

=====

THE ROLE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF RELIGIOUS IDEAS AND IDEOLOGY IN FICTION

Ahmadova O'g'iloy Ozodqul qizi
PhD student, Samarkand State University

ARTICLE INFORMATION

ABSTRACT:

ARTICLE HISTORY:

Received: 05.06.2026
Revised: 06.06.2026
Accepted: 07.06.2026

KEYWORDS:

literature, religion, faith, psyche, idea, ideology.

This article discusses the role and importance of religious ideas and beliefs in fiction, the process and influence of religion's integration into literature, as well as the new stage of literary development. It also examines the issue of constructing literary works on the basis of religious themes and the impact of religious and enlightenment literature on the psyche of the modern individual.

It is no secret that the subject matter of fiction constantly evolves and renews itself in connection with social life, the events occurring within it, and the individual of a particular era. Space, time, and events have always left their mark on literature, literary works, as well as on human psychology and personality. There is another factor that has always been closely connected with literature. Although at first glance literature and religion may seem to belong to two separate spheres, in reality, they are deeply interconnected and inseparable, like two organs of a single body.

In his scholarly work, Shahzad Latif compares literature to the body and religion to the soul. While this idea is not entirely new in academic discourse, it once again confirms that literature and religion have long been regarded as an inseparable unity. The presence of narratives and stories in sacred texts such as the Qur'an and the Bible, along with their use of artistic and expressive devices, has been extensively studied as an object of literary analysis and continues to be so.

Today, many scholars frequently emphasize that certain literary genres—particularly poetry and drama—originated directly from religious rituals. Although this view may not apply to all genres and forms of literature, the Romanian scholar Mircea Eliade identified that some types of epic literature are connected to shamanistic practices. One of the most significant and visible aspects of the relationship between literature and religion is that both

oral and written literature have historically served to preserve and transmit religious ideas and movements.

In general, many scholars have attempted to interpret the relationship between religion and literature as a unified whole, demonstrating their deep interconnection and arguing that literature cannot exist entirely independent of religious ideas. Among Western literary scholars, figures such as Redmond James, Scott Nathan, E.S. Shaffer, Meir Sternberg, Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, Giles B. Gunn, Northrop Frye, Rudolf Bultmann, and many others have explored this issue in depth in their research.

In Eastern literature, religious ideas have long been a central theme. Compared to the West, religion has had a more enduring presence in Eastern literary traditions and continues to do so today. It is difficult to imagine Eastern literature without religious thought. When we look at the most ancient literatures of India, Iran, and Egypt, we encounter clear evidence supporting this view. Naturally, providing a comprehensive analysis of this topic would require considerable time and might lead us away from the main focus of the article. Therefore, we will limit ourselves to presenting a few examples from the history of Eastern classical literature.

In the East, particularly after the emergence of Islam, the influence of religion on literature increased significantly. Of course, it would be incorrect to claim that there was no influence before Islam (for instance, myths and legends about the creation of the world, various cults, Indian works such as Kalila and Dimna and Panchatantra, as well as the Zoroastrian sacred text Avesta, and others).

Specifically, new concepts began to appear in Eastern literary works. The tradition of composing hamd (a literary passage praising and glorifying Allah—the Creator of all existence, including humanity, animals, plants, and the entire universe), na't (texts describing and praising the Messenger of Allah, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who is regarded as the reason for the creation of the worlds), and mi'rajnama (literary depictions of the Night of Ascension—Mi'raj—when the Prophet ascended to the presence of Allah) became widespread. The concept of tasawwuf (Sufism), which formed the foundation of classical literature, also emerged. Nearly every work was created based on Sufi teachings. Thus, the notions of religion and literature began to be used side by side. People started to understand religion through literature, and religious ideas gradually penetrated human hearts through literary expression.

As mentioned above, literature is a social phenomenon that develops in harmony with life. As people's thoughts, aspirations, lifestyles, and religious beliefs change, literature also evolves and renews itself. After literary periods such as the Renaissance in Europe and the classical period in the East, we can observe significant transformations both in world literature and in Uzbek literature. More precisely, people gradually began to focus more on the material (the body) rather than the spiritual (the soul), and this shift inevitably influenced literature. Writers started to acknowledge material reality and made it their central theme. Social life,

political systems, and prevailing ideologies managed, for a certain period, to distance religion from literature (in the West from the 17th century to the present, and in the East from the late 19th to the 20th century).

However, in the contemporary period, with the renewed development and expansion of Islam, a new stage has begun to emerge in Eastern literature. One may say that religion has once again started to influence literature. In Uzbek literature, for instance, verses from the Qur'an, hadiths, and religious narratives have gradually reappeared. As an example, in the story "Qorako'z Majnun" by the Uzbek writer Said Ahmad, the inclusion of an epigraph from Surah Al-Baqarah (2:217) of the Qur'an ("And whoever of you reverts from his religion and dies while he is a disbeliever—for those, their deeds have become worthless in this world and the Hereafter, and those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide therein eternally") as well as a hadith from Al-Jami' al-Kabir ("One of the ten animals that will enter Paradise is the faithful dog of the Companions of the Cave") serves to artistically express the grave consequence of apostasy in Islam.

