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ON THE METRE OF THE EARLY POEMS OF THE KHAMSA

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Abstract. This article examines the question of metre in the early poems of the Khamsa tradition — Makhzan ul-asror, Matla' ul-anvor, Tuhfat ul-ahror and Hayrat ul-abror. It analyses the expressive resources of the sari' metre employed in the composition of these poems, its two metrical variants, and the role this metre plays in conveying, in full measure, the substance of the questions interpreted in the poems.

Keywords: metre, sari', rhyme, interpretation, tradition, artistic mastery.

Introduction

A number of studies in literary scholarship contain important observations on the sari' metre and its metrical variants, which were used in the composition of the early poems of the Khamsa. For the authors of these poems, the metre proved highly serviceable in articulating philosophical reflection, admonitory and didactic statements, and complex ideas and views. Its simplicity, transparency and fluency not only allow the author's worldview to be expressed with depth, but also exert a strong artistic and aesthetic effect upon the reader. A further advantage of the sari' metre lies in the fact that it permits rhymes to be formed from words and expressions of exceptionally profound meaning.

Literature review

In *Mezon ul-avzon*, Navoi adduces examples of the rajaz, ramal, munsarih, muzori', mujtass and sari' metres and recognises two varieties of sari':

1) *sari'i musaddasi matviyi mavquf* (V V – | – V V – | – V ~);

2) *sari'i musaddasi matviyi makshuf* (V V – | – V V – | – V –).

Sari' belongs to the group of metres derived from the primary feet and their offshoots. In *Funun ul-balogha*, Shaykh Ahmad Taroziy enumerates thirty-two metres; in treating sari', he records its pattern in the form *mus-taf'-i-lun / mus-taf'-i-lun / maf'-u-lo-tu //* — – v – / – – v – / – – – v [3].

The pattern cited by Ahmad Taroziy is the *solim* (sound, unaltered) form of the sari' metre. The literary scholar D. Yusupova observes that the sound form of sari' does not occur in Turkic literature, and that only the forms *sari'i musaddasi matviyi makshuf* and *sari'i musaddasi matviyi mavquf* were employed in our poetry [10]. In *Mafotih ul-ulum*, Abu Abdullah al-Khwarazmi defines the notion of *bahr* (metre), lists sari' as the ninth type, and enumerates seven variants of it [2]. As I. Stebleva writes, in classical poetry the metre was bound up with the governing idea of the particular poem and was for that reason deliberately selected by the poets [4].

Research methodology

If a work is to win the affection of its readers, it is essential that the ideas advanced in it be expressed with mastery, that a metre appropriate to the work be chosen, and that a single sustained musical sequence be maintained from the opening to the close. Because the feet of the sari' metre are fluent and melodious and allow exceedingly rich meanings to be conveyed, all the early poems of the

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Khamsa tradition were composed in its two metrical variants. The authors of the Khamsa did not select this metre for their poems by chance. First, it was a requirement of tradition. Begun with Nizami Ganjavi's *Makhzan ul-asror*, this tradition was continued in Khusraw Dihlawi's *Matla' ul-anvor*, Abdurrahman Jami's *Tuhfat ul-ahror* and Navoi's *Hayrat ul-abror*. Navoi, in particular, considered it fitting to observe the tradition. Second, this traditional metre, chosen for the poem, accorded with the ideational spirit of the work: its fluent and light manner is well suited to conveying the substance of the work to the reader. It is worth noting that Hakim Sanai composed his poem *Hadoyiq ul-haqoyiq* in the khafif metre, whereas Nizami, who came under his creative influence, composed *Makhzan ul-asror* in the sari' metre — a metre that also met with Alisher Navoi's approval.

Analysis and results

It should be noted that in *Makhzan ul-asror*, *Matla' ul-anvor*, *Tuhfat ul-ahror* and *Hayrat ul-abror* alike, couplets composed in *sari'i musaddasi matviyi mavquf* occur less frequently than those composed in *sari'i musaddasi matviyi makshuf*. As a rule, this variant of the metre arises when the line ends in a word closing with a long vowel or with a consonant cluster, or when the long vowels o and o‘ occur within a closed syllable:

Shak-ka-ri-din to‘-ti e-di sharm-sor
– V V – | – V V – | – V ~
To‘-ti-dek e-di za-na-xi taqv-dor
– V V – | – V V – | – V ~ [M.A. – p. 52]

In this couplet from *Makhzan ul-asror* the metre *sari'i musaddasi matviyi mavquf* is employed: in the line-final words *sharmsor* and *taqvdor*, the consonant-cluster syllables *sharm* and *taqv* are rendered as – V (one long and one short syllable). The vowel *o* occurring thereafter within a closed syllable gives rise to a further overlong syllable. The consecutive occurrence of overlong syllables within the couplet constitutes an important means of conveying the questions it raises with greater force; the musicality, fluency and expressiveness of the couplet are thereby intensified. Let us now attend to the following couplet, taken from the Second Discourse of the poem:

