

The Principle of Sociality in Defining the Genre of a Historical Work of Art

Mamatvaliev Mukhammad Kuymurodovich

Independent researcher at Namangan State University, Uzbekistan

Received: 17 March 2026; **Accepted:** 05 April 2026; **Published:** 30 April 2026

Abstract: This article provides a scientific and theoretical analysis of the role of the principle of sociality in defining the genre of a work of art on a historical theme. Specifically, the criteria for determining genres within the dramatic form are re-examined using the example of Makhsud Shaykhzoda's work "Jaloliddin Manguberdi." The study argues that the work belongs to the genre of drama, not tragedy, based on the character of its social reality, the nature of its conflict, and the relationship between historical truth and artistic invention. Additionally, existing views in literary criticism are critically analyzed, and it is substantiated that the protagonist's fate and social turning points are decisive factors in defining the genre.

Keywords: Historical work, principle of sociality, drama, tragedy, dramatic conflict, tragicism, historical truth, artistic invention, genre theory, Makhsud Shaykhzoda.

Introduction: The issue of defining the genre of historical works of art is one of the important theoretical problems in literary criticism. Particularly in works of the dramatic form, social reality, the nature of the conflict, and the protagonist's fate emerge as decisive factors in determining the genre.

In prevailing scholarly views, historical works are often classified based on the tragic or dramatic nature of their events. However, in some cases, these criteria are not sufficiently substantiated, which results in the misinterpretation of a work's true genre. The debates surrounding Makhsud Shaykhzoda's "Jaloliddin Manguberdi" serve as a clear example of this.

The purpose of this research is to determine the role of the principle of social context in defining the genre of a historical work and to re-evaluate the genre features of "Jaloliddin Manguberdi" on a scholarly basis.

METHODOLOGY

The following methods were utilized in the research process:

- The historical-comparative method was used to identify the differences between historical events and their artistic interpretation.
- Analysis and synthesis were used to

systematize scholarly views on dramatic genres (drama, tragedy, comedy).

- A hermeneutic approach was used to interpret the work from the perspective of the author's position and the demands of the era.

Additionally, the theoretical views of V.G. Belinsky, Aristotle, and modern literary scholars served as the methodological foundation.

RESULTS

Among the masterpieces of world and Uzbek literature, there are works on historical themes. In some of these, a specific social period and the protagonist's life are depicted in detail. In others, only a certain stage of the social period and the protagonist's life is illuminated. This creative approach plays a crucial role in determining the genre of a historical work. In literary studies, works of art that fully depict the landscape of a social period and the life of the protagonist are often considered novels. In contrast, works of art that illuminate a particular stage of a social period and the protagonist's life are classified as novellas. When distinguishing dramaturgy and its genres, special attention is also paid to these aspects, as well as to the nature of the social event. Genres are defined based on whether the event is tragic, comic, or dramatic in

character.

In determining the genre of a literary work on a historical theme, significant social and domestic changes related to the lives and activities of the main characters play an influential role. For instance, the events of 1447-1449 are selected for Makhshud Shaykhzoda's tragedy, "Mirzo Ulughbek." The tragedy features the character of Mirzo Ulughbek's mother, Gavharshodbegim. However, the character of his father, Shohruh Mirzo, does not appear among the cast. This is because the events in the tragedy occur after the death of Shohruh Mirzo, and the historical reality that unfolds over those two years plays a tragic role in Mirzo Ulughbek's fate. The crisis of the Ashtarkhanid dynasty, the death of Abulfayz Khan, and the rise of the Manghit dynasty to the throne form the main theme of Abdurauf Fitrat's tragedy, "Abulfayz Khan." For both tragedies, the tragic events that befell the main characters were chosen. The crisis or historical turning point in the social reality, and the downfall of both historical figures, defines "Mirzo Ulughbek" and "Abulfayz Khan" as belonging to the tragedy genre.

