

Tribute

Dr Abdul Haque Khan Hasrat Kasganjvi 1935-2015

The death of Dr Hasrat Kasganjvi received little public notice or press attention. His life is an example for those who are easily disheartened by difficulties. At the time of Independence, Dr Hasrat was only 10 years old and he and his family faced tremendous hardships. These did not daunt him although he was at such a tender age. Settling in Hyderabad [Sindh] with his family and working hard to support his siblings, Dr Hasrat was able to pass the examination of MA [Urdu], MA [English], LLB and finally Ph.D. [Urdu]. A person of lesser ability and lesser courage would never have been able to reach these academic heights. Dr Hasrat was a prolific writer and produced in his creative phase poems, novels and short stories. These reflect the harsh realities of life and are, no doubt, based on personal experience.

The most valuable part of his writing is the critical component. Dr Hasrat, on the basis of his critical acumen, attained a very high position in the area of Urdu criticism where he may be ranked alongside Dr A.K. Kashfi, Prof. Jamil Akhter Khan and Dr A. Qayyum. His books of criticism include *Adab: Ilmi Aur Fikri Zawiye* [1994], *Biswin Sadi ka Urdu Adab* [1994], *Muta'lia-i-Iqbal* [1994] and *Adab aur Iqdar* [1998]. There is no doubt that any student of Urdu critical theory will not be considered capable in his field until he is able to evaluate the critical contribution of Dr Hasrat.

Dr Hasrat was a friend of my father, Prof. S.M. Jamil Wasti. He always called himself a 'shagird' of his although he was never formally a student of Father's. He used to send me copies of his books and also has written a large number of letters to me. These will be printed in the next issue of 'Al Ayyam' [forthcoming]. He was appreciative of, and encouraging towards, all my critical writings. He was pleased to receive my compilation of Father's scattered poetry called *Khoon-i-Hasrat* [2015]. He used to urge me to publish a thesis written on Father submitted to Punjab University. So far this has not been possible. In later life, he was beset by many painful illnesses. Among his very last writings

was a sketch of (late) Prof. Dr Najmul Islam, Chairman, Department of Urdu, University of Sindh, and editor of the reputable journal 'Tahqiq' noted for its critical content. He promised to write a similar sketch of Father but death intervened before this could be done. I will remember him as a modest, self-effacing scholar unmoved by worldly considerations devoted single-mindedly to study and research. May his soul rest in peace!

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