

The Harmony of Philosophical-Didactic Content and Poetic Form in the Quatrains of Kenesbay Rakhmanov

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the poems of Kenesbay Rakhmanov in quatrain form from genre and poetic perspectives. The study examines the compositional conciseness of the quatrain genre, its philosophical content, the characteristics of the lyrical subject, as well as the artistic means of representation employed in the poems. It is scientifically demonstrated that the relationship between the individual and time, the philosophy of life, spiritual perfection, and the poetic representation of the national worldview constitute the central themes of the poet's quatrains.

Keywords: K. Rakhmanov, quatrain, lyric poetry, genre, poetics, philosophical lyricism, image, symbol.

INTRODUCTION

While 20th-century Karakalpak literary studies focused primarily on analyzing the artistic qualities and overall composition of literary works, particularly the rhyme and meter of poems, in recent years greater attention has been given to exploring the underlying meanings and the ways in which these meanings are conveyed through various artistic devices. With the emergence of new trends in lyric poetry and the development of various methodological approaches to analysis, a tendency toward a more comprehensive examination of literary works and a departure

from earlier schematic approaches began to emerge. In scholarly studies conducted between 1990 and 2026, greater attention has been devoted to issues concerning lyrical genres and forms, the lyrical subject and object, and poetic elements. At the same time, we can observe the emergence of new trends and ideas with profound meaning in the creative works of writers and poets. Moving away from outdated and repetitive themes and creating works with ideas in various directions became the main objective of literary creators. This can clearly be seen in the works of representatives of Uzbek, Kazakh, Karakalpak, and other Turkic literatures who were active during this period. Among them was the poet K. Rakhmanov, who worked productively during these years and began to attract attention in print with his lyric poems written in various forms. In particular, his quatrains, characterized by profound philosophical content, are works rooted in the poet's own life experiences.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH METHODS

In this article, we aim to analyze a number of K. Rakhmanov's quatrains in terms of their genre characteristics, poetic system, and philosophical semantics, based on modern literary methodology, and to determine their place in the development of Karakalpak poetry. The scientific novelty of the study lies in the fact that, for the first time, K. Rakhmanov's quatrains are comprehensively examined from the perspectives of genre poetics, cognitive poetics, and hermeneutic analysis. Although scholarly studies have been conducted on the poet's lyric poetry, his quatrains have not yet been analyzed sufficiently and comprehensively.

DISCUSSION

In Karakalpak poetry, the quatrain genre is regarded as one of the significant lyrical forms that developed on the basis of national oral literary traditions and written literature. In contemporary lyric poetry, this genre is developing not merely as a concise form, but rather as an independent artistic system that reflects

profound philosophical and didactic content. A number of Uzbek literary scholars, expressing their views on its nature, have arrived at the following scholarly conclusion: "Quatrain is an independent lyrical work consisting of four lines. Its history dates back to very ancient times, as it first emerged in folklore. The emergence of Uzbek folk songs as independent quatrains can serve as clear evidence of this. Quatrains differ from rubaiyat both in form and content. The thematic scope of quatrains is broad, and they may reflect various events and situations from everyday life... In a quatrain, the creator's thoughts and conclusions concerning a particular life event are expressed briefly and poetically" [1: 356-387].

Although quatrains and the rubai genre were sometimes confused in earlier periods, in recent years their differences have been analyzed and clearly established on the basis of convincing evidence. For example, literary scholar Sh. Aldasheva states: "Although quatrains and the rubai genre share a certain degree of similarity in poetic form, they differ from each other in terms of their formal and content-related characteristics." First, in terms of their rhyme schemes, individual quatrains generally follow the patterns aabb, abab, or abba, whereas rubaiyat typically rhyme according to the aaba or aaaa schemes and possess a distinctive degree of formal perfection. Rubaiyat that follow the aaaa rhyme scheme are referred to as *taronarubai*. The scholar also notes that the composition of rubaiyat in the *akhram* and *akhrab* branches of the *hazaj* meter was an important rule of classical lyric poetry [2: 35], thereby substantiating the distinction between quatrains and rubaiyat. This demonstrates that, although a quatrain is concise in form, it is a work characterized by profound meaning in terms of content.

