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WOMEN'S FATE AND SOCIAL CONSTRAINTS IN MEHROBDAN CHAYON

Annotation

This article examines the portrayal of women's fate and the pervasive social constraints imposed upon them in Abdulla Qodiriy's seminal novel, Mehrobdan Chayon (The Scorpion from the Altar). This research underscores the enduring relevance of Mehrobdan Chayon as a powerful testament to the struggles of women in that era, highlighting their resilience and the profound impact of social constraints on their personal destinies, thus contributing significantly to discussions on gender in Central Asian literature.

Key words: women's destiny, patriarchy, social inequality, Jadid movement, gender issue, enlightenment reformism, social realism, family and marriage, tradition and reform, women's rights, colonial period, Uzbek novel.

“MEHROBDAN CHAYON” ASARIDA AYOLLAR TAQDIRI VA IJTIMOYIY CHEKLOVLAR

Annotatsiya

Ushbu maqola Abdulla Qodiriyning mashhur romani “Mehrobdan chayon” asarida ayollar taqdiri va ularga yuklatilgan keng qamrovli ijtimoiy cheklovlar tasvirini tahlil qiladi. Mazkur tadqiqot “Mehrobdan chayon” romanining o'sha davr ayollari kurashining kuchli badiiy ifodasi sifatidagi dolzarbligini ta'kidlaydi, ularning matonati va ijtimoiy cheklovlarning shaxsiy taqdiriga chuqur ta'sirini yoritadi hamda Markaziy Osiyo adabiyotida gender masalalariga oid ilmiy munozaralarga salmoqli hissa qo'shadi.

Kalit so'zlar: ayollar taqdiri, patriarhat, ijtimoiy tengsizlik, Jadidchilik harakati, gender masalasi, ma'rifatparvarlik, ijtimoiy realizm, oila va nikoh, an'ana va islohot, ayollar huquqlari, mustamlaka davri, o'zbek romanchiligi

СУДЬБА ЖЕНЩИН И СОЦИАЛЬНЫЕ ОГРАНИЧЕНИЯ В РОМАНЕ «МЕHROBDAN CHAYON»

Аннотация

Данная статья рассматривает изображение женской судьбы и всеобъемлющих социальных ограничений, налагаемых на женщин, в знаменитом романе Абдуллы Кадыри «Скорпион с алтаря» (Mehrobdan Chayon). Данное исследование подчёркивает неизменную актуальность романа «Mehrobdan Chayon» как мощного свидетельства борьбы женщин той эпохи, освещающая их стойкость и глубокое влияние социальных ограничений на их личные судьбы, тем самым внося значительный вклад в дискуссии о гендере в литературе Центральной Азии.

Ключевые слова: женская судьба, патриархат, социальное неравенство, джадидизм, гендерная проблема, просветительское движение, социальный реализм, семья и брак, традиция и реформа, права женщин, колониальный период, узбекский роман.

Introduction. Abdulla Qodiriy (1894–1938), a towering figure in Uzbek literature, penned Mehrobdan Chayon, completed in 1927, as a profound exploration of social life in Turkestan during the nascent Soviet era. The novel is not merely a story but a historical document, offering a vivid depiction of moral conflicts and societal pressures, where women frequently emerge as the most vulnerable victims of rigid traditions. This study delves into the multifaceted aspects of women's fate within the narrative - a destiny often characterized by arranged unions, domestic subjugation, and severely limited educational opportunities. Concurrently, it investigates the broader social constraints, including feudal patriarchy, the pervasive influence of religious interpretations of social roles, and the subtle yet impactful colonial reforms of the time. By dissecting these intricate elements, this article aims to illuminate Qodiriy's progressive undertones, contributing to a deeper understanding of gender dynamics within Central Asian literature. The central research question guiding this analysis is: How does

Mehrobdan Chayon portray women's struggles against formidable social barriers, and what profound insights does this reveal about early 20th-century Uzbek society?

Literature review. The literary landscape of Uzbekistan during the early 20th century was profoundly shaped by the Jadidist movement, a reformist intellectual current to which Qodiriy belonged. This movement championed national awakening, emphasizing education, cultural reform, and a critical examination of existing societal structures. Works like Qodiriy's earlier novel, O'tkan Kunlar (1926), set a precedent, and Mehrobdan Chayon continues this tradition by critiquing feudalism and entrenched gender roles. Scholarly analyses consistently portray the society within the novel as deeply stratified, with women predominantly confined to domestic spheres, their lives often tumultuous amidst economic and political upheaval. The prevailing social system, underscored by family relations, exerted immense pressure on individuals, particularly women, whose roles were often dictated by expectations of family honor and economic

