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Sahitya Akademi

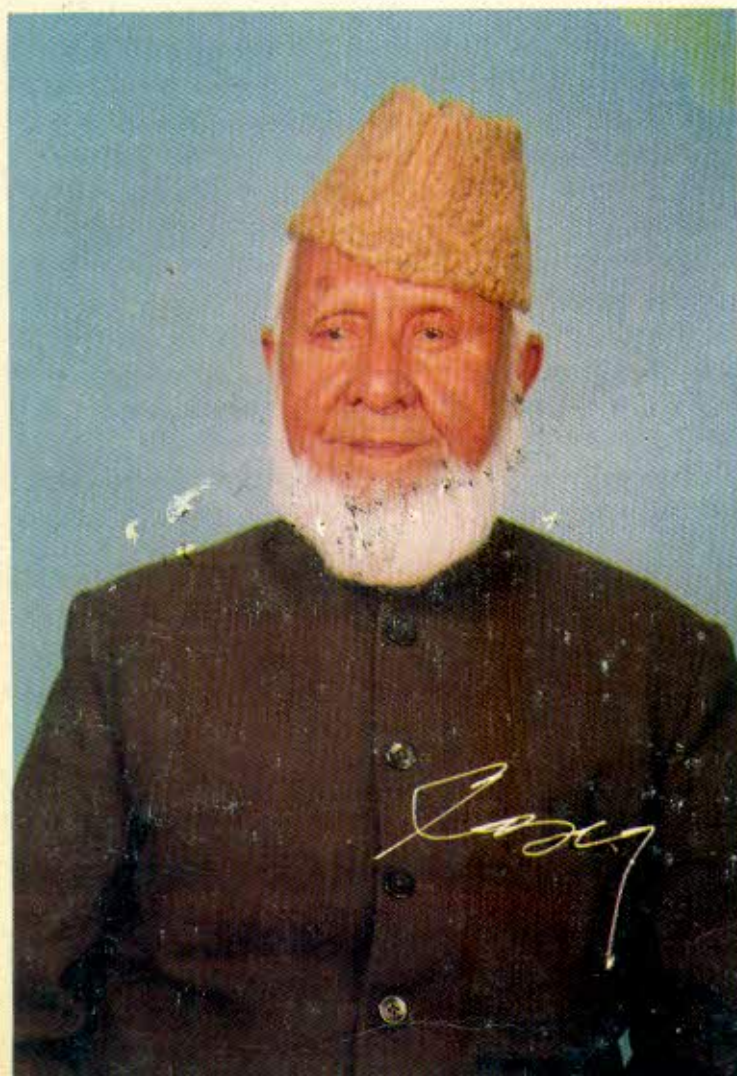


India International Centre

invite you to

meet the author

Mirza G. H. Beg Arif



Born in a middle class family of Anantnag, Mirza Gulam Hassan Beg Arif was brought up in an atmosphere of mysticism, surrounded by religion-conscious Persian scholars.

There have been two distinct and wide-apart influences on him—that of mysticism and of Darwinism. The first because of his father having been a mystic, a seer and a poet, and also of his having had close contact with Allama Iqbal for two years at Lahore. The second because of his specialisation in the Theory of Evolution.

During the early forties of the current century, Mirza Beg launched a movement for developing Kashmiri into a literary language. At that time Kashmiri language was looked down upon by the educated elite with the result that such



An outstanding alumini of S.P. College, 1992

an old language, whose literature was small but respectful, had shrunk to the level of a dialect. Within a few years Beg was able to found a literary society *Kashmir Bazm-e-Adab* (1943) and very soon he could give to Kashmiri the first ever bilingual (Urdu-Kashmiri) journal *Gulrez* which found a wide response not only in the



With his fellow poets, 1997

Valley but wherever Kashmiri was spoken. *Bazm-e-Adab* and *Gulrez* were responsible for creating a conducive atmosphere for creative work in the language, easily understood by the common man as against the verbose and Persianised or Sanskritised language used by the writers previously. Today the fruit of his half a century of labour is available in the shape of post-graduate classes and also research classes in the Kashmir University.

Initially Mirza Arif produced natural poetry, reflecting mysticism but after being associated with the Kashmir Culture Front (1947), a progressive socialistic organisation, he underwent a radical change from spiritualism to socialism, from being an ardent believer into an avowed non-believer.

During the second phase of his writing career, he produced progressive poetry and several of his long poems such as 'Moziren', 'Baahaj Baal', 'Dussa', etc. are quite popular. It was also the time when he became an ardent advocate of Naya Kashmir and won the title of 'The Watch Dog of the Kashmir Freedom Struggle'. In the words of Prof. P.N. Pushp, "By and by Mirza Arif came out of the academic world of abstraction into the vast arena of grim realities and the Kashmiris' struggle for freedom from the feudal lord found in his verse a



Receiving the Sahitya Akademi Award, 1986

gripping articulation with a soul-stirring plea for the reordering of society." Though Mirza Arif continued to be the poet of Naya Kashmir he went on undergoing a revolution from within. He now began to be remoulded as a spiritualist with a vision, who witnessed surprising phenomena, invisible to the naked eye, which he has described in an Urdu book entitled *Makaa Shifaat*. Today at the age of about 88, he feels that the spiritual world is more real than the world we see around us. He ardently believes that when one's 'inner eye' is able to 'see' things unseen, the soul itself becomes visible.

