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THE ISSUE OF PERIOD AND HERO IN SHUKRULLA'S DRAMA "HASRAT BOGI" ("THE GARDEN OF SORROW")

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes Shukrulla's verse drama "Hasrat Bogi" ("The Garden of Sorrow"). The tragedy of time and hero reflected in the drama is explored, that is, the consequences of the "cult of personality", the problem of the negative and tragic impact of traumas inflicted by the socio-political system on the destinies of people.

KEY WORDS: *Shukrulla, verse drama, social and spiritual-moral problem, conflict, tragedy of time and hero.*

In Shukrulla's drama "Hasrat Bogi" ("The Garden of Sorrow"), the dreadful tragedies of the Soviet era, including the cult of personality, and the socio-economic, spiritual, and moral issues faced by individuals oppressed by the despotic regime, are highlighted [1]. Several reviews were published in the press about this drama in its time, and H.Ikromov expressed the following thoughts about this play: "In this play, not the entire era but a slice of life on the brink of Independence is depicted. From the early 1980s, the Soviet regime was gasping for breath, and even in its death throes, it devised various tricks to further oppress the people and close the opening eyes of awareness. Among these tricks were the Afghan war and the Chernobyl disaster [1]. The playwright begins his narrative about the regime with these deceptions".

It is apparent that the drama reflects the tragic impact of the 70-year despotic regime on the fate of the nation in connection with the tragedies of its characters. The drama showcases the tragedies of the era and individuals, the scars of repression, the Afghan war, the Chernobyl disaster, the command-and-control and bureaucratism of the Soviet period, and the negative impact of the cult of personality on people's destinies in dramatic situations. Indeed, "the difference between drama and tragedy is that drama depicts life events not in a tragic but in a dramatic manner [2]". In short, the drama not only portrays the tragedies of individual characters but also artistically embodies the issue of a whole nation's spiritual crisis. This crisis, which arose from external interventions and pressures, encapsulates the social tragedy resulting from the disregard for human life.

If we focus on the composition of the drama "Hasrat bogi" ("The Garden of Sorrow") it consists of 3 acts and 6 scenes. The characters in the drama include Ulmas (the killed soldier), mother (Ulmas' mother), Murad (Ulmas' uncle, nicknamed "Murad coward"), Mels, Ashrafiy, Azim (Ulmas' friends), Jamila (Mels' lover), Kholikulov (one of the party leaders), Nozanin (Kholikulov's secretary), Mirsoat (a lunatic), Ziyad (a drunkard), and Kasim (the teahouse owner).

The title of the drama "Hasrat Bogi" ("The Garden of Sorrow") itself carries a symbolic meaning, combining the sorrows and sufferings of the characters with the laments of the era. In nearly all of Shukrulla's dramas, the sufferings and tragedies of the era and its characters are artistically interpreted through dramatic action. The playwright delves deeper into the tragedy of the era and its characters through their inner feelings and experiences. The main characters of the poetic drama "Hasrat Bogi" ("The Garden of Sorrow") are two young individuals, Mels and Jamila. They deeply love each other, but the tragic past separates them. Due to the bitter truth that "Mels' father had Jamila's father executed during the years of repression", their lives are turned upside down.

In fact, the primary aim of the playwright in "Hasrat Bogi" ("The Garden of Sorrow") is not just to depict the love and its rupture between the two youths, but more importantly, to highlight the socio-political issues.

It is well-known that the foundation of drama consists of dramatic action and conflict, the clash of characters and situations. Scholars who study drama theory indicate that conflict, collision, and confrontations are the basis for creating dramatic action. Specifically, H.Abdusamatov notes the role of conflict in dramatic works, stating: "Conflict is the force that forms the basis of coherent dramatic action. The essence, direction, and development of the conflict are interconnected with the manner and ideological direction of the dramatic action. In a play, conflict and dramatic action appear like twins, complementing and enriching each other [2]". In this sense, the dramatic action in the plot of "Hasrat Bogi" ("The Garden of Sorrow") is generated by social, interpersonal, and psychological conflicts. These conflicts are not only expressed in the confrontations between characters, their interactions with Soviet government regulations, or their psychological experiences but also in the dramatic situations and circumstances that cause these conflicts to emerge.

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In particular, in the second scene of the drama, social (the conflict between the hero and the environment) and psychological conflict are revealed very effectively through the laments of the mother:

Mother

May the Soviet's house burn to the ground, for it has scorched my very soul.

Murad

(Startled by these words...)

Hey, hey, slow down, we mustn't utter a word about the government.

Mother

Fate dealt me a bad hand.

Murad

Don't you dare say that?

Mother was about to say something, but Murad, startled, scratched his ear and quickly backed away.

Mother

"Instead of so much love,
Couldn't mothers give their
children their lifespan [3]?".

From these words of the mother, we sense a profound inner psychological conflict dominating her psyche, a fundamental element of the drama. Her heart becomes a battlefield of emotional turmoil. The playwright skillfully depicts the mother's inner struggles and reflections primarily through psychological collisions. The mother character in the drama is a composite figure, embodying the brutal realities of both the Afghan War and the Chernobyl disaster in her tragic fate.

