



Legends As Ideological Underpinnings: An Analysis of Tradition and Morality in Tahir Malik's «Shaytanat»

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ABSTRACT

This article delves into the ideological movements encapsulated within the intricate fabric of legends and traditions in Tahir Malik's magnum opus, «Shaytanat». Anchored within a cultural milieu rich with histories and moral tales, Malik's novel transcends the confines of mere fiction, evolving into an exploration of the collective consciousness of a society shaped by its past. Employing a methodical approach, we dissect the interconnected layers of legends, traditions, and societal norms, revealing their significance as instruments of ethical instruction and reflections of communal values. Our analysis reveals that, through «Shaytanat», Malik underscores the enduring relevance of these legends, emphasizing their roles as both mirrors reflecting the inherent human nature and compasses guiding individuals through life's moral quandaries. Beyond a mere recounting of tales, the novel emerges as a clarion call for introspection, urging readers to confront the juxtaposition between age-old virtues and modern-day challenges. Through this paper, we illuminate how «Shaytanat» serves as a testament to the timeless resonance of traditional narratives and their unyielding influence in shaping human thought and behavior.

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Introduction. In the diverse tapestry of world literature, Central Asian narratives offer an intricate interplay of cultural beliefs, traditions, and ideologies. Among these works, Tahir Malik's novel «Shaytanat» stands out as a monumental exploration of the ideological underpinnings behind legends and traditions. Originating from a socio-cultural milieu laden with myths, moral tales, and age-old customs, «Shaytanat» intricately weaves narratives that challenge, reinforce, and, at times, redefine the prevailing ideologies. The novel, replete with allegories, posits a profound dialectical relationship between an individual's internal moral compass and the external societal norms dictated by legends and traditions. This relationship, while harmonious in some instances, is riddled with conflicts and confrontations in others, prompting readers to engage in introspection and critical analysis of their own beliefs. By diving deep into these narrative currents, this paper aims to unravel the ideological movement of legends and traditions in Tahir Malik's magnum opus and their implications on both individual and societal paradigms.

Analysis. In the intricate web of «Shaytanat», Tahir Malik utilizes legends and traditions as ideological vehicles, steering the reader's consciousness towards a reflection on societal norms and personal values. Delving into the narrative, one finds a plethora of allegories, each serving as a mirror to both society's expectations and an individual's moral compass.

The first salient allegory in the novel revolves around the old man's dream in Pushkin's tale «The Fisherman and the Fish». Here, the insatiable desire to dominate both land and water becomes emblematic of unchecked ambition, cautioning readers against the pitfalls of unrealistic aspirations. When juxtaposed against the broader societal context, this legend echoes a warning: ambitions, if not tethered to reality, can lead to one's downfall. By grounding this idea in a well-known fable, Tahir Malik cleverly reinforces a universally recognized truth while simultaneously invoking a sense of cultural familiarity.

Yet another profound tale within the novel is narrated by Khudoyarkhon, Abdulhamid Abdusamad's teacher. Through the parable of the remorseful cat inviting mice to a feast, Malik delves deep into the complexities of trust and betrayal. While the mice's inherent vulnerability and their tragic end serve as a poignant reminder of the dangers of misplaced trust, the sage's advice to the mice underscores a larger societal admonition: caution and discernment in the face of deceit. The cat, despite its ostensible transformation, remains true to its predatory nature, suggesting that certain inherent tendencies might be inalterable.

Abdulhamid's recounting of a divine narrative, in which out of a hundred mercies Allah retains ninety-nine, is particularly telling. This legend serves a dual purpose. On one hand, it emphasizes the paramountcy of compassion and generosity in human interactions; on the other, it underscores the inherent benevolence embedded in creation, exemplified by the tender steps of horses around their young. Malik's incorporation of this tale accentuates that amidst human failings, there exists a divine expectation of kindness and benevolence.

A deeper subtext within «Shaytanat» is the allegorical representation of the governor and his aide, symbolic of man and his conscience, respectively. Through this narrative device, Tahir Malik illuminates the perpetual struggle between temporal temptations and enduring morality. The deserted island, symbolic of the afterlife or an alternate existence, underscores the inevitable confrontation with one's deeds, urging readers to act in a manner that ensures a harmonious future.

In sum, the ideological movement of legends and traditions within «Shaytanat» functions not merely as a narrative tool but as a philosophical compass, guiding readers through a maze of moral dilemmas and societal expectations. Through his masterful intertwining of tales and teachings, Tahir Malik not only presents a compelling narrative but also challenges readers to introspect and reflect on their own ideological stances.

Discussion. The ideological underpinnings found within Tahir Malik's «Shaytanat» offer a rich tapestry of beliefs, morals, and cultural nuances. By interweaving legends and traditions, the novel serves as both a narrative and a cultural commentary, prompting a broader discussion about the symbiotic relationship between lore and socio-cultural norms.

Central to the narrative's ideological framework is the belief that personal conduct, driven by human values, has inescapable consequences. While the text is steeped in Eastern tradition, this universality of morality resonates across diverse cultures. The recurring emphasis on reaping what one sows' underscores the cyclical nature of actions and consequences, suggesting an inextricable link between individual decisions and societal repercussions. The assertion that «crime never goes unpunished, and kindness never goes unrewarded» is not just a moral dictum but a reflection of a deeply ingrained cultural belief.

