eye catching picturesque colors which make it worth the colonial ventures.

Boy, let yon liquid ruby flow,  
 And bid thy pensive heart be glad,  
 Whate'er the frowning zealots say:  
 Tell them, their Eden cannot show  
 A stream so clear as Rocnabad,  
 A bower so sweet as Mosellay<sup>2</sup>. (ll. 7-12)

Historically speaking, *saqi* or the cup bearer has been male and if we consider *saqi* as female now, it's because of the contemporary Persian miniaturists who have rendered *saqi* as female. William Jones scholarly knowledge of Indo-European languages and literatures has helped him do justice to the gender of *saqi* but the way Jones apostrophizes him as "Boy" is not a little distant from Persian poets' approach. William Jones strips the Sufi connotations attributed to *saqi* as the spiritual mediator and relegates him to the position of a waiter. Jones adds the image of the ruby which apart from the color, points to the convention of aesthetizing the picturesque opulence of the Orient. *Saqi* who offers an intoxicating wine and hence helps the lover get closer to the absolute source of ideal love through intoxication has a symbolic presence in Hafiz' poems and his psychology is never probed and his feelings and thoughts never mentioned. There is in Hafiz, a binary opposition between the lover and the beloved, the drinker and the cupbearer, the seeker and the besought. The left side of the binary is articulate and vocal and expresses his

thoughts and feelings fully while the right side of the binary is silent and inarticulate. In order to maintain these binaries it is necessary that the right side of binary remain flat and depthless rather than round and complicated. William Jones adds the adjective "pensive" in addressing the cup bearing "Boy" and hence humanizes the character of an otherwise spiritual, flat idol and hence blurs the dividing line in the binary opposition: the humanization of *Saqi* strips him from his mystical qualities and consequently the quest of the poet/lover loses its spiritual goals.

Another point that is important in this stanza is Jones' use of the word "zealot" which is absent from Hafiz poem. "Zealot" was used to refer to the Puritans who ruled England after the beheading of Charles the first. Their rejection of worldliness and their governmental system of "thou shalt and thou shalt not" led to discontent and finally resulted in the restoration of monarchy. William Jones, living in the post Puritan 18<sup>th</sup> century, expresses his reactionary hedonistic attitude when he adds the zealots to Hafiz poem, only to dismiss them and their promise of the otherworldly paradise. Therefore, it can be concluded that William Jones brings the historical and political dimensions of the British society into his translation.

### **The Influence of British Conventions of Love Sonnet on Jones' Reading of Hafiz**

The position of the lover and the beloved has been represented differently in Eastern and Western love sonnets. Jones, as a Western scholar, has been trained within the framework of humanism. Consequently, his belief in human dignity prevents him from empathizing with the Persian poet/lover who humiliates himself in front of another human being, i.e., the beloved. To the Persian poet, the beauty of the beloved, would lead the lover to the perfect beauty of God, and this is the point of departure between the Western humanist and the Eastern mystic. Such cultural differences can be traced in the following stanza:

O! When these fair perfidious maids,  
Whose eyes our secret haunts infest,  
Their dear destructive charms display;  
Each glance my tender breast invades,  
And robs my wounded soul of rest,  
As tartars seize their destined preys<sup>3</sup>. (ll.13-18)

One of the literary terms used in many Persian poems and not in British poems is hyperboles. Davis (2004) believes that the use of hyperbole can be only justifiable-- and not necessarily poetic—only when a mortal uses it to address an immortal; and he goes on to argue that, to British readers, it is "distasteful flattery" when a mortal uses hyperbole to address a mortal (315). The difficulties of translating hyperboles are due to the vacuum faced by the Western translator when he comes to "religion of love" in Persian poetry. Khurramshāhī quotes Abd al-Rahmān Khatmī Lāhūrī<sup>4</sup> who relates microcosm and macrocosms and believes that human beauty points to the transcendent beauty:

