



The Influence Of The Fable On Uzbek Literature And The Concept Of The Genre

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OPEN ACCESS

SUBMITTED 31 August 2025

ACCEPTED 26 September 2025

PUBLISHED 31 October 2025

VOLUME Vol.05 Issue 10 2025

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Abstract: This article interprets English and Uzbek fabulism. The great and small affairs of society have been rendered into fables. This paper systematizes those reflections.

Keywords: Essence, essay, genre, style, artistic wholeness, form, content.

Introduction: In many genres of world literature, didactics holds special importance. In the nature of didactic counsels, hints, examples, and fables, a synthesis of lofty, noble feelings directed toward the human phenomenon takes shape. The attention to fables—and their development in poetic form—in the works of the early polymath scholars, writers, and poets of the 9th–12th centuries is clear proof of this view. In the artistic-philosophical-historical inquiries of Yusuf Khos Hojib, Ahmad Yassawi, Ahmad Yugnaki, Mahmud Kashgari, and Abu Rayhan Biruni, we observe various forms of the genre, sometimes appearing in mixed modes. For authors, scholars, and historians did not disregard the fable. This should be understood as stemming from their desire that the people—united as one society under one banner—live lives of happiness and prosperity. Yet the courtiers did not readily heed such advice. The concept that wherever honesty and truthfulness, purity and humanity prevail, there will be blessing, is reflected in the nature of fables.

In the book *A Dictionary of Literary Studies* by Uzbek scholars D. Qurono v, Z. Mamajonov, and M. Sheraliyeva, the following is stated about the fable: “...one of the oldest and, since antiquity, most widely popularized genres in the art of words, a concise story written in prose or verse; due to the primacy of its educative purpose and its overt didactic quality, the fable is regarded as a genre of didactic literature. The construction of the fable corresponds to its didactic character: first a brief story is given, and then, with a

conclusion in the form ‘the moral of the story,’ its figurative meaning is emphasized.” Indeed, while the narrative portion of the fable is akin to fairy tales and anecdotes, the “moral of the story” part is closer to proverbs and sayings. For by “moral of the story” is meant the necessary didactic principle that a person draws from a given reality, which ultimately underscores the importance of deriving educative conclusions. In this way, its educative significance leads the artistry of the fable toward imagery within a certain stratum.

The notions of the lower self (*nafs*) and belief (*i’tiqod*) existed even among primitive humans. Miserliness and hypocrisy, jealousy and sacrificing others for one’s own interests are among the core problems reflected in the nature of the fable. Attitudes toward the fable in world literature have differed and continue to differ. The Turks, for example, call it a “fairy tale,” and draw firm conclusions from it; in Uzbek literature, too, the structure of fairy tales is surrounded by springs of perception aimed at assimilating specific kinds of knowledge and concepts. For this reason, we understand the poetic formula of the fable as grasping what the storyteller intends to say and extracting from it the necessary conclusions for oneself. Since every person is prone to error—the eating of the forbidden fruit, the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise, falling into sin yet readying oneself for worship—making up for errors, separations, and losses in life becomes the most important moral education for a person in the spirit of the fable.

Prof. B. Sarimsoqov on the form *matal* of the word *masal* (fable): “The word *matal* is used among Turkic peoples with various meanings. It is used to mean riddle, wise saying, fairy tale, fable, in general narration, relating, uttering a maxim. As a term, in Uzbek folkloristics it is becoming differentiated as it denotes one type of *paremia* (proverbial expression).” As can be seen, the distinctness between *matal* and *masal*, as well as their genre—compositional integrity, manifests in its own way. The reality narrated in a fable is concise, yet the criteria of meaning within it can encompass the weight of a large work; in a *matal* this appears from a different angle. The social-psychological function of the fable emerges through aspects of a person’s inner world—outer form and inner essence, sincerity in interaction with others, and living in accordance with norms of propriety. Most of these reach their proper measure within these very criteria (standards).

In the Noble Book, the Qur’an, there are chapters (*suras*) associated with the names of animals and living beings. The benefit they bring to humanity—their diligence, and in all cases the cultivation of a habit of

moral upbringing, the holding fast to honesty and purity—has given rise to a kind of moral “modification.” Upon reflection, the central root of the human being—“hold firmly to faith”—points to the prevention of various deviations and separations, errors and losses.

