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SCENES OF SOCIAL LIFE IN JAMILA ERGASHEVA'S NOVELLA “TANAZZUL”

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Annotation: The article analyzes the spiritual and social decline of an individual in Jamila Ergasheva's novella "Tanazzul" examining, through the image of Ziyodullo, how family, social, and moral factors shape a person's fate. The study shows how the author portrays the protagonist's decline not one-sidedly but as a complex system of cause-and-effect relationships.

Keywords: social life, spiritual decline, alcoholism, family environment, generational repetition, social stigma, psychological character, loss of self, responsibility, artistic

Literature is an artistic reflection of social life. In any literary work, the relationship between the individual and the surrounding social environment is one of the central issues. In contemporary Uzbek prose especially, the individual's place in society, their inner world, moral choices, and relationship with social reality have become one of the leading themes.

The writer's novella “Tanazzul” is one of the works in contemporary Uzbek prose that illuminates society's spiritual and social crisis on the basis of artistic-aesthetic principles. Through the fate of a single person — Ziyodullo — the work rises to the level of artistic generalization in portraying the complex processes occurring throughout the life of the whole of society: the erosion of moral values, disorder within the family environment, alcoholism, social indifference, and the tragedy of a person losing their sense of self. The very title “Tanazzul” (“Decline”) also expresses the author's central idea. This decline is interpreted not merely as that of a single protagonist, but as the decline of the entire social environment.

The researcher R. Zaripova characterizes the novella as follows: “Through the example of this novella, Jamila Ergasheva reveals, in the image of Ziyodullo, the portrait of people who have failed to choose the right path in life and do not know how to make full use of their own potential”[1].

In literary studies, scenes of social life within a literary work are revealed, above all, through the relationship between the individual and society. In this novella too, it is not the individual alone that stands at the center of events, but the environment that shaped them. The writer does not merely depict Ziyodullo's present tragic condition, but gradually uncovers the social factors that brought him to this state. In this respect, present-day reality and memories of the past are organically intertwined in

[1]Rushana Zaripova, Surxon adabiy jarayonida milliy kolorit, Monografiya, Termiz – 2024 yil, p. 84

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the novella. Such a compositional method not only reveals the protagonist's inner world but also allows for a deeper understanding of cause-and-effect relationships within society.

Already at the beginning of the novella, the depiction of Ziyodullo restrained in a hospital acquires symbolic meaning. In depicting his physical suffering, the author's actual aim is to show a spiritual and social tragedy. Through these images, the reader senses just how far alcoholism can degrade a person.

The family environment depicted through Ziyodullo's childhood memories contains two opposing worldviews. On one side stands the image of an honest father who has nonetheless fallen into the grip of alcohol; on the other, the image of a mother struggling to hold the family together. The author does not portray the father as an entirely negative character but as a victim of a social vice. His loss of reputation, health, and ultimately his life because of drink becomes a tragedy for the whole family. Through this, the writer shows that one person's vice derails the fate not only of that individual but of the entire generation to follow.

In the novella, the father's advice to his son performs a particularly important artistic function. On one hand he urges his son not to drink; on the other, he stresses the importance of wealth and status in society. This inner contradiction reveals the complex psychological nature of the character. The author builds the individual's character not in a one-sided manner but through real-life contradictions. As a result, the reader views the father not only with criticism but also with compassion.

The writer makes extensive use of the village setting in creating scenes of social life. Gossip among the villagers, people's attitude toward a family of drinkers, and the label “the drunkard's child” exert a powerful influence on Ziyodullo's formation as a person. Thus, the writer strives to show the role of the social environment in shaping a person's destiny.

The author does not depict the human psyche as a flat, unchanging state. The characters simultaneously love and hate, feel pity and condemn, help and grow weary, forgive and turn away. Such inner contradictions make the images in the work lifelike and complex. The defining feature of Ziyodullo's personality is his inner division. On one side is a capable student who lived with great dreams, vowed not to repeat his father's mistake, and longed for love and family. On the other stands a person unable to control himself, quick to be swayed by outside influence, and prone to lies and self-justification to hide his weakness.