That Transcendent Beloved Being then spoke, stating that any gnostic who is a confidant of the arcane mysteries, who recognizes the true face of such an affair, when given such a wine – that is, beauty and loveliness decked out in the garb of the veiled presentment of a figurative mortal sweetheart – will only end up veiling and concealing this display of God, this divine theophany, unless he does becomes a worshipper of beauty [*husn-parast*]. This is because it is through the forms of mortal beauty [*suwar-i husniyya*] that God-as-Absolute in reality attracts the hearts of lovers to Himself. (cited in Lewisohn 2010, p. 85)

Based on Lahuri's delineation of the "religion of love", the praise of the "mortal" beloved, to use Dick Davis's terms, leads the lover to the immortal beauty and love of God-as-Absolute. The "religion of love" in Persian poetry has been translated into a sordid language by Jones. The adjective "Shahrashoob" in the poetic landscape of Hafez refers to a mediator that can "free one from conceit, self-centeredness and egotism" (Lewisohn, 2010, p. 84) and this revolutionary change in the character of the lover sounds like an "ashoob" or a riot that is liberating in the long run. William Jones' confusion at this cultural encounter is revealed when he replaces the positive revolutionary force of the earthly beauty with adjectives such as "perfidious", "infest", "destructive".

The adjective "perfidious" was used in the 16<sup>th</sup> century to refer to political infidelity. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the adjective is used in *The Lady's Magazine and Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex*, to refer to prostitutes that corrupt men and make them unworthy of marriage. The word as an attribute for betraying women, seems to come into fashion in the literary discourses of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, that is after William Jones translation of Hafiz.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, it seems that Jones have taken a part in establishing the tradition of using the phrase "perfidious maid" to refer to unfaithful and promiscuous women who betray the lover. Jones' enterprise can be informed by the orientalist discourse and its erotic representation of the oriental woman as sensual and promiscuous. Jones has stated in his translation that the eyes of the perfidious maid have infested his secret haunts. The word "infest" creates unpleasant gustatory and olfactory imagery that is absent from Hafiz description of the beauties. In order to interpret Jones' use of such negative concepts, we'd better contextualize his outlook within the aesthetic beliefs prevalent in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Britain. Grewal (1996) refers to "Rousseauist dream of the transparent society" (p. 25) and explains that the aesthetics of visibility and transparency was a reaction against the pre revolutionary gothic rule of Europe with its dark dungeons and chambers, mysterious castles and the opaque spaces in which despotic rule, superstition and conspirators reigned. And therefore the Betamite panopticon was put forth to replace the underground dungeons and to make the society as transparent as possible. Based on the 18<sup>th</sup> century aesthetics of transparency, secrets and mysteries were considered threats to the transparent society. The East was seen by the 18<sup>th</sup> century European man "as this area of darkness not only because it was unknown and perceived as mysterious but because it was believed that these lands were ruled by a despotism" not unlike that of the Goths that was already removed in Europe (p. 26).

William Jones, influenced by the orientalist discourse, interprets East as the opaque space which is inevitably infested. The two-word phrase "secret haunts", connotes an opacity feared by the 18<sup>th</sup> century Europeans. Haunt refers to private moments that are probably beyond the jurisdiction of the panopticon, and the word "secret" connotes hidden truths, constipations and plots that may endanger the otherwise transparent society. The opacity and invisibility of this erotic obsession has been projected on the oriental female figure whose beauty,

unlike the angelic beauty of the European female figure, is only infesting and destructive.

The process of westernizing Hafiz for British readers runs through the following stanza in which the self-pity of the poet/lover centralizes the lover himself and marginalizes the beloved:

In vain with love our bosoms glow:  
Can all our tears, can all our sighs,  
New luster to those charms impart?  
Can cheeks, where living roses blow,  
Where nature spreads her richest dyes,  
Require the borrow'd gloss of art<sup>6</sup>? (ll.19-24)

Hafiz in this line is describing the perfect beauty of the beloved and the fact that the lover's love would not enhance the beauty of the beloved. Therefore, once more the lover humbly admits through a hyperbole the absolute beauty of the beloved. Jones in his translation of this line slightly departs from Hafiz and with a self-pitying tone in the first two lines of the stanza attracts the attention of the readers to his own pains rather than the beauty of the beloved. Such a self-pitying tone can be found in many Roman elegies in which the lover complains bitterly and self-righteously against the beloved who has betrayed him<sup>7</sup>. There is no self-pitying tone in Hafiz's line; therefore, it seems that the translator is using the ancient heritage of Western literature to appropriate Hafiz sonnet for the British readers.