RESULTS

Quatrains are included in almost all of K. Rakhmanov's collections of poems published during both the early and later periods of his creative career. In the course of our study, we can observe that their themes, rhyme schemes, and, generally speaking, their overall compositional structures vary

considerably. That is, quatrains in Turkic poetry generally employ the aaba, aabb, and abab rhyme schemes, and, in rare cases, the aaaa scheme. Thus, in terms of their rhyme structure, these quatrains fully meet the requirements of the genre. In the poet's lyric poetry, such positive qualities as wisdom and moral instruction, education and upbringing, and humaneness, along with philosophical views on good and evil, love, and life, constitute the principal themes of his meditative lyricism. This indicates that these ideas are rooted in the poet's experiences accumulated over many years of life. Every poet interprets and expresses their thoughts and perceptions about life in different ways. For example, while the Uzbek poet Shukhrat more frequently turns to phenomena of nature in his quatrains, the philosophy of life, the individual's present and tomorrow, and the future occupy a central place in Abdulla Aripov's quatrains. K. Rakhmanov, in turn, seeks to convey the lessons he has learned from life primarily in the form of aphorisms and words of wisdom. In his works, human life, time, spiritual perfection, and the realities of everyday existence are portrayed in a concise form, yet with profound philosophical meaning. The poet makes effective use of the possibilities of the quatrain genre, artistically expressing universal ideas through symbols, metaphors, and antithesis. For example, let us consider the following quatrain:

I am a river, and my bank is steep, – a
 My feet are filling with sand, – a
 Running back and forth between the two, I have grown old, – b
 While my weary heart, alas, remains young. – a [4, 4]
Men da'ryaman, sag'ajag'ima'spekte, – a
Ayaqbetimtolipatirsa'psetke, – a
Ekiortadashawipju'ripqartaydim, – b
Hallaslag'ankewlimqurg'irjastekte – a [4: 4]

In the quatrain, the lyrical hero's inner emotional state and the contradictions of life occupy a central position. The line "Running back and forth between the two, I have grown old" serves as a symbolic representation of life's dualities, spiritual struggle, and spiritual exhaustion. English The author contrasts

outward aging with inner youth, revealing the difficulties within the human spirit through concise yet powerful and expressive artistic devices. While preserving the traditional quatrain composition, the poet enriches it with new poetic content. This is because artistic devices and expressive, aesthetically refined language are what make a literary work vivid, powerful, and impactful. Literary scholar G. Doshanova, in her research, expresses the following valuable opinion: “It is well known to us that genuine poetry is rich in poetic content, expressive, and constructed on the basis of diverse and vivid artistic devices. This is because the compositional structure of a poem, its distinctive formal characteristics, word choice, and the use of rhyme in accordance with intonation are all regarded as poetic elements of poetry” [5: 20].

In addition, if we analyze from a scholarly perspective his quatrain beginning with the line “In my youth, I listened to others a lot,” we can observe the following:

In my youth, I listened to others a lot, – a
 I am not tired of listening to their wisdom, – b
 Some people are the sky of wisdom, – a
 While I am a deep well hidden in the depths. – b [4: 4]
Jas gezimdeko'ptin'ladımbasqanı, – a
Eleberinjalıqpaymantın'lawdan, – b
Geybirewlerdanalıqtın' aspanı, – a
Men teren'dejatqanbirshın'ırawman – b [4: 4]

