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### **Three main currents of Iranian political intellectuals in four periods of Ahmad Shamlou's intellectual life**

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#### **Abstract**

In this research, the authors have tried to analyze the three main currents of Iranian political intellectuals in the four periods of Ahmad Shamlou's intellectual life in a descriptive-analytical way and with a library method. Examining Shamlou's poems, it is determined that Shamlou is a poet born from the heart of the society and belongs to the masses, and his poetry is the manifestation of the realities of the society and the ideals of the masses, and in his political poems, he wants to remain in the memory of the society as an intellectual. Stay as a poet. An intellectual who has used poetry as a tool for his struggle. He expects the reader to look at his poetry as a tool. A tool that is supposed to serve as an awareness for their creation and liberatio.

***Keywords:*** *Ahmad Shamlou, political enlightenment, contemporary poetry, political thought.*

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***Extended Abstract***

**1. Introduction**

The name of Shamlu is more than the name of any other contemporary poet, tied with politics. Although some of the most important and beautiful poems of Shamlu are his love poems, he is known as a social or political poet more than anything else. The reason for this may be found in his attempt to show the intellectual political aspects of himself on the one hand, and also the content of his poems, which has been in connection with some political and intellectual approaches, on the other hand. It is due to such a color that his kind of confrontation with the intellectual and political currents of the time takes dimensions beyond Nima or any other contemporary poet. The connection of Shamlou and his poetry with the intellectual political currents of the time is such that from the content of his poems, one can follow the intellectual developments of Iranian intellectuals, or on the other hand, by following the trends of Iranian intellectual developments, he can predict the content of his poems, or He understood the meaning of his poems.

His dedication to writing white poetry and confirming it can be seen as a sign of his social interests and commitments. Pournamdarian believes: "The main field of Shamlu's poetry is the emotions caused by social influences. Shamlou is constantly present in the heart of the struggle of life, and that is why the pulse of his poems beats the pulse of the community, and his poetry is the sound of the blows of a social life and a vast conflict with events" (Poornamdarian, 2011: 823).

Abdul Ali Dastgheeb also emphasized the social commitment of Shamlu and considers this commitment to be about raising awareness about destructive elements and fighting against them. From his point of view, "Shamlo is a social pictorialist poet. In his pictures, the situation of man today - here and now - in our society is reflected." (Dashghib, 1373: 115).

On the basis of such beliefs, Zia Mohd introduces Shamlou as "a humanist, freedom-loving political poet who opposes tyranny and oppression" (Mohud, 1379: 45), some other literary critics also believe: "He is a social poet. And it is political to the extent that even poetry is a tool for political struggle. A cry that can show the way of liberation. (Jamali, 2016: 216).

Also, many of Shamlu's poems that have a political or social aspect are written in the form of social symbolism, although some of his folkloric or romantic poems that do not fit into this form, are also considered by some critics and commentators to have political

dimensions and are known socially. The framework of social symbolism for Shamlu has been effective in determining or strengthening some political orientations. In this research, we will examine the way Shamlu faced the three main currents of Iranian political intellectuals in four periods of his poetic intellectual life. The political intellectual current, influenced by the left current and the Tudeh Party, the Third World political intellectual current and the Guerrilla intellectual current, are the three currents with which Shamlu had the most exposure and interaction during his poetic life. Shamlu has never faced these three currents independently and separately, and his interest in one of these currents has not necessarily negated his other interests. These three currents during Shamlu's poetic life alternately or together with each other have influenced his views and works or show themselves in his views and works. In this research, the author is trying to answer the question, what is the ideological analysis and political reading of Shamlu's poems? And how has Shamlu expressed his intellectual thoughts in his poems.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **Shamlu and the political era**

Although some of the most important and beautiful poems of Shamlu are his love poems, he is known as a social or political poet more than anything else. The reason for this may be found in his attempt to show the political and intellectual aspects of himself on the one hand, and also the theme of his poems, which has been in connection with some political and intellectual approaches, on the other hand. It is due to such a color that his kind of confrontation with the intellectual and political currents of the time takes dimensions beyond Nima or any other contemporary poet. The connection of Shamlou and his poetry with the political and intellectual currents of the time is such that from the content of his poems one can follow the intellectual evolution of Iranian intellectuals, or on the other hand, by following the evolution of Iranian intellectuals, the content of his poems can be predicted and Or he understood the meaning of his poems.