### **Empiricism vs. Mysticism**

In the stanza below, a brilliant example of cultural diversions between the East and the West can be traced. The Western scholar seems to be bewildered at the encounter with Eastern opacity:

Speak not of fate:--ah! Change the theme,  
And talk of odours, talk of wine,  
Talk of the flowers that round us bloom:  
'Tis all a cloud, 'tis all a dream;  
To love and joy thy thoughts confine,  
Nor hope to pierce the sacred gloom<sup>8</sup> (ll. 25-30)

A Persian reader of Hafiz's poetry is used to finding negative imperatives that beseech the reader not to ask, not to seek because the atmosphere of mysticism in Hafiz's poetry makes it necessary that the opacity of the world be maintained. The poetic landscape of Hafiz centers round the unknown and a halo of mystery covers Hafiz's ambiguous language, hence the unsettled Western reader whose aesthetics of transparency, apart from the historical and political context was informed by the ideals of enlightenment. The age of enlightenment advocated the supremacy of science and rationality and clarity. William Jones, himself a scientist and the true child of enlightenment manipulates Hafiz's focus on the unknown and shifts the emphasis away from Hafizian mystery to Khayyamian *carpe diem*, a theme dominant in the post Puritan literary discourse of Britain. If Hafiz insists on leaving the mystery of the world untouched, Jones treats this concept as if it is a boring topic and implores his addressee to change the theme. While Hafiz believes no one can solve the mysterious puzzle, Jones says that "it's all a cloud, it's all a dream". A cloud would hinder the passage of light and is hence, a threat to transparency and a dream is a violation of the enlightenment ideal of the rational, transparent and concrete reality. If Hafiz advises his addressee not to put an effort in order to know the unknown, the Persian reader would willingly attend to the sagely word of wisdom and it wouldn't sound like naïve acceptance of the world, but accepting such an advise would sound like retreating to the pre revolutionary gothic realm of darkness and the pre enlightenment world of superstition. In order for Jones to appropriate such an inconvenient cultural encounter between the East and the West, he shakes off the mysterious on the whole because the persistence in opacity would only deserve dismissal.

### **Stereotyping the Orient**

Once more, Jones has recourse to the strategy he used in the first stanza, that is, the deletion of the proper nouns. On the one hand, Jones deletes the specificity of the allusion and on the other hand, he generalizes his comment on oriental sexuality to give a reductionist picture of the whole orient:

Beauty has such resistless power,  
That even the chaste Egyptian dame  
Sighed for the blooming Hebrew boy;

For her how fatal was the hour,  
 When to the banks of Niles came  
 A youth so lovely and so coy!<sup>9</sup> (ll.31-36)

Hafiz alludes to the story of Joseph and Zuleikha and points to Joseph's irresistible beauty only to lead us indirectly to plight of Zuleikha. It seems that Hafiz sums up the story into a focal point which is the fate of Zuleikha, while William Jones constructs the moment of their encounter; therefore if Hafiz brings the final result into the reader's mind, William Jones theatricalizes the beginning of the story and depicts the bedazzlement of hers. This slight change would lead us to the questions posed by Lefevere:

Can culture A ever really understand culture B on that culture's (i.e. B's) own terms? Or do the grids always define the ways in which cultures will be able to understand each other? Are the grids, to put it in terms that may well be too strong, the prerequisite for all understanding or not? (Lefevere 1999, p. 77)

Lefevere highlights the influence of the cultural encounter between the translator and the translated. The cultural grids foment a particular reading of a text in the target culture that may not be exactly the same as the way that text is read in the source culture. The culture specific reading of a text would lead to conscious or unconscious manipulation and appropriations of the text. Therefore, Jones's treatment of Hafiz can be considered as his conscious contribution to the discourse of propagandizing the orient that was meant to arouse sensual and erotic expectations. The colonial enterprise of Britain in Asian countries, prepared the grounds for the project of stereotyping the orient as the inferior other of Britain.

