

Thematic And Artistic Characteristics Of Lyrical Motifs In The Work Of Erkin Vokhidov

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Abstract: This article analyzes lyrical motifs, their formation, and the characteristics of their manifestation within the artistic context of the poet Erkin Vokhidov's work. It explores the poetic function of motifs linked to spirituality—such as the human being and the inner self, affection, love, the Motherland, family, national identity, and concepts of life and time—within Vokhidov's lyric poetry. The study substantiates and analytically examines the concept of the lyrical motif as an artistic phenomenon that defines the lyrical hero's state of mind, the author's ethical-aesthetic stance, and the work's ideological direction.

Keywords: lyric poetry, lyrical motif, ethical-aesthetic relationship, lyrical persona, emotional experience, psychological character, poetic thought, national identity, philosophical reflection, aesthetic ideal, lyric genre, evolution, poetic meter, profound, philosophical reflection.

Introduction. Uzbek poetry is unimaginable without the work of Erkin Vokhidov. A prominent figure in Uzbek literature—as well as a great statesman, poet, playwright, and translator—he left an indelible mark on the literary landscape. Vokhidov's body of work resembles a boundless sea; just as the sea possesses vastness, one finds a similar breadth of contemplation in the poet's work. A distinctive feature of his lyric poetry is the organic fusion of life's events with the inner workings of the human soul. Through this synthesis, he articulates the relationship between the external environment and the human inner world, expressing deep personal emotions through the voice of the lyrical protagonist. Vokhidov composed celebratory odes, poems of pride, and qasida, as well as romantic ghazals in the classical aruz meter. He sang with overflowing passion of the soul's delight, the ecstasy of love and happiness, and a profound sense of gratitude and contentment with life. [1, 27.]

In Erkin Vokhidov's poetry, external reality is often perceived through the lyrical protagonist's inner experiences. Consequently, the poet avoids confining his work to a rigid thematic framework. As a result, it is crucial to study his oeuvre not merely based on a system of themes, but rather through lyrical motifs that recur, evolve, and complement one another. In literary studies, the motif plays a pivotal role in shaping the work's content, poetic structure, and composition. This shifts the focus of the lyrical work from the event itself to the emotional experience, and from the occurrence to the attitude toward it. To begin with, let us define the lyrical motif and its significance in literature: a lyrical motif is a fundamental semantic and thematic unit within a poem that expresses the lyrical protagonist's inner world, emotional experiences, and state of mind. Unlike an epic motif, where external action takes precedence, the lyrical motif places the primary focus on the human emotional state and the inner "self". In this regard, the lyrical motif serves as a vital poetic device that ensures the thematic integrity of the poem while artistically conveying the protagonist's emotions, perspectives, and inner world. By transforming the poet's individual feelings into a generalized artistic substance, it enhances the work's ideological and aesthetic impact.

Literature view. Research within Uzbek literary studies concerning the nature of the lyric genre, artistic imagery, motifs, themes, and ideas serves as a vital theoretical foundation for the scholarly examination of this subject. The study of Erkin Vokhidov's work, in particular, places special emphasis on the poet's artistic mindset, poetic craftsmanship, the psyche of the lyrical persona, and his views on the relationship between the individual and society. Themes such as the homeland, separation, longing, solitude, and philosophical reflection are widespread in Uzbek poetry; at the same time, poems exploring love and romance are also frequently encountered. As the renowned literary scholar B. Tomashevsky noted, a motif is the smallest, indivisible unit of a work's theme, serving as the primary element that evokes specific experiences and emotional states within a lyric work. [2, 182].

A key characteristic of the motif in Erkin Vokhidov's work is its semantic mobility. Motifs in the poet's work can be observed at three levels. At the first level, the motif brings a specific theme to the fore.

*Shatranj uzra borar shafqatsiz bir jang,
Goh oqlar, goh qoralar bo'lur mat va tang.*

*Har bitta donaning o'z o'rni boru,
Taqqir qo'llarida chekar bitta rang* [8, 85].

On a secondary level, it defines the state of mind of the lyrical persona responding to this theme.

*Goh lolu goh hayron bo'lib boqqandaman,
Oliy taxt,*

Zarbalarining ostida men chekkanman g'am va dard

*Piyoda yanglig' shitob yursam-da, maqsad sari,
Taqqir otliq sipohi ayladi yo'limda mot* [8, 143].

At the third level, the motif is linked to the poet's aesthetic and philosophical views.

*Shatranj taxtasidir yorug' bu jahon,
Shohlar ham, gado ham bir kun begumon*

—O'yin tugagach, ey g'ofil odam,

Bitta qutichaga qo'yilur hamon [8, 144].

The human being stands at the center of Erkin Vokhidov's lyric poetry. However, the poet is interested not in a person's outward appearance, but in observing and expressing their inner experiences, spiritual world, and the contradictions within their soul. The lyrical protagonist's dialogue with the self—harboring doubts about something or someone, grappling with inner turmoil and anguish, or witnessing the reawakening of sparks of hope—invites poetic exploration. Studies covering various periods of the poet's work also note the deepening portrayal of the lyrical protagonist's soul and the increasing depth of psychological analysis. In particular, the later stages of his work demonstrate a fusion of philosophical reflection with inner psychological processes.

Research methodology. One of the distinctive features of Erkin Vokhidov's lyric poetry is the harmonious expression of the human inner world, emotional experiences, and reflections on life alongside various themes and motifs. In the poet's lyric verses, the emotional motif cannot be analyzed in isolation from other motifs; regardless of their specific nature, they ultimately converge upon the human heart. Whether the reflections concern the Homeland, love, or the nature of life and time, their ultimate destination is the heart and the human psyche.

