

# The Issue of Rhyme and Refrain in Asriy's Lyrics

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**Abstract:** This article discusses the issues of rhyme (qofiya) and refrain (radif) in the works of the Turkic-language poet Asriy Tabrizi, who lived and wrote in the territory of Iran. The study analyzes, with concrete examples, how masterfully Asriy selected rhyme and refrain—two key elements that define the structure of a poem—and how deeply he had mastered the science of rhyme (‘ilm al-qāfiya).

**Keywords:** Asriy, Fuzuli, ‘ilm al-qāfiya, rawī, muqayyad, mutlaq, radif, rujū’, idāfa, takrīr, dhū-l-qāfiyatayn, radd al-qāfiya, muraddaf.

**Introduction:** In classical Eastern poetry, the triad of sciences—‘ilm al-‘arūḡ, ‘ilm al-badī’, and ‘ilm al-qāfiya—constitutes the foundation of poetic expression. In the grand tradition of the East, a poet’s artistic mastery was judged not only by their theoretical understanding of these sciences but also by the extent to which they utilized them effectively in conveying poetic meaning.

As is known, the repeated use of similarly sounding words at the end of each poetic line is called rhyme (qofiya). The science dedicated to its study—‘ilm al-qāfiya—defines rhyme as consisting of the rawī (literally, “the rope that binds a load to a camel”; in terminology, the main sound element of the rhyme). For example, in the words vafā and jafā, the vowel ā is the rawī; in vafādor and jafādor, the consonant r is the rawī. According to rhyme theory, in addition to the rawī, there are eight more components: four that precede (ridf, qayd, ta’sīs, dākhil) and four that follow it (waṣl, khurūj, mazīd, nā’ira).

In classical poetics, rhymes are divided into two main groups: muqayyad (based on root consonants) and mutlaq (based on affixed forms). The muqayyad type includes seven varieties (e.g., muqayyad mujarrad, mu’assas, with ta’sīs, ridf asliy, etc.), while the mutlaq type includes 25 detailed classifications, each distinguished by specific phonetic and structural features.

As evidenced by the above citation, Eastern classical rhyme theory represents a highly developed phonetic

system, the mastery of which requires considerable effort. Asriy Tabrizi, having thoroughly studied this field, demonstrates in his work a high level of skill in choosing both rhyme and refrain—key elements in shaping the poetic form.

Only 33 ghazals (4 of which are musannā), 1 mukhammās, 1 didactic pandnāma, and 2 qo’shma (folk-style) poems by Asriy have survived. Of these 33 ghazals, 8 end in rhyme and 25 in refrain. The mukhammās and the pandnāma sometimes end in rhyme and sometimes in refrain; the same is true for the qo’shma poems. This shows that Asriy preferred to conclude his poems more often with a refrain rather than a rhyme.

The analysis begins with the verses that end in rhyme, although they are fewer in number.

Sani har ko’rdugimda, boshqo bir olam bo’lur paydo,

Mana maqsud ulan olam, dur ko’yinda der: jono.

Dur ko’yinda der: jono mana maqsud ulan olam.

Na olam – olami jannat, na jannat – jannati a’lo.

Boshimdan ketmadi hargiz, sani la’lingdagi lazzat,

Na lazzat – lazzati shakkar, na shakkar – shakkari go’yo...

In the first couplet of this ghazal, which is built upon the rujū’ poetic device, the rhyme is expressed through full

words (paydo, jono), while in the second and third couplets, it is expressed through *idāfa* constructions (*jannati a'lō, shakkari gōyō*).

The repetition of a single word multiple times within a single line of poetry with a rhythmic enumeration is referred to as *takrīr* (repetition). “Emphasizing the meaning and essence of a word through repetition is considered the core characteristic of this literary device” [6:125]. In Asriy’s use of *takrīr*, the vivid portrayal of the lover’s emotional state becomes dominant, intensifying the expressiveness of the depiction.

Soqiyo! Soqiyo! Sharob, sharob,

O’ldi dil, o’ldi dil, xarob, xarob.

Sandadir, sandadir, umid, umid,

Ila ber, ila ber, savob, savob...

In these lines, Asriy creates the poetic device of *takrīr* by repeating the words *sharob* (wine), *xarob* (ruined), and *savob* (reward). In the following couplet, along with *takrīr*, he also employs *dhū-l-qāfiyatayn*—a device in classical literature where each line ends with two rhyming words (*zulqofiyatayn*)—thus enriching the poetic texture.

Lutfing-la kim o’lur mana onchoq marom, rom,

Lutf aylakim, olub ulo ko’nglum ba kom, kom.

Soqiy! Tag’oful aylama, may sun, hamon, hamon,

Sandan budurki, boshqana o’lsun rajom, jom...

In the above couplets of the ghazal, the literary device *dhū-l-qāfiyatayn* is realized through word pairs such as *marom, rom*; *ba kom, kom*; *rajom, jom*, while the device *takrīr* is created by the repetition of the word *hamon, hamon*.

It is worth noting that in the science of rhyme (*‘ilm al-qāfiya*), the *dhū-l-qāfiyatayn* is closely related to nearly a dozen classical poetic devices. These include *i’nāt*, *musajja’*, *tajziya*, *tashtīr*, *tajnīs*, *tarse’*, *hājib*, and *radd al-qāfiya(ito)*, among others.

*Radd al-qāfiya(ito)* refers to the technique of replacing one rhyme with another identical rhyme—repeating a rhyme without any change in form or meaning, but using it in a different rhyming position. In Asriy’s body of work, there exists at least one ghazal that demonstrates this type of rhyme usage.