Therefore, Jones adds some attributes to Joseph that are absent from Hafiz's poem. First of all he deletes the names of the two and in this way generalizes the story to include the whole orient. Zuleikha is the Egyptian "dame" and Joseph is the "Hebrew boy" in Jones' translation. Jones, apart from depriving these characters from their names, and hence from their local and historical individuality, gives a feminine identity to Joseph by using adjectives

that are mostly attributable to women. Joseph is a "blooming boy" and "a youth so lovely and so coy". Such adjectives are meant to erase the masculinity of the oriental man in general, a strategy used in the orientalist discourse to justify the disciplining presence of the virile British forces in the orient, a geography that had gone feminine due to its effeminate men. The oriental woman wishing for the effeminate man would be considered as a sensual and promiscuous woman to the British readers who believed in heterosexual strict binaries between man and woman, masculinity and femininity. Therefore, Jones seems to be actively engaged in the process of stereotyping the orient and the oriental.

### **The Cult of Mentoring and the British Love Sonnets**

Jones, once again, seems to be bewildered at the Eastern cultural norms. He sexualizes the cult of mentoring and with a patronizing tone, feminizes the addressee in Hafiz's poem and adds strong overtones of *carpe diem* to his interpretation:

But ah! Sweet maid, my counsel hear  
(youth should attend when those advise  
Whom long experience renders sage):  
While music charms the ravish'd ear;  
While sparkling cups delight our eyes,  
Be gay; and scorn the frowns of age.<sup>10</sup> (ll.37-42)

Within this stanza Jones has recourse to the British convention of love sonnets. Sir Thomas Wyatt, the 16<sup>th</sup> century poet who is said to have been the first who introduced love sonnets into British literature presented a British masculinity, hitherto rare in the British elite literature. In "Madame, Withouten Many Words" for example, he proposes to the lady but he never insists, he is reluctant to wait forever to hear the positive response of the lady. Revealing an impatient and demanding masculine identity, the poet predicts the consequences of the two possible replies of the lady: "If it be yea, I shall be fain;/If it be nay, friends as before; /Ye shall another man obtain,/And I mine own and yours no more (ll. 9-12). The love sonnets introduced by Wyatt are basically different from Persian love poems in that they dismiss the idea of insistence and persistence in love, an idea that forms the pillar of Persian love

poems. In "Farewell Love and All Thy Laws Forever," for example, Wyatt harshly refuses to follow a domineering woman that is represented as a seductress: "With idle youth go use thy property/And thereon spend thy many brittle darts,/For hitherto though I have lost all my time, /Me lusteth no lenger rotten boughs to climb." (ll. 11-14). William Jones can also be influenced by the frank and unprecedented approach of the metaphysical poets toward love. The poet in "to His Coy Mistress" addresses a silent and inarticulate lady and reminds her of the passage of time and mocks her romantic expectations and finally concludes tersely that they should consummate their love before they die: " Let us roll all our strength, and all/Our sweetness, up into one ball;/ And tear our pleasures with rough strife/ Thorough the iron gates of life" (ll.40-43). What is important about such influences is that they would form the underlying structure of Jones' appropriation of Hafiz's poem. From Wyatt, he learns the demystification of the lady and from Marvell he learns the superior tone of a mature man who addresses a naïve, inarticulate and immature lady and who patronizingly gives some "adult" advice to her.

