

**THE REPRESENTATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE WORKS OF
TOHIR MALIK**

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Abstract: This article explores the conceptual portrayal of artificial intelligence (AI) in the fantastic works of Uzbek writer Tohir Malik. While Malik wrote during a period when the term "AI" was not widely popularized in Central Asian literature, his fiction presents forward-looking philosophical reflections on machine consciousness, ethical dilemmas of technology, and the blurring of human-machine boundaries. By analyzing select stories, this study reveals how Malik used speculative elements to predict the rise of intelligent systems, emphasizing their potential impact on identity, morality, and society.

Keywords: Tohir Malik, artificial intelligence, Uzbek literature, speculative fiction, ethics, machine consciousness, futuristic narrative.

Introduction

Artificial intelligence is a defining theme of 21st-century science and culture, yet its conceptual roots stretch back to earlier speculative fiction. In Uzbek literature, Tohir Malik emerges as one of the few authors who indirectly anticipated AI-related issues through allegorical and symbolic writing.

Although Malik did not explicitly use the term "artificial intelligence," several of his stories feature themes that align with modern AI discourse—intelligent machines, human-like programs, loss of emotional connection due to technological over-dependence, and questions of ethical control over created intelligence. In works like *Charxpalak* (The Ferris Wheel), *Ko'zgu* (The Mirror), and *Tungi mehmon* (The Night Guest), Malik examines characters' interactions with entities that possess autonomous logic, predictive ability, or non-human intelligence.

This paper analyzes the philosophical and literary dimensions of these portrayals and argues that Malik's speculative imagination anticipates the fundamental dilemmas of today's AI ethics and metaphysics.

Methods

To analyze AI representation in Tohir Malik's fiction, the following methods were employed:

1. **Textual Analysis** – Close reading of selected stories to identify traits associated with AI or synthetic cognition.
2. **Comparative Approach** – Paralleling Malik's fictional technologies with contemporary AI concepts (machine learning, robotics, sentience).
3. **Philosophical Interpretation** – Exploring existential and ethical themes related to human-machine boundaries.

4. **Symbolic Reading** – Interpreting allegorical representations of machines and non-human intelligence in cultural and spiritual contexts.

Results

1. The Machine as a Mirror of Humanity (*Ko‘zgu*)

In this story, a character confronts a mysterious mirror-like device that reflects not only physical form but inner consciousness. The mirror anticipates modern AI’s capacity for psychological profiling and predictive behavior analysis. Malik uses the object as a metaphor for surveillance and loss of privacy—core themes in AI ethics.

2. Predictive Systems in *Charxpalak*

The narrative features a symbolic structure that manipulates time and memory. The protagonist becomes trapped in a repetitive cycle controlled by an unseen system—suggesting deterministic algorithms akin to AI decision-making systems. Malik subtly critiques the mechanization of choice and the erosion of free will.

3. Emotionless Intelligence in *Tungi Mehmon*

An uninvited visitor, possibly extraterrestrial or mechanical, disrupts the protagonist’s worldview. The being’s lack of emotion and logic-based reasoning foreshadows debates about empathy and affective computing in AI.

Story Title	Implied AI Concept	Literary Device	Ethical/Philosophical Issue
<i>Ko‘zgu</i>	Predictive cognition	Symbolic mirror	Self-awareness, identity
<i>Charxpalak</i>	Algorithmic determinism	Temporal loop	Free will, system control
<i>Tungi mehmon</i>	Emotionless reasoning agent	Allegorical character	Empathy, humanity vs logic

Discussion

Tohir Malik’s speculative fiction operates in a unique philosophical register—blending Central Asian spiritualism with global futurism. His narratives do not describe robots or computers in the conventional sci-fi sense, yet they raise critical questions:

- Can intelligence exist without emotion?
- What are the consequences of systems that know us better than we know ourselves?
- Does technological progress mean spiritual regression?

These questions anticipate today’s discourse on AI ethics, surveillance capitalism, and digital consciousness. Malik’s approach suggests a cultural skepticism toward soulless intelligence—emphasizing the primacy of spiritual and moral awareness over mere computational capacity.

Conclusion

Although Tohir Malik did not live in the AI age, his fiction resonates strongly with modern technological anxieties. His works reveal a visionary understanding of the human condition in an era dominated by intelligent systems. Malik's narratives highlight the tension between reason and empathy, control and freedom, technology and tradition.

By presenting AI as a metaphor rather than a machine, he offers a literary framework through which readers can critically assess the ethical boundaries of emerging technologies. His stories remain a rich source for rethinking the human role in a world increasingly governed by artificial logic.

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