



E-ISSN: 2706-8927  
P-ISSN: 2706-8919  
[www.allstudyjournal.com](http://www.allstudyjournal.com)  
IJAAS 2022; 4(1): 05-09  
Received: 04-11-2021  
Accepted: 06-12-2021

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## Ways of selecting literary periods

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### Abstract

In this article you can find about introduction to the literary periods, the contribution of written literature in literary periods, oral literature plays the role of a mother to written literature, oppositions about literary periods and a glance at its background in other languages, new theories about the naming of literary periods, how many literary periods there are in Pashto literature and what features separate them from one another and their individual characteristics of each literary period is described. The value of a topic is to find a solution to a controversial issue. I encountered difficulties and limitations during the work, the lack of books and the controversial opinion regarding it, are worth mentioning. The goal of this article is to point out the materials of controversies and the ways of the literary periods. A lot of articles have been written on this subject and we can also find ideas about it in many books, but the achievement of my work is different from previous works. Information from various books have been used in the article, as this is library-based research, descriptive and analytical methods have been used in it. Previous works and articles have been read and used, and a descriptive and analytical article has been written.

**Keywords:** literary periods, pashtu, literature

### 1. Introductions

Pashto literary periods have been separated from each other due to various factors. Among these differences, political, economic, social developments, scientific and literary journeys, influences and studies of other languages, as well as dozens of other factors have been seen, and based on them, a period is separated from another one. Different languages of the world have different literary periods, which is not a problem for a language. In fact, it is considered development and innovation, as a period cannot last forever, and a period starts after another one ends.

### 2. Importance and significance of research

The subject is important because many social sciences, in particular, have different periods and also the discussion of literary periods in all languages is an essential subject, and in Pashto literature, understanding literary periods is also important for university students and other readers. The role of unwritten literature in written literature, the causes of disagreement in literary periods in other languages, as well as the naming literary periods, have new implications, which shows the importance of the article.

### 3. Research Objectives

The issue of literary periods is a contentious and controversial one, and the goal of the article is to find solutions to some of the problems regarding the said issue. An introduction to literary periods, the reasons for the distinction between literary periods, understanding the names of literary periods, as well as some explanatory and descriptive guidelines on controversial issues can be found in this article.

### 4. Research Questions

1. What are literary periods?
2. How do literary periods differ?
3. What are the reasons for the separation of literary periods?
4. What should be the names of Pashto literary periods?
5. How many Pashto literary periods are there?

### 5. Research Method

The article uses the research style of the library and the descriptive and analytical methods and sometimes critical methods have been applied as well.

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## 6. Context

The issue of selecting literary periods is a critical one, as many contemporary (third) period researchers, writers, scholars and historians have expressed their views on determining periods, which generally for young people and particularly for students, is an unresolved problem, however, it is the case with most of the world's languages. The folkloric literature is a very important topic in the selection of literary periods and one cannot ignore the importance of the role of folkloric literature.

Folkloric Literature: The history of oral literature in any language precedes written literature. Those who are concerned about the timing of literary works should not forget the constructive role of folk literature. There are tapas in Pashto language, which can prove their ancient history by internal and external skills, such as:

(يار مي هندو زه مسلمان يم  
د يار لپاره درمسال جارو كومه)

The meaning of this tapa is: (My friend, sweetheart and lover is Hindu and I am Muslim, but because he is my friend, he is dear to me and he is in love with me, I serve and clean Hindu temple).

This tapa is definitely from the post-Islamic period, when Pashtuns became Muslims, but Hindus and Muslims (Pashtuns) lived on the same land. Or:

سپوړميه سر وهه راخپزه  
يار مي د گلو لو كوي گوتي ربيينه

The meaning of the folk Tapa is: (The speaker wants the moon to rise. His lover is reaping flowers, he may cut his fingers.)

In the time of the Aryans, the plants of Soma and Homa would be gathered to the light of the moon and would be used by the people, or there are other similar tapas. (Khattak, 1989) [4].

Studying the world literature history always draws our attention to the fact that literature is strong and has a fundamental connection with society. In Greece, Homer (Eliad) and (Adesa); in Latin, Virgil (Aeneid); in Sanskrit, Kalidas's Dramas; Ferdowsi's Shahnamah in Persian has derived from Folkloric discourses and Homer, Virgil, Kalidas and Ferdowsi have incorporated these myths into their artistic circles. Thus it can be said that oral literature is the mother of written literature and no one can underestimate the role and influence of oral literature.

