

Classic Poetry Series

Moti Lal Saqi
- poems -

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Moti Lal Saqi(1936 – 21 May 1999)

Moti Lal Saqi (Kashmiri: ????? ??? ?????? (Devanagari), ????? ??? ????? (Nastaleeq)) was an Indian poet, writer, folklorist and researcher.

Born in 1936 at Bijbehara, Jammu & Kashmir, India, Moti Lal Saqi enriched Kashmiri language and literature in several ways, and emerged as a major poet and critic in the language.

Work as a Critic

Saqi worked as a literary critic also, including on Sheikh Nur-ud-Din (popularly known as Nund Rishi) and Sufi poets such as Samad Mir. As a folk-lorist, Saqi compiled five volumes of Kashmiri folk-songs. His numerous articles on Kashmiri literature, art and culture were published in several magazines and journals of the country.

Lexicography

Moti Lal Saqi was also a lexicographer. He worked as an editor of the Kashmiri-Kashmiri and Urdu-Kashmiri dictionaries brought out by the J&K Cultural Academy and also edited the three volumes of Kashmiri Encyclopedia published by the Academy.

His last book, Aagar Neb, was regarding various aspects of Kashmiri culture. He was awarded the Padma Shri for his services to Urdu literature.

Moti Lal Saqi was also associated with the activities of the N. S. Kashmir Research Institute and had agreed to work for the compilation of the encyclopaedia of Kashmiri culture which the Institute is going to bring out.

Death

Moti Lal Saqi died on May 21, 1999 in New Delhi after a heart attack. Earlier in March he had undergone surgery for a heart ailment at Jammu, and he had been recuperating at the home of his eldest son in Sarojini Nagar.

A Request

You
With the flute,
Inclined
To lie
By the Gunpowder
Hills,
Strike up
A mood,
Attune us
To rain
To the wet earth
Colors,
Win us
A smile
From blue
Skies.
We are
These many generations
On fire.

You
Who
Play
The flute,
The relief I crave
Is not
At home
In all that is the case,
My body, kindling
To fire
More intimate
Fires

You
With the flute,
I pray—
This palette
Dulls to dusk's
Ends,

Do not
Play
Time's fool,
Do not
Strike up
A mood,
Attune us
To the burning
Colors,
To new
Fire.

Moti Lal Saki

Lord! You Look After This Univers

Lord! You look after this Universe,
Your order moves this world.
Then how can i not bow at thy abode.
Why did you not grant me
just one day free from pain and Agony?

This mind is a traveller towards its own destiny,
It has not to be begged or bribed,
This is a like a Shrine within every individual,
But this Ziyarat blesses only a seeker.

(Translation from original kashmiri by A K Mota)

Moti Lal Saqi