

The Approaches of Selecting Literary Periods

Rahimullah Zirak

Assistant Professor.

Pashto Language and Literature at Communication and Journalism Faculty and Ph.D Researcher in Pashto Department, Faculty of Language and Literature Kabul University, Kabul, Afghanistan

Email - r.zirak2015@gmail.com

Abstract: *This article focuses on understanding the literary periods, the contribution of written literature in literary periods, it further found that oral literature plays the role of backbone (mother) for written literature. This study explores the differences and opposing points in various literary periods and it figured out the dominant role and background of these periods in other languages. What are the major literary periods in Pashto Language and ideas and reasons which drive the nomination of these literary periods and what main features distinguish them. This mini research is library research in which key terms and issues were compared, contrasted and analyzed. This study will help the desired scholars to have an intensive outlook upon the literary periods in Pashto Language. Lastly, the main characteristics of every periods is clearly described throughout the work.*

Key Words: *Literary Periods, Oral Literature, Pashto Literature, Literature.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Pashto Literary Periods have been separated for various factors. A wide range of differences can be seen in the spiritual and physical structure of poetry and prose as a result of political, economic, and social changes and improvement, literary and academic trips (exchange programs), the influence and study of other languages were the driving force for distinction of literary periods and thoroughly each period is separated from the other. Different languages of the world have different literary periods, so this difference is a matter of complexity but rather it is a development and creativity of that language t single period that does not let the period to last forever. Thus one period can pave the ground for emerging next period.

2. Importance of the Study

Since social science have different periods so the issue of literary period is equally important in all languages. This study can provide a greater contribution to the students and scholars of Pashto Language and Literature to understand literary periods. The importance of oral literature in written literature, the opposing triggers of literary periods in other languages and the nomination of literary periods highlight the significance of this study. Thus altogether the aforesaid points made the study highly contributive to audience of this area.

3. Aim of the Study :

The theme of literary periods is a complex and abstract issue so the very intention of the study is to explore the solutions. The understanding of literary periods, the factors of distinguishing the literary periods, studying the reasons of nominating the literary periods and extensive instructions on contradicting points have been embedded in this study.

Questions of the Study:

- What are Literary Periods and what do you mean by them?
- How literary periods can be separated?
- What are the major factors of distinction of literary periods?
- What should be the names for Pashto Literary Periods?
- How many literary periods are there in Pashto?

4. Research Method:

This study used descriptive and analytic method and sometime enjoyed critical approach as well. The Body of Study

5. Folklore Literature:

The issue of selecting literary periods is a complex topic, many writers, scholars, researchers and historians of the contemporary (third) period have been presented their views, but still the problems and questions of students and young researchers have not been solved and it remained unresolved, but so is the situation in most of the languages of

the world. In selection of literary periods, folkloric literature plays a very crucial role and the contribution of folkloric literature cannot be simply ignored. The history of oral literature in any language precedes its written literature. Anyone who talks about selecting literary periods, should not forget the important role of folk literature. Oral literature existed before the advent of written literature in Pashto Language. There are couplets (tappy) in Pashto that can be proved by national and international references which show Pashto Literature ancient history, for instance:

My friend is a Hindu, I am a Muslim (يار مي هندو زه مسلمان يم)
I broom Temple for a friend (د يار لپاره درمسال جارو كوم)

This couplet is certainly from the period after Islam, when Pashtuns embraced to Islam, but Hindus and Muslims (Pashtuns) were living on the same land.

The moon come and see (سپوړميه سر وهه راخيژه)

My beloved is reaping flowers but cut his fingers
(يار مي د گلو لو کوي گوتي ربينه)

In the time of the Aryans, the Soma and Homa plants would gather in the moonlight and the people have been use the aforesaid plants and there are other such couplets as well. (1) While studying world literature's history, this fact should be taken into account that literature has a fundamental connection with society. In Greece, Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, Virgil in Latin, Kalidas in Sanskrit and Shahnameh-e-Ferdowsi in Persian dramas and literary pieces are the mere products of Folklore so Homer, Virgil, Kalidas and Ferdowsi have been embedded in their artistic frame. Taking into consideration what is so far said, oral literature plays the role of backbone (mother) of the written literature and nobody can underrate this high importance of oral literature. In the ancient period of Pashto literature, the content of each form of written literature can be summed up in: (elegy, praise, patriotism, epic poems, etc.) before the written forms of literature we had oral literature that embedded all the aforesaid genres. It is worth to assume that the writers and speakers of written literature had a deep study of folklore and oral literature and oral literature had a special place in the hearts of people in the community. The first hand elegies of ancient time of Pashto were from Sheikh Asaad Suri in 425 (Higri Qamari), we do have such couplets, elegies and ballads that its history precede Sheikh Asaad Suri's elegies and ballads and are much older than Sheikh works. The tradition of oral literature has given greater importance in the history of literature and has always been cherished. In English literature, the fairytales cannot be forgotten and have been considered the core literature. The Arabs claim, "One Thousand and One Nights" stories as the masterpieces of their literature. Literature contributes to the image of society, but written (written) literature cannot do so. (2) Bearing in mind the above analysis, the role of oral and folklore literature should be given special place in the history of literature in order the scholars, the public and the students of this arena would realize that oral literature is just as important as written literature, and that determining the periods of literature that begins with written literature is the same as understanding oral literature.