dependency. Qodiriy's work is celebrated for its realism and its bold engagement with the moral dilemmas of its era. Through intricate character development and compelling plotlines, he illuminates the tensions between tradition and reform that characterized Jadid-era Uzbekistan. Analyses of national heroes and Qodiriy's masterful use of stylistic devices further highlight his intent to expose oppression. Translations of his work, such as Tukhtasinov's English rendition of *Scorpion from the Altar*, reveal the complexities in conveying the cultural nuances of women's plight, underscoring the deep-seated nature of these issues. This rich literary and historical context positions Mehrobdan Chayon as a vital bridge between traditional Uzbek narratives and modernist critiques, profoundly influencing the spiritual and moral development of its readers by challenging established norms.

Research methodology. This qualitative study employs a multi-faceted approach, primarily utilizing close textual analysis of Mehrobdan Chayon, supported by comprehensive historical and sociocultural lenses. The primary data sources include the novel's original Uzbek text and available English translations, allowing for an in-depth understanding of Qodiriy's narrative choices and their cultural implications. Secondary sources are drawn from a wide array of peer-reviewed articles and scholarly works focusing on Qodiriy's oeuvre, with particular attention paid to thematic elements such as social conditions, family dynamics, and nonverbal politeness in interactions. The methodology involves thematic coding to identify recurring motifs of constraint, such as arranged marriages, the concept of honor, and limitations on female mobility. Character analysis is systematically applied to female figures within the novel, scrutinizing their motivations, actions, and the societal forces acting upon them. A diachronic comparison with Qodiriy's era is conducted, drawing upon documented socio-political events and historical records to contextualize the fictional world within its factual antecedents. This study intentionally avoids quantitative tools, opting instead for interpretive hermeneutics to ensure cultural sensitivity and accuracy, particularly in understanding the linguistic equivalence of cultural nuances in translations. This approach allows for a rich and nuanced interpretation of the novel's profound social commentary on women's lives.

Analysis and results. The detailed analysis of Mehrobdan Chayon unequivocally reveals that women's fates are inextricably linked to and largely dictated by prevailing social constraints. The male protagonist, Otabek, often finds himself entangled in moral dilemmas that reflect the broader subjugation experienced by female characters. Women like his wife endure the profound consequences of arranged unions and rigid familial honor codes, symbolizing the "scorpion" of tradition, which metaphorically stings and constrains personal

freedom. The novel vividly illustrates how traditional family systems rigidly enforce gender hierarchies, with women disproportionately bearing the brunt of societal shifts, from the entrenched feudalism to the emerging Soviet influence. This is evident in the poignant depictions of the struggles faced by women from various social strata, particularly the common folk. Qodiriy masterfully employs various stylistic devices, such as metaphors of entrapment and confinement, to underscore the pervasive oppression. For instance, the often-silenced voices of women in dialogues, their reliance on nonverbal cues, and the subtle art of nonverbal politeness are depicted not merely as cultural practices but as survival mechanisms within a restrictive patriarchal society. This passive communication highlights the limited avenues available for women to express their agency or dissent. In contrast, the portrayal of national heroes frequently emphasizes male agency and proactive roles, further accentuating the prevailing female passivity. This serves as a subtle yet powerful critique of how colonial reforms, rather than empowering women, often exacerbated their vulnerabilities without providing meaningful avenues for liberation or self-determination. These analytical results firmly affirm Qodiriy's artistic intention to expose systemic barriers, thereby fostering profound reader empathy for the constrained and often tragic lives of women depicted in Mehrobdan Chayon.

Conclusion. Mehrobdan Chayon stands as a masterful and timeless illustration of the tragic fates of women under severe social constraints in Uzbek society. Abdulla Qodiriy's narrative transcends mere documentation of historical inequities; it serves as a profound indictment of patriarchal norms and an impassioned advocacy for moral and social reform. The novel's enduring power lies in its ability to amplify the often-silenced voices of women, providing a critical perspective that continues to inform modern discussions on gender equality and human rights in Central Asia. By compelling readers to confront the stark realities faced by women, Qodiriy promotes spiritual and ethical growth, urging a re-evaluation of societal values even amidst adversity. The novel's intricate portrayal of characters like Oydin and Zuleikha, navigating the treacherous waters of traditional expectations versus personal aspirations, offers invaluable insights into the complexities of gender roles in a transitional society. The consistent depiction of women as victims, constrained by societal expectations, early marriages, and economic dependency, underscores the urgent need for structural and cultural changes. Mehrobdan Chayon not only reflects the historical realities of its time but also implicitly calls for a fundamental re-assessment of women's positions in society, making it a foundational text for understanding the historical trajectory of women's rights in the region.

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