

Urdu literature, writings in the Urdu language of the Muslims of Pakistan and northern India. It is written in the Perso-Arabic script, and, with a few major exceptions, the literature is the work of Muslim writers who take their themes from the life of the Indian subcontinent. Poetry written in Urdu flourished from the 16th century, but no real prose (style) literature developed until the 19th century, despite the fact that histories and religious prose treatises are known from the 14th century. More informal forms of writing gradually displaced the classically decorative literary Urdu in the 19th century; in the 20th century, Urdu literature was encouraged by nationalist, pan-Islāmic, and socialist feeling, and writers from the Punjab began to contribute more than those from the traditional Urdu areas of Delhi and Lucknow.

One of the sweetest languages in the world, the history and origin of Urdu literature is bright, colorful and harmoniously touched that has led to the development of this language. The style of writing the Urdu language has developed tremendously with the domination of Ghazals and nazms, the most dominant forms of verses. The evolution of Urdu literature history has been slow yet steady and today, it is still one of the preferred languages for writing poetry and songs that express true meaning and feelings.

Urdu is also spoken as a first language by nearly 70 million people and as a second language by more than 100 million people, predominantly in Pakistan and India. Urdu developed in the regional Apabhramsha of northwestern India, serving as a linguistic *modus vivendi* after the Muslim conquest. Its first major poet was Amir Khosrow (1253–1325), who composed *dohas* (couplets), folk songs, and riddles in the newly formed speech, then called Hindvi. This mixed speech was variously called Hindvi, Zaban-e-Hind, Hindi, Zaban-e-Delhi, Rekhta, Gujari, Dakkhani, Zaban-e-Urdu-e-Mualla, Zaban-e-Urdu, or just Urdu, literally ‘the language of the camp.’ Major Urdu writers continued to refer to it as Hindi or Hindvi until the beginning of the 19th century, although there is evidence that it was called Hindustani in the late 17th century.

Urdu is closely related to Hindi, a language that originated and developed in the Indian subcontinent. They share the same Indo-Aryan base and are so similar in phonology and grammar that they appear to be one language. In terms of dictionary, however, they have borrowed extensively from different sources—Urdu from Arabic and Persian, Hindi from Sanskrit—so they are usually treated as independent languages. Their distinction is most

marked in terms of writing systems: Urdu uses a modified form of Perso-Arabic script known as Nastaliq (*nasta 'līq*), while Hindi uses Devanagari.

Phonologically, the Urdu sounds are the same as those of Hindi except for slight variations in short vowel allophones. Urdu also retains a complete set of aspirated stops (sounds pronounced with a sudden release with an audible breath), a characteristic of Indo-Aryan, as well as retroflex stops. Urdu does not retain the complete range of Perso-Arabic consonants, despite its heavy borrowing from that tradition. The largest number of sounds retained is among the spirants, a group of sounds uttered with a friction of breath against some part of the oral passage, in this case /f/, /z/, /zh/, /x/, and /g/. One sound in the stops category, the glottal /q/, has also been retained from Perso-Arabic.

From the grammatical point of view, there is not much difference between Hindi and Urdu. One difference is that Urdu uses more Perso-Arabic prefixes and suffixes than Hindi; examples include the prefixes *dar-* 'in,' *ba-/baa-* 'with,' *be-/bila-/la-* 'without,' and *bad-* 'ill, miss' and the suffixes *-dar* 'holder,' *-saz* 'maker' (as in *zinsaz* 'harness maker'), *-khor* 'eater' (as in *mufkhor* 'free eater'), and *-posh* 'cover' (as in *mez posh* 'table cover').

Although both Urdu and Hindi typically mark the plural by changing the singular suffix *-aa* to *-ee*, Urdu uses *-aat* in some cases, such as *kaagazaat* 'papers,' *jawaharaat* 'jewels,' and *makaanaat* 'houses.' In addition, where Hindi and Urdu both use the suffix *-ka* 'of' in many constructions, Urdu marks the genitive 'of' with *-e(e)*, as in *subhe-azadi* 'the morning of freedom' and *khoon-e-jigar* 'the blood of heart.'

History Of Urdu Literature

The Urdu literature has a heavy domination of poetry. It is this domination that has led to the expansion and development of writing style in literature. In the contemporary world, Urdu is still popular in India and Pakistan and other south Asian countries. The origin of Urdu literature can be traced to the 14th century in India during the Mughal rule. It was very much prevalent among the urbane Persians in the elite Muslim classes. The origin of the Urdu literature struck a fine balance between the new cultural amalgamation of a vocabulary of Sanskrit and Persian words and firm retention of the best of Persia and Afghanistan. One of the most influential people who initiated the growth and development of Urdu literature is undoubtedly, the famous Amir Khusro. He is credited with categorizing of north Indian classical music, which is popularly

known as Hindustani music. He frequently wrote in both Persian and Hindi and often mixed the two ingeniously. His influence was so vast that even a century after his death, the famous Quli Qutub Shah took an immense liking to this language that was called Urdu.