



CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF LITERARY WORKS CREATED DURING THE WAR YEARS (1941–1945)

Hayitov Shavkat Ahmadovich

Professor of the Department of Uzbek Language and Literature, Bukhara State
University, Doctor of Philological Sciences (DSc)

ORCID 0000-0002-4290-6071

Boymurodova Munisa Bobomurodovna

1st-year Master's student in Literary Studies, specializing in Uzbek Literature,
Bukhara State University

Annotation: At a specific stage in history (1941–1945), the novels Navoiy and The Path of Abai (Abay yo‘li) reflected the comprehensive panorama of an entire nation’s life—its economic, social, cultural, spiritual, and psychological dimensions. In the plot structures of these works, not only the protagonists and their immediate circles are depicted, but also representatives of various social strata of the people.

In the Uzbek writer Oybek’s Navoiy and the Kazakh author Mukhtar Auezov’s epic novel The Path of Abai, the characters’ activities, psychology, and life paths are revealed in close connection with the dialectics of the historical period and its dominant ideological currents. The article discusses the literary scholar G. Murodov’s comparative study of these two major works and evaluates the scientific significance of his research.

Key words: Oybek; Mukhtar Auezov; Navoiy; The Path of Abai (Abay yo‘li); genre specificity; plot structure; novel-epopee; chronotope; artistic time; artistic space.

In literary studies, the literature of the war period (1941–1945) is examined as a distinct stage in the literary and artistic process. The same principle can also be observed in the research of Doctor of Philological Sciences G. Murodov. According to the scholar, while the novels and dramas of the 1920s focused primarily on fragmentation and the decline of feudal states, works created during the war years devoted considerable attention to heroic scenes from history. In works belonging to epic and dramatic genres, the people who rose up against invaders and their leaders were portrayed as the main characters. The tendency to explore the past through artistic representation grew stronger, and the range of themes related to the past expanded. The war influenced all types and genres of literature, as well as their thematic scope and characters. It determined the psychological and social spirit of the period, its atmosphere, and the structure of literary works. National heroes from history entered literary works, and the artistic characters created in the genres of epic and drama embodied, in their personalities and actions, the leading qualities characteristic of the people. A new spirit and new heroes entered literature.



Amid the turmoil of war and the waves of patriotism, the aspiration to liberate the homeland, the nation, national values, and freedom from the enemy became the artistic spirit of literature.

Expressing the ideas highlighted above required the scholar to undertake extensive and painstaking research. To provide a clearer picture, we consider it appropriate to mention here some of the many works that G. Murodov studied and examined comparatively. Among the works created in Uzbek prose and drama were the play *Alisher Navoi* by Uygun and Izzat Sultan and Oybek's novel *Navoi*. According to the scholar, in these works, Alisher Navoi was portrayed primarily as a statesman. This was a characteristic feature of the literature of the war period (1941–1945).

Oybek's Mahmud Tarobiy, Maqsud Shaykhzoda's Jaloliddin Manguberdi, and Hamid Olimjon's Muqanna, among other works...

The first volume of the novel *Abai* by the Kazakh writer Mukhtar Auezov, the drama *Magtymguly* by the Turkmen writer Berdi Kerbabayev, and the historical and literary essays *The Muqanna Uprising* and *Temur Malik – a Hero of the Tajik People* by the distinguished scholar Sadriddin Ayni are also among these works. In these works, Ayni portrayed the tragic and heroic stages of Central Asian history.

G. Murodov is a scholar who objectively evaluates each literary work and every literary phenomenon on the basis of its external and internal essence. This characteristic of the scholar is also evident in his clear assessment of the works mentioned above: "In it, one can also discern the dogmas and criteria of 'socialist realism', which had already taken shape in the 1930s, its class and party-based attitude towards human beings and life, its 'revolutionary pathos', and its propagandistic and agitational spirit" [9, 84].

The scholar noted that in a number of plays created in Uzbek, Tajik, and Kyrgyz literature, the characters of folklore genres such as fairy tales, epics, and legends were ideologically and artistically reworked and incorporated into written literature. He also emphasized that, during 1941–1945, the tradition of portraying the artistic landscape of the war years through folklore themes and characters developed further. In this regard, the scholar drew readers' attention to works by the following authors.

These include the musical drama *Tahir and Zuhra* by the Uzbek playwright Sobir Abdulla; *Kurmanbek* by the Kyrgyz playwright K. Jontoshev; the play *Janyl* by K. Malikov and A. Quttiboyev; and the musical-dramatic poem *Tahir and Zuhra* by the Tajik poet Mirzo Tursunzoda.