(In the ancient period of Pashto literature, before the content of any forum and framework of written literature which has meaning such as (lament, praise, patriotism, epic poems, etc.), we have oral literature which clearly has all the above topics, so we can estimate, either the writers and speakers of written literature had information about folklore literature or public loved oral literature and it had a special place in hearts of the people. The first lament in the ancient period of Pashto literature belonged to Sheikh Asad Suri in (425AH). However, we have tapas whose content contain lament and is historically a lot older than Assad Suri's Lament Epic. In some literature, this tradition has always been nurtured which very carefully places history in literature. (Kandupla) and (Yellow-haired Fairy) tales of English Language can never be forgotten and is considered to be one of genuine literature of people. The Arabs

consider the story of (One Thousand and One Nights) the masterpieces of their literature. In many cases, oral literature contributes to the image of society, even written literature cannot reach its importance. (Atai, 1988) [1].

Based on the discussion mentioned above, special attention should be given to oral and folkloric literature in the history of literature, so everyone (the university students and public) should understand that oral literature is valuable exactly like written literature.

## Differences in Literary Periods

Differences in Literary Periods exist in many languages of the world, the historical background of selecting literary periods of Pashto language has some controversial issues. There are many ways and methods to determine the literary period in Persian language, some of them are as follows:

1. Determining literary periods considering the kings and leaders.
2. Determining literary periods based on chronology and time.
3. Determining literary periods based on genres, styles and schools.
4. Determining literary periods by changing the historical, political and social situation.
5. Determining literary periods by changing a common historical situation.

There are also disagreements and controversies in the chronology of the Arabic language and Pashto, Persian as well as other regional languages are affected. Arabs are the leading founders of writing Literary histories of literary periods and have the following views on literary periods:

The Arabic language divides the poetry and literature from the ignorance period into two parts and they also divided the poets of this period into kinds.

Some have divided the poetry and literature of the ignorance period according to the rank, position, function and status of the people in the society.

Some have considered the fluency and eloquence of the poets of this period and have divided it into three and eight parts.

Some have divided them into seven groups, considering Sabatul-Mualaqa. The Sabatul-Mualaqa were seven complex elegies, which would be priced and scrutinized in the Okaz market. The elegy which met the standard based on time, were hung on the walls of Kaba Sharifa. Some people consider the owners of these elegies to be ten and some others have mentioned them seven, namely Amar Al-Qais, Zaheer, Nabegha, Asha, Labid, Tarafa and Amar Bin Kalsoom.

Some have further divided Arabic poetry and literature as follows:

The Age of Ignorance, the Early Age of Islam, the Age of the Abbasids, the Age of the Turkish and the Present.

In addition to Persian and Arabic, attempts have been made in 'The world of history and literature' to determine the literary period.

In the world of historical literature (Anders, Torles, Levi, Bute, Cyrus, German, etc.) worked in the 5th-6th centuries AD. In the light of the above remarks, we naturally come to the conclusion that the composition of the period of literary history does not have a definite and universally accepted standard, for example, the number of standards in English literary historiography is almost the same. The number of

books on the subject, or in other words, the number of authors, is the standard. One of the criteria in English literature is that each period or era is named after a famous representative, author and writer, such as: Chaucer's Age, Spencer's Age, and Shakespeare's Age. Literary periods are sometimes called centuries, such as: fifteenth-century literature, eighteenth-century literature, and so on. Sometimes they are called the dominant philosophical ideas and literary schools, such as: the age of classicism, the age of romanticism and so on. Another criterion for determining literary periods is that periods are referred to kings or queens, such as the Elizabeth period, the Jacobin period, the Victorian period, and so on. Sometimes periods are named chronologically.

There is also a controversy of literary periods in Pashto language, but no care has been taken in naming literary periods. (Hashemi, 2014)<sup>[2]</sup>.

**Naming Literary Periods:** (Pashto Language Writers, Poets, Scholars and Researchers have divided Pashto Literary Periods according to their views and have given different names to each of them. According to many literary histories, Pashto Language has three literary periods which are called 'The Ancient period, middle period and the contemporary period', meaning the same names are given in many literary histories and literary works, but in my opinion, literary periods should be given names that are always acceptable. Pashto Language has three literary periods and one period (middle) is located in the middle, so many scholars and researchers have chosen the name of the middle period, which is in the middle. If another period (fourth after that the fifth one) start after the (contemporary) period as the time passes, then the upper middle period does not remain in the middle, which should be called the second period, or the last period should be called the contemporary (current) period, if not When the next period begins, what we will call it. As today changes into yesterday and yesterday changes into the day before yesterday, years pass in the same way, time passes and the present does not remain present, so the name of the contemporary period is always changeable. It is also worth mentioning that the above literary periods, if given the following names, would be better, because they are perfect names and are mentioned in very few literary works. Apparently, if more literary periods appear over time, naming will not be a problem any longer. (Hashemi, 2016)<sup>[3]</sup>.