The motifs of love and longing are among the most expansive themes in Erkin Vokhidov's lyric poetry. In his romantic verse, the significance lies not merely in the romantic aspect of love, but in its power to reveal human character; naturally, where love exists, concepts such as loyalty, separation, and devotion inevitably arise. The figures of the lover and the beloved play an active role in the poet's work, as he portrays love through the lens of an individual striving to define its spiritual value and significance. Consequently, the motif of the Homeland also encompasses the motif of memory.

The fact that the interplay between the national spirit, human values, and the emotions of the lyrical protagonist is specifically explored in Vokhidov's work further underscores the importance of this theme within the poet's poetics.

In the poet's work, the motif of the Homeland is linked to the concept of national self-awareness; in short, the two are inextricably intertwined. For the artist, the Homeland is not merely a birthplace but a spiritual concept embodying history, language, the collective memory of the people, the legacy of ancestors, and a sense of responsibility toward the future. Consequently, the motif of the Homeland encompasses the motif of memory. The fact that Erkin Vokhidov's work specifically explores the interplay between the national spirit, human values, and the emotions of the lyrical persona further underscores the significance of this theme within the poet's poetics.

Analysis and Results. In Erkin Vokhidov's work, the lyrical motif forms an integral whole with the motifs of memory and time. A person's relationship with the past and the spirits of their ancestors constitutes a deeply significant lyrical theme for the poet. Meanwhile, the motif of time appears in his poems not merely as a chronological concept, but as a philosophical criterion enabling one to reflect upon one's own life. Motifs of freedom and truth also feature prominently in his work. It would be reductive to interpret the motif of freedom

in his poetry solely in a political context; for Vohidov, freedom is also linked to the way a person thinks, their striving to comprehend the truth, and their integrity of conscience.

In Erkin Vokhidov's poetry, lyrical motifs often culminate in philosophical insight. The poet does not merely express an emotion but reflects upon its causes and consequences. Consequently, his lyricism is characterized by a strong lyrical persona who questions and contemplates.

A key feature of this philosophical motif is the elevation of personal experience to a universal human level. An individual's anguish over separation transforms into the universal human experience of loss; personal longing for the homeland evolves into a sense of national belonging; and one person's quest for truth becomes a broader spiritual journey.

In this process, the poet's aesthetic ideal also becomes apparent. The ideal human figure created by Vokhidov is one who possesses self-awareness, cherishes the Motherland, remains faithful in love, strives for truth, and upholds their conscience. Thus, lyrical motifs do not explicitly declare the poet's aesthetic ideal; rather, they reveal it through the experiences and choices of the lyrical hero. "For E. Vokhidov, it is quite possible that the desire was not merely to write, but to live within the work being created—and to lead an eternal life while doing so. As we study the poet's work, we essentially become acquainted with his philosophical reflections and beautiful expressions. We come to realize that just as a tender infant requires immense toil, labor, and sleepless nights to reach adulthood, a poet requires an equal amount of effort to develop and attain maturity. As understanding and imagination expand, and as human emotions are exalted, the creative work begins to rise to a higher level" [1, 45].

In Erkin Vokhidov's lyric poetry, the impact of a motif is evident in its fusion with the portrayal of the inner self. The lyrical hero's state of mind may be conveyed either directly or indirectly—through address, questioning, contrast, memory, symbolic imagery, or natural landscapes.

For instance, the motif of longing is not limited merely to the sentiment of "I miss you". Instead, it is conveyed to the reader through imagery involving emptiness, memory, silence, anticipation, or separation. Thus, the motif transcends simple emotional content to acquire an artistic-psychological dimension. This is a key feature of Vokhidov's poetics: emotion is not merely described but is evoked through artistic symbols. Consequently, the reader gains direct access to the lyrical persona's inner world.

Conclusion. In Erkin Vokhidov's poetry, the lyrical motif serves as a vital poetic device for expressing the poet's perception of the world, his views on humanity and society, and his aesthetic ideals. Concepts such as human destiny, love, the Motherland, national identity, historical memory, time, freedom, and truth find artistic expression through various motifs in his lyric poetry. These motifs do not appear in isolation but are interconnected in terms of content, creating a cohesive poetic vision. The artistic significance of motifs in Vokhidov's work lies in more than just their repetition; the poet employs a single motif across diverse emotional and life situations, imbuing it with fresh meaning. For instance, while the sentiment of love manifests as the joy of reunion in some poems, in others it intertwines with separation, longing, or memory. Memory, in turn, prompts reflections on the past and present, as well as philosophical musings on the meaning of life. Similarly, sentiments regarding the Motherland extend beyond mere love for the country, encompassing concepts of national values, history, and one's responsibility toward ancestors.

The motifs of freedom and truth in the poet's work are also depicted in close connection with the human inner world. Here, freedom is interpreted not merely as an external social condition, but primarily as a spiritual need linked to human conscience, conviction, and the process of self-realization. Consequently, the lyrical experience transcends a simple emotional state to acquire profound socio-philosophical significance. The evocative power of Erkin Vokhidov's poetry is evident, above all, in the harmony between individual experiences and broader spiritual themes. The poet's personal "self" frequently intertwines with ideas concerning the people, the nation, history, and humanity. Thus, lyrical motifs in his work serve not only to shape the content of individual poems but also as a vital means of revealing the internal coherence of the poet's poetic universe.

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