The vivid representation of inter-character conflict in the drama is clearly manifested through the confrontations between Ashrafiy and Mels. Ashrafiy feels the anguish and grief of the mother whose son was martyred in the Afghan war. However, he knows very well that he cannot complain about this to anyone or anywhere, as lamenting the times could lead to serious consequences. Therefore, he finds solace in expressing such sorrow and suffering of the people through the verses of his poetry. His friend Mels, on the other hand, strongly opposes Ashrafiy's writing of such poems and openly speaking the truth. These situations lead to the emergence of conflicts between the two friends.

It is essential to emphasize that tragedy is merely a manifestation of human fate in specific difficult and extraordinary circumstances. Tragic situations and conflicts have both subjective and objective causes. In this poetic drama, Shukrulla highlights the inappropriate psychological factors in the relationship between the era and the individual, presenting the consequences of the Afghan War and the Chernobyl disaster as objective causes. Meanwhile, he identifies the subjective reasons as the flaws in the characters' consciousness and psyche, such as sycophancy, idolization, and cowardice.

The tragedies and fateful destinies mentioned in the drama, the life conflicts and contradictions, are not simple or random; they have socio-historical characteristics. Because life conflicts, confrontations, and tragedies are social phenomena, they inherently reflect the problems of society. Tragedies and conflicts are manifested in the characters' actions and moral-ethical world, leading them to suffering and sometimes even death. As the researcher of dramaturgy V.Volkenshtein noted, "An experienced playwright does not hesitate to put their characters in difficult situations. On the contrary, they seek such situations [4]." In this sense, Shukrulla also does not shy away from placing his main characters in perilous situations and severe psychological states. The psychological turmoil of the main character Mels in "Hasrat Bogi" ("The Garden of Sorrow") reaches its peak when he meets his beloved Jamila in the park and is rejected by her. Consequently, Mels sees death as the only cure for his pain and takes his own life, creating the climax of the psychological state. The playwright reflects such anguished psychological situations and conditions through the elements of drama (in monologues and dialogues, stage directions):

Mels

God relieves the mad of sorrow's weight,
For some, in wine, their solace they find.
But for those like me, torn from their fate,
Is death the only cure for hearts confined?

With a heavy heart, he drew a gun from his side and, in a moment of despair, ended his life [3].

In the drama, a young man, whose heart is brimming with love, takes his own life in the park. Shukrulla repeatedly portrays such tragic confrontations in his dramatic works, intensifying the painful and heavy experiences in his characters' lives. Through this, he opens a path for them to understand the tragic contradictions of their time.

It is well known that the author-dramatist's position is reflected in the development of dramatic conflicts, characters' actions and speech, as well as in monologues and dialogues. An experienced playwright reveals the individual character of drama characters through their speech. As V.Volkenshtein, a researcher of dramaturgy aesthetics, stated: "The unique speech of characters simultaneously embodies individuality and sociality, reflecting the peculiarities of the social environment to which the character belongs [4]". In particular, in "Hasrat Bogi" ("The Garden of Sorrow") the characters' speeches are given with such high skill that they perfectly match the time in which the characters are acting. In almost all scenes of the drama, the phrase "There is a man under the hat" is repeatedly mentioned by Mirsoat.

Mirsoat

The walls have ears, and beneath the hat There is a man!
Speak softly, what time is it, now (page 10).

Through this phrase used by Mirsoat, the playwright alludes to the informers (delator) of that era, who would report to KGB officers. During the Soviet era, no one could speak the truth or express their true thoughts openly because there were "ears" everywhere, in every organization, passing information to the relevant authorities.

As H.Abdusamatov said, "The unity of action and word is an essential feature of the play. The harmony of the phrase's tone with the inner action is one of the creative achievements [2]." Specifically, if we focus on the practical

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actions, psychological state, and speech of another character in the drama – Murad:

Azim

(to Murad)

The time for the funeral has come,
A crowd of thousands gathers,
Shoulders lift the coffin high,
Through sorrow, their hearts tethered.

Murad

To hold a funeral without government permission...
Communists, don't put our heads in the noose.

Azim

Even if he is a communist, he is still a Muslim!

Hearing this, Murad, startled, scratched his ear and pretended not to hear, then began to walk away [3].

The words and actions of Murad in the above excerpt (pretending to be naive, scratching and covering his ear) may initially seem insignificant. However, a keen viewer or reader will notice that this scene reveals the "psychology of fear" of the government deeply rooted in the characters of many people from that era. By giving Murad the nickname "the coward", Shukrulla symbolically points to the "fear" in his psyche through this conditional artistic depiction.

In summary, Shukrulla's poetic drama "Hasrat Bogi" ("The Garden of Sorrow") vividly interprets the lives of dozens of characters such as Mels, Jamila, Kholikulov, mother, and Ziyad, illustrating the tragic chain between generations. The drama masterfully highlights the tragedies of the time and the heroes through conflicts and bright characters. "Hasrat Bogi" ("The Garden of Sorrow") is valuable as a work that exposes not just personal tragedies but the broader tragedies of life and the era itself.

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