

**Abstract:** The authors of this paper have deeply focused Pashto literary history in Southern Pashtoon Khwa, from its emergence till the modern period but highlighted the eminent figures of Pashto literature so that to point out the works carried by assorted scholars in the field of literature. This paper discusses the modern poets and prose writers besides those who had done translations. Including the writers rendered services for Pashtoon history.

In this connection, through the writings of various writers it has been proved that which regions in Southern Pashtoon Khwa brought novelty to Pashto literature and what were the reasons which resulted in the novelty?

It also discusses about the start of Pashto poetic sessions in Quetta, which would be held in Balochistan Book Depot. a book shop of well known Pashto writer and poet Hafiz Khan Muhammad.

This paper unveils the start of translation and Pashtoon journalism initiated by the beloved and prominent political leader and writer of Pashto language and literature Khan Abdul Samad Khan Achakzai Shaheed.

In this period of bandari<sup>1</sup> poetry in South Pashtoon Khwa new experiments can be witnessed in poetry. “In Pashto poetry, experiments were made regarding subject matter and form .In result of which new style came into existence. Along with the tradition, modern methods were also adopted. At first total attention was focused on sonnet and ballad. Then with the growth of ode, syllabics were used as it were used in other parts of great Pashtoon khwa.” (Sahibzada 1999).

Sahibzada Hameedullah may be right in his view that there in novelty in the poetry of South Pashtoon Khwa. This view can be agreed only when comparison is made between Pashto poetry and bandari poetry. Through out this period all the work was done in strict adherence

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<sup>1</sup> Local folk concerts.

to the tradition. Both in thoughts and art the tradition was strictly followed.

As far as the subject matter is concerned, only Salam Baba brought some novelty in his work. According to Abdul Karim Baryalai, Abdul Ali Akhonzada also had novelty in his work. He further says “In Balochistan

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Abdul Ali Akhonzada and Mulla Abdul Salam Ashezai brought some novelty regarding the matter only in poetry. As far as the art is concerned, they also followed the old path of tradition. Their poetry does not show new aspects. Any how regarding the matter, and style, the emotional approach of both of them is different.”(Baryalai 1984).In our view, no poet except Abdul Salam Ashezai deviated from traditional way, even in case of matter.

In this regard Ayaz Dawood Zai says “when *Pashto Tolana* was constituted all the writers of the region joined it. In addition to introductory meetings, they also held sessions for criticism. They felt that they follow the old traditional path .In prose as essay writing/ composition and in poetry as poem and Ghazal besides folk poetry.” (Ayaz 2002).

Although tradition has its own place and importance yet it seems that folk poetry gradually changes its colors. Through these changes occur with snail pace. The combination of bandari poetry in the poetry of Abdul Ali Akhonzada is observed. Though he opened the door for change yet it can be noticed that deep impacts of bandari poetry are visible in the latter upcoming poetry. After Abdul Ali Akhonzada and Salam Ashezai this process of change was carried on by Hafiz Khan Muhammad, Abdul Hameed Kakar, Abdul Haq Bostani, Mulavi Abdul Khaliq Tarun and others.

After the death of Allama, one of his students, a great scholar and writer Hafiz Khan Muhammad kept the Pashto literary movement alive which was started by Allama Abdul Ali Akhonzada in very unfavorable circumstances .Then Balochistan Book Depot. the book shop of Hafiz Khan Muhammad became the center for the lovers of Pashto literature.” (Ayaz 2002).

The book shop of Hafiz Khan Muhammad played very significant role in the promotion of Pashto literature in this region. The reason is that there was no other suitable place in Quetta where poets and writers could meet. Hafiz shop was the only place where the poets and writers of the surrounding areas used to get together.

Poetry of this period is dominated by Allama Abdul Ali Akhonzada both in terms of thoughts and arts. The reason is that during that period only those people who were writing poetry, were either religious scholars or had had some sort of relationship with religion. This attachment with religious knowledge and hatred against the modern

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education was in reaction to the English rule. It is worth mentioning that Allama was not against acquiring the modern education but some other writers of that period. Consequently Pashtoon remained deprived of modern education. For a long period of time, whoever tried to attain modern education was declared infidel by verdict of religious scholars.

This aspect of religion is conspicuous in the freedom thoughts of Abdul Salam Ashezai also. This is why, in his poetry religion and ethical aspects are dominant. Reason may be that Pashtoon by nature love their religion.

Along with the freedom thoughts, nationalism was started in the leadership of Khan Abdul Samad Khan Shaheed in the reaction of ignoring Pashtoons. In spite of having played the front line role in the freedom movement, Pashtoon as a whole were badly ignored and neglected. This movement was the logical national reaction to the unjust behavior.

The reason of this injustice with Pashtoons may be the relationship/ attachment of Pashtoon leaders with Indian congress. Had the Pashtoon leaders struggled to become part of Afghanistan, Instead of united India. Pashtoon would not have faced these problems.