When determining the genre of the drama "Jaloliddin Manguberdi," literary scholars fail to consider this very aspect, and the work is groundlessly classified as a tragedy. Before expressing our own view on these opinions, we deemed it necessary to briefly touch upon what should be considered when defining the genres of drama in general, and their most important characteristics. Although this issue is covered in detail in the relevant scholarly literature, the problems in determining the genre of the drama "Jaloliddin Manguberdi" have necessitated shedding light on this topic. V. G. Belinsky emphasizes that the main feature of the dramatic genre is the dominance of man and the manifestation of everything through his actions. In our opinion, this feature should be taken as the reference point when defining its genres. If a person finds himself in living conditions or among people unworthy of their character (i.e., base), their actions provoke laughter. Eventually, they too become one of them. This is comedy. In a drama, however, people who are worthy of each other in every respect interact. As a result, a powerful dramatic situation occurs, as the saying goes, "two rams' heads cannot boil in one pot." Life, however, places demands on the tragic hero that are contrary to his nature. These insurmountable demands play a tragic role in his life. V. G. Belinsky explains the cause of Hamlet's tragic internal conflict as follows: "...This struggle is the result of two hostile forces, namely the duty that compels him to avenge his father's death and his personal inability to take revenge. This is the tragic collision!" [3.148] His words,

"Even if blood, corpses, daggers, and poison are not the usual attributes of tragedy, its consequence is always the destruction of the heart's most precious hopes, the loss of a lifetime's happiness," [3.194] convey the essence of true tragedy. [3.148] His "Even if blood, corpses, dagger, poison are not the usual qualities of tragedy, its consequence is always the destruction of the heart's most precious hopes, the loss of all life's happiness."

Now, let us turn to the question of the genre of "Jaloliddin Manguberdi." It is well-known that the fates of major historical figures are fraught with profound contradictions. In their actions, dramatic, tragic, and comic elements often intertwine. However, no individual's fate consists solely of one of these. Only at a particular moment does one of these three conditions become prominent, and this situation forms the basis for a drama, tragedy, or comedy. Therefore, it is impossible to present a complete picture of a person's fate within the dramatic genre. Proceeding from these ideas, it is more appropriate to call "Jaloliddin Manguberdi" a drama rather than a tragedy. This is because, although some tragic events occurred during the period of Jaloliddin's life on which the drama is based, they did not escalate into a true catastrophe. His entire tragedy begins after the battle on the bank of the Indus River. Historical sources attest to this, and an author has no right to alter it. There was also a social imperative for Shayxzoda to write a drama, not a tragedy. The Second World War was raging. In such circumstances, it would be illogical to present the fate of a glorious national hero in a tragic light to a people whose hearts were already broken by terrible calamities, a people longing for a single kind word. In the 1945 collection "Armug'on" [10.126], as well as in articles published in the "Khizil Uzbekistan" newspaper at that time, "Jaloliddin Manguberdi" is presented as a historical-romantic drama. For instance, Sora Eshonto'rayeva writes in her article "The Creative Path of Our Theater": "In the final years of its 25-year history, the Hamza Theater has worked on several complex, original historical dramas imbued with powerful dramatic pathos and of high artistic quality. Among these are Hamid Olimjon's drama "Mukhanna," Shayxzoda's historical-romantic drama "Jaloliddin," and our historical work "Navoiy" (a work by Uyghun and Izzat Sulton), which is currently being staged." [6] Hamid Ghulom also corroborates this conclusion in his article "The Academic Theater During the Days of the Patriotic War": "The second original historical work staged by the Hamza Theater was the historical-romantic drama "Jaloliddin" by the poet Shayxzoda. This drama depicts a truly dramatic event from the distant past of the Uzbek people - their struggle against

the Mongol invaders." [5] Furthermore, on the theater posters published on the back page of the 1945 issues of the "Khizil Uzbekistan" newspaper, it is clearly stated that "Jaloliddin Manguberdi" is a historical-romantic drama in five acts and nine scenes. ("Khizil Uzbekistan" newspaper, December 24, 1944, December 26; January 13, 1946, January 21, January 27, October 1, October 9). However, literary criticism, in contrast to existing sources, strives to prove that "Jaloliddin Manguberdi" is a tragedy, and in the contemporary Uzbek literary milieu, the genre of "Jaloliddin Manguberdi" has been popularized as a tragedy. In particular, this is especially evident in the scholarly research of Academician Naim Karimov and Professor Berdiali Imomov.

Literary scholar Berdiali Imomov's conclusions on this matter are as follows: "In fact, the essence of the material in "Jaloliddin Manguberdi," the tragic nature of the character and the conflict, and the tragic idea that permeates the entire work's action provide full grounds to call it a tragedy." [2.68] Subsequently, the Khwarazmshah's mistake, the conflict among the emirs, the death of Timur Malik, and the feelings awakened in Jaloliddin under their influence are presented as elements of tragedy, while the death of Nasavi, the Mother throwing herself into the river, and the defeat of Jaloliddin's troops are identified as the culmination of this tragedy.

