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The Evolution of the Sonnet as a Genre: Tracing Its Development and Influential Sources

Evolusi Soneta sebagai Sebuah Genre: Menelusuri Perkembangan dan Sumber-sumber yang Berpengaruh

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Abstract

This article explores the evolution of the sonnet genre in Uzbek literature, tracing its origins from European literature, particularly the Petrarchan and Shakespearean traditions, to its manifestation in the works of Uzbek poets such as Barot Boyqabilov and Rauf Parfi. Utilizing comparative analysis, the study examines the structural and thematic adaptations of the sonnet form in Uzbek poetry, highlighting the influences of both European models and indigenous innovations. Results demonstrate the diverse approaches adopted by Uzbek poets in reimagining the sonnet, showcasing a synthesis of traditional forms with unique cultural expressions. This research sheds light on the dynamic interplay between global literary traditions and local artistic practices, contributing to a deeper understanding of cross-cultural literary exchange and innovation.

Highlights:

- **Cross-Cultural Sonnet Adoption:** Sonnet's European origin influenced Russian, Turkish, and Uzbek poetry, demonstrating its cross-cultural adaptability.
- **Literary Influence and Innovation:** Uzbek poets like Boyqabilov and Parfi expanded the sonnet genre, inspired by Petrarch and Shakespeare.
- **Sustaining Tradition and Individual Expression:** Uzbek poets blended European tradition with personal themes, enriching Uzbek poetry's cultural tapestry.

Keywords: Sonnet, Petrarch's Style, Genre Transformation

Introduction

The sonnet is a poetic form that has constrained poets for centuries in terms of form and weight [1]. The reasons for the emergence of this form as a genre with special rules are defined by teacher Abdulla Sher as the imitation of the ghazal genre of European literature, which is the mainstay of Eastern classical literature. Each poet discovered the characteristics of the genre in the following periods as best he could and molded his feelings [2]. That pattern we know consists of fourteen lines, its structure consists of quatrains and tercets, rhyming: quatrains - a-b-a-b or a-b-b-a; tercets - c-d-c, d-c-d or c-d-e, c-d-e. Which of the characteristics of rhyme, weight, rhythm, and volume, characteristic of sonnet, have been preserved the most? In particular, what is the importance of the form in the sonnets of Rauf Parfi, the creator of the sonnet genre? We will find answers to these questions only if we study the examples of the sonnet that appeared during the Italian Renaissance and its development until today [3].

Literature Review

Many scholars have divided into two sides, such as Petrarch or Shakespeare's directions, when expressing their relationship to the sonnet genre [4]. Some of them said that real sonnets were created in Petrarch's style. Scholars who take into account the content of Shakespeare's sonnets recognize that this is an advanced form of the sonnet [5]. Literary scholar Abdulla She'r supported the opinion of the first group of scientists and published an article entitled "Secrets of Sonnets". K. Nosirov and Jamoliddinov, who do not agree with the opinions in this article, "Didn't Shakespeare write a sonnet?" The article proved the contrary. Literary critics of the later period Rabiyeva M., Kuvvatova D., and the Beknazarovas analyzed the sonnets created in the direction of Shakespeare as examples of this genre without any explanation. For example, the poet Rauf Parfi also made a great contribution to Uzbek literature of the 20th century with his sonnets, but his sonnets are very different in form [6]. That's why it is necessary to research how the sonnet genre has evolved from its original roots to today's forms.

Methods

Sonnets are divided into such types as Petrarch's method and Shakespeare's method. The artists who lived after them chose one of the two paths and continued to write in a favorable direction. Two sonnet forms provide the models from which all other sonnets are formed: the Petrarchan and the Shakespearean [7].

What is the difference between these two directions?

Sonnet genre appeared in Italy. The sonnet is a type of poem finding its origins in Italy around 1235 AD. While the early sonneteers experimented with patterns, Francesco Petrarca (anglicized as Petrarch) was one of the first to significantly solidify the sonnet structure. The Italian or Petrarchan sonnet consists of two parts; an octave and a sestet. The octave can be broken down into two quatrains; likewise, the sestet is made up of two tercets [8]. According to this information, Petrarch founded the original form of the sonnet that has reached us. His sonnets consist of two parts: octave and sestet. These names are not scary terms that have different meanings as we think. From the Latin name, we can translate it into our language as eight and six.