During the war years, greater attention was devoted to portraying peasants, artisans, and soldier-warriors, and their lives and psychological and spiritual worlds began to be represented more fully within the development of the plot. According to



G. Murodov, explaining this phenomenon solely through the requirements of “socialist realism” would amount to a superficial assessment of the history of the literary and artistic process. Rather, it was a literary phenomenon that emerged from the creative development and enrichment of artistic experience, which had occupied a certain place in the works of the classical masters of twentieth-century world literature, and was nourished by universal human thought.

Recognizing documentary authenticity and the principle of relying on reliable sources when depicting the lives of historical figures and events of the past as one of the important characteristics of historical literature during the war years, the scholar includes Oybek’s novel *Navoi* and Mukhtar Auezov’s novel-epic *The Path of Abai* among the works that represented significant milestones in the development of twentieth-century historical prose.

The major epic works *The Path of Abai* and *Navoi*, which emerged as outstanding examples of Central Asian novel writing and embodied the positive traditions of world realist prose, share a number of common features that G. Murodov perceptively identified in his research.

These features are as follows:

1. *Navoi* and *The Path of Abai* were created during the same stage of the literary process, namely the war period (1941–1945).
2. Both works belong to the historical-biographical novel as a form of artistic prose.
3. Oybek’s novel portrays A. Navoi, a prominent figure in Uzbek national history, culture, and literature, while M. Auezov’s novel-epic creates the image of Abai Qunanbayev, a major historical figure who occupied a central place in Kazakh cultural and intellectual life.
4. Both Oybek and M. Auezov selected historical figures who held a special place in the history of their respective peoples and portrayed their characters, along with the broader historical landscapes of the periods in which they lived, in accordance with the principles of historical authenticity.
5. In both major works, public-spirited statesmen were chosen as the protagonists.

In our view, another important contribution of G‘ayrat Murodov’s research lies in its examination of literary texts and the processes involved in their creation. Applying this criterion to the study of the textual history of literary works has yielded the expected results. It has also enhanced the literary-aesthetic and scholarly value of the researcher’s studies.

Drawing on the works of researchers who have studied *The Path of Abai*, such as E. V. Lizunova (Lizunova, Z. V. *The Modern Kazakh Novel*. Almaty, 1964), the scholar establishes that M. Auezov began preparing to write a novel about Abai in





1930. He collected information about the life and work of the poet, educator, and statesman. In creating the novel, Mukhtar Auezov relied primarily on the memoirs of Abai's contemporaries and the poet's literary legacy. The absence of written sources concerning the history of the Kazakhs, who had lived as nomads or semi-nomads in the past, created difficulties for the writer. Nevertheless, he succeeded in portraying both the historical period to which Abai belonged and the protagonist himself in a comprehensive manner.

Like M. Auezov, Oybek began preparing to write his novel in the 1930s. Unlike Auezov, Oybek had access to historical documents, treatises, and memoirs concerning Navoi and the period in which he lived. G. Murodov refers to dozens of sources, including Zayniddin Vosifi's *Badoe ul-vaqoe*, Mirkhond's *Ravzat us-safo*, Khvandamir's *Makorim ul-akhloq* and *Habib us-siyar*, and Z. M. Babur's *Baburnama*. Just as the author of the novel was thoroughly familiar with the works of the aforementioned writers, the researcher examining the novel also studied these sources meticulously. Without a thorough understanding of these additional sources, it is impossible to analyze the novel *Navoi* properly.

Oybek's research into the biography and literary legacy of Alisher Navoi, as well as his narrative poem *Navoi*, written in 1937, constituted an important preparatory stage in the creation of the novel *Navoi*.

To portray the life of an entire people and the economic, social, cultural, spiritual, and psychological landscape of society during a specific historical period, the plot structures of the novels *Navoi* and *The Path of Abai* incorporate not only the protagonists and those directly connected with them but also characters representing various social strata of the population.

Although both novels belong to the historical-biographical form of artistic prose, they also draw extensively on the artistic experience of *Bygone Days* (*O'tgan kunlar*), a novel that portrayed historical settings through fictional characters, as well as on its characters, ideas, and methods of representation. As the scholar states: "Just as in *Bygone Days*, the principles of historicity are observed in *The Path of Abai* and *Navoi*. The actions, psychology, and life trajectories of the heroes and characters are revealed in connection with the historical period and its environment, as well as with the dialectics of the dominant and leading currents of that period and environment" [9, 88].

The differences between *Navoi* and *The Path of Abai* in terms of genre-specific characteristics, plot structure, and the portrayal of the protagonist are presented in G. Murodov's research as follows:

1. *Navoi* belongs to the novel genre of the epic literary form, whereas *The Path of Abai* belongs to the novel-epic genre.





