



Article

The Unity of Theme and Content in Poetry

Kamola Allanazarova

1. Alisher Navoiy Tashkent State University of Uzbek Language and Literature
- * Correspondence: allanazarovakamola021@gmail.com

Abstract: This study investigates the harmony of theme and content in the poetry of Mutriba within the context of late 19th and early 20th century Uzbek literature. The research focuses on the analysis of socio-political, lyrical, and educational motifs in the poetess's works, with particular emphasis on their artistic representation and ideological significance. Using literary analysis as the main approach, the study examines how historical realities such as colonial oppression, social injustice, and the 1916 events are reflected in Mutriba's poetry. The article also explores the artistic means through which personal emotions and collective experience are unified, including metaphor, repetition, and hyperbole. Special attention is given to themes of women's spiritual experience, teacher-disciple relations, and love lyrics as key components of her poetic system. The findings indicate that Mutriba's poetry integrates individual emotional expression with broader socio-cultural realities, demonstrating a coherent unity between thematic content and artistic form.

Keywords: *Mutriba, Uzbek poetry, theme and content, lyrical interpretation, social motifs, women's poetry, artistic imagery.*

1. Introduction

At the beginning of the twentieth century, women poets in Uzbek literature continued to create primarily within traditional poetic genres. However, the social events and socio-political transformations of the period gave rise to distinctive stylistic and formal developments in their works. In their poetry, these women poets increasingly began to address pressing social issues, contemporary events, and the oppression inflicted upon the people as a consequence of colonial policy [1]. As a result, socio-political themes came to occupy an important place within the thematic scope of women's poetry. As noted, "Uzbek literature of the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century became, above all, the voice of a people whose historical heritage had been plundered and whose spiritual values had been suppressed as a result of the bloody conflicts among the khanates, the harsh living conditions of Turkestan under Tsarist Russian colonial rule, and later the one-sided policies pursued by the Soviet regime [2,3]."

Women poets such as Mutriba, Hakima, Dilshod Barno, and Nozimaxonim depicted issues of enlightenment and education, social life, and the struggle between nobility and moral corruption, while expressing the people's real conditions of life and their aspirations for a just society [4]. The lyrical protagonists of these women poets are portrayed as educated and intellectual women who openly protest against oppression, social inequality, and the lack of freedom. In the poetry of Muazzamxon, Nozimaxonim, and Mutriba,

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criticism is directed against laws and social norms that humiliated women and deprived them of their rights, while progressive intellectuals of society were called upon to support women's freedom and equality [5].

2. Materials and Methods

Mutriba was one of the prominent representatives of the literary milieu of the period. Alongside traditional poetic forms, her poetry also addressed historical and social themes. In particular, her poem devoted to the 1916 labor conscription events is of considerable significance. The poem dedicated to the events in Kattaqo'rg'on depicts the people's life under oppression and injustice, as well as their aspirations for freedom and a prosperous future.

Ey do'stlar na bo'ldi ahvoli Kattaqo'rg'on,
Tirqirab jumla xalqi, har qayda bo'ldi sarson.
Zulm aylabon Nikolay, tarqatdi elg'a farmon,
Shahar va qishloq qolmay yig'durdi otni chandon.

The poem presents the suffering of the population and the conditions of oppression in a dramatic manner. The ruler and his decrees function as symbols of tyranny and are associated with the political and social realities of the period. The figure of "Nikolay" refers to the Russian Emperor Nicholas II. In 1916, the Tsarist administration issued a decree mobilizing the population of Turkestan for rear-front labor service, which provoked widespread dissatisfaction among the local population. The poem emerged as a poetic reflection of these historical events and their impact on public consciousness.

According to Professor Qozoqboy Yo'ldosh, "Beginning from the second half of the nineteenth century, literature shifted from the traditional treatment of the relationship between God, man, and love toward the realities of everyday life... In the twentieth century, Uzbek literature became fully social literature. This tendency, first observed in the works of Komil, Muqimiy, Zavqiy, Furqat, and Avaz, later became one of the principal features of Jadid literature".

Tushdi el ichra g'avg'o, jam bo'ldi shahru sahro,
Yog'durdi o'q havodin, bir necha o'ldi ando.
Qamalda qancha odam, ming-ming desam erur kam,
Ketdi, shu ketganicha, bedomu bedarak ham.

