

**LYRIC HERO IN CLASSICAL UZBEK POETRY:  
ARTISTIC IMAGE, SPIRITUAL-PHILOSOPHICAL  
CONTENT, AND LITERARY TRADITIONS**

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**Abstract:** *This article offers a comprehensive scholarly analysis of the formation, artistic function, and spiritual-philosophical essence of the lyric hero in classical Uzbek poetry. The study examines poetic works of the 15th–16th centuries, with particular attention to the genres of ghazal, rubaiyat, and masnavi. It argues that the lyric hero is not merely a bearer of romantic sentiment, but a complex artistic subject embodying the inner world of the individual, spiritual maturation, ethical stance, and the aspiration to comprehend divine truth.*

*Through a comparative analysis of the works of Alisher Navoi and Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, the distinctive features of the lyric hero are identified, and the reductionist approach equating the lyric hero with the author's personality is critically reconsidered. The study employs comparative-analytical, historical-typological, hermeneutic, and structuralist methods. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the development of the human concept in classical Uzbek poetry and propose updated theoretical approaches for teaching and interpreting classical literary texts.*

**Keywords:** *classical Uzbek poetry; lyric hero; artistic image; love and gnosis; spiritual-philosophical reflection; human concept; ghazal; rubaiyat; masnavi; author and lyric subject; Sufism.*

Classical Uzbek literature, particularly its poetic tradition, represents one of the highest achievements of Eastern literary thought. At the ideological and aesthetic center of this tradition stands the human being – their inner world, spiritual experience, relationship with society, and aspiration toward divine and mystical knowledge. Within this framework, the study of the lyric hero constitutes an essential scholarly problem.

In classical poetry, the lyric hero does not function simply as a projection of the poet’s personal identity. Rather, it emerges as an artistic construct that embodies specific aesthetic, philosophical, and spiritual positions. Across genres such as ghazal, rubaiyat, qasida, and masnavi, the lyric hero appears in diverse forms: as a suffering lover, a seeker of mystical perfection, a moral thinker advocating justice, and at times a socially engaged figure attentive to historical and communal realities.

In the context of globalization and the reassessment of national heritage, re-examining classical literature through contemporary theoretical methodologies becomes especially important. Despite existing scholarship, the problem of the lyric hero in classical Uzbek poetry has not yet received systematic and comprehensive treatment. Many studies tend either to equate the lyric hero directly with the author’s personal “self” or to interpret the hero primarily as an expression of romantic emotion [1].

However, in classical literature the lyric hero is a multilayered artistic image shaped by socio-historical realities, Sufi doctrine, Islamic ethical norms, and philosophical traditions. In the works of Alisher Navoi, for instance, the lyric hero embodies the individual progressing along the path of love and mystical perfection. In contrast, in Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur’s poetry, the lyric hero is more closely connected with historical experience, personal destiny, and patriotic sentiment [2].

The primary aim of this article is to analyze the formation, artistic function, and spiritual-philosophical meaning of the lyric hero in classical Uzbek poetry. To achieve this aim, the study addresses the following objectives:

- To clarify the theoretical foundations of the concept of the lyric hero;
- To examine the functions of the lyric hero across major classical genres;
- To identify the romantic, mystical, and social dimensions of the image;
- To conduct a comparative analysis of the lyric hero in selected classical poets' works.

Although scholars such as I. Haqqulov, N. Komilov, and A. Qayumov have addressed aspects of this issue [3], their research predominantly emphasizes Sufi interpretations. Meanwhile, Russian literary theorists including B. Tomashevsky, L. Ginzburg, and Y. Lotman developed a nuanced theory distinguishing the author from the lyric subject [4]. These theoretical frameworks, however, have not been sufficiently applied to classical Uzbek poetry.

This article therefore seeks to bridge that gap by integrating national literary traditions with modern theoretical approaches.

This study focuses on 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century poetic texts, particularly ghazals, rubaiyat, and masnavis. The works of Alisher Navoi and Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur serve as primary case studies for examining the artistic representation, inner experience, and philosophical orientation of the lyric hero.