### **Pashto Literary Periods**

**Ancient (First) Period:** The first period starts from the year of Amir Karor's glory (139 AH) and continues till the appearance of Bayazid Rokhan (950 AH) and traces of this period can be seen till (1000 AH). The general characteristics of this period, which do not exist in the second and third periods, are as follows:

1. The poetry of ancient periods are called (ancient songs) and can also be called eastern poetry, but cannot be called folkloric period, however, it contains the genre of both eastern poetry and folkloric poetry.
2. The poems of this period has simple thoughts. There are no complex artistic fantasies. The language is pure and the rhyme and rhythm of the poem is adjusted to the tone.
3. In ancient times we have two masterpieces of elegies, which are probably imitated from Arabic or Persian

literature. These poems differ from the ancient songs in terms of form as well as in terms of poetry and imagination and these two elegies are praising elegies which are common in Arabic Language.

4. The main themes of the first period are the songs of celebration, pride, fear, love, separation and morality, which does not have complex imaginations and literary terms.
5. 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 used in some areas and some of which have gone archaic.
6. Poems of the ancient period have a national concept, i.e. they are not influenced by the Arabic and have no or less frequent Persian characteristics.
7. In terms of thoughts, these poems are similar to the old Aryan songs and the concept of poetry in the book of Rigveda is reflected in them.
8. There are fewer or no foreign words in this style and the language is pure.
9. In this genre, the poems are recited with a special tone and voice and have special melodies. (Hashemi, 2014)<sup>[2]</sup>.

### **Second Period**

This period begins in the year of Bayazid Roshan's revolt and literary struggles (590 AH). There are two literary periods in the said literary period. The first one starts in 950 AH. Bayazid starts his literary struggles in 950 AH and continues up to Khushal's literary endeavors continue. Khushal Khan was born in 1022 AH and he wrote his first poem at the age of 20, which coincides with 1044 AH. 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 the Rokhan literary school cannot be called classical considering the standard of classicism. There are three literary schools in the second phase of the classical period. Khushal Khan Khattak National Literary School, Abdul Rahman Baba theosophical Literary School and Abdul Hameed Momand's Indian Literary School. In terms of political views, Khushal Khan Khattak and in terms of artistic views, Shaida and others are worth mentioning. The characteristics of the four literary schools of this literary period are either not present or very limited in the first and third periods. The second period starts with political and ideological struggles, but does not go beyond the limits of feudal conditions, as a leader of religious group, Rokhan struggles against his enemies using his sword and pen. The literature of Rokhanids and Khattak focuses a lot on preaching and enlightenment. Both Rokhan and Khushal have fought cold war and hot war for the independence of Pashtuns and national sovereignty. Cold war is waged through pen and needs an intellectual system. The Rokhanid worked for raising the political conscience of people, and they created tonic literary works in order to awaken the feelings of self-reliance and conscience and this way, the literary capital (wealth) was acquired. The literature of the second period differs considerably from that of the ancient period in terms of subject matter and form. During this period, the rhymes and rhythms of ancient songs were abandoned. Classical spiritual and literary terms became a chapter of Pashto literature. Systematic works were created in terms of concept. Pashto literature of the mentioned period was influenced by the regional literature

and came out of the state of downfall. The depth of thought, the variety of ideas, and the innovation and development in the forums are the general characteristics of the second period. It is clear that neither the Sufism and theosophy of the Enlightenment, nor the thoughts of Khushal, nor the literary eloquence of Rahman Baba, nor the delicacy of Hamid Momand and Kazim Khan Sheida are found in any of the poems of the earlier (first) literary period. In general, the characteristics of the second period are as follows: (Satarzada, 1988)<sup>[5]</sup>.