In terms of its content and essence, this passage artistically reflects the severe socio-political conditions and collective tragedy of the population during the colonial period. It depicts the people's sense of protest, the state's armed violence, as well as the imprisonment and disappearance of innocent individuals in a dramatic manner. The poet illuminates reality through a strong emotional representation, revealing the violation of human dignity and honor as a consequence of oppression and injustice. The main ideological orientation of the passage is the portrayal of collective suffering, a spirit of resistance against oppression, and the inhumane nature of colonial policy.

In the history of classical Uzbek literature, the elegy (marsiya) is regarded as one of the key poetic forms expressing human psychology, life tragedies, and emotional suffering. Mutriba's elegy also embodies such a profound lyrical and philosophical content, in which the poet artistically interprets life's severe trials, separation, loneliness, and the complexity of human fate. In the work, personal grief is generalized and transformed into an aesthetic expression of human tragedy. The central theme of the poem is constituted by sorrow and unfulfilled desire in human life. The lyrical hero describes his life through concepts such as "a thousand pains," "grief," "sorrow," and "misfortune":

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Shod bo'lmay bul jahondin ming alam ko'rgan boshim,
Zor yig'lab, hasratu armon bilan to'lgan boshim,
Har zamon yuz ming baloga muftalo bo'lgan boshim,
Marsiya aytib, yozib, g'am birla ko'mulgan boshim,
O'Imaginga har kuni yuz ming rizo bergan boshim.

3. Results and Discussions

The lyrical experiences are artistically articulated in close connection with a tragic life experience. The poet conceptualizes life as an uninterrupted sequence of suffering, grief, and hardship, thereby highlighting the idea that human existence is inherently marked by severe trials. Hyperbolic expressions such as "a thousand pains" and "a hundred thousand calamities" intensify the semantic and emotional density of the text, indicating the vast scope of the depicted experiences [6]. The repeated use of the image "my head" functions to centralize individual suffering and underscores its direct grounding in lived experience. Dissatisfaction with life, psychological distress, and a sense of helplessness before fate emerge as the dominant thematic orientation of the passage [7].

Qavmu qardoshim va bir g'amxor yorim yo'q meni,
Arzu ahvolim so'rar pushtu panohim yo'q meni,
Munisim, sirdosh rozi mehribonim yo'q meni,
Misli bir devonadurman hech xayolim yo'q meni,
Uch go'dakning holidin hayronu sargardon boshim.

Life is interpreted as a complex of suffering and trials. The psychological state is expressed through intense pain and inner lamentation, thereby revealing a mood of dissatisfaction with fate [8]. The motif of loneliness and lack of support occupies a central position, as the absence of social and familial assistance further intensifies the lyrical experiences. Maternal anguish and issues related to the fate of children elevate personal experience to the level of a universal human tragedy. The poem reflects the tragic nature of human destiny, familial loss, and psychological suffering. Through instability of life, separation from loved ones, and loneliness, the text reveals the trial-filled essence of human existence. Individual experiences are elevated to a generalized level, producing a broad representation of human suffering [9]. The narrative is lyrical in character, with inner experiences expressed directly. Repetition and apostrophic forms intensify the psychological state, while the expression remains simple and structurally coherent [10]. Depictions involving parents, children, and close relatives illustrate the loss of familial support and the condition of existential solitude. The lyrical "I" occupies a central position, functioning as a unifying expression of emotional suffering. Hyperbole and repetition intensify the psychological state, broaden the scope of suffering, and enhance the expressiveness of the text [11].

Mutriba's poem "In Praise of My Teacher Hakima" is a lyrical work that foregrounds the themes of teacher-student relations, spiritual succession, and moral-ethical upbringing. The poet's profound respect, gratitude, and spiritual attachment to her teacher are expressed in a sincere tone. The content of the poem emphasizes the teacher's intellectual and scholarly maturity, her decisive role in the student's development, and her function as a spiritual guide. The teacher is depicted as a figure of wisdom and insight,

whose activity is interpreted as an intellectual force shaping the student's worldview [12]. The student, in turn, is portrayed in a spirit of loyalty, respect, and gratitude, expressing a sense of moral obligation toward the teacher. From a stylistic perspective, the poem employs simile and hyperbole to elevate the teacher's virtues to an idealized level. The tone of testament in the teacher's speech introduces a didactic dimension to the poem. Overall, the work represents an artistic expression of respect for teachers, reverence for knowledge, and the idea of moral perfection [13].

U piri shoirā—ustoz Hakima,
 Anga shogirdi sodiqman kamina.
 Anidek koʻr madim bir nuktadoni,
 Edi goʻyoki donishmand yunoniy.
 Yoshi saksonga yetgan olim erdi,
 Menga koʻp ilmu fanlar yod berdi.

