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# SHAROF BOSHBEKOV DRAMATURGIYASIDA ZAMON VA INSON KONSEPSIYASINING BADIIY-FALSAFIY MEZONLARI

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**Annotatsiya.** Maqolada o‘zbek dramaturgiyasining yirik namoyandasi Sharof Boshbekov ijodida zamon va inson konsepsiyasining badiiy-falsafiy mezonlari tahlil qilinadi. Dramaturg ijodida zamon ikki planda — aniq tarixiy-ijtimoiy va falsafiy-umuminsoniy tarzda — namoyon bo‘lishi asoslanadi. “Temir xotin” dramasidagi Qo‘chqor va robot-ayol obrazlari misolida inson va texnika o‘rtasidagi ziddiyat, gumanistik qadriyatlarning ustuvorligi masalasi yoritiladi. Til mahorati, tragikomediya janri xususiyatlari va milliy hamda umuminsoniy mazmunning uyg‘unligi dramaturg badiiy uslubining o‘zagi sifatida ko‘rsatiladi. Tadqiqot Boshbekov ijodini yangi ilmiy-nazariy nuqtai nazardan baholashga xizmat qiladi.

**Kalit so‘zlar:** Sharof Boshbekov, zamon konsepsiyasi, inson konsepsiyasi, “Temir xotin”, tragikomediya, gumanizm, robot-ayol obrazi, xalq tili, badiiy-falsafiy mezon.

# ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННО-ФИЛОСОФСКИЕ КРИТЕРИИ КОНЦЕПЦИИ ВРЕМЕНИ И ЧЕЛОВЕКА В ДРАМАТУРГИИ ШАРАФА БОШБЕКОВА

**Аннотация.** В статье анализируются художественно-философские критерии концепции времени и человека в творчестве видного узбекского драматурга Шарафа Бошбекова. Обосновывается, что время в его произведениях проявляется в двух планах — конкретно-историческом и философско-общечеловеческом. На примере образов Кучкора и робота-женщины из драмы «Железная жена» раскрывается конфликт между человеком и техникой, приоритет гуманистических ценностей. Языковое мастерство драматурга, особенности жанра трагикомедии, гармония национального и общечеловеческого содержания рассматриваются как основа его художественного стиля. Исследование служит новой научно-теоретической оценке творчества Бошбекова.

**Ключевые слова:** Шараф Бошбеков, концепция времени, концепция человека, «Железная жена», трагикомедия, гуманизм, образ робота-женщины, народный язык, художественно-философский критерий.

# ARTISTIC AND PHILOSOPHICAL CRITERIA OF THE CONCEPT OF TIME AND MAN IN SHAROF BOSHBEKOV'S DRAMATURGY

**Abstract.** The article analyzes the artistic and philosophical criteria of the concept of time and man in the work of the prominent Uzbek playwright Sharof Boshbekov. It is argued that time in his plays appears on two levels — a concrete historical-social one and a philosophical-universal one. Using the images of Qo'chqor and the robot-wife from the play “Temir xotin” (Iron Wife), the article reveals the conflict between man and technology and the priority of humanistic values. The

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playwright's linguistic mastery, the features of the tragicomedy genre, and the harmony of national and universal content are shown as the core of his artistic style.

**Key words:** Sharof Boshbekov, concept of time, concept of man, “Temir xotin”, tragicomedy, humanism, robot-wife image, folk language, artistic-philosophical criterion.

**Introduction.** In the history of Uzbek dramaturgy, Sharof Boshbekov (1951–2022) occupies a distinctive, unparalleled place. His inside knowledge of stage art as an actor, and his subsequent work as a literary associate at the Writers' Union and the National Theatre, played a decisive role in his formation as a playwright. As the author of stage works such as “Tushov uzgan tulporlar”, “Eshik qoqqan kim bo‘ldi?”, “Temir xotin” and “Eski shahar gavroshlari”, he created his own school within national dramaturgy. In particular, the play “Temir xotin” was awarded the Maqsud Shaykhzoda State Prize in 1989 and the Hamza State Prize in 1990, bringing the playwright wide renown. At the same time, the artistic and philosophical criteria of the concept of time and man in Boshbekov's work have still not become the object of a holistic scholarly analysis in Uzbek literary studies, which determines the relevance of this article. The purpose of the article is to identify and substantiate the distinctive artistic-philosophical criteria of the concept of time and man in Boshbekov's dramaturgy.