Khan Shaheed the great leader of the region created awareness in the people of the region. He also laid down the milestone of political understanding and became founder of the journalism in the region.” **(Baryalai 1984).**

Khan Shaheed not only served the Pashtoon in politics and journalism but he also has rendered invaluable services to Pashto language and literature with the special reference of his struggle for the usage of pure Pashto words. Khan Shaheed as a national leader felt the need of work in every walk of life and he took bold steps in this respect. In any field when he participated, he proved himself.

Though he was unique in political struggle yet his services in the field of education, literature and journalism are invaluable and can not be covered easily. In his memoirs he did not only mention his political thoughts, but told us that he never compromised on his thoughts. In his writings he gave great importance to the correctness of the language and to local and historical terms/ words. **(Panzai 2009)**

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In south Pashtoon Khwa, modern literature started from Pishin. Later on the people of loralai also played vital role in modern Pashto literature.

Quetta became center for the writers of far flung areas. They used to get together at Hafiz Khan Muhammad book shop called *Balochistan book depot*. They introduced with each other and used to get guidance from there for further literary work. A meeting of these writers was held at Hafiz shop in 1957 and a society by the name of *Pashto Adabi Tolana* Pashto Literary Society was constituted in the same meeting. The society took many significant decisions over there. It held the first Mushaira<sup>1</sup> in the history of Quetta city. The people of this area became familiar with the idea of Mushaira for the first time. There was no concept of Mushaira before this. They used to hold Bandar and sing their own or some one else poetry in those bandars.

As compare to poetry, prose was promoted well enough and standard work was given sustainability. In promotion of prose, *gulistan and Pashtoon* magazines played very significant role. Further work was initiated on religious and historical topics. Literary work of the other languages was translated in Pashto. The task of translation was also initiated by Khan Abdul Samad Khan Shaheed. He translated *future of freedom* written by Chalet.O.Carter from English and the same was published. **(Bawar 2008).**

At first he translated that book in Urdu by the name of *Azadi Ka Ufaq* (Horizen of Freedom) and then started translating it in Pashto by the name of *Da Azadai Pai* (End of the Freedom). He started that work during Ayub Khan martial law regime, when he was in jail. He completed translation from English into Urdu by the name of Horizen of Freedom, but he could not complete the translation into Pashto. He also tried to translated *Gulistan-E-Saadi*, *Tarjuman-UI-Quran*, *Seerat-UI-Nabi* and *Keemia-E-Saadat*, but could not succeed to complete all of them. **(Panzai 2009)**

Kamal Khan Sherani is another well known person who tried to draw attention of the people towards translation of work done in prose.

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<sup>1</sup> Poetic session

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He translated and published a booklet *Liberty and* a novel of Voltaire known as *Candid* from English into Pashto. The novel candid was named *Spesalai*. **(Bawar 2008)**.

Prose writers of that period, worth mentioning are Hafiz Khan Muhammad, Khudai Dad Khan, Jaffar Khan, Muhammad Akbar Khan and others.

Sultan Muhammad Panezai is another famous name who did research work in this period. He also did a lot of work in on history in this region. "Sultan Muhammad dedicated himself to do research in Pashto literature and history. Besides his essays, he wrote three books which are ready to be published. First one is on the history of Pashtoon tribes in Balochistan, the second one is on fighting of Pashtoons against Tatars, Mughals, Iranians and Britains and the third is a research work on Quetta. **(Ayaz 2002)**.

The prose writings of Sultan Muhammad are divided into two major parts. One is composition while the other is compilation and authorship.

His writings were published in monthlies, *Lar*, *Rahbar*, *Alfalah*, *Pashtoon*, and *Ulas*. **(Sahibzada 1999)**.

He is rightly considered the first prose writer in this region. He wrote many essays in different magazines and newspapers during 1920-1972. These essays were in Urdu, Pashto and Persian languages. In this period, literature and history of Pashto language was paid more attention in prose than in poetry.

In the same period Mulavi Rehmatullah Mandokhail, Hafiz Khan Muhammad and Abdul Shakoor Akhonzada wrote religious books, in which Pashtoon poets were also mentioned. Besides them, Sultan Muhammad, Kamal Khan Sherani and Khan Shaheed also decorated Pashto language with history and art.

Regarding the prose of this age, a renowned critic Ayaz Dawood zai wrote in a special volume of *Qund* magazine issued in July/August 1958. "As compare to poetry, the writers of this region made tremendous progress in prose. Prose writings seem mature and there is proper use of proverbs, correctness of language, flow and good command / grip over the language. All these are characteristics of the writings of this area. **(Ayaz 2002)**.

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In South Pashtoon Khwa, Sultan Muhammad provided a strong base for prose writing and deep research. How ever the standard fixed by him was not maintained. Any way, the work in this respect was kept continued. During that period a group of young writers appeared and gave an identity to Quetta city as the fourth center of Pashto literature. This group includes Sultan Muhammad Sabir, Farooq Shah Ismailzai, Fazal Ahmad Ghazi, Syal Kakar and Sahibzada Hameedullah. They worked on artistic prose and criticism and research.



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