

## **Arjun Dev Majboor - The Restless Soul**

Arjun Dev Majboor does not need any introduction in the world of literature. A writer of great repute, Majboor has a very good command over three languages Kashmiri, Sanskrit and Persian, and has also done research work in Dogri and some other languages of Jammu & Kashmir. As a senior poet, who has enriched Kashmiri literature by the varied canvass of his contributions, Shri Majboor commands instant respect from the litterateurs in these languages.

Arjun Dev Majboor was born in Zainapora village in Pulwama District in Kashmir in the year 1924. Having orphaned in the early stage of his life, he worked in a co-operative bank after passing his Matriculation. In due course of time, he got a job in the court which he did not continue for a long. He went to Lahore, where he started learning Sanskrit. On his return from Lahore, he worked with Shri Prem Nath Bazaz for some time. He was subsequently employed in Education Department after he got a Degree in Teaching.

Arjun Dev Majboor was very much influenced by Kalidas, Galib and Nadim. He translated Kalidas's Meghadootam into Kashmiri verse. His first collection of poems Kalaam-e-Majboor was published in the year 1955, Dashahaar in 1983, Dazavuni Kosam in 1987, Padi Samyik in 1993 and Tyol in 1995. He also authored his most notable set of essays Tehqeeq. He has written a good number of short stories in Kashmiri, which have over the years been translated into various other Indian languages. Majboor has translated Nilamata Purana into Urdu, which is expected to be published by the J&K Academy of Art, Culture & Languages soon. He has also worked and written a lot on the Pre-historic Period of Kashmir and Kashmiri Culture, parts of which have already been published and more yet to be published.

Arjun Dev Majboor has authored research papers on Lala Lakshman, a well known Kashmiri humorist-poet (1892-1962 AD) and compiled a book on his works titled 'Kuliyat-e-Lala Lakhman', published by J&K Academy in 1982. Majboor has also to his credit, a research article on Arinimal. He has published monograph on Krishen Razdan.

'WAVES', A collection of Arjun Dev Majboor's 30 poems, selected and translated into English by Prof. Arvind Gigoo, has opened a wide window on his works, thus taking him right across the country. This book won him an award from Poets Foundation, Calcutta, presented to him personally by Chief Justice Shyamal Kumar Sen of Calcutta High Court on 20 December 1999. According to Dr. B.K.Moza, this book brings out his deep rooted love for the beautiful valley of Kashmir, the land of his birth, where he sees his cultural roots. Dr. R.L.Bhat, a well known reviewer and columnist says, "Had WAVES not appeared, non-Kashmiri people in Tagore's land might never have tasted the rich flavors, Majboor has been brewing." Majboor won the All India Radio Award in National Songs Competition, and also the Best Book Award from the J&K Academy of Art, Culture & Languages in 1993 for his book 'Padi Samyik'.

Arjun Dev Majboor was conferred with the Rashtra Bhasha Samaan by Rashtra Bhasha Samiti, Jammu in the year 2005 for his contribution to Hindi language. He has been honoured with the Saraswati Award by the J&K Vichar Manch in 2005 for his contribution to Kashmiri literature, and also with the Vitasta Award by Naagraad, Jammu.

A Kashmiri music album 'AAIO' based on the lyrics of Arjan Dev Majboor, with music and direction by the sitar maestro Pt. Bhajan Sopori was released in Jammu in December 2006 by the governor of J&K Lt. Gen. S.K.Sinha. The voice to the album has been rendered by Shamima Dev Azad, Rashid Farash, Jamila Khan and Shazia Ahmed Dev.

What kind of a love Majboor has for the place of his birth, is evident from his writings. Dr Manzoor Fazili says, "The political upsurge and violence in the Valley forced him to leave Kashmir in 1990. Since then he feels alienated. He is conscious of separation from his native village and native place ..... The soul of the poet tumults in such a manner that he turns majboor (helpless) and is sandwiched between the love of his native land and its separation. He aches, has agonies and woes that his personality is shattered."

It is very difficult to sum up the character of Majboor as a writer, especially as a poet. But Maharaj Krishan Santoshi's brief assessment tells a lot about the poet: "Arjun Dev Majboor is a restless soul, who always wants to come out with something.

Although he is septuagenarian, yet old age has not touched his spirits. He is as such, the most diligent poet of Kashmiri”. Shri T.N.Koul adds, “Arjun Dev Majboor’s poetry is marked by deftness of expression, deep introspection, progressive outlook and mature treatment. His works constitute a muffled outcry of his bruised heart against the disappearance of old values and the disequilibrium of modern life”.

Arjun Dev Majboor is presently in exile, having been hounded out of Kashmir along with his brethren because of militancy, craving to return to his native land, once adored as the Land of Rishis.