Hafiz in this line is not addressing the beloved because in Persian poetry, the lover never considers himself in a position to advise the beloved, but Jones locates this line within the tradition of British love poetry and with an authoritative tone advises the "sweet maid". Hafiz in this line might be addressing himself or any other young man and is, in fact, cherishing the cult of mentoring which is a same sex relationship. Jones deletes the cult of mentoring and gives a heterosexual tone to this line and imbues its sensuous pleasures. The cult of mentoring advocated by Hafiz in this line has been missed by Jones; he probably had met a vacuum in this line because he had found it insufficient to advise people to take advise, so he generates some pieces of advice to fill the vacuum: "While music charms the ravish'd ear; /While sparkling cups delight our eyes;/ Be gay; and scorn the frowns of age." These lines, that are absent from Hafiz, carry a striking resemblance with Andrew Marvell's advise in "To His Coy Mistress" in which the poet advises the coy mistress to seize the day: "while the youthful hue/ Sits on thy skin like morning dew,/ And while thy willing soul transpires/ At every pore with instant fires,/ Now let us sport us while we may "(Marvell, ll. 33.37), in which the poet tries to cherish the post-Puritan *carpe diem* theme.

---

### Transparency vs. Opacity

In the following stanza Jones uses the strategy he used in the beginning stanza: once again he apostrophizes the beloved and hence concretizes the ethereal beloved of Hafiz by addressing her directly:

What cruel answer have I heard  
And yet, by heaven, I love thee still:  
Can aught be cruel from thy lip?  
Yet say, how fell that bitter word  
From lips which streams of sweetness fills  
Which naught but drops of honey sip<sup>11</sup>? (ll. 43-48)

Hafiz uses conditional sentences about imaginary encounters while Jones renders the encounter a past event that has already taken place. There seems to be another encounter between the speaker and the lady because Jones addresses her and asks her for an explanation in the fourth line of the stanza. Encounters in Jones' translation replace the impossibility, invisibility, absence and silence of Hafiz's beloved with the possibility, visibility, presence and articulation of Jones's cruel lady. These reversals mean that the unknown and the mysterious have been explored and consequently their Eastern opacity has given way to the Western transparency.

### Patronization

Within the last stanza we find the prime examples of the Western sense of superiority and Jones' patronizing tone in his treatment of Eastern literature and culture:

Go boldly forth, my simple lay,  
Whose accents flow with artless ease,  
Like orient pearls at random strung:  
Thy notes are sweet, the damsels say;  
But O! Far sweeter, if they please  
Thy nymph for whom these notes are sung<sup>12</sup> (ll. 49-54)

The Western colonial subject assumes the position of the superior patron and believes the East is in need of the support and the patronizing protection of

the West. In the final line in which the poet registers his autograph<sup>13</sup>, Hafez addresses himself to offer a ray of hope or find a solution to get over his agonies and in many cases to admire himself. William Jones in his translation of this line deletes the name of Hafiz. Deletion of the proper names seems to be a westernizing technique used systematically throughout the poem. The deletion of Hafiz's name is the deletion of his autograph, his identity, his autonomy and authority, in the same way that the deletion of "Shirazi Turk" in the beginning stanza meant the deletion of the local identity of the poem; such manipulations would make it smooth for the British reader to handle the poem. While Hafiz apostrophizes himself in the last line, Jones apostrophizes Hafiz in the final stanza and seals his own footsteps on the poem and addresses Hafiz with a patronizing and belittling tone as "my simple lay" and encourages him to "go boldly forth". He evaluates Hafiz poem as lacking in coherence and uses the stereotyping image of "orient pearls at random strung". This evaluation reminds one of Fitzgerald's judgment of Persians "who are not poet enough". Such an attitude toward cultural differences reveals the extent to which Westerners render their own literary taste as the standard based on which they could score Eastern poetry.

Each one of Hafiz's lines can be quoted as an aphorism without the need for quoting the previous or the following lines. This quality is dismissed by the Western readers because they are used to reading poems in which an idea is developed through the course of the poem. The British reader would feel unsettled when his preference for a unified theme is replaced by multiple and plural themes in one single poem, the difference cannot be tolerated; therefore, Jones in the last stanza, says with the tone of a teacher who generously forgives the "simple lay" for his want of coherence only if he can please the nymphs with his words. The additions and deletions in Jones' last stanza are so drastic that the Persian reader would probably be speechless with disbelief.

