

POETIC GENRES IN THE LITERARY PROCESS: THE RUBAI AND SIJO

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Abstract : In the history of the literary process, poetic genres have developed as significant artistic forms that reflect the collective thinking, worldview, and spiritual–moral values of a people. Within the Eastern poetic tradition, the rubai of Uzbek classical literature and the sijo of Korean classical poetics hold a special place due to their capacity to convey profound philosophical meaning within a concise poetic form. This thesis examines the poetic and rhythmic affinities of the rubai and sijo genres through a comparative analytical approach.

Annotatsiya : Adabiy jarayon tarixida poetik janrlar xalq tafakkuri, dunyoqarashi hamda ruhiy–ma’naviy olamini aks ettiruvchi muhim badiiy shakllar sifatida shakllanib kelgan. Sharq she’riy an’anasida o‘zbek mumtoz adabiyotiga mansub ruboiy hamda koreys klassik poetikasidagi sijo janrlari qisqa hajmda chuqur falsafiy mazmunni ifodalash imkoniyati bilan alohida ahamiyat kasb etadi. Ushbu tezisda ruboiy va sijo janrlarining poetik va ritmik mushtarak jihatlari qiyosiy tahlil asosida o‘rganiladi.

Keywords: rubai, sijo, poetic genres, rhythmic structure, comparative analysis, Eastern poetry, Uzbek classical literature, Korean classical poetics

Kalit so‘zlar: ruboiy, sijo, poetik janrlar, ritmik tuzilish, qiyosiy tahlil, Sharq she’riyati, o‘zbek mumtoz adabiyoti, koreys klassik poetikasi

In the history of the literary process, poetic genres have developed as one of the most important forms expressing the collective consciousness, worldview, and spiritual–moral values of a people. Within Eastern poetic traditions, the rubā‘ī of Uzbek classical literature and the sijo of Korean classical poetics occupy a distinctive position. Both genres are characterized by their ability to convey profound philosophical meaning within a short poetic form, as well as by their rhythmic harmony and artistic conciseness.

The aruz system and the metrics of the rubai

In Eastern poetry, the science of *aruz* functions as a theoretical system that determines the metrical foundation of poetic texts, and the rubā‘ī is formed precisely within this system. *Aruz* consists of eight fundamental metrical feet (*asli rukn*), whose various combinations give rise to different poetic meters (*bahr*). The rubai is most commonly composed in the *hazaj* meter, particularly in its *akhrab* and *akhram* branches. Alisher Navoi, in his treatise *Mezon ul-avzon*, identifies twenty-four metrical patterns specific to the rubai—twelve belonging to the *akhrab* branch and twelve to the *akhram* branch. Structurally, the rubai is usually written according to the *aaba* rhyme scheme, which ensures its internal rhythmic harmony. In terms of content, rubais are created in amorous, moral–didactic, and mystical directions. Formal conciseness, semantic depth, and philosophical closure have elevated the rubā‘ī to the status of a masterpiece of Eastern poetry.

The poetic nature of the sijo genre

Sijo (시조) is a traditional Korean poetic form that typically consists of three or four lines. Each line contains 14–16 syllables and is characterized by internal rhythmic division (7+7 or 8+7). By the seventeenth century, a four-line form known as *chan-sijo* became widespread, making it possible to compare this genre with the rubai. Unlike the rubai, the sijo does not follow a strict rhyme system; instead, its rhythm is shaped primarily by the natural phonetic flow of the language. The third or fourth line usually serves as a philosophical turn or conclusion, which creates a structural affinity with the final line of the rubai.

Comparative analysis

The similarity between the rubai and the sijo is first and foremost evident in their concise four-line structure. Both genres are oriented toward expressing philosophical meaning within a brief poetic form. In the rubai, rhythmic harmony is achieved through the aruz system, whereas in the sijo it is created through the natural intonation of the language. Structurally, in both genres the final line functions as a semantic turning point or conclusion. The main difference lies in their formal organization: the rubāʿī adheres to a strict rhyme scheme and a measured metrical system, while the sijo employs free rhyme and relies on phonetic naturalness for its rhythm. The metrical rigidity of the rubāʿī and the rhythmic freedom of the sijo reflect the distinctive aesthetic orientations of Eastern and Korean poetic thought.

Conclusion

The rubai and the sijo are short lyrical forms that emerged in different cultural contexts yet are closely related in their spiritual and semantic essence. Both genres demonstrate similar poetic principles in expressing human emotions, philosophical reflection, and the essence of life within a concise structure. The strict rhythmic organization of aruz and the natural rhythmic harmony of the sijo serve as an aesthetic bridge connecting Eastern and Korean poetry. In terms of content, the rubai and the sijo share important similarities: both express philosophical and lyrical meaning in a brief form, emphasize personal emotions and universal human concerns, and employ the final line as a conclusion or an unexpected turn. Common themes include nature, love, and the transience of life. However, significant differences also exist. While the rubai places greater emphasis on didactic and moral issues, the sijo is more lyrical and oriented toward nature. The philosophical foundation of the rubai is rooted in Islamic mysticism, whereas the sijo reflects the influence of Buddhist and Confucian thought.

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