Similarly, in the works of the contemporary Uzbek writer Ulug'bek Hamdam, such as the novels "Isyon va Itoat" and "Muvozanat", attention is given to the role of religious beliefs in shaping human psychology and spirituality. The novel "Isyon va Itoat", dedicated to questions of faith and belief, portrays how its characters attempt to comprehend the logic of existence and spiritual tranquility through reflections on both this world and the hereafter. The protagonist Akbar's rebellion against fate and God, followed by his eventual submission after long struggles and hardships, is depicted through a philosophical and psychological lens. Another writer who reintroduced religious spirit into literature after a period of separation from religion is the beloved Uzbek author Tohir Malik. In his works, deeply imbued with the light of Islam, he presented a series of writings fully grounded in religious ideology to the public. The works of Tohir Malik such as "Mehmon tuyg'ular", "Iymonlashish umidi", and "Odamiylik mulki" belong to the category of the above-mentioned writings. In particular, the book "Odamiylik mulki", written in a religious-philosophical spirit, begins with an epigraph taken from the Holy Qur'an, Surah Al-Isra (17:70): "Indeed, We have honored the children of Adam, carried them on land and sea, provided them with lawful and pure sustenance, and preferred them above many of those We have created."

This book is described as a "book of ethics," in which the author addresses issues such as the virtues of acquiring knowledge, the rights of parents, maintaining kinship ties, principles of good character, the conditions of marriage and spousal relations, and the harms of improper speech—all from an Islamic perspective.

It is possible to add dozens of other examples to the list of works mentioned above. However, among the more recent works that have attracted significant attention from contemporary readers, it is worth highlighting Akrom Malik's "Xalqa." This work narrates the struggle between faith and disbelief, the believer and the devil, the downfall of the oppressor, and the triumph of the oppressed. "As a nation strives to recognize its identity, it

is compelled to recognize God,” says the author, who, despite his young age, has managed to gather a wide readership with a single book.

The growing interest in religious themes mentioned above is evident not only among Uzbek readers but also among Turkish readers, as works written in this direction are increasingly occupying larger spaces on bookstore shelves. It can also be observed that such works are rapidly entering Uzbek literary circles. For instance, dozens of works by the Turkish writer Omina Shenliko‘g‘li, built upon religious ideas and ideology—such as “The Imam’s Mannequin Daughter,” “Maria,” “The Christian Rose,” “Layla, Daughter of the Pyramids,” and “A Muslim Woman in Europe”—have been translated into Uzbek.

Likewise, many other literary works, including “The Stepmother” (Ahmad Lutfi Qozonchi), “Mothers Who Raised Scholars” (Murat Tosun), “Faith and Sorrow” (Said Chamlija), and “Alfido” (Onur Qoplon), are rapidly reaching readers. This trend indicates that the modern reader has an increasing demand for such literature.

In conclusion, the close relationship between religion and literature has played a significant role in shaping the thematic, ideological, and aesthetic foundations of literary works throughout history. From ancient myths and sacred texts to classical Eastern literature and contemporary writings, religious ideas have continuously influenced the development of literary expression. In particular, Eastern literature demonstrates a deep and enduring connection with religious thought, especially following the emergence of Islam, which introduced new genres, concepts, and spiritual dimensions into literary creativity.

Although certain historical periods witnessed a decline in the presence of religious themes in literature due to social and ideological transformations, recent trends indicate a revival of religious motifs and spiritual inquiry, especially in modern Uzbek and Turkish literature. The growing interest of readers in such works further highlights the relevance of religious and moral issues in understanding the human psyche and contemporary life.

Therefore, it can be argued that religion remains an essential and dynamic component of literature, continuing to inspire writers and shape readers’ worldviews. Whether this resurgence represents a new stage in literary development or a continuation of traditional patterns will become clearer over time. Nevertheless, the analysis and interpretation of such works remain a crucial task for literary scholarship. Taking this into account, literary scholars have begun to reflect on whether a new stage in literature is emerging today. Of course, whether this can truly be called a new stage or not remains to be seen over time. It is also unclear how long such works will endure. However, analyzing and critically evaluating every work that reaches readers remains one of the primary tasks of literary studies.

References

1. Glimpses of Religion in English Literature. Shahzad Latif Chaudhary. American International Journal of Contemporary Research, Vol. 3, No. 12, December 2013.

-
2. Literature and Religion. Article from <http://encyclopedia.com> □
 3. Adabiyotshunoslik nazariyasi. Hotam Umurov, “Xalq me’rosi,” Tashkent, 2004.
 4. Adabiyotshunoslik nazariyasi. A. Ulug‘ov, “G‘afur G‘ulom,” Tashkent, 2017.
 5. Qora ko‘z majnun. Said Ahmad, “O‘zbekiston,” Tashkent, 2013.
 6. Muvozanat. Ulug‘bek Hamdam, “Sharq,” Tashkent, 2007.
 7. Isyon va itoat. Ulug‘bek Hamdam, “Yangi asr avlodi,” Tashkent, 2018.
 8. Odamiylik mulki. Tohir Malik Publishing House, 2021.