6. The Differences in Literary Periods

There are many disagreements and differences of literary periods in many languages of the world, including Pashto language and the historical background of Pashto literary periods is one these controversial issues. There are several ways and methods of determining literary periods in Persian language, some of which are following:

- Selecting literary periods in consideration of the Kings and Elders interests.
- Selection of literary periods on the basis of chronology and time.
- Selection of literary periods based on genres, styles, schools and literary movements.
- Selection of literary periods based on historical, political and social changes.
- Selection of literary periods based on an important public historical event or change.

There are similar differences in the chronology of the Arabic language and that is why Pashto, Persian as well as other regional languages are affected. Literary historians, pioneers and founders are Arabs and have the following ideas about literary periods:

- The Arabic language divides the poetry and literature of the pre-Islamic period (Ignorance period) into two parts and the poets of this period are also divided into two broad category.
- Some have divided the poetry and literature of the pre-Islamic period taking into consideration the rank, position, job and prestige of the people in the society.
- Some have been divided this period into three to eight parts taking into consideration the fluency and eloquence of the poets of this period.
- Some have divided them into seven individuals based on the Saba'a al-Ma'laqa. The Saba'a al-Ma'laqa were seven complex balled poems (ballads), through which criticism and valuation were taking place in the Okaz bazaar. The poems and ballads which would have met the standard of time, were hung on the walls of the Ka'bah. The writers of these poems have mentioned that they are ten but some others claimed that they are seven: Amr al-Qays, Zahair, Nabegha, Aisha, Labid, Tarafa and Amr ibn Gulthum.

Some have divided Arabic Poetry and Literature as following:

The Age of Ignorance (Pre-Islamic Period), the Early Age of Islam, the Age of the Abbasids, the Age of the Turks and the Present era. Despite of Persian and Arabic Language, in the history of world literature it is strived to select and categorize literary periods. In the history of the literary world, (Andres, Torles, Lee Wei, Bota, Cyrus, German, and others have been worked in this regard in the 18th and 19th centuries AD). Bearing in mind the aforesaid remarks and points it can be concluded that the classification of periods of literary history does not have a definite and universally accepted standard, for instance, the number of standards in English literary historiography is almost the same as the number of books on the subject, or in other words, there are as many standards as there are writers. One of the criteria in English literature is that each period or era is named after a famous poet, author and writer. Such as: Chaucer's era, Spencer's era, Shakespeare era. Literary periods are sometimes called centuries, such as: fifteenth-century literature, eighteenth-century literature, and so on. Sometimes it is called after dominant philosophical theories and literary schools, such as: the age of classicism, the age of romanticism and so on. The other criterion of determining literary periods is that the periods are referred to as kings or queens, such as the Elizabeth period, the Jacobin period, the Victorian period, and so on. And even sometimes periods are nominated based on chronology. There is also a difference of literary periods in Pashto language, but concentration and discretion has not been used in choosing the name of literary periods. [3]

7. Choosing Name for Literary Periods:

Pashto language scholars, writers, researchers and poets have divided Pashto literary periods according to their views and each period has been given different names, which have appeared in many literary histories as follow: The literary periods of Pashto language are comprised of the ancient period, medieval period and contemporary period. In other words, in many literary histories and literary works, the same names have been given, but I believe that literary periods should be given names that are always acceptable. The above literary periods are three and one period is in the middle, so many scholars and researchers have chosen the name of the middle period, which is in the middle, if another period starts after the (contemporary) period and the fourth or fifth period occurs over time, but then the aforesaid middle period does not remain in the middle, which should be called the second period, or the last period is called the contemporary (current) period, if another period starts after this, what will we call it, that today, tomorrow and the next day, the years go and the time elapses so the name of the contemporary period is also not bearable and it would be better if the above literary periods were given the following names, which are given in very few works. Such as: (Ancient) first period, second and third period, these names seem appropriate for literary periods, if other literary periods appear over time, there will be no problem in naming (calling) them. [4]