**Research methodology.** The object of the study is Sharof Boshbekov's drama “Temir xotin” and the playwright's other works — “Eshik qoqqan kim bo‘ldi?”, “Tushov uzgan tulporlar” and “Eski shahar gavroshlari”. The historical-comparative method was used to study the playwright's work in the context of the development of Uzbek dramaturgy; the hermeneutic method, to uncover the philosophical layers of the literary text; and the typological method, to classify the system of characters and images. The method of psychological analysis of the literary text was also used to illuminate the inner contradictions within the protagonist's character.

**Results and discussion.** In Boshbekov's work the concept of time manifests itself on two levels. The first is concrete, historical-social time: “Temir xotin” was created at a complex moment when the crisis of Soviet society was deepening and the first winds of independence had only just begun to blow, depicting the life of an ordinary Uzbek village and the everyday existence and concerns of the working person as they arose from the realities of that period. The second is philosophical-universal time — the era of the profound changes taking place in human consciousness under conditions of scientific and technological progress. The core question of the work is this: instead of easing human life, does technology deprive it of its human essence, and can a machine take the place of compassion and conscience? This philosophical question has become even more relevant in the age of artificial intelligence.

The playwright's choice of protagonist is likewise no accident: as a rule his characters come from the ordinary strata of society — peasants, craftsmen. The image of Qo'chqor in “Temir xotin” is the most vivid expression of this concept. Qo'chqor is a simple peasant with his own idiosyncratic life philosophy; he often treats his wife Alomat roughly, repeatedly asserting the notion that “a woman's soul is made of iron.” It is precisely this flaw that leads him to dream of a tireless, uncomplaining robot-wife. Yet the playwright does not portray Qo'chqor one-dimensionally, but as a person who is at once comic, pitiable, guilty, and himself a victim: his attitude toward women is not personal malice but the product of a patriarchal consciousness shaped over centuries.

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In the course of the play, Qo'chqor's character undergoes an evolution. His experience with the robot makes him recognize the worth of a living, affectionate human being — a spiritual awakening for the character. The unfolding events show that no machine can take the place of a living person: the iron wife, for all her technical perfection, lacks human warmth and the capacity to feel the bitter and sweet of life. Symbolically, the iron robot ultimately cannot bear a woman's fate and burns down into a heap of metal — a profound artistic resolution expressing the playwright's idea of the primacy of human values. Through the image of the robot-wife, the playwright interprets the artificial woman as the material embodiment of a person's desire to escape his own responsibility and his debt of affection toward a living human being.

Boshbekov often creates his works in the genre of tragicomedy, in which comic and tragic beginnings are organically intertwined. This is not an accidental choice: tragicomedy is best suited to reflecting the contradictory, multilayered nature of life, and it was precisely this method that allowed the playwright to paint a spiritual portrait of the Soviet crisis period, since that era itself consisted of an absurd gap between lofty slogans and the bitter truth of everyday life. Boshbekov's tragicomedy differs both from Western absurdist theatre and from classical comedy — it is a national phenomenon rooted deeply in Uzbek folk comic culture and the traditions of askiya (verbal wit) and humor.

The question of language occupies a special place in Boshbekov's work. The playwright's linguistic mastery is almost unrivaled in Uzbek dramaturgy: his characters' speech is so natural and distinctive that each personage can be recognized purely by the manner of speaking. He skillfully employs proverbs, sayings, idioms, irony, and sarcasm, yet this linguistic mastery is never an end in itself — the playwright uses the richness of language not to display it, but to create character, develop conflict, and unfold his idea. Humanism forms the philosophical foundation of the concept of man: in every situation the playwright exalts human dignity and spiritual freedom, and he does not draw even his negative characters one-dimensionally, in purely dark tones.