In the quatrain, the lyrical hero's life experience and stage of spiritual development are conveyed through philosophical reflection. In the first two lines, listening to the opinions of others is depicted, while in the third line, the metaphor “the sky of wisdom” creates an image of truth and enlightenment. The image “I am a deep well hidden in the depths” in the fourth line conveys the poet's inner world and profound thought. In the quatrain, devices such as metaphor, symbol, and philosophical reflection are combined to convey a broad and profound meaning within a concise form. One of the distinctive features of the poet that sets him apart from others is his ability to convey the words of

wisdom expressed in hadiths and aphorisms through the quatrain form. In his quatrains based on the teachings of the hadiths, ideas such as faith, the pursuit of knowledge, honesty, and doing good deeds are prominently reflected. For example:

Know this well: the finest form of charity – a
 Is to devote all your faculties to the pursuit of knowledge. – a
 Learn knowledge yourself, and teach it to others, – b
 This is your charity – the treasure you offer as a gift – a [6: 248].
Bile-bilsen' sadaqanin'abzali: – a
 Ilimushinjumsan' barliqag'zani. – a
 O'zin' ilimu'yren, basqag'au'yret, – b
 Bulsadaqan'– tartqansiyin' qaznanı – a [6: 248]

In this quatrain, the poet successfully conveys one of the teachings found in the science of Hadith and the Quran to the reader in an accessible form through didactic lines. Indeed, in the early decades of the twentieth century, considerable attention was paid to issues of enlightenment, and many exhortative and didactic poems of this kind were written with the aim of promoting widespread literacy. Nevertheless, the poet's distinctive feature lies in his rendering of these words of wisdom in the form of quatrains, which highlights his originality in our literature. This is because philosophy, wisdom, and didactic instruction are the dominant elements of the quatrain genre. The main object depicted in K. Rakhmanov's quatrains is, in most cases, the human being, including their character and virtues, as well as phenomena of nature. He uses inanimate objects as symbols to reveal various human qualities. For example, let us consider the following quatrain:

You have no fixed home; wherever you fly, you land, – a
 Yet as soon as you land, you are ready to fly again, – a
 If everyone were as light and carefree as you, – b
 Wouldn't the world itself turn into a tumbleweed – a [7: 141]
Turag'in' joq, ushasan' da qonasan', – a
Qonasalatag'ushpaqshibolasan', – a
Bolsaha'mmesendeyjen'ilsalmaqlı, – b
Du'nyaaylanıpketpespeekenqan'baqqa – a [7:141]

In terms of its rhyme scheme, the poem consists of paired rhymes arranged in the a-a-b-b pattern. Through the image of a tumbleweed, the author portrays the unstable, frivolous, and flighty nature of certain types of people, who are easily blown about by the wind. It does not remain in one place; even when it lands, it soon takes flight again. The poet likens this quality to human nature and satirizes people who are unstable, irresponsible, and frivolous in their outlook on life. The main idea of the work is to criticize instability and frivolity in human character through the nature of the tumbleweed. In other words, a person should be steadfast and serious in life and remain committed to their goals. The tumbleweed in the work serves as a symbolic image. It represents a generalized symbol of frivolous and unstable people. The image of the world, on the other hand, is considered a symbol of society and life. By employing a simile and posing the rhetorical question, "Will the world not eventually revolve around the tumbleweed?", the poet seeks to make the reader reflect and further intensify the central idea. In the first two lines, the parallel use of the words "fly" and "land" serves to emphasize the unstable movements and actions represented by the image of the tumbleweed. By employing a simile and posing the rhetorical question, "Will the world not eventually revolve around the tumbleweed?", the poet seeks to make the reader reflect and further intensify the central idea. In the first two lines, the parallel use of the words "fly" and "land" serves to emphasize the unstable movements and actions represented by the image of the tumbleweed.