In his work *Tafsiri Hilol*, the venerable Shaykh Muhammad Sadiq Muhammad Yusuf emphasizes the following: “In *Tafsiri Hilol* it is explained thus: ‘The purpose of a parable (*zarbulmasal*) is to test people’s hearts and put them to trial. After such a parable, people adopt two kinds of attitudes: 1) Those who have faith take admonition and counsel from the parable, once again marvel at God’s power, and know that the parable has come from their Lord and that it is true. 2) As for those who disbelieve, because they are deprived of God’s light and faith, they do not comprehend this great truth. They behave impertinently toward Allah. ... Therefore, a parable is a test: it affects each person differently. A sensible person benefits from it and strengthens faith. Those whose minds are in Satan’s hands mock it and sink even deeper into disbelief.’”

The fable as a synthesis of comparison. Throughout the historical development of world science, the “secrets” of the Noble Qur’an—its miracles—have not yet been fully comprehended; there are even hadiths stating that this mysteriousness will remain veiled from human eyes until the Day of Resurrection. For the human mind, even if it were to use a third of its thinking capacity fully, still lacks the intellect and reflection to draw all the conclusions. This is a sign that we cannot even imagine—let alone grasp—the invisible world behind the veil. Things, stones, minerals—indeed everything—reveal their genuine and spurious natures only when compared with one another. A person’s beautiful conduct, dress, self-possession, composure, humility, and taciturnity are all determined by the upbringing that has permeated their very being. Upbringing is the essence of the fable. The things compared—objects, creatures, the changes and growth in the animal and plant realms—live and pass their days under certain laws. The didactic mood and the delight found in fables perfect the weakness of faith in the heart. They lead toward integrity of belief, toward recognizing oneself and recognizing God. On this radiant path, a human being must not try to observe “many” things, but rather live by understandings suited to one’s own body and needs.

In the Noble Qur’an it is said: “Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth (that is, He illuminates all of them and, making them visible, brings them into being from non-existence). The parable of His light (in the heart of a believing servant) is like a niche, within it a lamp; the lamp is in a glass; the glass is as it were a brilliant star. It is lit from a blessed olive tree, neither of the east nor of

the west (but at the very center of the earth). Its oil is so pure and clear that, even if no fire were to touch it, it would almost give light (by itself). (And when fire touches it, it is) light upon light. Allah guides to His light whom He wills. Allah sets forth parables for the people so that they may take heed.” Indeed, as a result of comparison, genuine and spurious minerals separate entirely from one another. So too with people: if they are faithful and believing, God-fearing, with intention and deed united—if their inward and outward are in harmony—then it is worthy to take admonition. The essence of fables also gives expression to these issues related to what is false.

In Jalal al-Din Rumi’s *The Inner Is Within* (*Ichindagi ichindadir*), numerous instructive stories, fables, and legends are presented, sometimes in verse and sometimes in prose. For Rumi expounds, through various episodes, the intermingling of the human being, matter and spirit, the world and nature, and the idea that a pilgrimage of the heart is superior to a thousand pilgrimages to the Ka’ba. Thus, the socialization of the genre—its educative aspects such as communicability among people—can be clearly felt in the doctrines Rumi advances. The strength of the heart lies in the restraint of the tongue. And when does the heart find tranquility? Rumi seeks to answer this question through his life-tested insights and observations. In this sense, the unity of heart and tongue, the harmony of faith and belief, manifests a constellation of metamorphoses that lead to the essence found in fables:

“A Story: A poet who spoke Arabic came before a Turkish king. The sovereign did not even know Persian. The poet had composed a very beautiful poem in his honor. The king sat on the throne, the other amirs and viziers in their places. The poet rose and recited his poem. The ruler, in harmony with the poem’s meaning, kept making corresponding gestures. Those present said, ‘Our king has known Arabic all these years and concealed it from us. If, during this time, any of us uttered bad words in Arabic—woe to us!’ Later they gave precious gifts to one of the king’s trusted servants and said, ‘Find out whether the king knows Arabic or not. If he does not, why did he make such appropriate gestures at the proper moments? Bring us word.’