Shamlou has faced three major currents of Iranian political intellectuals in four periods of his intellectual life. The political intellectual movement influenced by the left movement and the Tudeh Party, the Third Worldist political intellectual movement and the Guerrilla intellectual movement are the three movements with which Shamlu had the most exposure and interaction during his poetic life.

**First period: as a political party activist**

The beginning of Shamlou's entry into the political life of Iran dates back to the 1320s, the era when the left movement influenced by the Soviet Union in the form of the Tudeh party and the intellectuals attributed to it played the most important role in the intellectual life of Iran. In this era, Iranian literature is considered the most important carrier of the political thought of the time. In fact, the intellectual tradition of the time expects literature to take such responsibility. This issue also moves Iranian art and literature in a different direction. According to some, this path has led to the decline of art and literature, and it also confines political thought within the framework of art and literature and reduces it to one of its subjects.

Like other young Iranian elites of that day, Shamlou gets acquainted with the idea of communism from a political point of view. But according to the usual intellectuals of that time, this acquaintance is not deep and accurate. His information is mostly oral; But he shows himself to be strongly influenced, while the later signs indicate that his influence was not so deep.

Perhaps this position of negation can be considered the greatest characteristic of his political and social life in this era. In all these years, the main basis of his judgment about others was the type of people's political positions.

The current situation and the "solution" from Shamloo's point of view In this era, Shamlou's poems are mainly emotional, slogan-like and nervous cries of a desperate intellectual who speaks of the "silence of the foggy nights" of his country in the "dark and gloomy sunset" in the spring of Omar.

This is how the atmosphere of despair caused by intellectual thinking casts a shadow on his poetry from the early years of Shamlu's poetry, and until the end of his poetic life, it only occasionally gives way to a bright and hopeful atmosphere.

**The second period: as an intellectual or a prophet**

In the 1940s, in sync with the socio-political changes, a concept of intellectualism was born, which, although it has many dependencies on the leftist ideology; But more than being influenced by a kind of party thought, it has a trans-regional and global character. In the 1940s, with the increase in oil revenues and the occurrence of some international changes, the Shah's regime moved towards some kind of government reforms.

In such an environment, Shamlu also seeks to define himself as a poet and an intellectual in line with the concept of a committed intellectual. Shamlou seeks to remove the concept of a committed and militant intellectual from its third-world context and give it a more historical dimension, that is why he takes the history of this concept of intellectual back to the era of Sufism and Sufism.

The current situation and the "solution" from Shamloo's point of view from Shamlou's point of view - like other Third World approaches - the world is divided into two poles. This bipolar division of the world has its roots in the ruling intellectual ideology. In the definition of a committed intellectual, Shamlou emphasizes the category of "negation". From his point of view, a militant and committed intellectual is a person who defines himself in the negation of everything that exists. A committed intellectual opposes any kind of authority. Shamlou considers this anti-authoritarianism to be the greatest human ideal.

#### **The third period: as a guerilla intellectual**

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, the process of political and intellectual developments in Iran went in such a direction that the division of the intellectual stream into committed and non-committed is also considered a reactionary matter. This issue shows itself most of all in the field of literature. In such a way that in those years political poetry is considered as the only type of poetry expected by the public. This kind of expectation is well demonstrated in the cluster poetry nights that were held in 1947 and Shamlu was one of the most important participants in it.

#### **The solution from Shamlu's point of view**

Faced with this intellectual orientation of the times, Ahmed Shamlou shows different reactions. According to his aesthetic type and understanding and expectation of art, he was clearly opposed to guerrilla poems; After the incident of Siahkal, he wrote his most brilliant and profound poems in praise of the guerrillas and in the collection "Ibrahim Dar Atash" which was apparently written in honor of Mujahid Khalq, Mehdi Rezaei, considering what was included in the poems It can be seen in this period, it seems that he seriously criticizes Guerrilla poetry and its most important representatives, although from an aesthetic point of view; But he looks at the poem and its position with the same look, which is exactly in line with the look of the poet he hates - Saeed Salt. Anpur is

Shamlou and Ghalib, the current intellectual stream of the time - intentionally or unintentionally - ignore this internal obligation of the hero in favor of his external obligation. It is this neglect or condescension towards the inner commitment that fuels the most important contradiction of the guerrilla approach and the intellectuals who support it. A contradiction that arises from the inconsistency of the goal and the means. Where the originality of practice in his eyes goes as far as justifying violence and tyranny, and he also brings committed intellectuals with him. Shamlou and Qatabah of the intellectual current of that era praise the heroes who do not shy away from any kind of Stalinist crime even in their own group life. Attachment to the method of struggle, the most important aspect of which is violence, leads to justification and sanctification of violence in his poetry and speech.

