

Maqbool Hasan Khan obituary

Mohammad Asim Siddiqui

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Maqbool Hasan Khan wrote in both English and Urdu, and was an expert on Shakespeare

My former teacher and PhD supervisor, Maqbool Hasan Khan, who has died aged 79, was a professor of English at Aligarh Muslim University, northern [India](#), and a bilingual literary critic. Greatly interested in western philosophy and Urdu literature, Maqbool wrote in both English and Urdu.

Shakespeare's plays and Shakespeare criticism were Maqbool's lifetime passion. He loved to quote Shakespeare in all situations and could discuss almost all major and minor Shakespeare critics. Though he wrote a book on Edward Dowden in the mid-80s, and essays on AC Bradley's and Walter Raleigh's Shakespeare criticism, his work is also full of interesting asides on other Shakespeare critics, including Coleridge, Granville-Barker, EE Stoll, LC Knights and G Wilson Knight. He obtained an MA in Shakespeare studies from the Shakespeare Institute at Birmingham University in 1974, after being awarded a British Council scholarship.

He also edited the Aligarh Journal of English Studies, which specialised in Shakespeare scholarship, and the annotated editions of Hamlet and The Tempest, with long introductions, for Orient Longman Drama Classics.

Born in Malihabad, Lucknow, a town known for its rich variety of mangoes and Urdu poetry, Maqbool was the only brother to his five sisters. His father, Mahmood Hasan Khan, owned mango orchards and his mother, Razia Begum, taught the Qur'an to children and started a school for girls. Maqbool received his early education at Mahatma Gandhi high school, Malihabad, and did an MA in English at Lucknow University in 1959.

He worked briefly as a lecturer of English at Government College, Kota, Rajasthan, in 1961, before joining Aligarh Muslim University in 1963. He stayed there for 35 years until his retirement in 1998.

He wrote many essays in Urdu, and his long article on Qurratulain Hyder, an important Urdu novelist, won him critical acclaim in Urdu literary circles.

He was a shy, modest and private person, almost obscure even in his own university town, and never fond of public speaking, but the classroom transformed Maqbool into a very articulate, confident and inspired speaker.

He possessed a refined sense of humour and an extraordinary flair for teaching. His lectures were unfailingly interesting. In fact his greatest contribution lay in awakening in students a love of literature.

Maqbool married Ayesha Hussain in 1961. She died in 1971 and Maqbool brought up their four children singlehandedly before marrying Afsar Bano, a geography teacher, in 1981. She survives him, together with his son, Ayaz, three daughters, Tamkin, Tazeen and Taskeen, and nine grandchildren.