The quatrains and tercets we are talking about are fragments of these two large parts. In terms of content, the first quatrain states the theme and the second quatrain expands the idea. The first part of the tercets synthesizes the theme, and the last gives a conclusion. This form and content belong to Petrarch's direction and is being continued [9].

1. Rhyme structure of Petrarch's sonnet

Petrarch's Sonnet	Rhyming of the Sonnet
Already I grow weary thinking how,	A
Unwearying, my thoughts upon thee dwell,	B
And how to life they cling as to their hell	B
When they might quit their sighing at one blow;	A
And how of that sweet face, that hair, that brow,	A
Those eyes, the sun's pure golden citadel,	B
By day and night naming thy name I tell	B
Their virtues in my beads until they glow!	A
And how my feet, not tired, not broken, still	C
Following thy dear footsteps everywhere,	D
Mount uselessly a never-ending stair;	D

And whence the ink, the paper which I fill	C
With thee? If incompletely I declare thee,	D
Blame not the art but blame the love I bear thee	D

Table 1. Rhyme structure of Petrarch's sonnet

The second direction was the sonnets created in English with rhymes such as abab, cdcd, efef, gg in the style of Shakespeare. We see that these sonnets have changed systematically. In terms of content, the last binary part makes a conclusion for the developing three quatrains [10].

The main theme in Petrarch and Shakespeare's sonnets is love. If the appearance of Petrarch's sonnets was influenced by his love for Laura, it is difficult for Shakespeare, whose main creative method is romanticism, to get out of this mood [11]. The whole world recognized the sonnet genre as a form of romantic lyrics. Turkish translator Talat Sahid Halman classifies the lyrical characters of Shakespeare's sonnets as follows:

- 1) Sonnets 1 to 126 are named after a young nobleman.
- 2) From sonnet 127 to sonnet 152, wheat is named after a woman.
- 3) It is assumed that sonnets 153 and 154 are free translation sonnets taken from Greek poetry.

In the iambic pentameter measure of Shakespeare's sonnets, we can clarify the weight by putting (.) instead of unstressed syllables and (-) for stressed syllables:

. -.-.-.-.-.

This form with eleven or ten syllables can also be changed. If necessary, cases of joining two or one syllable are also observed. But the unique rhythm of the sonnet is not destroyed by this.

Sonnets of both directions are found in Uzbek literature. If we see Petrarch's method in Osman Nasir's sonnets, we notice the superiority of Shakespeare's direction in Rauf Parfi's sonnets. The sonnet genre should be written in iambic pentameter according to the original weight rule. This weight has been preserved since the literature of antiquity and is typical for European literature. Because stressed and unstressed syllables are very important. In fact, although this scale was traditionally popular in ancient Greek poetry, its term - Iambic pentameter came into use in the 16th century [12].

Pentameter originating from the French word *pentametre* became known since the sixteenth century to define "a verse line of five metrical feet." Pentameter is one of the traditional types of meter used. Pentameter is historically found in French and Italian classic poetry and was first found used in English poetry thanks to Geoffrey Chaucer in the fourteenth century [13].

For example, take the quatrains of Shakespeare's following sonnet:

That time of year thou mayst in me behold When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold, Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day As after sunset fadeth in the west;
Which by and by black night doth take away, Death's second self, that seals up all in rest...

Menda kuz faslini ko'ryapsan ayon, Osilgan zar barglar titrar ayozda
Bir-bir to'kilmoqda, bo'lmoqda xazon, Xor qushlar ovozi siniq, shikasta.
Menda ko'rayapsan oqshom rangini,

G'arbda bo'zarganda botayotgan kun.

Tun yoyganda zulmat paranjisini, O'lim tin oladi bag'rida beun .

This is certainly not typical for our language. Because the accents of words are mobile and often fall to the last place. It is impossible to write a poem from one-syllable words whose stress is fixed in one place and falls on the first or second syllable, because we have words with a fixed stress. It consists of auxiliary word groups that do not mean meaning and modals that help in loading additional meaning [14].

Which of the canons of the sonnet genre has Uzbek literature fully adopted and which ones has it adapted to our language? - a question appears. For this, we will find an answer and proof by giving examples from the works of Usman Nasir and Rauf Parfi.

