

Glimpses of Revolutionary Romanticism in Pashtu Literature

ABSTRACT

Pakhtun nationalism, with its dual goal of freedom and development, was the hallmark of Pakhtun/Afghan political thinking at the turn of the century in various forms, associations and institutions like Maktaba-i-Habibia, Maktaba-i-Herbiya Kabul and Islamia College and Edwards College Peshawar. A nationalist literary movement emerged advocating reassessment of the role of poets, writers and intellectuals in the society. The movement is seen to have worked on the adaptation of old literary forms to new circumstances and audiences. Along with other literary forms, poetry was consciously employed to promote social and political goals. In this paper, an attempt is made to highlight briefly the genesis of traits and trends of revolutionary romanticism in Pashtu literature and its major contours in the geopolitical-economic context of the entire Pakhtunkhwa. It also explores how Pashtu language and literature were born and bred in the womb of nationalist movements with various ideological cross-currents in pre-partition. The paper mainly explores how Pakhtun nationalist movements in India pushed towards revolutionary romanticism on both sides of the Durand Line.

Keywords: Revolutionary, Romanticism, Bacha Khan, Pakhtunkhwa, Pakhtun, Hijrat