Bo-shi-ga mush-tur-di-yu yosh to‘k-di ul
– V V – | – V V – | – V –
Zul-mu si-ta-mo-xi-ri ko‘z yo-shi-dir
– V V – | – V V – | – V –

The phenomenon of *vasl* is observed at two points in the lines of this couplet. In the first line, the final consonant *t* of the word *musht* attaches to the first syllable of the following word *urdi-yu*, forming the syllable *tur*. Two considerations are at issue here. The first is that, since *musht* contains a consonant cluster, treating it as an overlong syllable would disrupt the order of scansion within the feet and violate the requirements of the metre; from this standpoint the function of *vasl* is essential. The second is that, in accordance with Arabic grammar and the requirements of aruz, the formation of a syllable by attaching the final consonant of a preceding word to a following word beginning with a vowel serves to keep the musical movement of the lines unbroken and unified, and thereby to heighten their expressive force. Let us turn to the following couplet from *Hayrat ul-abror*:

Qil-di chu Ad-ham xa-la-fi tar-ki joh
– V V – | – V V – | – V ~

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To-ji fa-no bo-shi-g'a qo'y-di I-loh
– V V – | – V V – | – V ~

Muf-ta-i-lun | muf-ta-i-lun | fo-i-lon [H.A. – p. 102]

In this couplet the first and second feet of both the first and the second line are formed from *muftailun*, while the final foot of each line is formed from *foilon*. Open syllables ending in short vowels yield short syllables, whereas syllables ending in the long vowel o, as well as closed syllables, yield long syllables. A number of features of the following couplet call for attention:

De-ma yi-lon | *aj-da-re-rur* | *ganjsanj*
– V V – | – V V – | – V ~

Muz-ma-ra-ning | *jav-fi-da yuz* | *tur-fa ganj*
– V V – | – V V – | – V ~ [H.A. – p. 195]

Here the phenomenon of *vasl* is observed in the first line. *Vasl* (from the Arabic, "joining") is defined as the pronunciation, in the expressive recitation of poetic works created on the basis of the aruz system, of the consonant closing certain closed syllables together with the syllable that follows it and begins with a vowel, as required by the metre [6]. The phenomenon occurs with the words *ajdar* and *erur* in the first line and with *muzmar* and *aning* in the second. Aruz possesses musicality and rhythmic succession, and one word is pronounced joined to another. In the ordinary case, the second syllable of *ajdar* and *muzmar* would have to be taken as a long syllable. The words *erur* and *aning* that follow them, however, form a *vasl* with the final consonant of *ajdar* and *muzmar*, yielding *aj-da-re-rur* and *muz-ma-ra-ning*. This accords fully both with the requirements of the metre and with the norms of pronunciation. If this feature is left out of account — that is, if *vasl* is not effected — a mismatch arises in the scansion of the feet of the metre. *Aj-da-re-rur* forms the second foot of the first line and *muz-ma-ra-ning* the first foot of the second line, both realising the foot *muftailun*:

Aj-da-re-rur	Muz-ma-ra-ning
– V V –	– V V –
Muf-ta-i-lun	Muf-ta-i-lun

If, however, the phenomenon of *vasl* is disregarded, the following situation arises:

Aj-dar e-rur	Muz-mar a-ning
– – V –	– – V –

As can be seen, such a foot does not occur among the feet of the sari' metre.

The next feature concerns the word *ganjsanj*, which occupies the final foot of the first line. The element *ganj* contains a consonant cluster, and words with consonant clusters are ordinarily taken as overlong syllables; when such a word occurs not at the very end of the line but in its initial or middle portion, it is marked as one long and one short syllable. At times such words may be represented by adding a short *i* at the end and taken with two marks, – V. The word *ganj* is accordingly rendered with one long syllable "–" and one short syllable "V". If such a word occurs at the very end of the line as the final syllable of the rhyme or the *radif*, we render it with the overlong sign "~". This is precisely what is observed in the word *sanj*.

The fact that long and short syllables occur in the line in nearly equal numbers in the sari' metre also makes it highly convenient for the Uzbek language and its norms of pronunciation.

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Conclusion

In sum, literary scholars acknowledge that, in the early poems of the Khamsa tradition, the authors made masterly use of the melodic possibilities of these metres in giving artistic expression to universal ideas and to narratives drawn from life: life and the place of the human being within it, the relations between ruler and people, the significance of lofty human virtues for the spiritual perfection of the individual, and the role of upbringing in the formation of the perfect human being. Indeed, the measured gravity, the serenity and the even, sustained melodiousness of sari' make it possible to contemplate, grasp and analyse in depth the substance of the couplets composed in it; they strengthen the didactic spirit of the verse and widen the range of its effect.

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