In these lines, Mutriba evaluates her teacher Hakima as a perfect spiritual guide (piri i komil) and a highly accomplished creative figure. The teacher's designation as "nuktadon" signifies her subtle intellect and profound capacity for thought. She is also compared, in terms of wisdom, to the great scholars of ancient Greece, which highlights her exceptional intellectual and scholarly potential. Despite her advanced age, her continued engagement in scholarly and pedagogical activity, particularly in imparting knowledge to her student, occupies a significant place in the text [14]. The student's expression of loyalty reflects both moral reverence and spiritual-intellectual attachment to the teacher. Overall, this passage underscores the teacher's intellectual and ethical maturity while illuminating the spiritual essence of the pedagogical tradition.

Hakima's testament addressed to her student reveals the ethical and spiritual dimensions of the teacher-student relationship. In this context, the teacher, approaching the end of her life, expresses affection, prayer, and didactic counsel toward her student, which allows her to be interpreted as a morally perfected spiritual guide. The content of the testament emphasizes the student's health, the continuation of scholarly pursuit, and the importance of preserving the teacher's memory. Expressions such as "friend," "kind-hearted one," and "confidant" directed toward the student intensify the sense of emotional closeness and spiritual connection [15]. The text further emphasizes the teacher's scholarly and educational activity, noting her role in guiding the student toward knowledge and enlightenment. Through scholarly comparisons, her intellectual authority is represented at a high evaluative level. In the concluding section, the depiction of the teacher's death introduces an elegiac tone, thereby reinforcing the tragic dimension of the narrative. Overall, this section articulates, in an artistic and philosophical manner, the teacher's moral perfection, her testament to the student, and the continuity of intellectual and ethical heritage.

Yozib bir sheʻr menga ul yaxshi atvor,
 Vasiyat ayladi takror bisyor:
 — Ayo jonim qizim, boʻlgil salomat,
 Jahonda koʻr magil bir zarra ofat.
 Umidim bul erur, ey rohati jon,
 Davomat yod etgaysiz bu xizmat.

In the muxammases of Mutriba, the theme of love occupies a central position. In these works, love is presented as the primary factor determining the emotional state of the lover and is articulated through the depiction of inner psychological and affective experiences. The condition of love is interpreted as a force that influences all aspects of the lover's life. The representation of beauty is constructed through comparisons with elements of nature and celestial bodies, thereby expanding the scope of imagery and contributing to the generalization of meaning. Through this approach, experiences of love are elevated beyond an individual condition to a broader artistic interpretation. The lover's state develops through separation and suffering, with emotional experiences progressively intensifying. This reflects the extent to which love affects human destiny. Hyperbole and

simile function as primary artistic devices, enhancing the expressive power of the depiction, while repetition ensures structural coherence and rhythmic organization. Overall, the muxammases present the theme of love through a synthesis of emotional experience and artistic representation.

Love is further interpreted as a force that fundamentally transforms the human psychological state. For the individual afflicted by love, worldly criteria become secondary, while primary attention is directed toward the beloved. This condition reflects the strong influence of love on both cognitive and emotional systems. Love is portrayed simultaneously as an attractive and a suffering-inducing force. The mere act of seeing the beloved once is presented as sufficient to establish emotional attachment, indicating the rapid formation of love as a psychological and emotional phenomenon.

Kim ishq balosig'a agar bo'lsa giriftor,
Xoh o'lsa va yo quysa, na parvoyi sari bor,
Bir zolimi berahm, anga kim bo'lsa agar yor,
Bir ko'rmak ila boy berib ko'nglini, bo'lur zor,
Bo'ldi bir ajab xislat anga vojibi akbar.

4. Conclusions

The poetry of Mutriba illuminates social content through various literary forms and generalizes it in connection with the realities of its historical period. In the poem "On the Events of Kattaqo'rg'on", historical processes related to wartime conditions—such as forced mobilization, population displacement, economic pressure, and social instability—are represented as concrete aspects of reality. In the poem "To Bibi Khalifas", structural inequalities within society, illiteracy, and bureaucratic formalism are critically examined. In the elegy, the impact of social conditions on human life is expressed through motifs of loss, exile, and hardship. In "In Praise of My Teacher Hakima", educational and social relations are explored through the institution of mentorship and the educational process. Overall, Mutriba's literary output constitutes an artistic legacy in which the human psychological world and the social problems of the era are closely interrelated, and in which individual experiences are transformed into broader human and social interpretations.

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