2. Because *The Path of Abai* takes the form of a novel-epic, it is considerably longer than the novel *Navoi*.
3. The chronotope of *Navoi* depicts Khorasan in the fifteenth century, while *The Path of Abai* portrays life in Kazakhstan in the nineteenth century. In this context, the scholar explains the essence of the chronotope and the reasons for classifying *Navoi* as a novel and *The Path of Abai* as a novel-epic by referring to the theoretical reflections of the philosopher and literary theorist M. Bakhtin.
4. The chronotope of *Navoi* is limited in scope. The novel depicts thirty years of socio-political, spiritual, and cultural life in Herat. Certain periods of Alisher Navoi's life are selected and portrayed in harmony with the history of the country and the state. In the novel-epic *The Path of Abai*, however, fictional time and space are broader and more extensive than in *Navoi*. Rather than focusing on a particular segment of the protagonist's life, the work portrays his entire life journey, from childhood to death.
5. "The protagonist (Alisher Navoi—Sh. H.) is introduced into the plot of Oybek's novel from the very first pages as a mature individual who has already developed his philosophical worldview, humanistic thinking, and ideals" [9, 90]. The scholar supports this argument by referring to the following observations presented in academician M. Qo'shjonov's book *Oybek's Artistic Mastery*: "The novel *Navoi* differs from L. Tolstoy's *Peter I* and M. Auezov's *The Path of Abai*. In these novels, the authors gradually reveal the protagonists' worldviews throughout the works, presenting them as the conclusions drawn from the events depicted" [9, 90].

Having carefully examined subsequent stages of the literary process, the scholar establishes that in historical-biographical novels created in the literatures of Central Asian peoples, such as *Magtymguly* (Q. Qulliyev), *Ulugbek's Treasure* (O. Yoqubov), *Firdawsi* (S. Ulug'zoda), and *Mahambet's Spear* (A. Olimjonov), the authors selected the most significant stages in the lives of great figures in accordance with their artistic and poetic, philosophical, and ideological concepts.

Navoi was influenced primarily by Eastern epic and lyric literature, whereas M. Auezov's novel-epic was influenced by folk oral tradition and the achievements of world novel writing. Professor G. Murodov, who thoroughly studied Oybek's biography, notes that the author of *Navoi* had been devoted to Uzbek and Persian-Tajik literature since childhood and later became known as a discerning specialist in Eastern literature. This extensive knowledge and deep commitment were reflected in the artistic structure and linguistic world of the novel *Navoi*.

The harmony between Eastern literary and artistic traditions and the novel *Navoi* is substantiated in depth by G. Murodov. According to the scholar, the highly



idealized portrayal of both positive and negative characters, as well as the explicitly negative attitude towards antagonistic characters, stems from the requirements of Romanticism as a literary method characteristic of Eastern literary works. This also confirms the connection between *Navoi* and the early examples of the “new school of novel writing,” including *Bygone Days* (*O‘tkan kunlar*), *The Scorpion from the Altar* (*Mehrobdan chayon*), *Slaves* (*Qullar*), and *Dokhunda*. Although both Abdulla Qodiriy and Sadriddin Ayni created their novels in accordance with the principles of realism, they also made effective use of the possibilities offered by Romanticism.

REFERENCES

1. Auezova, L. *Historical Foundations of the Epic Novel The Path of Abai*. Alma-Ata: Nauka, 1969. 314 p.
2. Bakhtin, M. “Epic and Novel.” Translated by M. Olimov. *Philological Issues*, no. 2–3 (9). Tashkent, 2005, pp. 228–237.
3. Bakhtin, M. *Literary-Critical Articles*. Moscow: Khudozhestvennaya Literatura, 1986. 544 p.
4. Bakhtin, M. *Forms of Time and Chronotope in the Novel: Essays on Historical Poetics*. Tashkent: Akademnashr, 2015. 288 p.
5. Vosifi, Z. *Badoye‘ul-Vaqoe‘*. Tashkent: Adabiyot va San‘at, 1979. 214 p.
6. Zhirmunsky, V. M. *Problems of the Comparative-Historical Study of Literatures: Interconnections and Interactions of National Literatures*. Moscow: Nauka, 1961. 439 p.
7. Zhirmunsky, V. M. *Comparative Literary Studies*. Leningrad: Nauka, 1979. 496 p.
8. Zhurakulov, U. *Issues of Theoretical Poetics: Author, Genre, Chronotope*. Tashkent: G‘afur G‘ulom Publishing and Printing Creative House, 2015. 356 p.
9. Murodov, G‘. *The Historical Novel: Its Genesis and Subsequent Development*. Tashkent: Fan, 2005. 168 p.
10. Khondamir, G‘. *Makorim ul-Akhloq*. Tashkent: Akademnashr, 2018. 368 p.
11. *A Typological Study of the Novel Genre in the Literatures of the Peoples of Central Asia and Kazakhstan*. Tashkent: Fan, 1991. 272 p.
12. Qo‘shjonov, M. *Oybek’s Artistic Mastery*. Tashkent: Badiiy Adabiyot, 1979. 232 p.