“One day the trusted servant found the opportunity to solve the matter. During a hunt the king was in high spirits. Taking advantage, he asked the sovereign frankly. The king said, ‘By God, I do not know Arabic. But because I understood the purpose with which he composed that poem—that the poet meant to praise me—and realized the poem was merely a vehicle, I showed him favor. Had there been no purpose, the poem would not have been written.’ Therefore, when

one looks to the purpose, there is no place for duality. Duality lies in what is secondary (division, separation—trans.). The foundation is one.”

As we can see, in advancing this doctrine, Jalal al-Din Rumi classifies episodes that elucidate, in the language of lived experience, the content and essence of the matter and its didactic qualities—showing what kind of prestige and standing the king possessed before his attendants.

As the Russian critic E. M. Meletinsky notes in *The Poetics of Myth*, when explaining how artistic literature connects back to myths and to the genres of folklore, myth is a universal genre: the essence of any work begins with myth and ends with myth. Indeed, there is hardly a genre that does not fit within myth’s scope, and without myth artistic literature could not have developed. If the cradle of world literature’s early development leads back to Greek culture and history, then myth systematizes the primitive conceptions concerning the creation of the world. In this sense, humanity has always felt the need to find answers to various events connected with its past and way of life.

Fable is a distinct, formed manifestation of myth. If, in the nature of myth, the unity of the human being, the world, and the entire cosmos is harmonized, then in the fable the lines of thought and imagination become universal and whole. At the same time, any perceived reality is turned toward educative significance.

Prof. D. Quronov recommends studying works belonging to antiquity by dividing them into three major types: “Everything created by a human being comes into the world due to a specific need and fulfills a certain function. Works created on the basis of figurative thinking are no exception; in this respect, we believe ancient works can be divided into three types: (1) myth—aimed at understanding the order of the world; (2) epic—aimed at perceiving the human within the bosom of the world and the human’s unity with the whole world; (3) fable, fairy tale, legend, anecdote, witticism, and the like—aimed at the perception of concrete life situations and having a practical-applied character.” From this quotation it follows that the distinctiveness in the interpretive structure of the fable is not only to separate good from evil or night from day and to differentiate their negative and positive qualities, but also to comprehend a synthesis of notions directly connected with dynamic prognosis and the human psyche. Until humankind comes to understand its own creation, the many events it experiences dwell in the subconscious and in its sensations; like a beautiful dream, they surface only when their time arrives.

As Prof. D. Abdullaeva writes: “All the myths of the world’s peoples are directed toward understanding the

world, knowing who the Creator (or creators) of the world and humankind is, and seeking answers to natural phenomena. It is an undisputed fact that the symbols of sun, moon, stars, earth, sky, mountain, sea, and the like in myths migrated into folk oral creativity and written literature as symbolic-allegorical images. The use of symbolic-allegorical images is, moreover, characteristic of fables. The central issue of myths—the struggle between good and evil—also synthesizes into tales, fables, legends, and stories.” Indeed, mythological transformation serves to clarify the structure of the fable, the factors of its emergence, its aims, and its functions. For this reason, the concepts of myth and time appear as universal phenomena. By these very facets, fables become evident as a narrower phenomenon than myth.

In conclusion, in Rashid al-Din Vatvat’s work *Hadā’iq al-sihr fī daqā’iq al-shi’r* it is stated regarding *irsāl al-mathal* that “this device consists in the poet inserting a proverb into the couplet.” He then provides examples of verses containing *irsāl al-mathal* from six poets. He also notes separately that when a poet inserts two proverbs into a couplet, this is called *irsāl al-mathalayn*.

Accordingly, in *irsāl al-mathal* the poet, by bringing in exempla from fables/proverbs, elevates both the semantic essence and the plot of the poem, thereby enriching reality. Imagery, emotion and hyperbole, similes—all of these, like *irsāl al-mathal*, impart a renewed, fervent spirit to feelings and perceptions. At its core, the truth of life, interaction with people, and the inner moral facets of the individual are revealed. It lends brilliance to interpretation and depiction, aesthetic delight to logic and philosophy, and originality to the psychological platform. United at a single center with human destiny, experiences, and delicate feelings, it manifests the resonance of a distinct reality. All of this harmonizes with the mythological image, the conceptual doctrine of the fable, and the creator’s manner of apprehending the world.

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