An analysis of the play's text reveals that one cannot agree with these ideas. For this, it is enough to touch upon one of the events that scholar B. Imomov called the high point of the tragedy. At the end of the play, there is an episode where the Mother throws herself into the river. According to historical truth, she is thrown into the river on Jaloliddin's order. So, why did the playwright alter it? Firstly, he considered the audience and Jaloliddin, whom they had come to love, and did not want to cast a shadow on his character. Secondly, if he had done so, his entire intention would have been ruined - a powerful dramatic situation would have turned into a tragedy, meaning the people could not have accepted a man who threw his own mother into the river as a hero. For this reason, the playwright skillfully distorts historical truth, but only out of necessity for the drama. It is a historical fact that Jaloliddin's mother, Oychechak Khatun, drowned in the river. The playwright does not distort this historical fact; rather, he changes the event that leads to this outcome. In the play, the mother throws herself into the river. The alteration of historical truth in the interpretation of Timur Malik's character was also carried out with similar intentions.

It is known from historical sources that after the brutal battle on the banks of the Indus River, Jaloliddin Manguberdi's six- or seven-year-old son was taken

captive and executed by Genghis Khan. Makhsud Shayxzoda made creative use of this specific information; namely, in his drama, it is not Jaloliddin Manguberdi's son but Timur Malik's son, Donishmand, who is killed by order of Genghis Khan. For an incomparable warrior, great commander, and statesman, losing his mother and child is a truly tragic event. Makhsud Shayxzoda's main goal was not to write a tragedy but rather a heroic drama on a historical theme, and thus he consciously avoids the real-life tragedies associated with Jaloliddin Manguberdi's persona, depicting these two situations differently in the drama. Academician Naim Karimov, also supporting Berdiali Imomov's views, emphasizes in his educational-biographical novel on Makhsud Shayxzoda that the drama "Jaloliddin Manguberdi" belongs to the genre of tragedy, explaining his reasoning as follows: "Any tragedy ends with the death of the main character. In this work, the main character, Jaloliddin, perishes in an unequal struggle" [4.128]. It is known to every reader and researcher that Jaloliddin Manguberdi does not die in the drama. Naim Karimov, however, reasons this way for some reason and, based on this conclusion, asserts that "Jaloliddin Manguberdi" belongs to the genre of tragedy.

It is well-known that the foundational principles of the tragedy genre were first established in Aristotle's "Poetics." Existing scholarly research on the tragedy genre in literary studies is based on the conclusions presented in this work. In Uzbek literary studies, for instance, Mahkam Mahmudov and Abdulla Ulugov have presented their views on the tragedy genre, drawing upon the conclusions in "Poetics." Abdulla Ulugov, in particular, elaborates on the characteristics of the tragedy genre, citing Makhsud Shaykhzoda's drama "Jaloliddin Manguberdi" as an example. [9.41] However, researchers overlook the following crucial characteristic of tragedy noted in "Poetics": "For the plot of the best tragedy should not be simple but complex, and one that represents incidents arousing fear and pity - for this is the distinctive function of this kind of imitation. It follows, therefore, in the first place, that good men should not be shown passing from prosperity to adversity, for this is not fearful or pitiable but odious" [8.26]. (Because this feature is a specific feature of artistic depiction).

If the drama "Jaloliddin Manguberdi" is viewed through the lens of these conclusions, everything becomes clear. Indeed, the protagonist of the drama does not evoke fear and pity - emotions inherently tied to tragedy - in the viewer or reader. On the contrary, Jaloliddin's fervent words, imbued with a spirit of faith in the future, inspire the audience and reader, urging them toward life-affirming goals. One of the main

features of a tragedy is an unexpected turn of events caused by the protagonist's error. In the drama "Jaloliddin Manguberdi," the events take a dramatic turn due to the mistake of Muhammad Khwarazmshah. Jaloliddin, however, strives to correct this mistake. In other words, the passion, spirit, and mood in the drama "Jaloliddin Manguberdi" do not align with the characteristics of tragedy as described in "Poetics."

