

EMERGENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SONNET GENRE IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

Mustafoyeva Mahfuza Anvarovna

Master's student at the department of
Foreign languages, BSU
mahfuza-85@mail.ru

Abstract. In this article formation and introduction of the sonnet genre in English literature is discussed. Its time and place of appearance and emergence in England is investigated. The contribution of William Shakespeare as the first English poet adopted this complex poetic form, his transformation and transferring it to future generations are revealed.

Key words: renaissance, sonnet, English literature, Golden age, William Shakespeare.

Introduction.

The genre of the sonnet for the period of the Renaissance becomes the most common genre of lyric poetry. A sonnet, in England, goes through a long way of formation from Chaucer's free revival of Petrarch's sonnets to the final approval of an independent English form, which later become standard. Undoubtedly, the sonnet had various changes since poet wanted to bring his own view of both the form of the sonnet and its content into his works. However, we know the sonnet as William Shakespeare introduced it.

In this work formation and introduction of the sonnet genre in English literature is discussed. Its time and place of appearance and emergence in England is investigated. The contribution of William Shakespeare as the first English poet adopted this complex poetic form, his transformation and transferring it to future generations are revealed.

Main part. The first stage in the development of English Renaissance literature is characterized by the flourishing of poetry. Poetry represented by the works of Thomas Wyatt, Henry Howard, Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser and later the works of William Shakespeare, became for some time the dominant part of the Renaissance literature in England. Moreover, all of the above poets made a huge contribution to the development of the sonnet.

For the first time, a sonnet-form poem was written in the 13th century in Sicily. Its author was Giacomo da Lentini, also known as Jacopo de Lentini, was an Italian poet and senior poet of Sicilian school. Moreover, he was notary at the court of the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II. The monarch was a great admirer of art and often held public competitions of poets. The genre immediately gained popularity, but it was far from its peak.

Francesco Petrarch, a Florentine humanist, diplomat and poet, raised the sonnet to an influential literary form with his sequence known as the Canzoniere or Rime sparse ("Scattered rimes"). Petrarch's preferred poetic form in this collection was the sonnet, a 14-line lyric that often-expressed stages of meditation or argumentative reasoning. Petrarch's predecessor was Dante Alighieri, who frequently wrote sonnets, as did Sicilian poets at the imperial court before them. Many of those poets were also court lawyers, and this may be why the sonnet has always had a nimble, argumentative movement.

Discussions and analysis. The sonnet was first translated into English by the great English poet Geoffrey Chaucer. He included Petrarch's 88 sonnet (under the title "Troilus Complaint") in his poem "Troilus and Criseyde", but he did not retain the sonnet form, since the content was important to him. In other words, it was a free revival, but this revival was written in the same "royal stanza" of seven lines as the whole poem and was dissolved in its text.

Despite the fact that Chaucer did not closely study the sonnet, he became the one who first interested in this literary form and in those ideas that were provided by Petrarch's sonnets.

The sonnet became widespread quite later, due to works of poets related with aristocratic trend of English humanism. Court poets serving England's first great Renaissance monarch, Henry VIII, adopted the writing of sonnets as one of several sophisticated, Italian habits. These innovators were not writers professionally but aristocrats, courtiers or diplomats, whose literary activity gave a "civil grace" to their various attainments in languages, music, hunting and sport.

Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503-1542) was the first court poet who was interested in the sonnet. He is considered the father of the sonnet in England. Wyatt belonged to a wealthy noble family, was educated at Cambridge and became one of the king's close associates. That's why he traveled a lot. Once, while in Italy, he was introduced with the work of Petrarch. Petrarch's sonnet, in which the Renaissance "discovery of man" celebrated one of its first victories and in which the poet was presented as the bearer of feelings and qualities which inherent to him. It became a revelation and innovation for Wyatt. That is why, Wyatt could not pass the sonnet and became so interested in it. Thus, Wyatt introduced the sonnet into English poetry. He began with translations of Petrarch. However, the English word was "squeezed" with great difficulty into an unusual form, and Wyatt had to make some changes so such a literary form as a sonnet was established in England. This caused Wyatt to change the way he rhymed. He divides the last six lines of the sonnet into quatrain and into two lines that rhyme with each other. After Wyatt, Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (1517-1547) became interested in the sonnet. He changed the versification of Wyatt's sonnets. If Wyatt, followed the example of the Italian Petrarchists, kept two rhymes for both quatrains of a sonnet, then Surrey broke the sonnet into three quatrains and the final couplet with paired rhyme.

In addition, If Wyatt, followed the Italian poets, rhymed the first line with the fourth and the second with the third (encircling rhyme), then Surrey began to rhyme the first with the third and the second with the fourth (cross rhyme). It was he who created the scheme that is known to us from Shakespeare's sonnets: three quatrains not connected by common rhyming and a couplet at the end (4-4-4-2). Thus, Surrey actually completed the creation of the form of the English sonnet.

One more great sonnet writer between these Henrician poets and Shakespeare is Philip Sydney, the Elizabethan courtier, soldier and the author of the sonnet sequence "Astrophil and Stella", an Elizabethan sonnet sequence of 108 sonnets, alternating with 11 songs, by Sir Philip Sidney, written in 1582 and published posthumously in 1591. The work is often considered the finest Elizabethan sonnet cycle after William Shakespeare's sonnets.

Another significant sonnet writer is Edmund Spenser. His "Amoretti" uses a common variant of sonnet (known as Spenserian) that follows the English quatrain and couplet pattern but resembles the Italian in using a linked rhyme scheme: abab bcbc cdcd ee. Edmund Spenser completed the development of the poetic tradition, inherited by the late Renaissance. The line of love poetry, going from the troubadours to Petrarch and continuing in European Petrarchism in the 16th century, the significance of anew epic acquired under his pen. Spenser's influence has been reflected in the desire of English poets to bring the word to the maximum musical sound and the image to the brightness of color effects. Already during the life of Spenser, the main path of the poetic word in England lies in the dramatic genres. However, without the efforts of several generations of lyric poets, Shakespeare's theatre would not have been possible.

Results. Nevertheless, the genre received a second birth due to Shakespeare's works. His heritage includes 154 sonnets. Shakespeare made sonnets an important part of the stage business in early plays such as "Love's Labour's Lost" and "Romeo and Juliet" – most notably the "Pilgrim" sonnet spoken by Romeo and Juliet during their first meeting.

Despite his innovations, Shakespeare was by no means the first writer to produce long sequence of sonnets. On the contrary, he was composing near the end of more than two centuries of sonnet writing in Europe and also during a strong literary fad for sonnets in English in Elizabethan England in the 1590s.

So, in my opinion, I was able to study and briefly tell about the appearance of the sonnet in England, about such great court poets as Thomas Wyatt and the Earl of Surrey, who were not afraid of difficulties and managed to lay the foundations of this difficult poetic form in England. Their courage was rewarded by the fact that now in the history of English literature they are considered the founders of the English sonnet.

We get acquainted with the work of such remarkable poets as Philip Sidney and Edmund Spenser, who not only continued the development of the sonnet, but made a significant step forward. They attempted to create an English national sonnet, and their attempts were more successful than those of their predecessors. It was they who decided to rid the sonnet of its original native features, wanting to bring this poetic form closer to their own English realities.

Conclusion. The contribution of William Shakespeare to the development of the sonnet is difficult to underestimate. Thus, the sonnet turns out to be an incredibly significant part of the history of English literature. At the same time, it is not just one of the components of the historical course of the development of literature, it is a source of ideas, a way of thinking of great poets, certain philosophical reflections, and, finally, a source of vivid images and interesting plots.

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