The analysis demonstrates that the lyric hero in classical Uzbek poetry transcends the limited function of expressing romantic suffering. Instead, it constitutes a complex artistic subject striving for spiritual perfection and harmony with divine truth [1]. The hero also reflects ethical concerns, socio-moral dilemmas, and reflections on human destiny.

The research employs several methodological approaches:

- **Comparative-analytical method** – to identify similarities and differences in the representation of the lyric hero among poets;

- **Historical-typological approach** – to reveal the influence of cultural, historical, and spiritual contexts on the formation of the image [2];
- **Hermeneutic analysis** – to interpret symbolic and mystical layers;
- **Structuralist analysis** – to examine the internal organization of the poetic subject.

The object of the study consists of classical Uzbek poetic works, while the subject concerns the artistic structure and semantic content of the lyric hero.

The development of the lyric hero reveals a gradual evolution. In earlier stages, the hero appears primarily as a romantic lover. Over time, however, the image acquires deeper mystical and philosophical dimensions.

In Navoi's ghazals, the lyric hero ascends from the state of earthly lover to that of a mystic seeker. The hero embodies the ideal of spiritual purification and approaches the concept of the "perfect human" (insan al-kamil). In Babur's poetry, by contrast, the lyric hero is more closely interwoven with historical events, personal biography, exile, longing for homeland, and reflections on fate [3].

This transformation illustrates the progressive deepening of the human concept in classical Uzbek poetry and reflects the evolving relationship between individual and society.

The study also confirms that fully equating the lyric hero with the author lacks scientific validity. The lyric hero should be understood as an autonomous artistic construct that reflects the author's worldview in a generalized aesthetic form rather than as a direct autobiographical self-portrait [4].

Comparative engagement with Russian literary theory, particularly the works of L. Ginzburg and Y. Lotman, demonstrates that while theoretical distinctions between author and lyric subject are universal, the specific formation of the lyric hero in Uzbek

classical poetry is shaped by national cultural traditions, Islamic ethics, and Sufi metaphysics. This underscores the originality and scholarly relevance of the findings.

The study confirms that the lyric hero in classical Uzbek poetry constitutes a central aesthetic and spiritual-philosophical category. The lyric hero is a multilayered artistic image embodying romantic experience, inner spiritual development, ethical reflection, social awareness, and the pursuit of divine truth.

It has been demonstrated that the lyric hero cannot be fully identified with the author. Rather, it is a generalized artistic subject formed under the influence of socio-historical conditions, literary traditions, Sufi teachings, and philosophical thought. Interpretations reducing the lyric hero to the poet's personal "self" require critical reconsideration [1].

The evolution of the lyric hero—from a predominantly romantic lover to a spiritually and philosophically enriched subject—reflects the broader aesthetic development of classical Uzbek poetry. In Navoi's works, the hero symbolizes the striving for mystical perfection and embodies the ideal of the perfected human being. In Babur's poetry, the hero becomes a voice of historical consciousness, personal destiny, and patriotism [2].

### **Key Conclusions**

- The lyric hero in classical Uzbek poetry is an independent artistic construct expressing the author's worldview in generalized symbolic form;
- The image integrates themes of love, mysticism, ethics, social responsibility, and human destiny;
- The lyric hero performs distinct functions across genres (ghazal, rubaiyat, masnavi);
- The transformation of the lyric hero reflects the spiritual and aesthetic evolution of classical Uzbek poetry.

### **Recommendations**

1. The lyric hero should be treated as a distinct theoretical category in the systematic study of classical Uzbek poetry.

2. In higher education, special attention should be given to the concept of the lyric hero in order to deepen students' understanding of classical poetry as spiritual-philosophical discourse.

3. Future research should adopt a comparative literary perspective, examining the lyric hero in Uzbek classical poetry alongside Eastern and Western traditions to identify both universal and nationally specific features.

In conclusion, the study of the lyric hero remains a vital area of literary scholarship, contributing to a deeper understanding of national cultural heritage and spiritual thought. The theoretical and methodological conclusions presented here may serve as a foundation for further academic research.

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