

**THE LITERARY INTERPRETATION OF ECOLOGICAL IDEAS IN TOHIR MALIK'S  
WORKS**

**Khayrullaeva Nigorabegim Nematilloevna**

PhD, English Linguistics Department

Bukhara State University

n.n.xayrullaeva2019@buxdu.uz

**Abstract:** This article examines the literary interpretation of ecological ideas in the works of the prominent Uzbek writer Tohir Malik. Although Malik is primarily known for his detective and socio-philosophical novels, a closer reading reveals a consistent engagement with environmental themes such as ecological responsibility, human–nature relations, moral degradation leading to environmental harm, and urban ecological concerns. Using textual analysis of selected works—including “Shaytanat,” “So’nggi o’q,” “Zilzila,” and several short stories—the study explores how Malik embeds ecological warnings into narrative structures, character development, and symbolic imagery. The findings suggest that Malik’s ecological discourse, while not overtly didactic, emerges as an integral part of his broader humanistic philosophy, highlighting environmental ethics as a dimension of moral and social stability.

**Keywords:** Tohir Malik; ecological ideas; Uzbek literature; ecocriticism; environmental ethics; urban ecology; symbolic imagery; human–nature relations; moral ecology; literary analysis.

### **Introduction**

In contemporary Uzbek literature, ecological issues have increasingly become central topics reflecting the global discourse on environmental degradation and sustainability. Among modern Uzbek writers, Tohir Malik stands out for his ability to intertwine ecological anxieties within narratives that primarily address moral, social, and philosophical conflicts. Although Malik’s works are not classified as “ecological literature,” they contain recurring images of degraded landscapes, polluted urban environments, and disrupted human–nature harmony. These elements invite scholarly attention to the ways ecological concerns are artistically represented.

Previous studies have examined Malik’s contribution to the detective genre and moral philosophy, yet few works focus specifically on ecological interpretation in his fiction. This research aims to fill that gap by analyzing how Malik’s literary strategies convey environmental concerns, and how ecological ideas support the ethical and philosophical layers of his works.

Thus, the research addresses the following question: How does Tohir Malik interpret ecological ideas in his literary works, and what narrative devices does he employ to express them?

### **Methodology**

This study applies qualitative literary analysis, focusing on the following methods:

**Textual Analysis:** Close reading of selected texts (“Shaytanat,” “So’nggi o’q,” “Zilzila,” “Odamiylik mulki,” and several short stories).

**Thematic Analysis:** Identification of central ecological motifs such as environmental degradation, moral ecology, urban environmental decline, and symbolic natural imagery.

**Comparative Literary Method:** Relating Malik’s ecological ideas to broader Uzbek ecological prose traditions, including works of Chingiz Aytmatov and O’tkir Hoshimov, to contextualize his contributions.

Contextual Analysis: Examination of historical and sociocultural conditions—especially the ecological crises in the late-Soviet and early-independence period (e.g., Aral Sea problem)—that shaped Malik’s worldview.

The study does not aim to quantify ecological themes but to interpret their literary significance and function.

## **Results**

### 1. Human–Nature Relationship as a Moral Category

In Malik’s writings, nature is not just a background element but a mirror of human moral conditions. Characters who lose ethical orientation often appear in environmentally degraded spaces—withered landscapes, dusty towns, polluted urban surroundings. This pattern suggests that ecological decay reflects spiritual decline.

For example, in “Shaytanat,” the imagery of smoke-filled streets, collapsing urban infrastructure, and neglected green spaces symbolizes the moral corruption spreading through society. Nature suffers parallel to human conscience.

### 2. Urban Ecology and Social Chaos

Malik’s urban settings often depict overcrowded, polluted, and chaotic environments. These portrayals underline how social injustice and crime accelerate ecological decay. In “So’nggi o’q,” the waste-filled courtyards and polluted air underscore the collapse of human responsibility and civic discipline.