Usman Nasir is regarded as the author who started writing sonnets. We observe the poet's sonnet "Yana she'rimga":

She'rim! Yana o'zing yaxshisan, aBoqqa kirsang, gullar sharmanda. bBir men emas, hayot shaxsisan, aJonim kabi yaxshaysan manda. b

Yuragimning dardi — naqshisan, vQilolmayman seni hech kanda! gO't bo'lurmi ishqi yo'q tanda? gDardimsanki, she'rim yaxshisan. v

Sen orada ko'prik bo'lding-da, cGeyne bilan o'rtoq tutindim. dLermontovdan ko'mak o'tindim. d

Butun umrim sening bo'yningda. c

Saharda qon tupursam, mayli. eMen — Majnunman, she'rim, sen — Layli! e

In Petrarch's sonnets, the rhyme system is mainly two quatrains: a-b-b-a style; and the following tercets come in two different rhyme schemes: c-d-c, d-c-d or c-d-e, d-c-e. It can be seen that there is a unique rhyming system of the sonnet in French literature. "Hard form" already entered Tatar poetry at the beginning of the 20th century (G. Rahim "Sonnet"), during the 30s, poets focused on a more complex form - the garland of sonnets. At the end of the 20th century - the beginning of the 21st century, this genre was reborn in the works of R. Haris, Rob. Akhmetzyanov. Modern Tatar poets combined the philosophical nature inherent in this form with the issues relevant to the Tatar people. In the works of R. Haris, we find sonnets written in French (abba abba ccd eed) and English (abab cdcd efef gg) rhymes [15].

In the above sonnet of Osman Nasir, we can see that the rhyme form of the tercets has changed a little, but this form of the sonnet is clearly visible in Shakespeare's sonnets. There are many eleven-syllable sonnets in Shakespeare. Actually, according to the iambic pentameter, the number of five pairs of accented and unaccented syllables is ten or more, eleven or twelve. Only Osman Nasir's sonnets have nine syllables. In our opinion, this is also related to the poet's style. Although Osman Nasir's poem "Dengizga" is not called a sonnet in the publications, it is similar in form to this genre:

O'ynagil so'ng marta, chayqal, erkalan! cArmonim qolmasin ketar oldimda. d Bag'ringda baliqday yuzgan oq yelkan cBir umr sayr etgay mening yodimda... d

Yaxshi qol, erkin suv! Yaxshi qol, dengiz! eTo'liqlar, qo'ynimga qizday kiringiz... e

The above paragraphs are the last two tercets of the sonnet. But Osman Nasir divided the division into three quatrains and two parts, following Shakespeare's direction. It is natural for a poet who has studied the sonnet genre perfectly and introduced it to Uzbek literature to try to write in the style of Shakespeare. In our opinion, the poet tried himself in both directions. In this sonnet, the number of syllables in each verse is eleven [16].

In Uzbek literature, we are witness to Barot Boyqabilov's effective writing in this genre. Even the poet's book "Sonnets" was published. "The author gave four hundred and twenty-one sonnets in his book of sonnets." Sonnets of two directions can be found in the work of Barot Boyqabilov.

Muhabbat insonga qo'shqanot, Dunyoni ko'rguvchi ko'zidir, Avlodlar topingan baxt, najot.

Insonning u aytar so'zidir, U bilan go'zaldir bu hayot, Muhabbat insonning o'zidir!

What we quoted above are the tercets of the sonnet beginning with "Muhabbat chirog'i yonmasa.. (If the lamp of love does not light)" According to the rhyming system, like Italian sonnets. The following sonnet "Urgut chinoridan mening qalamim.. (My pen from the Urgut cypress...)" ends with these two verses after three quatrains:

Tarjimai holim — Urgut qissasi, She'rim — urgutliklar oltin bo'sasi.

