

THE DICHOTOMY OF THE ENEMY IMAGE IN THE MILITARY
LITERATURE OF SHUKHRAT AND Y.BONDAREV*Isaeva Gulnora Abdukadirovna**Senior Lecturer of the Department of Russian Language and Literary Studies,
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Abstract. *Analysis of the enemy image in Shukhrat's "Years in overcoats" and Yuri Bondarev's "Hot snow" reveals the profound duality of this concept, which goes beyond mere military-strategic or ideological opposition. Considering the enemy simultaneously as a military and ideological antagonist enriches the dramaturgy of the texts, introducing philosophical and ethical dimensions. Both authors, despite differences in their approaches and contexts, converge in their desire to portray the enemy not as an abstract evil, but as a collection of living people, each possessing their own inner world, fears, and moral choices. Shukhrat's use of Uzbek folk motifs and Bondarev's detailed study of character psychology serve as powerful means for reflections on morality, ethics, and humanity in war, making the image of the enemy a key to understanding the deep moral dilemmas inherent in human nature.*

Keywords: *military literature, enemy image, dichotomy, ideological antagonist, philosophical reflections, ethical dilemmas, Uzbek folk motifs, character psychology, moral choice, humanity in war, Shukhrat, Yuri Bondarev.*

Introduction. This study presents a detailed analysis of the concept of antagonism in relation to the enemy image within military literature, based on the works "Years in overcoats" by Shukhrat and "Hot snow" by Yuri Bondarev. The exposition of this analysis emphasizes the complexity and multifaceted nature of the antagonist's image, who is portrayed not exclusively as a military or ideological opponent, but also as a being possessing individual traits, emotions, and moral dilemmas. This approach to examining the enemy enriches the narrative with philosophical and ethical dimensions, prompting deep reflections on the nature of war, aspects of morality, and the foundations of humanity. The incorporation of elements from Uzbek folk culture in Shukhrat's work and the thorough exploration of character psychology in Bondarev's writing open new perspectives for analyzing moral conflicts inherent to human existence, transforming the enemy image into a central element for understanding profound ethical issues related to military conflicts.

Research methods. This study employs an integrated methodological approach to analyze the image of the enemy in Shukhrat's "Years in overcoats" and Yuri Bondarev's "Hot snow". Methods include textual analysis to examine linguistic and

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stylistic devices, historical-cultural contextualization to consider the influence of era and authorial perspective, and psychoanalytic interpretation to explore the motivations and moral dilemmas of both Soviet and German characters. This multidimensional analysis is further enriched by examining folk motifs and symbolism, offering a deeper understanding of the ethical and human dimensions of war.

Main part. In literary discourse, the antagonist is conceptualized as a multifaceted figure embodying opposing forces, serving as a tool for the deconstruction of social, ethical, and philosophical paradigms established by the author. The antagonist, whether depicted individually or collectively, catalyzes the exploration of socio-cultural and psychoanalytic dichotomies and generates dramatic tension that guides the audience's ethical orientation.

A comprehensive analysis of the antagonist necessitates attention to both textual and contextual factors — such as the era, authorial convictions, and sociopolitical context — while examining the antagonist's interactions and narrative function. In military literature, the image of the enemy assumes particular importance, revealing themes of heroism, morality, and human nature. Authors often emphasize various gradations of demonization, at times highlighting the enemy's humanity and thus framing war as a profound tragedy.

In “Years in overcoats” by Shukhrat and “Hot snow” by Bondarev, the image of the enemy is realized through two dominant forms: the “military adversary”, as a direct opponent on the battlefield, and the “ideological antagonist”, representing a clash of values and worldviews. The military enemy poses a tangible threat through conflict and confrontation, while the ideological enemy frames broader philosophical and moral dilemmas, transcending direct violence and engaging with questions of honor, duty, and the human condition.

Both works eschew unambiguous negativity, instead presenting antagonists as complex figures, whose doubts and fears invite the reader to see the enemy's inner world. Thus, the enemy in these novels serves not merely as a dramatic counterweight, but as a mirror for philosophical and ethical reflection, revealing internal conflicts of the protagonists and broader societal values.

Of particular note in “Hot snow” is the German occupation forces' propaganda, which sought to erode Soviet morale and trust via psychological manipulation, such as distributing leaflets claiming humane treatment for prisoners of war. These episodes highlight the ambiguous, shifting nature of the enemy and expose the blurred boundaries between truth and falsification in wartime. The characters' responses to such propaganda, including their ethical dilemmas and inner doubts, illustrate the profound complexity inherent in the literary depiction of the adversary.

In Shukhrat's “Years in overcoats”, the figure of Murzin is central to the exploration of the ideological antagonist. Captured and recruited by the enemy for

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propaganda and espionage, Murzin's experience illustrates psychological manipulation aimed at undermining loyalty and shifting convictions. The recruitment process, orchestrated by Ober-Lieutenant Funfash, involves threats, promises, and psychological pressure, transforming Murzin into a tool of influence. The narrative culminates in Murzin's morally charged decision to resist collaboration, highlighting the intense ethical crisis faced by individuals in ideological conflict. The final farewell between the major and Murzin underscores the ambiguous boundaries between loyalty and betrayal, reflecting the deeper risks of ideological manipulation.