Ey tiyri g’amin-chun dili ushshoq nishona,  
Ruxsorini gustur biza, san gulda miyona.

Sokin o’luram masjid-u dayr ichra damo-dam,  
Ya’ni sani doim ororom xona-baxona.

Ka’bayla ba komdir hoji, man tolibi diydor,  
Maqsudi unun Xonay manim Sohibi xona.

San-san dilayim, Ka’ba-vu butxonadan onchoq,

San-san dilayim, Ka’ba-vu butxona bahona.

Har dilda tarannum ulunon hab sanin ishqin,  
Oshiqda surudi g’am-u bulbulda tarona.

Har zarrada aksin sanin ulduqjo namoyon,  
Devona manamkim, guzaram xona-baxona.

Osiyligi Asriynin umidi karamin-la,  
Yo’xdur bu gunahkor laqiyno boshqa bahona.

In this seven-couplet ghazal, Asriy uses the words *xona-baxona* and *bahona* twice each as rhymes. In our view, Asriy, by repeating rhymes that convey the same meaning and do not acquire a new sense with each use, allows a minor flaw in his poetic construction. However, certain sources offer a different perspective on this matter: “... in poetic practice, the appropriate repetition of a rhyme is not considered a flaw, but rather is regarded as a poetic device, and the great representatives of Persian-Tajik literature have employed it skillfully” [7:108]. As noted in the above citation, experts in the field maintain that the justified repetition of a rhyme is not considered a defect. Nevertheless, this conclusion does not fully apply to the current case in Asriy’s poetry. Asriy’s ghazals, built upon repeated rhymes (*mukarrar*) that ensure a unique musicality, provide readers with a distinct poetic pleasure.

1) Kufr zulfidan olub iymon-iymon ustuna,  
Yora qul o’ldum edub paymon-paymon ustuna...

2) Ohim misoli sarvi xiromon uzun-uzun,  
Dardim misoli zulfi parishon uzun-uzun...

As previously mentioned, out of the 33 ghazals attributed to Asriy, 25 are *muraddaf*—that is, ghazals featuring a *radif* (refrain). In classical poetry, rhyme (*qafiya*) is often used in conjunction with *radif*. The term *radif*, meaning “that which follows in succession,” refers in literary criticism to a word or phrase that comes immediately after the rhyme and is repeated exactly throughout the poem. *Radifs* serve to emphasize the leading idea expressed in the poem, draw the reader’s attention to the central theme, and help deliver the poet’s ideological message more fully and deeply into the reader’s heart [6:84].

In his poetic works, Asriy employs a wide range of diverse, playful, and appealing *radifs*:

1) Nigohi yor ilon mast o’lmishiq paymonadan avval,  
Dari dildora dushdik, go’shayi mayxonadan avval...

2) Biz bu dunyo bazmina rindona kelmishlardaniz,  
Qoilizkim, go’shayi vayrona kelmishlardaniz...

3) Gahi oqil, gahi hayron, gahi shaydo ko’nuldur bu,  
Gahi obid, gahi ma’bud, gahi mavlo ko’nuldur bu...

4) Abro' ila, chashmon ila mushkil, ikilashdi,

Qotil ila, maston ila mushkil, ikilashdi...

Asriy composed a complete mukhammās based on Muhammad Fuzulī's seven-couplet ghazal that begins with "Tariqi faqr dutsam, tab' tobeyi nafs rom o'lmaz," masterfully aligning his verses to the original rhyme scheme with jewel-like precision. In the process of takhmis, he skillfully employed rhymes such as iltiyom, orzuyi xom, and lajom, which correspond seamlessly to the rhymes in the base ghazal.

Additionally, in his didactic work titled Pandnomayi Asriy, consisting of 25 couplets, the poet wove over twenty proverbs into verse. In this pandnāma, Asriy makes use not only of rich (to'q) rhymes but also employs light (och) rhymes, demonstrating his versatility in handling diverse rhyming techniques:

Kechar ahbob-u do'stlarin yuzidan,  
Kechmasin dodli dil kular o'zidan.

Har zamon uyama dodli so'zlaran,  
Og'la der do'st, kuldirar dushman.

San fanolar-la yo'l dutub yurma,  
Qorolir chun boxib o'zum-o'zuma.

It should be noted that Asriy's qo'shma poems are of particular significance due to their style, form, language, and expression, which closely resemble those familiar to the modern reader. The inner emotions of a person separated from their beloved are conveyed with simplicity and sincerity.

The rhyme scheme of this poem, composed in an 8-syllable meter, does not differ from that of contemporary poetry written in the barmoq (syllabic) meter. Its rhyming pattern follows the structure:

v-a-s-a, d-d-d-a, s-s-s-a:

Falakning charxi yixilsin,  
Mani nozli yordan etdi.  
O'lumi afg'on etmamak?  
Bulbuli gulzordan etdi.

Ko'zin nargis, sochi sunbul,  
Bog'inda o'lmusham bulbul.  
Kiprigi xordi, o'zi gul,  
Ham guldari, ham xordan etdi.

Asriy g'am libosini kiyar,  
Oyriqliq belini iyar.  
Etdigi "oh" dog'o deyar,  
Qorli dog'i qordan etdi.

Overall, Asriy Tabrizi was a poet who had thoroughly mastered the art of selecting the fundamental formal elements of Eastern poetry—qafiya (rhyme) and radif (refrain)—and made a worthy contribution to enriching Turkic poetry with his literary masterpieces.

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