A unique form of sonnets can be found in the work of the famous poet Alexander Feinberg. There is also a book of the poet "Erkin sonetlar (Free sonnets)" consisting of thirty-nine poems. The first tercet has its own rhyme scheme:

2. Penelope

Post-war. Wind bends the pillars. The factory hums in the chilly gray morning. There's little black oil there again. There's a lot of smoke from the pipe again. You walk, not standing out from the crowd, Wearing worn-out shoes, Transparent from fierce hunger, Local by the whim of fate. Where is your sail, stray Greek girl? But suddenly the eyelashes of a young hooligan Brushed me off like the oars of two galleys. She didn't hide her joyous accent: Come to my dorm, Homer. In the evenings, I'm all without Odysseus [17]. Such a view in Tercet is also found in English literature. William Wordsworth's sonnets have a Petrarchian succession:

3. Octave

Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour:	A
England hath need of thee: she is a fen	B

Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,	B
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,	A
Have forfeited their ancient English dower	A
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;	B
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;	B
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.	A

Table 2. Octave

4. Sestet

Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart;	C
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:	D
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,	D
So didst thou travel on life's common way,	E
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart	C
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.	E

Table 3. Sestet

Result and Discussion

Rauf Parfi, the poet who created the most sonnets in Uzbek literature and changed the world of the subject of the sonnet. The poet has quite a series of sonnets. Rauf Parfi's sonnets mainly preserve the form of Shakespeare's sonnets, but their theme is not limited to love. In sonnets, one can find the lyrical image of the poet describing his inner experiences along with topics such as love, freedom, homeland. Looking at the beautiful lyrical construction and thinking about the deep meanings embedded in its layers, we, like every reader, have a question. Do Rauf Parfi's sonnets conform to the laws of sonnets in terms of form?

Above, we did not mention several sonnets of Uzbek fathers in vain. How did sonnets that did not conform to the rules of the Uzbek language enter Uzbek literature? Which poets were able to preserve the original sonnet form? we found partial answers to the questions. In particular, the series of sonnets is one of the first new forms in Rauf Parfi's work. Also, the form of these sonnets is somewhat liberal.

a. Sensiz

1. Sovuq. Atrof temir. Qo'limni ochdim, Yelkamda chatnadi qaynoq qo'rg'oshin... Vayrona qa'ridan ko'klarga qochdim - Arzonga oldilar Majnunning boshin.

Rahmsiz olomon, sizga ne kerak? Angladim, jismimni ruhimni bog'lar. Vahiy keldi menga, chirpandi yurak, Aks-sado berdi muqaddas tog'lar.

The series of sonnets "Sensiz (Without You)" consists of three poems. "Senzizlik" described by the poet is "unbelief", the alienation of God from the heart of the lyrical hero. But our hero, who is trapped by these feelings, fights with his heart without compromise. Sonnet quatrains have an a-b-a-b rhyme scheme. Usually, in the octave part, we do not notice a serious change in form in any poet. But it seems that everyone likes to change the tercets according to their wishes [18].

Farog'at zirvasi. Olam — bilgisiz, sOxiri sen kelding. Xayolga tolding. dVodiy og'ushida so'zsiz, belgisiz, s

It is clear that the poet means the Creator when he says "Olam -bilgisiz (the world is unknown)". in the second tercet, it is left to the reader as a conclusion that a person cannot live without love for God, so the lyrical hero cannot live without this love:

Asta odimlar-la ko'zdan yo'qolding. dFaqat qayga ketding, qaylarda qolding, dOh, qanday yashayman sensiz — sevgisiz. S

In the sonnets of Fayenberg and Rauf Parfi, the tercets take Petrarch's form, but the rhyme is freely changed. As we can see, the structure of the first sonnet followed Italian sonnets.

Conclusion

Rauf Parfi was able to renew the sonnet genre in Uzbek literature both in terms of compositional construction and rhyming. Uzbek literature cannot be introduced to any feature of the sonnet other than the form of fourteen lines with rhyme and eleven syllables. It is natural that freedom in rhyming seems to be a violation of the rules of the old examples of the sonnet genre. Because the sonnet genre was born in a "closed form" that is, in an unchanging gender. But the forms that appeared later have their own sources, as we observed above. Everything develops or disappears over time.

The fact that the sonnet form left its mark in Uzbek literature in this case is only a manifestation of the transformation of genres. We rediscover the poet's talent in the form-changing but beautiful examples of Rauf Parfi's sonnets. To sum up, the sonnet genre is one of the ancient forms that have managed to form a transformational form. Rauf Parfi is an Uzbek poet who further updated this form.

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