

Professor Dost Mohammad: A Through Gentleman.

Dost Mohammad joined the department of Economics in 1973. Throughout his teaching career he mostly taught international trade. Classical trade theories charmed him the most while modern trade theories (Paul Kurgman et al.) always remained at the periphery of his teaching agenda.

In the early days our association was symbolic. Over the years, however, it blossomed into an exemplary comrade. It matured during the times when Kashmir University Teachers Association's (KUTA) was engaged in a struggle of survival. During this period KUTA was under siege and suspensions of the teachers galore. I was fortunate to be a part of this struggle. Supreme Court decided in favor KUTA and showed the door to the then Vice-chancellor Professor Manzoor Alam. For KUTA: indeed, a great victory.

Dost Mohammad was better known as soft, sober and sublime gentleman rather than an enthusiastic teacher of gravity models of International Trade. To me he was a through family man wedded to two families----one his extended family initially located at Dal Gate and another department of economics as an adopted family. He, till the end, remained loyal to both. On the flip side these very families, in different ways, proved his Achilles Heel. Yet he loved the cool breezes of Naseem Bagh under the shades of mighty chinars as well as dancing Shikars of Dal Lake. Among all the tourist places of Kashmir Dal Gate has always remained exposed to cross cultural influences imparting it an aura of cosmopolitan culture. Dost Mohammad's father was a fine example of this "cosmopolitan Tehzeeb".

Dost Mohmmad was a connoisseur of food and Kashmir Arts(his family business). Ahdoos Kababs of good old days would lure him in a jiffy of second. Four of us—Me, Professor Misri, Dost Mohammad and Roshan Lal used to organize occasional Kabab Parties at Ahdoos. Dost Mohammad had a very knowledgeable understanding of food and crafts. His gastronomic insights helped to understand the link between Kashmiri Culture and Cooking.

Kabab Parties at Ahdoos were enjoyable beyond belief. Professor Misri's humor acted as timely appetizer. While crafting his anecdotes he used to target all of us by turns. Me and Roshan Lal as 'country Cousins' and Dost Mohammad as "*Pettah Garam*" {Nickname for Dost Mohmmad coined by Professor Misri}. At the end of every narration, during the tea breaks in the teachers' Common Room in the department, Dost Mohammad would instantly utter, "*Pettah Garam*" which loosely translates as: 'given this; the hot weather is adding fuel to the fire' (My apologies to my dear friend, Professor Mujrooh, for not having provided an appropriate translation from Kashmiri to English)

Dost Mohammad and Roshan Lal were friends par excellence. I and Misri Sahib had other common bonds; Paul Sweezy's interpretation of Marxian Economics was one of these. I could not benefit from the benign presence of Dost Mohammad after my departure from Kashmir in 1989. My links with him remained in a state of suspended animation till his sad demise. Be that as it may: My association with my colleagues and students was indeed a memorable period. I owe this to my Alma Matar---The University of Kashmir.

We, at the department of Economics, like all *Homo sapiens*, had: shortcomings, strong liking and disliking, professional rivalries, difference of opinion, body shaming habits, different groups and sub-groups and many more. But these were always managed with grace. Interests of the department were always accorded priority. Together we lived a life full of life. Most of the members of the economics fraternity have decided to call it day leaving behind very few of us. I do not know why? Perhaps all of us are with and without nature.

As an afterthought: my personal narration may have very limited macro relevance and implications. But at times small things motivate people to do big things. I hope and trust Dost Mohammad's life will inspire the present generation of students and teachers in the university for doing what we failed to do during our times.

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