Jones adds three lines that are either rooted in misunderstanding or in his conscious manipulation of Hafiz's words. He notes that Hafiz's poems are sung for nymphs and scores Hafiz as "sweet" on the condition that he can please the nymphs that are Hafiz's intended listeners. Nymphs are mythological creatures both in Persian<sup>14</sup> and Western literature and refer to female beauty that allures men. In Western literature and art, however, they are hypersexual female

creatures that are far from the ethereal figures in Hafiz. The conscious manipulation of the words of Hafiz that are far from subtle, shows the deliberate effort put by the translator in order to strip the Persian poem from its Persian identity and to westernize it.

### Conclusion

At best, such a treatment of Hafiz would construct a colorful, sensuous picturesque landscape out of orient and at worst it would create a hypersexual and promiscuous East indulging in primitive life of instincts. William Jones throughout his translation uses different strategies such as apostrophe, patronizing, stereotyping and deleting the Eastern local color in order to domesticate the exotic and present the other as one of the familiar belongings of the colonizing West. In the hands of Jones, as a translator, Hafiz becomes just another Western secular poet celebrating the mundane beauties and attractiveness of the beloved and thus the reader loses the intrinsic spiritual Sufi message of the poem.

### Notes:

۱. اگر آن ترک شیرازی به دست آرد دل ما را  
 ۲. بده ساقی می باقی که در جنت نخواهی یافت  
 ۳. فغان کاین لولیان شوخ شیرین کار شهر آشوب  
 ۴. عبدالرحمان ختمی لاهوری
۵. Fare thee well, perfidious maid,/My soul, too long on earth delayed./Delayed, perfidious girl, by thee,/Is on the wing for liberty./I fly to seek a kindlier sphere,/Since thou hast ceased to love me here! Ode LXXII (translated by Thomas Moore).  
 You do not hesitate to beguile and betray me, perfidious wretch! XXX. TO ALPHENUS .  
 Freed from the toils of a perfidious mistress, Tibullus dedicates this to thee, goddess, and prays thee to regard him with favour ". Translations of the poems of Catullus and Tibullus, "The Vigil of Venus" by Walter K. Kelly, 1823
۶. ز عشق ناتمام ما جمال یار مستغنی است  
 به آب و رنگ و خال و خط چه حاجت روی زیبا را
7. The poems of Catullus and Tibullus
۸. حدیث از مطرب و می گو و راز دهر کمتر جو  
 ۹. من از آن حسن روزافزون که یوسف داشت دانستم  
 ۱۰. نصیحت گوش کن جانا که از جان دوست تر دارند  
 ۱۱. اگر دشنام فرمایی و گر نفرین دعا گویم  
 ۱۲. غزل گفتمی و در سفتی بیا و خوش بخوان حافظ  
 ۱۳. تخلص  
 ۱۴. پری
- که کس نگشود و نگشاید به حکمت این معما را  
 که عشق از پرده عصمت برون آرد زلیخا را  
 جوانان سعادت مند پند پیر دانا را  
 جواب تلخ می زبید لب لعل شکرخا را  
 که بر نظم تو افشاند فلک عقد ثریا را