The theme of the female image and women's fate comes to the fore in “Temir xotin”. Boshbekov depicts, with great compassion, the harsh and often unjust fate of the Soviet-era Uzbek woman: at the beginning of the play, through the image of a woman of thirty to thirty-five who looks considerably older than her years, he shows how endless labor and worry age a person prematurely. The central ideological conclusion of the work is that no machine can replace a woman's love and self-sacrifice. In Boshbekov's work, time and man are not set against each other but appear in a complex dialectical unity: man is the product of his own era while at the same time being an independent personality who passes moral judgment on it from the standpoint of higher values.

The concept of time and man in Boshbekov also left its mark on his work in cinema. Films such as “Ma'ruf va Sharif,” “Yuzsiz” (Faceless) and “Tilla bola” (Golden Child) continue the artistic-philosophical line of his stage works. Although the language of cinema differs from that of theatre, the playwright preserved his own style in this field as well: a deep analysis of human psychology, an artistic treatment of social and moral problems, and a harmony of national color with universal content. Whatever art form he worked in, he always placed the human being at the center of his inquiry. This versatility testifies that Boshbekov's concept of time and man rests on a single, coherent system of worldview.

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The artistic function of satire and irony in Boshbekov's work also deserves separate study. He skillfully employs irony, sarcasm, hyperbole, and the grotesque, yet his satire is never light or aimed merely at amusement — it is an exposing satire, full of social and moral content. His irony often serves as a means of conveying a bitter truth in a soft, artistic form. In assessing the contemporary significance of the playwright's work, his prescience deserves particular emphasis: when “Temir xotin” was created, artificial intelligence and robotics were nowhere near as developed as today, yet through his artistic intuition he foresaw, in advance, the most pressing question of technological progress — can a machine take the place of a human being?

The category of the aesthetic ideal also occupies a necessary place in understanding Boshbekov's work. The aesthetic ideal is the totality of a creator's conceptions of beauty, goodness, and truth, and Boshbekov's aesthetic ideal rests on values such as humanity, justice, compassion, and moral purity. He exalts these values not through pompous slogans but through living characters and lifelike situations. Although the playwright shows the bitter truths of life and moral crisis, his overall worldview is life-affirming: his characters, even when they err, retain the possibility of recognizing their mistake and rising morally. It is precisely this optimistic humanism that gives his work its light and hope.

The dialectic of the individual and society is one of the important facets of Boshbekov's work. The playwright never portrays his characters as isolated individuals cut off from society — they live within a particular social environment. Qo'chqor's attitude toward women, his dream of an “iron wife,” is not personal but social: the product of an entire system of patriarchal consciousness. The playwright analyzes how this collective consciousness both shapes and constrains a person, yet he also believes that a person can rise above and change morally from within it — this is his humanistic optimism. This dialectical approach also requires that artistic time in the playwright's work possess a multilayered nature: the first layer is the present moment unfolding directly on stage, the second is the past manifested through the characters' memories, and the third and most important layer is the philosophical-universal time of the work — the timeless, enduring significance of the issues raised, beyond any particular era. It is precisely because of this third layer that Boshbekov's works are not confined to any one period but resonate anew in every new age.

The symbolic-philosophical significance of artistic detail in the playwright's work also merits particular attention. He often expresses profound meanings through small, ordinary everyday details: every object, every detail in his works is not accidental — it serves either to reveal a character's nature or to deepen the idea. This power of detail is especially important for a dramatic work, since in drama the author lacks the possibility of extended description — in Boshbekov's hands, a simple detail can lay bare the essence of an entire era or of a character's inner state. Analyzing the system of characters is also important for understanding the playwright's concept: in “Temir xotin” other personages — the wife, the robot-wife, the villagers — are arranged around the protagonist Qo'chqor, each of them serving to reveal his character. Through the contradictions and relationships within the system of characters, the playwright expresses his idea in a multifaceted way.