The young Ziyodullo pictures his future clearly: studying at an institute, working well, becoming a leader, and bringing his father back from drinking. He believes that once he becomes “a big man,” all his problems will be solved. That is why, when Orzigul's family rejects him because of his lineage, his vision of the future is shattered as well. He does not merely lose the girl he loves; he also loses his confidence that he will be socially accepted. Ziyodullo's psychological crisis deepens precisely from this point. He begins to live with an inner resentment directed against Orzigul's father, the villagers, his own father's fate, and his own lineage.

After his father's death, Ziyodullo does not blame him, but neither does he defend him. Through this, the writer shows how a child is psychologically punished for a father's sin. Later, when Ziyodullo himself repeats his father's path, this unresolved psychological wound resurfaces. In this

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way, the author portrays the generational repetition not in the simplistic form of "the father drank, so the son drank too," but as a psychological mechanism. The proverb at the end of the work, "Do not rejoice thinking good will come from bad," reveals the central idea of the entire novella.

Ziyodullo's elder brother repeats their father's fate in a different form. Unable to give up drinking, he loses his family and faces tragedies connected with his own children. In the work, alcoholism is portrayed as a social vice that passes from generation to generation. Ziyodullo's father drinks, his brother also succumbs to drink, and eventually Ziyodullo himself follows the same path.

Ziyodullo leaves the village for Tashkent, hoping to leave his old humiliations behind. But his pain does not stay in the village; it settles in his heart and travels with him to the city. He is expelled from his studies and grows distant from his relatives. His relationship with Nazira, an acquaintance from the world of trade, is likewise not based on equality. Nazira is an experienced, economically powerful woman who knows how to control people, while Ziyodullo is a person searching for support in life, easily influenced, and in need of attention.

In Ziyodullo's life, money carries a meaning deeper than a mere material means. Having grown up suffering from poverty, his father's disgrace, and people's mockery, he comes to see money as a means of dignity and protection. Once he begins earning income with Nazira's help, Ziyodullo feels like a new man. In buying his wife Gavhar many gifts, sincere affection is mixed with a desire to prove himself a worthy husband. Through money, he seeks to gain a kind of victory over his childhood poverty and Orzigul's rejection.

At first, Nazira provides him with work, money, and housing. Ziyodullo comes to see Nazira as the person who improved his life. But this help gradually breeds dependency. Nazira knows well that Ziyodullo lacks confidence in his own strength, and she constantly instills in him the idea that "you became a man because of me." Nazira's attitude toward Ziyodullo combines affection, possessiveness, self-interest, and jealousy. She does not want to share him with another woman. After he marries Gavhar, his growing distance from her wounds Nazira deeply. Knowing his weakness for alcohol, she treats him to drink. Nazira then leaves, but Ziyodullo continues drinking. In this way the author does not place the blame for the protagonist's decline solely on Nazira: the external trigger awakens an inner weakness, and it is Ziyodullo himself who continues down that path afterward.

Gavhar gives Ziyodullo the family warmth he had never found before. When her husband comes home drunk, she looks after him. Seeing the worry and affection in Gavhar's eyes, Ziyodullo feels ashamed. This shame shows that his conscience has not yet been entirely extinguished. Gavhar's kindness briefly kindles a light in the protagonist's heart, and he promises to stop drinking.

Gavhar, too, is a character wounded by life. Divorced from her previous marriage, she lives with her child and feels a need for affection, yet this need does not cause her to lose her own self-worth. Every time Ziyodullo returns to drinking, he looks for the cause outside himself: Orzigul rejected him, Nazira forced him, life was unfair, his relatives did not understand him. It is precisely here that the protagonist's inner decline deepens further. Because he never fully acknowledges his own weakness, he cannot bring himself to take decisive steps toward recovery. He regards himself as "sick," but he does not consistently take responsibility for fighting that sickness.

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Ziyodullo's attempt, while drunk, to assault Gavhar's daughter marks the lowest point of his moral decline. Gavhar's decision to take her daughter and leave is not a renunciation of her own happiness but a choice in favor of her maternal responsibility. She does not place her love for her husband above her child's safety.