---

**Works Cited**

- Bassnett, Susan. "Culture and Translation." In *A Companion to Translation Studies*. Piotr Kuhiwczak and Karin Littau, eds. Clevedon, UK, Buffalo, USA, Toronto, Canada: Multilingual Matters Ltd. 2007: 13-23.
- Cannon, Garland. "Sir William Jones and the New Pluralism over Languages and Cultures." *The Yearbook of English Studies*. 28 (1998): 128-143
- Davis, Dick. "On not Translating Hafez." *New England Review*. 25: 1-2 (Winter-Spring 2004): 310-318.
- Grewal, Inderpal. *Home and Harem: Nation, Gender, Empire, and the Cultures of Travel*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1996.
- Hillmann, Michael C. "Hafez's 'Turk of Shiraz' again." *Iranian Studies*. 8: 3 (Autumn 1975): 164-182.
- Jones, William. "Sweet Maid." *Fifty Poems of Hafez*. Arthur J. Arberry, ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974: 85-86.
- Lefevere, Andre. (1999). "Composing the Other." In *Postcolonial Translation: Theory and Practice*. S. Bassnett and H. Trivedi, eds. London: Routledge, 1999: 75-94.
- Lewisohn, Leonard. "The Religion of Love and the Puritans of Islam: Sufi Sources of Hafiz Anti-clericalism." In *Hafiz and the Religion of Love in Classical Persian Poetry*. London and New York: I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd in association with Iran Heritage Foundation, 2010.
- Marvell, Andrew. "To His Coy Mistress." In *To His Coy Mistress and Other Poems*. S. Appelbaum, ed. New York: Dover Publications, 1997: 1-2.
- Schroeder, Eric. "Verse Translation and Hafiz." *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*. 7: 4 (Oct. 1948): 209-222.
- Ford, J. "An Essay on Matrimony." *The Lady's Magazine or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex*. 6 (January 1775): 257-261.
- Toury, Gideon. "The Nature and Role of Norms in Literary Translation." In *Literature and Translation: New Perspectives in Literary Studies*. James S., José Lambert and Raymond van den Broeck eds. Leuven: ACCO, 1978: 83-100
- Wyatt, Sir Thomas. "Farewell love and all thy laws forever" In *The Poetical Works of Sir Thomas Wyatt*. Y. James, ed. London: George Bell and Sons, 1904: 18-19.
- . "Madam withouten many words." In *The Poetical Works of Sir Thomas Wyatt*. Y. James, ed. London: George Bell and Sons, 1904: 178.

- <sup>۲</sup> بده ساقی می باقی که در جنت نخواهی یافت  
کنار آب رکناباد و گلگشت مصلا را
- <sup>۳</sup> فغان کاین لولیان شوخ شیرین کار شهر آشوب  
چنان بردند صبر از دل که ترکان خوان یغما را
- <sup>۴</sup> عبدالرحمان ختمی لاهوری

<sup>5</sup> Fare thee well, perfidious maid./My soul, too long on earth delayed./Delayed, perfidious girl, by thee./Is on the wing for liberty./I fly to seek a kindlier sphere./Since thou hast ceased to love me here! Ode LXXII (translated by Thomas Moore).

You do not hesitate to beguile and betray me, perfidious wretch! XXX. TO ALPHENUS . Freed from the toils of a perfidious mistress, Tibullus dedicates this to thee, goddess, and prays thee to regard him with favour ". Translations of the poems of Catullus and Tibullus, "The Vigil of Venus" by Walter K. Kelly, 1823

<sup>۶</sup> ز عشق ناتمام ما جمال یار مستغنی است  
به آب و رنگ و خال و خط چه حاجت روی زیبا را

<sup>7</sup> The poems of Catullus and Tibullus

- <sup>۸</sup> حدیث از مطرب و می گو و راز دهر کمتر جو  
که کس نگشود و نگشاید به حکمت این معما را
- <sup>۹</sup> من از آن حسن روزافزون که یوسف داشت دانستم  
که عشق از پرده عصمت برون آرد زلیخا را
- <sup>۱۰</sup> نصیحت گوش کن جانا که از جان دوست تر دارند  
جوانان سعادت مند پند پیر دانا را
- <sup>۱۱</sup> اگر دشنام فرمایی و گر نفرین دعا گویم  
جواب تلخ می زبید لب لعل شکرخا را
- <sup>۱۲</sup> غزل گفתי و در سفتی بیا و خوش بخوان حافظ  
که بر نظم تو افشاند فلک عقد ثریا را

<sup>۱۳</sup> تخلص

<sup>۱۴</sup> پری