Moreover, the novel grapples with themes of greed, deceit, and malevolence, juxtaposed against values of heroism, justice, and compassion. The polarity of these values can be seen as a representation of the constant tug-of-war between the base and elevated aspects of human nature. This duality raises pertinent questions: To what extent are societal structures responsible for nurturing or suppressing these conflicting tendencies? How do collective myths and stories shape individual behavior and vice versa?

An interesting dimension to consider is the nuanced portrayal of the father-son dynamic, particularly evident in the restrained communication between Abdulhamid and his father, Asadbek. The subtle cultural implication here is the deferential respect, perhaps even fear, that children often have towards their parents in traditional societies. This veneration, while fostering discipline and respect, can sometimes impede open dialogue and understanding, thus raising questions about the balance between maintaining cultural values and promoting open communication in familial structures.

Furthermore, the narrative's emphasis on generosity and compassion as pivotal human emotions offers a counterpoint to the individualistic tendencies prevalent in many contemporary societies. The notion that out of Allah's hundred mercies, only one was bestowed upon humans, suggests that even with limited divine

intervention, humanity possesses an innate capacity for compassion. It challenges readers to introspect on the collective responsibility of fostering an environment conducive to such virtues.

In conclusion, the ideological movement manifested through legends and traditions in «Shaytanat» serves as a testament to the power of stories in shaping, reflecting, and challenging societal beliefs. While the narrative is deeply rooted in its cultural milieu, its themes possess a universality that invites readers from all backgrounds to partake in the discussion, bridging cultural divides and fostering a shared understanding.

Furthermore, Tohir Malik's intricate weaving of legends into the storyline does not merely serve as a decorative element but rather, as a robust structural tool, facilitating deeper engagement with the text. Legends, by their very nature, encompass long-held beliefs and mores of a society, becoming a repository of collective wisdom and shared experiences. In "Shaytanat", these legends act as mirrors, reflecting the ethos of the community and providing a historical context that enriches the narrative's contemporary setting.

The allegorical tale about horses carefully treading the earth to avoid harming their offspring is especially poignant. This legend, at its core, emphasizes the innate protective and compassionate tendencies that creatures, including humans, possess. It subtly underscores the principle that if beasts can exhibit such caution and care, humans, with their superior intellect and consciousness, have an even greater responsibility towards each other and their environment. This allegory serves as a clarion call, urging readers to recognize and nurture their inherent virtues, while also being acutely aware of their potential for harm.

Another compelling facet of the discussion is the novel's stance on materialism and its potential pitfalls. The cautionary note on the dangers of becoming overly consumed by one's gains offers a timely reflection in an age of rampant consumerism. Malik's narrative seems to suggest that an unbridled pursuit of material wealth, devoid of ethical considerations, can lead to moral bankruptcy. This is a sentiment echoed in various philosophical discourses across cultures and eras, reinforcing the novel's universal appeal.

The power of Malik's prose is further magnified by the manner in which he delineates the East's pedagogical methods. The reticence exhibited by Asadbek's son, even in the face of impending death, speaks volumes about the deep-seated respect, and at times, the unspoken barriers that exist within familial structures in traditional societies. Such depictions invite readers to delve deeper into the complexities of interpersonal relationships, shaped by cultural, social, and historical forces.

In essence, «Shaytanat», through its rich tapestry of legends and traditions, encourages an introspective journey, compelling readers to question, reflect upon, and perhaps even recalibrate their moral compasses. By interlacing narrative with ideology, Malik offers a literary work that transcends boundaries, resonating with readers across spectrums, and prompting a global dialogue on shared human values and experiences.

Conclusion. In analyzing the ideological underpinnings of legends and traditions in Tohir Malik's «Shaytanat», we are confronted with a profound exploration of cultural, ethical, and societal reflections. Malik's adept interlacing of legends within the narrative does not merely stand as anecdotal narratives but rather, as pivotal conduits conveying the shared ethos and accumulated wisdom of generations past. Such legends, while rooted in a particular cultural context, resonate with universal truths, bridging disparate worlds and providing a canvas for shared human experiences.

Furthermore, the emphasis on virtues such as compassion, kindness, and introspection vis-à-vis the allegories and tales employed by Malik, underlines a pressing call for ethical consideration amidst modern-day challenges. In an era overshadowed by materialism and transient gains, «Shaytanat» serves as a beacon, illuminating the path towards moral integrity and righteous conduct. It underscores the timeless adage that actions, whether borne out of avarice or altruism, invariably bear consequences – a notion encapsulated in the simple yet profound principle, «As you sow, so shall you reap».

The novel's intricate exploration of East's pedagogical structures, familial bonds, and societal norms further enriches its thematic depth, prompting readers to confront and reevaluate their own conditioned responses and preconceived notions. This intricate dance between the particular and the universal, between the past and the present, sets «Shaytanat» apart as a literary work of considerable significance.

In conclusion, Tahir Malik's «Shaytanat» stands not merely as a novel but as a testament to the enduring power of legends and traditions in shaping, reflecting, and guiding human consciousness. It beckons readers to embark on a journey of self-discovery, urging them to discern the fine line between virtue and vice,

between transient gains and lasting legacies. Such works underscore the profound impact literature can wield, serving as mirrors to society and compasses for individual souls, guiding them through the labyrinthine paths of existence.

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