Conclusions from other scholarly and theoretical sources also support our view that "Jaloliddin Manguberdi" is not a tragedy, but a historical work belonging to the genre of drama: "In tragedy, the world order, in the form of values and traditions, creates a conflict within the hero's consciousness against their personal inclinations, desires, and aspirations. The dramatic hero, on the other hand, perceives the values of opposing forces as the values of another and cannot accept them. Accordingly, dramatic conflict, unlike tragic conflict, is not an irreconcilable contradiction; it is distinguished by the existence of possibilities for resolution. In drama, guilt and error are not understood as an irreparable tragedy or crime, as they are in tragedy; in drama, errors and faults are also necessary for the hero to draw lessons from the conflicts they experience. Therefore, in drama, the author often leaves the hero at the beginning of a new path." [1:96-97]

The following conclusion from literary scholar Uzoq Jurakhulov's specialized study on the drama genre is in harmony with the considerations presented in the aforementioned source: "In a true drama, one of the main conditions is that the conflict between the environment and the character must stem from the foundation of national ethics. In that case, neither the truth of life nor the truth of the plot formed on this basis will be compromised. Otherwise, historical and national truth, and therefore artistic truth, will also be undermined." [7.57] At the drama's conclusion, Makhsud Shayxzoda summons Jaloliddin Manguberdi toward a new horizon of hopes and dreams, and he speaks of grand ideas in an optimistic spirit. Today, the line "Kim yurtidan yovni quvsa, mendirman o'shal" ("Whoever drives the enemy from their homeland, I am the one"), sung in Ozodbek Nazarbekov's performance, inspired and filled the hearts of our compatriots, particularly Uzbek soldiers, with high romantic sentiments amid the tumultuous events of the Second World War. Furthermore, the author artistically proves Jaloliddin Manguberdi's righteousness within the dramatic conflict, and before the eyes of the reader and viewer, the main character rises as a combative figure preparing for new struggles.

CONCLUSION

The analysis has determined that the following criteria are important in defining the genre of a historical dramatic work:

1. The nature of social reality - what form a historical turning point, crisis, or contradiction takes;
2. The nature of the conflict - whether it is resolvable or irresolvable;
3. The fate of the main character - whether they meet a tragic end or the struggle continues;
4. The ending of the work - whether it is pessimistic or optimistic in spirit.

Based on these criteria, the work "Jaloliddin Manguberdi" was analyzed, and the following conclusions were reached:

- Although the work contains tragic elements, they are not decisive;
- The conflict does not lead to an unsolvable tragedy, but rather to the continuation of the struggle;
- The protagonist does not perish and preserves his fighting spirit;
- The conclusion of the work is imbued with an optimistic spirit.

Therefore, it has been scientifically substantiated that classifying the work as a drama, rather than a tragedy, is justified.

In literary criticism, the interpretation of "Jaloliddin Manguberdi" as a tragedy relies more on certain tragic episodes within the events. However, the fundamental requirement of the tragedy genre - the inevitable tragic end to the hero's fate - is not observed in this work.

As Aristotle noted, a tragedy should evoke fear and pity and lead the hero from happiness to misery. In "Jaloliddin Manguberdi," on the contrary, the spirit of struggle, willpower, and hope dominate the hero's character. Furthermore, the period in which the work was created - the years of the Second World War - also influenced its genre characteristics. The social demand of the time necessitated the creation of a dramatic work that reflected a spirit of heroism. For this reason, the author interprets historical truth not in its entirety, but in a manner consistent with artistic purpose.

Thus, in determining the genre, it is necessary to consider not only the plot but also the social context and the author's intent.

REFERENCES

1. Quronov D., Mamajonov Z., Sheraliyeva M. Dictionary of Literary Studies. - Tashkent: Akademnashr, 2013. - 409 p.
2. Imomov B. Tragedy and Character. Tashkent: Gafur Gulom Publishing House of Literature and Art,

1977. - 176 p.

3. Belinsky V.G. Selected Works. - Tashkent: Uzdnashr, 1955. - 512 p.
4. Karimov N. Makhsud Shaykhzoda. - Tashkent: Sharq, 2010. - 336 p.
5. Gulam H. The Academic Theater During the Patriotic War. / "Khizil Uzbekistan" newspaper, March 18, 1945.
6. Eshonturayeva S. The Creative Path of Our Theater. / "Khizil Uzbekistan" newspaper, March 14, 1945.
7. Joraqulov U. Issues of Theoretical Poetics. - Tashkent: Gafur Gulom Publishing and Printing Creative House, 2015. - 356 p.
8. Aristotle. Poetics. - Tashkent: Literature and Art Publishing House, 1980. - 152 p.
9. Ulugov A. Literature as Explained by Aristotle. Tashkent: Muharrir Publishing House, 2022. - 236 p.
10. Armughon. Literary and Artistic Collection. Tashkent, Uzbekistan State Publishing House - 1944. - 192 p.