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COMPARATIVE-TYOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF RELIGIOUS-ETHICAL DISCOURSE IN KHALED HOSSEINI AND TAMIM ANSARY

Tukhtanova Mumtozbegin
(PhD), NamSIFL

Abstract

Afghan-American literature occupies a distinctive place within contemporary diaspora writing, as it brings together two authors whose approaches to religious-ethical material diverge sharply in genre yet converge in underlying concern. Khaled Hosseini's novels dramatize religious-ethical dilemmas through fictional narrative, while Tamim Ansary's works — most notably his historical study *Destiny Disrupted* and his memoir *West of Kabul, East of New York* — approach the same value system through essayistic and autobiographical modes. A comparative-typological reading of these two authors makes it possible to isolate what is genre-specific and what is shared at the level of discourse strategy when religious-ethical content crosses from an Islamic cultural frame into English-language literary expression.

Keywords: Comparative-typological analysis, religious-ethical discourse, diaspora prose, code-switching, Khaled Hosseini, Tamim Ansary.

Introduction

The relevance of this study lies in the fact that existing scholarship tends to treat Hosseini and Ansary separately, within either fiction studies or life-writing studies, leaving their shared discursive strategies for encoding religious-ethical meaning largely unexamined as a unified typological problem.



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Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to establish a comparative-typological model of religious-ethical discourse as it operates across Hosseini's fiction and Ansary's non-fiction. The objectives are: 1) to identify recurring lexical and rhetorical markers of religious-ethical meaning in both authors; 2) to compare how narrative voice (fictional vs. autobiographical/essayistic) shapes the realization of these markers; 3) to determine the typological features that unite the two authors as representatives of a single diaspora discourse tradition.

Methods

The study employs comparative-typological analysis alongside discourse analysis and stylistic analysis. Textual fragments were grouped according to their function within religious-ethical discourse and compared across the two authors' genres to identify points of convergence and divergence.

Analysis and Discussion

The comparison reveals that both authors rely on a similar strategy of controlled code-switching: terms rooted in Islamic religious vocabulary are introduced into the English text and either left untranslated, glossed briefly, or woven into an explanatory clause, so that the term retains its original resonance while remaining accessible to an English-speaking readership. In Hosseini's fiction this strategy operates at the level of character speech and interior reflection, embedding religious-ethical vocabulary within emotionally charged narrative moments. In Ansary's non-fiction, the same vocabulary tends to appear within explanatory or reflective passages, where the author addresses the reader directly and situates the term within a broader historical or personal frame.



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A further point of convergence concerns narrative distance from religious authority: neither author writes as a religious commentator: Hosseini renders religious-ethical concerns through the interior conflicts of individual characters, while Ansary frames them through personal memory and historical explanation. This shared positioning – treating religious-ethical material as lived experience rather than doctrine – appears to be a typological feature of the wider Afghan-American diaspora discourse, not merely an idiosyncrasy of either writer. At the same time, genre-specific divergence is evident in sentence-level structure: Hosseini favors compressed, emotionally weighted constructions built around recurring symbolic imagery, whereas Ansary favors expository sentence patterns with a more explicit argumentative and explanatory function.

Conclusion

The comparative-typological analysis of Hosseini and Ansary demonstrates that religious-ethical discourse in Afghan-American diaspora writing forms a coherent typological pattern that transcends the boundary between fiction and non-fiction. Establishing this pattern contributes a methodological framework for extending comparative-typological analysis to other diaspora literary traditions in which religious-ethical content must be negotiated across genre and language.

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