The novella also contains the image of Iroda, Ziyodullo's niece. She once believed that her uncle would become an important official and raise the standing of the whole family. While her classmates took pride in their grandfathers, Iroda built her own future pride around the image of Ziyodullo. His fall into alcoholism means far more to Iroda than simply losing an uncle. She loses her childhood dream, her hope of restoring the family's honor, and the support that once kept her from feeling inferior to others.

For this reason, Iroda's anger toward her uncle is not simple exhaustion; it also contains the bitterness of a shattered ideal. She tries again and again to save Ziyodullo, but each failure feels like yet another rejection of her childhood hope. When she speaks harshly to him on the phone, it is not because she hates him, but because she is worn out by years of repeated promises, hospital visits, and her mother's pleas. Ziyodullo's words, “this time my condition is very bad,” sound to her like nothing more than a repetition of his previous false promises.

On the surface, Iroda is an independent, educated, and intelligent woman, but a deep loneliness lives within her inner world. Her husband has betrayed her, her boss at work demeans her, and even her mother does not always understand her emotional needs. She hides her pain from her children, believing they should not know of their mother's vulnerability. The author compares her heart to a house where outside guests are allowed only as far as the threshold, while sorrowful smoke gathers unseen in the inner room.

Ziyodullo was once an educated young man thirsty for knowledge. He seeks out the works of Ibn Sino, trying to find a cure for his illness. A hospital worker's mockery of him shows how society judges a person by a single condition alone — in their eyes, an alcohol-dependent person cannot read books or have any need for knowledge. He hides the books under his clothing to take them away. A man once esteemed as a “future prosecutor” is now afraid of being ridiculed for reading a book.

He seeks a cure for his illness in the works of Ibn Sino, yet his main problem does not lie in his body alone; he also needed to find a cure for his inner spiritual and moral corruption. In the protagonist's home, empty bottles lying scattered alongside the books of Ibn Sino symbolically sum up the two forces at work in his life: the striving for enlightenment and self-destruction.

After Ziyodullo's death, Iroda, seeing his condition, recalls their last phone conversation. The thought “he was sick” awakens a belated understanding and a sense of guilt within her. When the question arises of bringing Ziyodullo's body back to the village, Iroda again thinks about what people will say and about the relatives' shame. In this way, society's merciless judgment does not end even with death. Iroda does not excuse her uncle's actions, yet in the face of death her anger softens, and Ziyodullo becomes once more the helpless, needy uncle of her childhood.

Iroda pays the doctor and asks for a religious burial. She then goes to Ziyodullo's house, recites a few verses, and silently bids her uncle farewell within herself. The foul air, the empty bottles, and

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the books left in the house tell the story of Ziyodullo's life without words. This place had once been the home where his dreams of wealth, love, and family had lived; now it has become a ruin bearing the material traces of decline.

The author neither wholly condemns nor wholly excuses the protagonist. Ziyodullo's childhood wounds, his tragic love, the social stigma, and his alcohol dependence evoke the reader's compassion. Yet the author does not conceal the protagonist's avoidance of responsibility, his self-justification, or the harm he inflicts on those close to him. His tragedy does not lead to the simplistic conclusion that "a bad man was punished." On the contrary, the work leaves the reader facing complex questions:

"Tanazzul" is a psychological work that depicts a person's inner disintegration in connection with family, social, economic, and moral factors. Through Ziyodullo's life, the author shows that behind the decline of a single individual lies an entire system of relationships. The deepest cause of the protagonist's decline is his failure to fully acknowledge his affliction and to confront it with a sense of responsibility.

The central idea of "Tanazzul" is that a person's disintegration is not merely the result of alcohol or a single negative habit. Decline arises where a person's sense of worthlessness, society's merciless judgment, a lack of familial love, and interest-driven relationships converge. In the novella, social life is portrayed not as a collection of isolated events or everyday details, but as a complex environment that determines human destiny.

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