

## MORAL-ETHICAL DILEMMAS AND CULTURAL CONTEXT IN TAHIR MALIK'S NOVEL «SHAYTANAT» (DEVILDOM)

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### Abstract

This article is devoted to a comprehensive analysis of Tahir Malik's work "Shaytanat", focusing on the sociocultural, psychological, and moral-ethical facets that manifest within the context of character interpretation and their interactions. The research is grounded in a deep analytical approach, ensuring a detailed examination of multidimensional interpretations of the work's content. During the analysis, key characteristics of the characters, as well as their intrinsic motivations, conflicts, and relationships, were identified. Particular attention is paid to the confrontation between moral and amoral principles in the lives of the main characters, as well as the role of patriotism and love for the homeland. The study's findings allow for a delve into the deeper layers of the text, revealing the unique features of the author's perspective on the sociocultural processes of his era.

**Keywords:** Uzbek literature, cultural context, sociocultural aspects, moral-ethical conflicts, patriotism, love for the homeland, character interpretation.

### Introduction

Contemporary Uzbek literature, standing at the crossroads of cultural and social transitions, presents researchers with a panorama of intensive literary pursuits and experiments. At the heart of this panorama lies the work of Tahir Malik, a distinguished national writer of Uzbekistan, whose prose has bridged traditional Uzbek literature with new, modern artistic forms. His novel "Shaytanat" (Devildom), exemplifying a blend of profound ideological reflection and exceptional artistic craftsmanship, holds a unique place in the literary tradition of 20th-century Uzbekistan. This multifaceted work has been the subject of numerous scholarly discussions and analytical reviews, emphasizing issues of sociocultural identity, morality, and the ethos of the nation. As we embark on analyzing the novel, our objective is to illuminate its intricate structure, decode its complex symbolic imagery, and establish a connection between Malik's literary innovations and the broader trends of Uzbek prose in the latter half of the 20th century.

### Research Methodology

For a comprehensive analysis of the novel "Shaytanat" and to determine its position within the context of 20th-century Uzbek literature, we employ an integrated methodological approach. The study is grounded in the principles of the comparative-historical method, which facilitates the placement of emphasis within the literary process and identifies the influence of historical and cultural contexts on the shaping of the work's artistic world.

Within the framework of a structural-semiotic approach, we examine the compositional design of the novel, identify key symbols and sign systems, and determine their role in constructing the primary ideological tenets of the text. This method not only allows for a deeper insight into the essence of artistic

images but also establishes the interrelation between individual text components and the overall concept of the work.

The hermeneutic approach is used for the interpretation of underlying meanings and philosophical subtexts of the novel. Relying on the principles of the hermeneutic spiral, we aim to immerse ourselves in the context of the era during which the work was created, and based on this context, decode its intricate symbolic structures.

Critical discourse analysis is employed to study the novel's reception in literary criticism and scholarly research, as well as to identify main trends and contradictions in the evaluation of the work.

For the analysis of the artistic language specificity of the work, a stylistic analysis is applied, wherein the primary stylistic devices and figures of speech used by the author to create the artistic world of "Shaytanat" are examined.

Thus, our combined methodological approach ensures a profoundly deep and multifaceted exploration of the work within its sociocultural, historical, and artistic contexts.

## **Results**

Within the framework of this study on Tahir Malik's "Shaytanat", a thorough and multifaceted analysis was conducted, revealing the key features of this work in the context of 20th-century Uzbek literature. Employing a semiotic approach, we deciphered the deep symbolic structures upon which the novel is based. The image of the "Devildom" is not merely a metaphor; it serves as a mirror reflecting the intricate internal contradictions of society. Through this imagery, Malik critiques a society torn apart by moral and spiritual shortcomings.

The hermeneutic approach exposed the philosophical depth of the work. Malik does more than merely narrate the story of his characters; he compels the reader to ponder eternal questions of human existence, the role of the individual in history, and the value of human life.

Through structural analysis, it became evident that "Shaytanat" is a complex, layered work where every element is meticulously thought out, each playing its role in elucidating the author's intent. Every character, every scene, every dialogue serves to unveil the world that Malik has depicted in his novel.

Critical discourse analysis confirmed that "Shaytanat" did not go unnoticed in literary critique. The work prompted active discussion and a multitude of interpretations, attesting to its relevance and significance in a cultural context.

Particular attention should be paid to the stylistic analysis of the work. Tahir Malik showcases a high command of artistic language, actively employing idioms, proverbs, and comparisons, which endow the text with a distinct national flavor.

Thus, "Shaytanat" stands out as an exemplary piece of Uzbek prose, combining the author's profound psychological insight and exceptional artistic craftsmanship.

## **Discussion**

Tahir Malik's "Shaytanat" stands as a notable phenomenon in 20th-century Uzbek literature, and beyond its evident artistic merit, it acts as a mirror reflecting the intricate sociocultural processes of the period. Examining this work provides a deeper understanding of the spiritual and cultural aspirations of the nation and acknowledges the challenges of personal identification amid sociocultural transformations.

