



VERSES ACROSS CENTURIES: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF SONNETS OF SHAKESPEARE AND IBRAYIM YUSUPOV

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the thematic and structural similarities and differences between the sonnets of two great poets, William Shakespeare and Ibrayim Yusupov. Despite differences in time, culture, and language, both poets reflect universal themes like love, time, life, and death in their works. This article shows how Yusupov and Shakespeare both use the sonnet form to convey their philosophical understandings of the fleeting nature of time and the everlasting nature of the words written about life and death through a detailed examination of their sonnets.

INTRODUCTION

The sonnet has long been a favored form among poets because of its capacity to encapsulate complex emotions and universal themes. The sonnet first appeared in Italy in the 13th century and became famous through the works of Francesco Petrarca, spreading throughout Europe. Along with other countries, the sonnet made its way into English literature, where it flourished during the time of William Shakespeare, who became one of the most celebrated poets in the sonnet genre. Shakespeare wrote a total of 154 sonnets, addressing themes such as love, beauty, time, and death [1]. Scholars have pointed out the philosophical depth of Shakespeare's sonnets, where time and death are often depicted.

In the 20th century, Ibrayim Yusupov, a prominent figure in Karakalpak literature, brought the sonnet form, along with other minor lyrical forms from Western poetry, into Karakalpak poetry and composed many works in this form [3]. His sonnets often explore existential themes, frequently reflecting on death, memory, and the transience of human life.

METHODS

This study uses a comparative literary analysis of selected sonnets from William Shakespeare and Ibrayim Yusupov. The analysis focuses on thematic and structural elements of their sonnets, examining how both poets engage with themes of love, time, death, and immortality. Shakespeare's sonnets are analyzed using the traditional Shakespearean sonnet form, characterized by three quatrains followed by a rhyming couplet. Ibrayim Yusupov's sonnets, though structured similarly with 14 lines, are more flexible in their rhyme schemes and meter, reflecting the linguistic and cultural traditions of Karakalpak poetry.



The comparison emphasizes how each poet adapts the sonnet form to reflect their philosophical views and cultural contexts. By analyzing specific sonnets, we explore how the formal structure and thematic content of their works intersect and diverge.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Although there are several centuries and vast cultural differences between Shakespeare and Yusupov, both poets used the sonnet form to express their views on life, death, time, love, and poetry.

The conventional English (or Shakespearean) sonnet form, which consists of three quatrains and a rhyming couplet, is often followed in Shakespeare's sonnets [1]. Iambic pentameter is often used for each line, and the rhyme pattern is ABAB CDCD EFEF GG.

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?	A
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:	B
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,	A
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:	B
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,	C
And often is his gold complexion dimmed;	D
And every fair from fair sometime declines,	C
By chance or nature's changing course untrimmed;	D
But thy eternal summer shall not fade	E
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;	F
Nor shall Death brag thou wanderest in his shade,	E
When in eternal lines to time thou growest:	F
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,	G
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.	G

In English sonnets, the final two lines often serve to provide a resolution or contrast to the ideas expressed in the preceding quatrains. For example, in Shakespeare's Sonnet 18 mentioned above, he compares his beloved's beauty to a summer's day, but in the final lines, he states that her beauty will live on forever through the poem:

So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

Yusupov's sonnets, while also structured with 14 lines similar to Shakespeare's sonnets, do not strictly adhere to the traditional rhyme schemes or metrical patterns of the English (Shakespearean) sonnet. The language of Ibrayim Yusupov's sonnets is free and lyrical, deeply engaging with the profound content of the genre. He often uses repetition, a characteristic of Karakalpak oral traditions, to emphasize emotional depth. His sonnets typically follow a 4+4+3+3 line structure, with a rhyme scheme of ABAB ABAB ABA ABA [3].

Let's consider the following sonnet from Yusupov's "Sorsha" sonnets collection as an example:

Barlıq hám joqlıqtıń, shegarası bul,
Usı jerge kelip izler joǵalar.
«Mensiz dúnya joq» dep, asqınǵan kewil
Bunda arnasına qayta quyılar.