**The fourth period: return to committed intellectualism**

After the revolution and at the beginning of the 1960s, in the field of literature, we face a situation that Shams Langroudi refers to as the state of poetry. "This situation is caused by the non-functioning of those two types of committed and non-committed poetry that dominated the literary discourse in the 1950s.

Iranian intellectual thinking did not have analytical power beyond the simplified two poles of good and evil. He was used to portraying the society in two fronts: the supporters of the status quo i.e. those in power and the opponents of the status quo i.e. the masses of people and of course intellectuals. Now intellectuals were facing a different situation. including the reason for the masses not understanding the intellectuals' speech, not the hard and incomprehensible speech of the intellectuals and their lack of close relationship with the realities of the society and the mentality of the masses, that is, the most important factor for the decline of leftist ideologies In Iranian society, they have even known the failure of guerilla movements. Rather, it is caused by the negligence and ignorance of the masses.

In order to explain the Iranian revolution and to show how the ignorance of the masses and the change of trends in a revolution, Shamlou uses his famous opinion about Ferdowsi: "The uprising of the people against Zahhak, the uprising of the masses freed from the shackles of the aristocratic society against their own interests. In fact, it is a coup d'état that the deposed nobles launched against Zahhak by inciting thugs and mobs against Zahhak.

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### **3. Methodology**

In terms of the method, this research is a descriptive-analytical one that has been done with the content and intellectual analysis of the work, and from the point of view of the goal, this research is fundamental and in collecting data and analyzing them from the documentary or library method. It has been used through paper writing. This research has investigated the political poems of Ahmad Shamlou and as mentioned, so far about the main currents of Iranian political intellectuals in intellectual life. Ahmad Shamlou, no investigation has been done.

### **Results**

Shamlu saw himself as a poet belonging to the heart of the society and the masses, and he considered his poetry to be the manifestation of the realities of the society and the ideals of the masses. Despite this claim, which many commentators and critics also agree with, it seems that what Shamlu called the representation of reality in his poems was nothing but an ideological interpretation of reality. Shamlou sees the reality of the society and the relations governing it in the same way that the ideological discourse ruling the intellectuals of the time expects from him. The representation of reality in his poetry is the poetic drawing of the class and dialectical analysis of the left ideologies of the society. Even in delineating his position as a prophetic intellectual, he walks in the same way as his European symbolist predecessors also walked in the same way. A way that finds a lot of consonance and kinship with the thinking of the intellectuals of the time from the position of a committed poet.

In the study of Shamlu's poems, it was shown how, on the one hand, the reduction and generalization of all relationships and analyzes to the field of political conflicts and contradictions, and on the other hand, the dominance of a certain perception of political thought and action on the society, affects the poets' poetry and thought. . Where the people are either "sleepers" and serve the tyranny of the ruler or "political fighters" and accordingly, the poet is the "prophet" of the sleepers; And since this prophetic self-view includes a break from society and the masses, it

leads to a kind of image of a mental utopia instead of a real society, and myth-cultivation instead of de-mythology.

It seems that Shamlu wants to remain in the memory of the society more as an intellectual than a poet. An intellectual who has used poetry as a tool for his struggle. He expects the reader to look at his poetry as a tool. A tool that is supposed to be in the service of raising awareness for their creation and liberation. This guiding tool, however, in the end, serves to promote and induce the kind of awareness that is considered the only honest and true awareness from the point of view of leftist ideologies. The dominant ideology of the intellectuals of the time expects a committed poet to not only move his pen within the framework of their party and political interests, but also to use his poetry completely to justify and propagate their positions and political action as the only acceptable political action. In such a case, the symbolic imagination serves the poetic and mythological depiction of the political action of the ideology of the time and the induction of poets into an ideological utopia.

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