Shukhrat's depiction of the military enemy is characterized by emotional and psychological depth, shaped by his own wartime experience. The enemy is presented less as a detailed individual and more as a symbol of existential threat and collective suffering. By avoiding personalization of German soldiers and instead referring to them generically, the narrative universalizes the experience of war and shifts focus to the inner struggles of the protagonists. This approach deepens the moral and philosophical reflection on war, emphasizing collective endurance and ethical dilemmas over confrontations with specific enemy figures.

Notably, "Years in overcoats" contrasts with Bondarev's "Hot snow", where the antagonist is more concretely embodied by high-ranking German officers, such as General Friedrich Paulus and Field Marshal Erich von Manstein. These characters not only represent the strategic might of the enemy but also drive the narrative's dramatic tension and scope. The Soviet protagonists, especially Bessonov, are compelled to investigate the motives and psychology of their adversaries, seeking to understand the true nature of those who wage war. This inquiry lends psychological complexity to the narrative, transforming the image of the enemy into a subject of profound moral and existential analysis.

In "Hot snow", the military antagonist serves not only as a strategic and tactical challenge for the Soviet forces but also as a subject for philosophical reflection on the nature of conflict and the moral dilemmas it generates. The narrative focuses on both high-ranking German officers, such as Generals Paulus and Manstein, and ordinary prisoners of war, highlighting the multifaceted nature of war through individual stories and experiences. Interactions between Soviet soldiers and enemy prisoners open avenues for understanding the human dimension of the adversary, moving beyond pure hostility.

The interrogation of Major Erich Dietz exemplifies this approach: Commander Bessonov, driven by curiosity, seeks to uncover not only the enemy's strategies but also the personal motives and emotional states of individual German soldiers. The scene reveals the complex emotions and moral ambiguities that arise in direct confrontation, where the boundaries between enemy and human being blur. Bessonov's

humane treatment of the prisoner contrasts with the brutality of war and foregrounds the ethical challenges inherent in conflict.

Bondarev's novel emphasizes that military opponents are not merely agents of warfare but also ordinary people forced by circumstance into conflict. Dialogues between Soviet soldiers and prisoners demonstrate that enmity can give way to understanding and compassion, as illustrated by the German officer's plea for mercy — a request that humanizes the enemy and underscores war's tragic nature.

Similarly, in Shukhrat's "Years in overcoats", the image of the military opponent is constructed not solely through combat but also through the personal stories and psychological portraits of characters like Kaiser, a German spy. His life trajectory, marked by personal failures and social shame, highlights themes of betrayal, loss of identity, and the struggle between personal conviction and external pressures. Kaiser's fate, shaped by his involvement with the Nazi regime and eventual capture by Soviet intelligence, prompts deeper contemplation of human nature and the impact of circumstance on individual choices.

At the outset of the Stalingrad campaign, both works portray the enemy as confident and formidable, reflecting historical realities of German military successes. However, as the narrative progresses and the dynamics of battle shift, the image of the adversary evolves — from a powerful and self-assured force to one marked by exhaustion and desperation. Importantly, this transformation is presented with nuance: the enemy is depicted not as an impersonal embodiment of evil, but as a collection of individuals, each grappling with fear, uncertainty, and moral conflict.

Shukhrat's approach to the antagonist is notably multidimensional and enriched by elements of Uzbek folk culture and tradition. Rather than resorting to simple demonization, Shukhrat frames the war as a space for ethical reflection and consideration of universal human values. The integration of cultural motifs is evident in soldiers' conversations, where folklore and epic narratives are invoked to judge the enemy's actions. For example, references to legends about tyrant rulers serve as a moral lens for condemning evil, allowing the narrative to transcend the specifics of military conflict and address broader questions of morality, humanity, and cultural memory.

Conclusion. In synthesizing the analysis of the concept of antagonism in Shukhrat's novel "Years in overcoats" and Yuri Bondarev's "Hot snow", one can discern a deeper understanding of the specifics of war literature, in which the portrayal of the enemy is realized through two fundamental planes: military-strategic and ideological. This dichotomy of the antagonist not only forms the basis for dramatic tension but also serves as a platform for philosophical and moral contemplations on the nature of war, ethics, and humanity. The authors of these works resort to personifying the enemy, imbuing their image with both negative and individual human characteristics, thereby

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providing an opportunity for the reader to gain a more meaningful perception of the conflict's tragedy. The concept of the enemy extends beyond the framework of unambiguous antagonism, representing a complex combination of direct confrontation and ideological discourse, which reflects the multi-layered nature of human essence and the moral dilemmas faced by the characters.

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