Bunda kúlki tınar ğumsha láblerden,
Kózge jas juwırar, aqıl albırar.
Dostıń sensiz úyge qaytar bul jerden,
Ya ol sen qaytqanda ere almay qalar.
Ólimnen hesh júyrik qashıp qutilmas,
Esaptan jańılmas, ol hesh utilmas.
Biraq ol qast etip qılsa da hámir, -
Tek te bir kúsh onıń aytqanın qılmas:
Saw bolsın ğúressheń, sharshamas ómir!
Bir shıbıǵı sınsa, mıń bolar sarras [6].

In this sonnet, the poet uses a rhythmic and cyclical structure to convey the idea that life and death are interconnected, and that every living thing inevitably returns to its origin. One of the central themes in both Shakespeare's and Yusupov's sonnets is the concept of death and the passage of time. Shakespeare often presents time and death as opposing forces, attempting to erase beauty and love. In many of his sonnets, poetry serves as a refuge against the destructive power of time, offering the hope that beauty and love can be immortalized [2]. In Sonnet 60, Shakespeare reflects on the relentless march of time with the following lines:

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end [4]

Although death is viewed as a natural phenomenon in the sonnet, the poet expresses hope that the beauty and worth of the subject will be preserved through his verse:

And yet to times in hope, my verse shall stand,
Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand [1].

Ibrayim Yusupov, on the other hand, views death more as an unavoidable and irreversible event. His sonnets often emphasize the inevitability of death, the futility of human actions in the face of time, and the profound spiritual impact of loss on those left behind. In many of his sonnets, the first quatrain introduces the main idea, the second quatrain presents a counterargument or shifts the direction of thought, the third quatrain reaches a climax, and the fourth quatrain provides a resolution.

«Ol qayta tirilip kelse edi bir,
O, men kirpik bolıp onıń kózine.
Kórmegen izzetin kórsetip ne bir.
Sıylar edim shań qondırmay júzine.
Keshikken soldattay, kelse ol kirip,
Yarınday aymalar edim-aw sonda» -
Der adam adamdı jerlep atırıp ...
Bul biyhuwda ókinish ğoy shınında.
«Qara xattan» keyin kelgen soldat hám
Jat kóriner. Ólik tirilgen gezde,-
Súyiw túwe, jolay almassań oǵan.



Sol ushin suw qaytip aqpaydı izge,
Bos ókinishten kóre, bir-birimizdi
Sıylay bilgen ábzel biz tirimizde [6].

In Yusupov's aforementioned sonnet, the protagonist imagines the return of a lost beloved companion, only to painfully realize that such a return is impossible. Unlike Shakespeare, who often finds solace in the immortality of poetry, Yusupov's protagonist is left with feelings of loss and deep regret, accepting that no poetic or emotional act can defy death.

Both poets, Shakespeare and Yusupov, use rich imagery to convey the themes of time, death, and love. Shakespeare often employs natural imagery such as the sun, summer, waves, and flowers to reflect the transient nature of beauty and life. In Sonnet 18, for instance, he compares his beloved to a summer's day, acknowledging that summer is fleeting and passes:

Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date [4].

In contrast, in the following sonnet by Ibrayim Yusupov, the poet uses the image of a soldier returning from battle to express the shock and disbelief surrounding the death of a loved one:

Keshikken soldattay, kelse ol kirip,
Yarınday aymalar edim-aw sonda» -
Der adam adamdı jerlep atırıp ...
Bul biyhuwda ókinish góy shınında [6].

The image of the delayed soldier highlights the emotional turmoil and the sense of limbo between life and death, drawing particular attention to the grief caused by loss.

CONCLUSION

Both Yusupov and Shakespeare engage with universal themes such as death, time, and love, their perspectives are shaped by their cultural and literary traditions. In Shakespeare's sonnets, death is often portrayed as inevitable, but there is a hopeful belief in the immortality of poetry. Yusupov's sonnets, on the other hand, reflect on the profound spiritual impact of loss and the impossibility of bringing back those we have lost.

These findings demonstrate the adaptability of the sonnet form as a tool for expressing deep human emotions, grief, and anxieties. Through the examples of Shakespeare and Yusupov, we see that the lyrical form of the sonnet has deep roots in the creative works of poets, transcending geographical and chronological boundaries to explore themes that are universally relevant to humanity.

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