Tradition and innovation appear in a harmonious synthesis in Boshbekov's work. On the one hand, he is deeply rooted in the traditions of folk oral art: the spirit of humor, the ironic style, and reliance on folk wisdom all draw nourishment from this source. On the other hand, he is a genuine

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innovator — he brought to Uzbek dramaturgy a new theme (the conflict between man and technology), a new solution (the image of the robot-wife), and new generic possibilities. This synthesis lends his work both national distinctiveness and contemporaneity. The playwright treats the national heritage with deep respect, yet he does not glorify it blindly — he subjects outdated aspects of national life that run counter to humanism, such as the unjust treatment of women, to criticism. It is precisely this critical-creative approach to the national heritage that reveals him as an enlightened creator and further deepens his concept of time and man.

Another important aspect of the playwright's art is showing the influence of the social environment on individual fate. In “Temir xotin” the village community actively intrudes into Qo'chqor's personal life: his family problem soon becomes the talk of the entire village. This communal oversight, on one hand, shows the solidarity of traditional society, but on the other, it also manifests itself as a mechanism of pressure on personal freedom. The playwright depicts both facets with equal skill, prompting the reader to arrive at his own final conclusion — this testifies to the democratic, non-dogmatic nature of Boshbekov's style.

A comparative perspective also yields useful results in studying the concept of time and man. The theme of man and technology, man and the artificial being, has also been raised in world dramaturgy by creators such as Karel Čapek and Isaac Asimov, but Boshbekov reworked this universal theme in an original way on the basis of Uzbek national life, the system of family relations, and folk philosophy. His solution is not technological-fantastical but has a deeply national-psychological character: the idea that a machine cannot replace a human being also resonates with ancient Eastern philosophical conceptions of the relationship between man and the cosmos, soul and body.

The significance of Boshbekov's dramaturgy for contemporary Uzbek literary studies also lies in the fact that he reveals the concept of time and man not as an abstract philosophical category, but through the daily life of every ordinary person, through their small joys and worries. This approach is close to what literary studies calls the “poetics of everyday life,” and it testifies to the playwright's ability to portray man not as a grand hero but as an ordinary, familiar person who nonetheless possesses a profound inner world.

One notable aspect in analyzing the concept of time is the playwright's organization of events not in linear but in associative fashion. Qo'chqor's memories, dreams, and present-day events intermingle within the stage space, which makes the notion of time even more complex and multilayered. Such associative composition is a vivid example of what contemporary drama theory calls “inner time,” serving to show the discrepancy between a character's objective, calendar time and his subjective, psychological time.

Yet another important facet of the concept of man in Boshbekov's work is the question of labor and its effect on human dignity. The daily labor of Qo'chqor and Qumri, and its exhausting monotony, occupy a large place in the work, showing the playwright's deep respect for the working person. At the same time, he also shows that labor can exhaust a person and dull his feelings, raising the question of the delicate balance between labor and humanity. This question lies precisely at the intersection of the concept of time and the concept of man, since working conditions are largely determined by the socio-economic features of an era.

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Another element in the playwright's concept of man is the idea of overcoming pain through laughter. Boshbekov's characters do not abandon humor even under harsh living conditions, which shows their inner strength and resilience toward life. This trait is characteristic of the Uzbek national mentality, and by instilling it in his characters the playwright artistically reinforces an important facet of the national character. Laughter here is not merely a comic effect but appears as a person's strategy for resisting harsh circumstances.

It is also useful to compare Boshbekov's dramaturgy with the prose works of his contemporaries — writers such as Abdulla Qahhor and Said Ahmad — in all of whom the life of the ordinary person, with its small worries and joys, occupies a central place. But Boshbekov, using the specific possibilities of the dramatic genre, unfolds this theme in his own distinctive way through stage devices — dialogue, action, stage directions. This comparative perspective allows for a more precise determination of Boshbekov's place within the general development of Uzbek literature.