The sacred Vedas impressed him most as the

first holy book that has unequivocally preached the existence of a single creator for this Universe. Like Swami Vivekananda, Mirza Arif believes that the rivalries will disappear if this spirit of the sacred Vedas could be combined with the practical aspect of the *Tawheed* of Islam. There will be then only one religion, of humanity.

Mirza Arif has sung profusely of old age, which he calls 'octogenarian poetry'. He is busy composing verses even today. He regards talent for creative work as a trust, and believes in giving vent to truth, to all that he imagines worth writing about.

Among his published works *Baangi Awal* and *Ramoz Arif* represent his sufi period: *Rubaayaat Arif* and *Lola Vechar* his progressive ideas and *Naya Kashmir*

Movement; his *Mathnavi Laila Mustafa* is regarded as the best attempt after the famous *Gulrez* of Maqbool Saha Kashmiri. In his *Aalam Ashob* (The World Turmoil), he has categorically predicted the dissolution of Communism and the rise of universal Humanism.

Mirza Arif is equally renowned as a scientist and was the first scientist to rear non-mulberry silkworms indoors (known locally as *tussar*) in India. His work has been published in international scientific journals of repute like *Sericola* (France) and *Scientific Mirror* (USA).

Mirza Arif Beg is at present serving as Honorary Principal, Sarafraz College of Education, Srinagar and also is the Director of Mirza Arif Educational Complex, Srinagar. □



With Dr. Karan Singh, 1983

A Select Bibliography

In Kashmiri

<i>Ramoozi Arif,</i>	1946	<i>Aadami Mor</i> (A book on human physiology)	
<i>Laila Mustafa,</i> (1st edition)	1947	<i>Lola Vechar,</i>	1984
(IInd edition)	1990	<i>Aalam Aashob,</i>	1987
<i>Rubayaati Arif,</i>	1954	<i>Ahsanuti Qasas,</i>	1993
<i>Baangi Awal,</i>	1954	Commentary of the Quran in prose and poetry (in press)	
<i>Safar Namai Cheen,</i>	1958		
<i>Aagar Woni,</i>	1971		

In Urdu

<i>Maka Shifaat</i> (Arifana Stories)	<i>Mushahidat</i> (Matrimonial Bliss)
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In English

<i>An Anthology of Kashmiri Poets,</i> 1958	<i>Research and Silk Industry of Kashmir</i> 1960 to 1964
<i>Discovery of Non-Mulberry Silk in Jammu & Kashmir,</i> 1958	<i>Indoor Culture of Tussar Worms,</i> 1961
	<i>Hybridation of Japanese and Jammu Varieties,</i> 1961

Translations

Kashmiri Translation of the Holy Quran (prose & poetry)	collaboration with Prof. P.N. Pushp)
<i>Cycle of Spring</i> by Rabindranath Tagore	<i>Chilhil Asrar</i> by Shahi Hamdan (in Kashmiri verse)
<i>Constitution of India</i> (in	<i>Quatrains of Umar Khaiyam</i> (in Kashmiri Quatrains)



With other eminent poets

A Chronology

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|---|---|
| <p>1910 Birth</p> <p>1939 M.Sc (Zoology), Aligarh;
Lecturer, S.P. College,
Srinagar</p> <p>1940 Founded Kashmiri Cul-
tural Renaissance;
Married Habeeba.</p> <p>1943 Founder President
<i>Kashmir Bazm-e-Adab</i></p> <p>1947 General Secretary,
Kashmir Cultural
Front; Co-editor with
Mahjoor of <i>Kong Posh</i></p> <p>1948 Director (Programmes),
Jammu & Kashmir
Radio</p> <p>1950 Represented Kashmiri
in the All India
Scholars' Conference;
J&K Award</p> <p>1951 Represented Kashmiri
in All-India Conference
of Letters</p> <p>1952 Convener, Kashmiri
Advisory Board of
Sahitya Akademi;
Founded <i>Gulrez</i>
(Bilingual Journal)</p> | <p>1970 President, Ta' leemul
Quran, Srinagar</p> <p>1971 Founder President, All-
India Iqbal Memorial
Trust</p> <p>1973 Haj to Saudi Arabia</p> <p>1974 President, Kashmir
Council of Research
(English) 'for propaga-
ting Kashmiri Cultural
Heritage</p> <p>1975 Robe of Honour
awarded by J&K
Cultural Academy for
<i>Aadami Mor</i>; Founder
President of Kashmir
Council of Research</p> <p>1985 Sahitya Akademi
Award for <i>Lola Vechar</i></p> <p>1986 Honoured by the Kash-
mir Council of Research</p> <p>1993 Mulk Raj Saraf Award
as pioneer journalist in
Kashmiri</p> <p>1994 Founder President of
Sarafaraz College of
Education; honoured
by the Iqbal Academy</p> |
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With his family