

**Religious Narrative of Literature in Contrast with  
Materialism (Relying on the Opinions of Morteza  
Motahhari)**

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**Introduction**

Materialism, in its Hegelian-Marxist sense, provoked unprecedented reactions specifically among the clergies since its inception in Iran. Morteza Motahhari was one of the first people who understood the importance and sensitivity of this concept and its consequences in the intellectual condition of the society as well as the indisputable necessity of paying attention to it. Therefore, he could bring a part of society, especially the clergies, to an approximate consensus in its confrontation against it. The central question in this campaign is what the role and function of Persian literary heritage has been, and the present study has dealt with it.

### **Research methodology, background and purpose**

This study has been done in the framework of qualitative content analysis using library resources. Researchers have always considered Motahhari's thoughts and works as one of the most prominent and influential contemporary characters. As a result, some prominent works have been done about materialism in Motahhari's thought. Shaverdi and Kermani (2011) in their article, titled "*Analysis and critique of Hegel's dialectical movement and dialectical materialism with emphasis on the views of Shahid Motahhari*", have dealt with the difference between the concept of movement in Islamic philosophy and Marxism from Motahhari's point of view. Another important work in this regard is Mohammad Sadra's thesis, titled "*The interaction between clergies and Leftist thoughts in contemporary Iran*", which deals with Motahhari's efforts against materialism in the third chapter. It should be noted that there is very little research which examines Motahhari's thoughts and works in relation to literature. For example, Mousapour and Shirjooposht (2014) in a dissertation titled "*Arabic literature in the works of professor Morteza Motahhari*" has examined the position of Arabic language and literature in some of Morteza Motahhari's works. Also, Tijani Semari (2007) in his thesis "*Foundations of mysticism from the Perspective of Imam Khomeini and Shahid Motahhari*", has partly approached literary discussions with Morteza Motahhari in accordant with the link between mysticism and literature. Rahmdel (2012) in the article "*A brief look at the Observer of Secrets*" has addressed Motahhari's views on Hafez's poetry and thoughts. Hosseinzadeh Yazdi (2016) has explained the causes of the degeneration of Islamic civilization from the perspective of Morteza Motahhari with an emphasis

on the book *Anecdotes of pious men*. Fasai and Dorri (2020), in the article "*The Position and Function of Saadi's poetry and thought in the intellectual System of Morteza Motahari*", have searched for Saadi Shirazi's poetry and thought in Motahhari's intellectual system. Thus, like the approach of present study, no independent research was found which examined the role and function of Persian literature in Motahhari's exposure to materialism. The main importance of this article is due to indicate the undeniable and important position of Persian literature in the socio-political environment of contemporary Iran.

### **Discussion**

Motahhari is one of the people who has a special interest in applying literary traditions.

Meanwhile, the position of Persian literature in Motahhari's struggle against materialism is very prominent and significant. This issue refers more than anything to the latent capacities in Persian literature which can be present in the most sensitive historical moments and play its social function. In the following, referring to some of the most well-known figures of the Persian literary tradition, it will be clear how and with what quality Motahhari used their poetry and ideas to describe and interpret the monotheistic worldview and in contrast to the material one.

### **Conclusion**

Radical and revolutionary ideas of the Left were introduced to Iran in the first Pahlavi period by Taghi Arani, and unlike the Constitutional period, it took on a scientific form.

In front of Taghi Arani and Donya Magazine were the clergies, who tried to present an anti-narrative against the materialism of doctor Arani and his followers. Realizing the necessity and the sensitivity of the issue, Tabatabai and his student, Morteza Motahhari were widely stood up against the roaring flood of materialism. Therefore, Persian literature has been one of the important tools for confronting materialism. Motahhari has realized that the tremendous capacity of this great treasure can be used to counter some currents, especially materialism. Hence, he has referred to the most prominent figures of Persian literature. Hafez, Rumi, Saadi and Khayyam are among those who have played a prominent role in Motahhari's decisive struggle against materialist traditions. Motahhari presents a completely mystical reading of Hafez's poetry and thought. He confronts Ahmad Shamloo and his material perceptions of Hafez. With meta-textual information and then textual implications, he reaches an immaterial reading of Hafez and tries to free him from the accusation of being materialistic. In this article, we have also shown that Rumi has a special place in literature. Motahhari uses some of Masnavi's anecdotes to weaken materialist discourses and to clarify some positions of dialectical materialism. We have also shown that Saadi's poetry has been very effective during Motahhari's confrontation with materialism. In the end, we have dealt with Khayyam and demonstrated that Khayyam's poetry and thought have also been used to explain some of the fundamental issues of materialism. In the final analysis of the result of this article, a part of the importance, sensitivity and performance of Persian literature is indicated outside the university and in the social, political and cultural relations of contemporary Iran.

**Keywords:** Persian literature, theology, materialism, Morteza Motahhari.

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