7.1. Pashto Literary Periods:

Ancient Period (First Period: The first period dates from the time Amir Karwar (139 Higiir Qamari) and lasts until the advent of Bayzid Roshan (950 Higiir Qamari) and the traces of this period are seen up to (1000 H.Q) the main features of this period are not existed or are limited in second and third periods are as follow:

- ✓ The poems of the ancient period have been given the name of "Ancient Period's Songs", which can be called neither Eastern poetry nor folkloric poetry, but have Eastern poetry and folkloric poetry forms.
- ✓ The poems of this period are simple in terms of thought process and mental juxtaposition. There are no complex artistic imagination (imaginative structures). The language is pure and the meter of the poem is adjusted to the tone of the poem.
- ✓ In ancient time, we have two masterpieces of ballads that the form may have been imitated from Arabic or Persian literature. These ballads differ from the ancient songs in terms of form as well as in terms of poetry and imagination and these two ballads were praise ballads which were famous in Arabic language.
- ✓ The main themes of the first period are the ceremonial songs, pride, elegies, love (romantic songs), separation and moral poems, in which complex imaginations and words play are rarely seen.
- ✓ There is a kind of purity and simplicity in the poetry of the ancient period. There are pure Pashto words, some of which are still using in some areas and some have been abandoned.
- ✓ The poems of the ancient period carry a national meter (sense), which means that these poems were not influenced by Arabic and Persian prosody or rarely affected.
- ✓ In terms of mental flow, these poems are similar to the old Aryan songs and embeds the very image of the poetry from the book of Rigveda. The praise and worship songs of Bet Nika are the clear proof of this claim.
- ✓ There are few or no foreign words in this style and the language is quite pure.
- ✓ In this style, the poems are recited with a special tone and voice and have special melodies.

7.2. Second Period:

This period begins with the year of Bayazid Roshan's literary endeavors in (950 Higiir Qamari). There are two phases and stages in this literary period, the first phase which starts in the year (950 Higiir Qamari). Bayazid started its literary efforts in year (950 Higiir Qamari) and continued until Khushal Literary Efforts, thus Khushal was born in the

year (1022 Higir Qamari) and he wrote his first poem in 20 years, which coincides with (1044 Higiri Qamari). The second phase of this period can be called the classical period, although in many literary histories the whole period is called the classical period, but Roshan literary school cannot be called a classic considering the standard of classicism. There are three literary schools in the classical phase of the second period. Khushal Khan Khattak National Literary School, Abdul Rahman Baba Irfani Literary School and Abdul Hameed Momand's Indian Literary School. From political perspective, Khushal Khan Khattak, from artistic perspective Hamid Momand and Kazim Khan Shaida and others are worth mentioning. The features of the second period's four literary schools are not existed in the first and third periods. The second period begins with a political and ideological struggle, but it does not exceed beyond the context of feudalism. Roshan fights with the sword and pen as the leader of a religious sect. Roshanian and Khattak literature is mainly focused on propaganda and enlightenment. Roshan and Khushal both were fighting for the independence and national sovereignty of Pashto and were at the frontline of the Cold and Hot War. Cold War means struggle through pen requires an intellectual (mental) system. Roshanian established Ahangwal literary works to raise the political consciousness of the people, instill a sense of self-reliance in them and thus a wealth of written literature gained. The literature of the second period differed considerably from that of the ancient period in terms of subject matter and form. The meter of the ancient songs were abandoned during this period. Classical spiritual and literal arts became prominent in Pashto literature. In terms of concept, systematic artistic works came into picture. Complex imaginations emerged in the form of Pashto literature. Pashto literature of that age inspired from regional literature and came out of a state of decline. The depth of thought, the beauty of imagination, the creativity in the genres and forms (innovation) are the general characteristics of the second period. It is clear that neither the Sufism and mysticism of the Roshanian, nor the thoughts of Khushal, nor the literary rhetoric of Rehman Baba, nor the delicacy of Hamid Momand and Kazim Khan Shaida are found in the poetry of the earlier (first) literary period. In general, the characteristics of the second period are as following. [6]