Drawing upon the results of this study, it's noteworthy to state that "Shaytanat" holds a special position in Uzbekistan's literary canon. The novel emphasizes society's internal contradictions, individual moral dilemmas, and, in a broader context, the search for national identity during turbulent historical shifts. The dialectic of individual and society, viewed through Malik's artistic lens, offers deeper insights into the sociocultural characteristics of Uzbek society during this period. A comprehensive approach to analyzing the work has deciphered not only its external layers but also its intrinsic strata, making this novel particularly relevant for humanities-based studies.

A pivotal theme in the novel is the challenge of moral choice and personal accountability. Through the destinies of his characters, Malik showcases the various paths an individual might take when faced with a moral decision and the repercussions of those choices. This aspect certainly calls for further contemplation and could be the focus of a distinct study.

When delving into "Shaytanat", we find that Tahir Malik immerses the reader in a complex world of metaphors, symbols, and folkloric images, illustrating the interplay between tradition and modernity. The work functions as a kind of literary laboratory where the author experiments with various genre and stylistic techniques, aiming to accurately and profoundly convey the intricate moral and sociocultural atmosphere of his era.

"Shaytanat" also offers an opportunity to analyze the evolution of moral values within the context of historical and social transformations. Through detailed scrutiny of character behavior and psyche, Malik examines issues of justice, love, betrayal, and the quest for truth amidst sociocultural ambiguity. These universal themes render the novel relevant not only to Uzbek but also to global culture.

The theme of the Homeland raised by Malik stands distinctively within the context of the novel. Based on the analysis of this theme, it can be inferred that for the author, the Homeland is not merely a geographical concept, but a sacred space where the past, present, and future converge. Malik constructs a complex system of allegories and symbols, showcasing diverse approaches to understanding the Homeland and national identity.

Various literary analysis methods were employed for an in-depth comprehension of the work, enabling the deciphering of many of the novel's "riddles" and unveiling its intricate multi-dimensional structure. Moreover, in "Shaytanat", there is a pronounced emphasis on the interplay between the individual and society. The work prompts reflection on how an individual can retain their identity, moral principles, and spiritual values amidst sociocultural pressures and transformations.

One of the most striking characters in "Shaytanat" is Asadbek. His image is complex and multifaceted, acting as the epicenter for many sociocultural conflicts unfolding within the novel. Asadbek mirrors the darker aspects of human nature and societal relations. In the context of his story, moments of sociocultural drama emerge, tracing back to times when the populace declared esteemed writers like Chulpan and Kadyri as enemies of the people. Towards Asadbek, one senses alternating feelings of animosity and pity, starting from his childhood marred by his brother's incurable illness.

The character of the Chechen, Zelimkhan, is also noteworthy, representing a true patriot, exhibiting his unwavering allegiance to the Homeland. Through this character, Malik raises questions about the genuine nature of patriotism, emphasizing that true love for the Homeland is manifested not in words but in deeds. A notable quote relevant to this discussion reads, "The Chechen Zelimkhan wishes to be buried only in his Homeland."

The images of Asadbek and Zelimkhan shed light on the profound sociocultural conflicts present in the novel and delve into the dynamics of the characters' moral values. For instance, Asadbek, on one hand, displays deep respect for certain individuals, aiding them in challenging situations. Yet, on the other hand, all his "noble" actions bear hidden motives. This duality is pivotal in analyzing Asadbek's character.

While examining Tahir Malik's work, it's essential to also consider the characters of Jalil, Kholidiya, Sharif, and other key figures who contribute to the novel's intricate spectrum of emotional and moral conflicts.

To conclude this discussion, it is imperative to highlight that Tahir Malik's "Shaytanat" is an exceptional piece that provides abundant material for analysis and research, facilitating a deeper understanding and appreciation of the complex processes occurring within the sociocultural reality of Uzbekistan, and more broadly, the entire post-Soviet realm.

### **Conclusion**

Throughout the comprehensive study of Tahir Malik's work "Shaytanat", key features of sociocultural, psychological, and moral-ethical aspects within the context of characters and their interactions were identified. Relying on an analytical approach, this analysis allowed for a deep exploration of the text, revealing its multifaceted interpretations.

The central discursive core of the work revolves around the confrontation of moral and amoral principles in the lives of the characters. The character of Asadbek, who is presented as central in the novel, illustrates the tragic fate of an individual who has lost his moral compass. His life trajectory, filled with internal and external conflicts, mirrors the complex social processes characteristic of the historical period depicted by the author.

Furthermore, it's essential to underscore the significance of the character Zelimkhan as a symbol of true patriotism and loyalty to his homeland. Through this character, Tahir Malik delineates the boundary between superficial and profound understanding of love for one's people and country.

Within the context of the discussion, it is also worth mentioning the myriad other characters in the novel, each contributing to the formation of a multifaceted portrayal of the work's sociocultural landscape.

In summary, it's crucial to highlight the brilliance of Tahir Malik's literary craftsmanship, capable of deeply and multifacetedly unveiling the intricate sociocultural processes occurring within society. The work "Shaytanat" warrants thorough research and analysis, facilitating an understanding of the profound contradictions and conflicts shaping the spiritual reality of the era.

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