

## EVOLUTION OF OTTAVA RIMA IN ENGLISH AND KARAKALPAK LITERATURE: HISTORY, FORM, AND INFLUENCE

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**Abstract:** This article explores the origins and evolution of the ottava rima in European and Karakalpak poetry, tracing its development from Italian Renaissance forms to English and Karakalpak literature. It examines structural features, historical context, and thematic versatility, highlighting how poets in different traditions have adapted the ottava rima for diverse purposes. This paper underscores the ottava rima's impact on literary traditions, demonstrating its adaptability and resilience in expressing culturally diverse narratives.

**Keywords:** Octave, eight-line stanza, poetry, English literature, Karakalpak literature, ottava rima, Byron, I.Yusupov

The octave, an eight-line stanza, has become one of the most enduring forms in Western poetry. The octave's origins in Italian poetry in the 14<sup>th</sup> century lie in the form known as *ottava rima*, which played a significant role in epic narrative poetry during the Renaissance. Italian poets like Ariosto, in "Orlando Furioso", and Tasso, in "Gerusalemme Liberata", used ottava rima to provide rhythmic structure and cohesion in long poetic narratives [2]. The rhyme scheme *ABABABCC* allowed for narrative progression within a stanza, culminating in a closing couplet that often provided emphasis, commentary, or a shift in tone, a structural technique that added dramatic tension and clarity.

English poets became familiar with the octave through translated works of Italian literature, where poets such as Wyatt and Howard adapted the octave into English sonnet structure. Their adaptations of Petrarchan sonnets introduced the octave-sestet division, which became a standard form in English poetry. Later poets, particularly during the Romantic period, revived the ottava rima for its expressive potential. The ottava rima stanza in English poetry consists of eight iambic lines, usually iambic pentameters. Each stanza consists of three alternate rhymes and one double rhyme, following the *ABABABCC* rhyme scheme. Lord Byron's "Don Juan" (1819) exemplifies the English use of ottava rima, blending the form's narrative structure with satire. It is probably the best-known English poem in ottava rima.

"Go, little book, from this my solitude!  
I cast thee on the waters – go thy ways!  
And if, as I believe, thy vein be good,  
The world will find thee after many days."

When Southey's read, and Wordsworth understood,

I can't help putting in my claim to praise –

The four first rhymes are Southey's every line:

For God's sake, reader! take them not for mine.

Byron's adaptation showed the octave's flexibility, where his wit and commentary on society and human behavior added a distinctly English sensibility to this Italian structure.

Lord Byron's success with ottava rima led later poets, including William Butler Yeats, to explore its possibilities. Yeats, while less satirical, used the form to convey mythic themes, showcasing ottava capacity of rima for introspection as well as storytelling. In "Sailing to Byzantium," for instance, Yeats employs ottava rima to meditate on the themes of aging and immortality, demonstrating the form's ability to support reflective, philosophical content [1].

In Karakalpak literature, the ottava rima was adapted in the 20th century by poets such as Ibrayim Yusupov and Kenesbay Rakhmanov. "*Kiev oktavalari*" (Kiev Octaves) by poet I. Yusupov is regarded as one of the finest examples of this genre in Karakalpak poetry. The work consists of 11 stanzas, each containing 8 lines. In this poem, form and content harmonize to such an extent that the octave seems purposefully crafted for conveying the poet's thoughts. Despite its relatively brief length, the poem addresses themes such as the contemporary face of Kiev, the friendship between Ukrainian and Karakalpak people, the history of Kiev, and notable historical figures, etc[3].

Бәлки өмирим бойы сени жырларман,

Украина, сәлем гүлбағларыңа:

Кеуилиң шын дослықтың нурыңа толсын,

Гуцулдың ақ кийген жас дилбарына

Мегзер қалғып тұрған уйқысыз Шолпан...

Мәужиреген Днепр қырғақларына.

Әне, жаңа өмир таңы нур шашты.

Кел, қарсы алайық, достым, қуяшты!

The rhyme structure of the ottava rima is reminiscent of the ghazal. However, while in a ghazal the even-numbered lines rhyme starting from the second couplet, the ottava rima form is more complex. In an ottava rima, the odd-numbered lines must also rhyme with each other (ABABABCC). In I. Yusupov's poems in ottava rima, the formal requirements are fully met [3]. This adaptation of the ottava rima structure demonstrates how Karakalpak poets have embraced and modified traditional forms to suit cultural and thematic needs.

Another excellent example of ottava rima in Karakalpak poetry is Kenesbay Rakhmanov's "*Institut oktavalari*" (Institute Octaves), a work that reflects the poet's mastery in language and conveys the lyrical hero's affectionate memories of his educational institution. K. Rakhmanov's skillful use of language and poetic form adds emotional depth and sophistication to the poem [3].

In Karakalpak poetry, adaptation of *ottava rima* by I.Yusupov and K.Rakhmanov demonstrates its capacity for solemn and contemplative themes. I.Yusupov employs it to celebrate cultural heritage, using the form to underscore his themes of friendship and historical respect.

In both English and Karakalpak literature, *ottava rima* has proven to be a versatile form capable of supporting a wide range of themes. In English poetry, Byron's use of *ottava rima* showcases its suitability for satirical and humorous themes, with the rhyme scheme providing a lively, engaging rhythm. Byron's closing couplets often deliver witty punchlines or shifts in tone, adding to the satirical impact of his verses [1].

The adoption of *ottava rima* in Karakalpak literature highlights the cross-cultural exchange of literary forms and ideas. While the form originated in Italian poetry and reached England through Renaissance influences, its presence in Karakalpak literature shows how poetic forms can transcend linguistic and cultural barriers. *Ottava rima* serves as a bridge that connects the lyrical traditions of Italy, England, and Karakalpakstan, enabling poets from diverse backgrounds to explore complex themes within a similar structure.

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