- The complex issues and terminology of Sufism and mysticism made their way to Pashto literature on a large scale, or in other words, Sufism came to Pashto literature as a profession.
- Rhythmic prose became popular in prose writing.
- Ethical and religious issues abounded in poetry and literature. Epic and national spirit became very pale and weak. Epic and national spirit became very dark and weak.
- The imperfect style of poetry and prose that existed before was reformed at this time, prose got clarity and sweetness and came out of the semi-poetic state and took the form of dialogue and the poem also became simpler.
- Pashto poetry developed in terms of form and a number of creativity and innovations have been emerged.
- In terms of subject matter, all aspects of life are reflected in this period. Many works have been written in this period and the world of Pashto literature has been well highlighted (colored). It introduced people with the social and other parts of life.
- Natural and simple analogies became common in the poetry of that time.
- Khushal Khan himself laid down the foundation of the epic sentiments (emotions) and his followers followed him.
- Criticism and satire have become more and more prevalent at this time, and it has been barely appeared against the Mughals' increasing power.
- In terms of literary value, the style of this stage is the most comprehensive and good one. In the sense that it is both mature in its meaning and its literary and poetic nature.
- The style of this stage is also very strong in imagination, there are very high and delicate poetic imaginations in it, Khushal Khan himself has brought many new subjects in his imagination and mobilized his style full of high and delicate imaginative beauty.
- There are many magical effects in poetry without exceptional poems.
- The reflection of many spiritual values in his poetry has gained public popularity and his artistic beauty made him more respected.
- His poetry is not only ordered in form, but also has a kind of spiritual order. In other words, the verses of most of the poems have a kind of magnetic connection with each other.
- Intellectual (mental) creativity and initiative are obvious in his poems.
- The use of allegory, metaphor, wonder, wisdom, philosophy and proverbs made the poems very popular.
- Apart from Sufism and Mysticism, other ideas also drive his poetry.
- The educational and moral indoctrination of his poetry is very strong.
- Most of Rehman Baba's poems are simple and flowing; but some of them are complex and sophisticated in the same simplicity.
- The limit of real and virtual love in Rahman Baba's poems is very fragile.
- In Hamid Momand's poetry, his great poetic talents and high scientific and cultural abilities are reflected, but he has been given the name of "Mushgaf" (Curious, keen, and wise) by the writers and poets of the time.

- The source of every new thought is his society and environment and very particularly the Indian environment and the Indian beauty, he has embedded whatever he was most impressed from.
- He has used fine words and combinations for every new inspiration, thought and imagination to visualize and imagine properly.
- Love and beauty and the concepts that emerge around these phenomena are the constant theme of poetry, which has been expressed in various poetic forms, especially in ghazal.
- Due to the technical necessity of the poetic structure, words and phrases of familiar un-Pashto languages are also found in the poem.
- In addition to romantic, lyrical and intellectual content, he has brought many other thoughts and sayings such as educational, mystical and mystical, epic, political and social themes in his poetry with high artistic essence and magical quality, but once again, it must also be said that love and beauty is the backbone of his poetry. [7]

7.3. Third Period:

Traces of the origins of the third period began at the same time in Afghanistan and Pakhtunkhwa, but their development is not the same. The third period of Pashto literature has several phases in Afghanistan. The first phase begins with the publication of Siraj-ul Akhbar newspaper in the year 1911 and the mental and real condition were provided for the flourishing literature of third period. The poems of the third period differ from the first and second periods in terms of content and format. The famous representatives of the third period are Mawlawi Saleh Mohammad Kandahari, Ghulam Mohiuddin Afghan, Mawlawi Abdul Wasi Kandahari, Abdul Ali Mustaghni, Abdul Hadi Dawi and so on. The pioneers of the third period in Pakhtunkhwa are Fazal Mahmood Makhfi, Rahat Zakheli, Khaliq, Mohammad Akbar Khadim, Akbar and others. The third period, which began in 1911 coincides with (1248 Higri Qarmari) continues to the present time and the main characteristics that distinguish the third period from the first and second periods are as following:

- The emergence of blank verse and free verse, which did not exist in the first and second periods.
- The emergence of blank poetry and haiku, of which we have no precedent in the first two periods.
- The emergence novel, short stories, novella and all prose genres are the major achievements of this period.
- Translations were made from many languages of the world, since we did have translation in the first and second periods, but much work in terms of quantity and quality was done in the third period and it has many other features as well.

8. CONCLUSION:

Literary periods exist in all the languages of the world and the differences that Pashto language has, is also the case in other languages, so English literature is a good example of this. This study focused on the factor of differences between the Pashto literary periods, as well as it discussed the role of folkloric literature in literary periods and the nomination of literary periods are the main themes covered within the study.

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Author Profile:



Rahimullah Zirak was born in 1986 in Wardak province, Afghanistan. He received B.A. degree from Education Faculty of Parwan University in 2010 and got his M.A. Pashto degree in 2016 from Kabul University, Kabul, Afghnaistan. He has had the privilege of Assistant Professor at Kabul University since 2011. Besides of serving as senior member of Afghan National Examination Authority and member of many committees at the university. It is worth to mention that Zirak is doing his PhD in Pashto Literature in Kabul University.