Malik’s ecological commentary highlights:

Poor waste management

Decline in public responsibility

Noise, air, and visual pollution

Loss of communal green areas

Thus ecology becomes a metaphor for social disorder.

### 3. Ecological Warnings Through Catastrophic Imagery

In the story “Zilzila,” natural disaster functions as an ecological warning, emphasizing humanity’s vulnerability and the consequences of irresponsibility. Malik interprets ecological catastrophe not simply as a natural phenomenon but as a result of human neglect of environmental balance.

**The earthquake** in the story symbolizes:

Human arrogance

Weakness of urban planning

Fragility of the man–nature relationship

Through catastrophe, Malik generates empathy toward nature and calls for ecological consciousness.

### 4. Symbolic Use of Natural Elements

Malik frequently uses nature symbolically:

Wind symbolizes moral purification or chaos.

Dust symbolizes social decay and environmental neglect.

Water scarcity reflects emotional and moral emptiness.

These symbols demonstrate how ecology integrates into the psychological dimension of Malik’s narratives.

### 5. Implicit Didacticism

Although Malik avoids overt moral preaching, his works advocate for an ethic of ecological responsibility. The characters who show respect for nature are often portrayed as morally upright, while those who exploit or ignore environmental harm embody ethical corruption.

### **Discussion**

The findings indicate that Malik's ecological ideas are woven into broader philosophical reflections on morality and social responsibility. His narratives demonstrate that ecological issues cannot be separated from human behavior, ethics, and social structures.

Malik's approach differs from overt ecological writers such as Barbara Kingsolver or Chingiz Aytmatov, who foreground ecological disasters as main plot elements. Instead, Malik embeds ecological concerns subtly within the psychological and social fabric of the story. This implicit strategy reflects the Uzbek cultural tradition where nature is perceived as a moral compass.

Moreover, Malik's ecological interpretations resonate with the post-Soviet ecological discourse, including concerns over the Aral Sea tragedy, urban pollution, and environmental neglect of the 1980s–1990s. His works echo a period when people experienced severe ecological degradation directly in daily life.

Thus, Malik's ecological ideas enrich Uzbek ecological literature not by explicit environmental activism but by integrating nature into the moral and philosophical dimensions of human life.

### **Conclusion**

This research found that ecological ideas in Tohir Malik's works are subtle but pervasive, forming an essential part of his humanistic worldview. Malik interprets ecology not only as environmental concern but also as a moral, psychological, and social category. Through symbolic imagery, urban ecological descriptions, and catastrophic motifs, he emphasizes the interdependence of human ethics and natural balance.

The study contributes to the understanding of ecological discourse in Uzbek literature and highlights the need for further research comparing Malik's ecological ideas with those of other Central Asian and global writers.

### **References:**

1. Xayrulloeva, N. (2021). The Issue of Feminism in "Beach House" Series by MA Monroe. Центр научных публикаций (buxdu. Uz), 8(8).
2. Xayrulloeva, N. (2021). An Image of Women in "Beach House Series" by Mary Alice Monroe. ЦЕНТР НАУЧНЫХ ПУБЛИКАЦИЙ (buxdu. uz), 7(7), 13.
3. Quronov, D. O'zbek adabiyoti nazariyasi. Toshkent: Universitet, 2010.
4. Karimov, S. "XX asr o'zbek prozasida ekologik tafakkur." O'zbek tili va adabiyoti, №4, 2015.
5. Saidov, A. "Ekologik muammolar badiiy talqinida obraz va g'oya." Adabiyotshunoslik jurnali, 2020.
6. Glotfelty, Ch. & Fromm, H. The Ecocriticism Reader. University of Georgia Press, 1996.
7. Buell, L. The Environmental Imagination. Harvard University Press, 1995.
8. Malik, Tohir. Shaytanat. Toshkent: Sharq, various editions.
9. Malik, Tohir. So'nggi o'q. Toshkent: Yozuvchi, 1994.
10. Malik, Tohir. Zilzila. In: Hikoyalar to'plami. Toshkent: Sharq, 1998.