1. The complex issues and terminology of Sufism and theosophy came to Pashto literature on a large scale or in other words, theosophy came to Pashto literature as a profession.
2. Rhythmic prose became popular in prose writing.
3. Ethical and religious issues abounded in poetry and literature. Epic and national spirit appeared very dark and weak in the mentioned period.
4. The incomplete style of poetry and prose that existed before, was reformed at that time, prose became more beautiful and came out of the semi-poetic state and took the form of dialogue and the poem also became simpler.
5. Pashto poetry in terms of form also developed during this period and a number of innovations emerged.
6. In terms of subject matter, all aspects of life were revealed in this period. Many works have been written during this period and the world of Pashto literature became very colorful. It introduced people to social and other issues of life.
7. Natural and simple metaphors became common in the poetry of that time.
8. Khushal Khan himself laid the foundation of the epic sentiments and his followers followed him.
9. Criticism and rhetoric became more and more prevalent at that time, and the issue of the increasing power of the Mughals became more and more apparent.
10. The style of this stage is the most comprehensive and good in terms of literary value. It means that it is mature both in terms of meaning and literary and poetic aspect.
11. 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 imagination and he has equipped his style with high and delicate imagination and beauty.
12. There are a lot of magical effects in poetry apart from some exceptional poems.
13. The reflection of many spiritual values in his poetry has gained popularity due to its artistic effect on the soul of the people.
14. His poetry is not only ordered in terms of form, but also has a kind of spiritual order. In other words, both lines in most of his poems have a kind of magnetic intellectual connection with them.
15. Intellectual innovation and initiative are felt in his poems.
16. His poems have a lot of lovers because of allegory, wonder, wisdom, philosophy and proverbs.
17. Apart from Sufism and theosophy, other thoughts also exist in his poetry.
18. The educational and moral emphasis of his poetry is very strong.

19. Most of Rahman Baba's poems are simple and fluent, but some of them are very complex and difficult despite of the simplicity.
20. In Rahman Baba's poems, the attack of real and virtual love is very delicate.
21. In Hamid Momand's poetry, his great poetic talent and high academic and cultural ability are evident, therefore, he has been entitled (Mushegaf) by the writers and poets of the time which literally means 'someone who makes a hole in hair' and its proper meaning is smart, sharp-sighted, delicate-sighted and curious.
22. The source and reference of every new thought is its society and environment and especially the Indian environment and Indian beauty, and he has included everything in his poetry that he was most inspired by.
23. The idea and inspiration of every new idea is to use appropriate words and phrases for imagery, allegory and illustration.
24. Love and beauty and the concepts that appear on the axis of these phenomena is a permanent theme of poetry, which has been expressed in various poetic forms especially in sonnet.
25. Due to the technical necessity of the poetic structure, words and phrases of non-Pashto familiar languages can also be seen in the poem.
26. In addition to romantic, lyrical and intellectual content, he has brought many other ideas and discourses such as educational, mystical and theosophical, epic, political and social themes in his poetry with high artistic essence and magical effect, but once again it must also be said that love and beauty are the backbone of his poetry. (Hashemi, 2014)<sup>[2]</sup>.

### Third period

(Traces of the origin of the third period started in Afghanistan and Pashtunkhwa at the same time, but its development is not the same.

The third period of Pashto literature in Afghanistan has several phases. The first phase starts with the publication of Serajul Akhbar in 1911. During this time, the visual and mental conditions had become ready for the third literary period.

The poems of the third period differed from the first and second periods in terms of content and format. The most prominent representatives of the third period were Salih Mohammad Kandahari, Ghulam Mohiuddin Afghan, Maulavi Abdul Wasi Kandahari, Abdul Ali Mustaghni, Abdul Hadi Dawi and others. The leading and prominent personalities of the third period in Pakhtunkhwa are Fazal Mahmood Makhfi, Rahat Zakheli, Khaleeq, Mohammad Akbar Khadem, and so on. The third period starts in 1911 AD (1248) and continues up to now and the characteristics that distinguish the third period from the first and second periods are as follows:

1. The appearance of free poetry and free poem, which did not exist in the first and second periods.
2. The emergence of white poetry and haiku, whose examples cannot be found in the first two periods.
3. The novels, short stories, novels and all the genres of prose art are the achievements of this period.
4. Translations were made from many languages of the world, which we also have in the first and second periods, but in the third period much work was done in

terms of quantity and quality. And it has many other characteristics as well (Hashemi, 2014)<sup>[2]</sup>.

## 7. Conclusion

Literary periods exist in all languages and, like other languages such as English, Pashto Language also have disagreements about it. The article has discussion on various factors of the distinctions of the Pashto Literary Periods. In addition to it, the role of literary folkloric literature in literary periods and the issue of selecting names for literary periods are worth mentioning. In the article, we have reached the conclusion of dividing the literary periods of Pashto Literature into three periods. Each period is different from other according to content, characteristics, poetry and prose whose characteristics have been shown in the article. There are different opinions about the selection of names of literary periods. The names of the literary periods in this article are three, namely, ancient (first), second and third. In some books of literature history, the second period is called the middle period and the third period is called contemporary and current period. However, neither the second period will not be the middle period and nor the contemporary and current period will stay in the same position. Therefore, these names are always changeable.

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