From an imagery perspective, this work brings to mind D. Aytmuratov's fable "Qarabaraq and Qanbaq." However, while the tumbleweed is portrayed as a negative type in this work, the tumbleweed in D. Aytmuratov's work has an entirely different meaning. There, the tumbleweed is portrayed as a person who quickly adapts to life and acts according to the circumstances of fate. Although seemingly weak, it is also presented as a symbol of adaptability and resilience. There, the breeze (a force of nature) is depicted as a symbol of life's trials and the passage of time. In due course, the nature and character of these two images become clear. The short lyric form is characterized by the

following structure: in this genre, the third line serves to reiterate the main idea once again (perhaps this explains why this line does not rhyme with the others), while the fourth line performs a summarizing function, fully revealing the content and reinforcing the author's central idea [8: 73]. In other words, in the first line, the poet introduces the theme (the tumbleweed's unstable and constantly shifting nature – N. M.); in the second line, the theme is developed; in the third line, an antithesis is presented; and in the fourth line, a synthesis is provided. The author concludes that if everyone were frivolous and unstable, the world itself would spin around like a tumbleweed. This form is common to the literature of all Turkic peoples and differs only according to the poet's individual perspective. In particular, although the works may be similar in terms of rhyme and their internal and external structures, they differ in the author's intention and in the way their symbolic meaning is conveyed. For example, in Kazakh literature, this form is referred to as a *rubai* or *tortlik* (quatrain). Some Kazakh researchers also point out that the origins of this genre can be traced back to the *qaraolen*, a traditional poetic form that has been used since ancient times. Among these scholars is B. Sh. Baeshova, a literary scholar who has studied lyric genres in Kazak poetry. In her research, she expresses the following view: "Upon closer examination, the ancient Turkic *tortlik* (quatrain), both in terms of its form and content, corresponds to the *qaraolen* poetic meter used in Kazakh literature" [9: 23-24]. Nevertheless, quatrains constitute an independent and free genre with their own rhyme, meter, and poetic techniques. Although this genre began to develop extensively in Kazakh poetry in the 20th century, even today there are many poets who continue to write in this form.

In Uzbek literature, it is appropriate to mention Shukhrat, A. Oripov, E. Vokhidov, Maqsud Shaykhzada, Rauf Parfi, and others as poets who created poems in the quatrain form. Among them, the Uzbek poet Abdulla Oripov also wrote several quatrains based on his life experiences. These were also created according to the requirements of this genre, differing only in their individual interpretations. The poet expresses ideas such as honor, the world, life,

friendship, humanity, love, kindness, time, and others, connecting them with the nationality of his people. In them, a proverbial quality similar to folk sayings prevails. We see that most of his quatrains usually consist of 10-11 syllables.

Suddenly, he gasped, and the bow bent,
The arrow flew towards unknown directions,
Making his elderly father's posture bent low,
The child was leaving at that moment.
Nogohentikdi-yu, egildikamon,
O'quchdibelgisizyoqlargatomon,
Keksaotasiningqaddindoletib,
Ketibboraredifarzandshuzamon, [10: 69]

In the quatrain, the author speaks about certain ungrateful children who have put their parents to shame. In it, we see that he intended to convey a deep meaning through the parallel depiction of the bow and arrow with the elderly father. That is, the unbent bow is depicted side-by-side with the bent posture of the parent who has been humiliated by a child who does not appreciate their parents. Here, the bow and arrow signify an allegorical meaning. It is a symbol of a bitter word. A scene of a child speaking bitter words to their parent and wounding their heart is reflected. Though these lines, the author reaches the didactic conclusion that a bad child will break their parent's posture low.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study demonstrate that the artistic quality of Kenesbay Rakhmanov's quatrains is realized through the interrelationship between their philosophical and didactic content and poetic form. In the quatrains analyzed, content and form complement each other, creating an integral poetic system. The aphoristic style, syntactic parallelism, antithesis, symbolic imagery, and techniques closely resembling traditional folk proverbs and sayings further enhance the impact of the philosophical ideas. The main thematic focus centers on general reflections concerning philosophy, didactics, religious

enlightenment, aphoristic expression, spirituality, time, and human life. In this respect, the poet's quatrains of the people's poet of Uzbekistan, Abdulla Oripov. Because this poet, like Kenesbay Rakhmanov, presents in his poems human traits, virtues, and religious-moral concepts, offering wise conclusions in a style close to proverbs and sayings.

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