In studying the concept of time in Boshbekov's work, the question of the conflict between urbanization and rural life also occupies an important place. Although the events of “Temir xotin” take place in a village, the image of the robot-wife symbolically expresses the intrusion of urban-technological civilization into rural life. This clash of two worlds — traditional village life and modern technological civilization — constitutes yet another important layer in the playwright's concept of time and raises the work above the level of a mere family drama to that of a work addressing a broad socio-cultural problem.

In analyzing the concept of man, the relationship between the motifs of childhood and adulthood is also noteworthy. In certain of Qo'chqor's actions, particularly his capriciousness and stubbornness, a childlike simplicity is preserved, which allows the playwright to present the complex problems of the adult world in a simplified yet at the same time profound form. Such a “childlike” trait of character makes the protagonist closer and more comprehensible, and at the same time, tragic.

The need to reassess Boshbekov's legacy from the standpoint of contemporary Uzbek literary studies also arises from the fact that, in the era of independence and digital technology, the ideas in his “Temir xotin” are becoming ever more relevant: contemporary phenomena such as artificial intelligence, robotics, and virtual relationships can be seen as a continuation of problems artistically foreseen by the playwright nearly forty years ago.

As a preliminary conclusion, it should be particularly emphasized that studying the concept of time and man in Boshbekov's work opens the possibility of new lines of research at the intersection not only of literary studies, but also of philosophy, cultural studies, and even the philosophy of technology, which shows that the topic holds great potential for future research.

Studying Boshbekov's work in a broad philosophical-cultural context shows that his views on time and man also resonate with conceptions of “man's place in the universe” found in classical Eastern philosophy. In particular, the problem of “soul and body,” “spirit and matter,” raised through the image of the robot-wife, is also directly connected with Sufi philosophical conceptions of man's dual — material and spiritual — nature. This aspect shows the need to analyze Boshbekov's dramaturgy not only in a contemporary light, but also from the standpoint of the national philosophical heritage.

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As a final generalization, it should be noted that the concept of time and man in Sharof Boshbekov's dramaturgy is not a static, one-time phenomenon, but a dynamic artistic-philosophical system that continually develops, revealing new layers with every new reading. This quality ensures that his work remains a long-term, multifaceted object of scholarly research in Uzbek literary studies for a long time to come.

From the standpoint of studying Boshbekov's linguistic legacy, his principle of using dialectal words deserves separate research: the playwright uses words and expressions characteristic of the Fergana Valley dialect to lend his characters local color, while at the same time using them in a way comprehensible in the common literary language, ensuring that his work is accessible to a broad audience. This language policy testifies to the playwright's mastery in maintaining a delicate balance between the national dialect and the common literary language.

Rereading the concept of time and man from the standpoint of feminist literary studies is likewise a promising direction: although the female image — Qumri — does not occupy a central place in the work, through her silently endured suffering and voiceless labor the playwright also indirectly raises the problem of the social “invisibility” of the Soviet-era Uzbek woman. A deeper study of this layer from the standpoint of contemporary gender studies would further enrich the meaning of the work.

Summarizing the analyses presented above, it can be stated that the concept of time and man in Boshbekov's work appears as a multilayered, multifaceted system that simultaneously embodies both concrete historical-social reality and philosophical-universal problems. This quality marks the playwright's work as a distinctive, unparalleled phenomenon in the history of Uzbek literature and preserves it as an inexhaustible source for future research.

**Conclusion.** The analysis conducted shows that in Sharof Boshbekov's dramaturgy the concept of time and man appears in an inseparable dialectical unity. In the playwright's work, time is expressed on two levels — concrete historical-social and philosophical-universal — while the concept of man emerges through the harmony of humanism, the richness of the national language, and the tragicomic style. The image of the robot-wife in “Temir xotin” should be evaluated as a prescient artistic find that allows the conflict between man and technology to be reread today from the standpoint of the age of artificial intelligence. The harmony of national color with universal content in Boshbekov's work turns his dramaturgy into an artistic phenomenon relevant not only to its own era, but to any age.

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