

Classic Poetry Series

Homen Borgohain - poems -

Publication Date:

2012

Publisher:

Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

Homen Borgohain(1932 -)

Homen Borgohain(Assamese: হোমেন বৰগোহাই)is an Indian writer, poet, critic, columnist and editor in the Assamese language. He was awarded the 1978 Sahitya Akademi Award in Assamese language for his novel, Pita Putra.

Homen Borgohain is one of those few Assamese writers whose works have attracted the attention of a wide number of readers and many acclaimed critics alike. He has carved a niche for himself in the domain of Indian literature by the magic of his words and his refined and dignified personality. He is one of those rare artistes who has allowed the flow of life to find its own form in art.

Though he is a natural columnist, yet his multifaceted genius exhibits its prowess in the genres of novel, short story and poetry with equal aplomb. He is a prolific writer but that has in no way jeopardised his own artistic integrity. Writing for him is a deep ethical commitment. In spite of having rural roots, Borgohain's work shows a deep understanding about urban complexities. In the early phase of his life Borgohain led an almost bohemian existence and the reflection of that particular life can be visualised in many of his early hain first edited an Assamese weekly News paper 'Nilachal' and later he edited another Assamese weekly 'Nagarik'. Afterward, he served as a senior staff of Bangali Daily Newspaper 'Ajkal'. Borgohain's editorial articles of Nagarik and Nilachal are edited by Dr. R. Sabhapandit and published in two volumes in Assamese.

Life

Born in a small village of Lakhimpur, Homen Borgohain came to Guwahati to study in Cotton College, the most prestigious college of India's North East. He married Nirupama Tamuli, famous in Assam as Nirupama Borgohain : one of the most popular writers of her generation and an exponent of early feminist writings in Assam. They have two sons, Anindya Borgohain and Pradipta Borgohain. Nirupama, too won the Sahitya Akademi Award for her novel Abhijatri. Their son Pradipta Borgohain is also a writer and academic who teaches at the Gauhati University. Their elder son, Anindya, apart from working with a bank, is also a freelance writer in Assamese. The writer couple wrote a novel called Puwar Purobi Sandhyar Bibhash, which is the first and perhaps the only joint-novel written in Assamese. They have three grandchildren: Manalika, Jahnvi and ya Akademi Award winner Rita Chowdhury's bestselling as well as controversial novel Popiya Torar Sadhu probably derives inspiration from Homen Borgohain and Nirupama Borgohain's life. Homen Borgohain currently lives in Dispur, Assam.

 Works

Though Borgohain has penned many controversial and thought provoking works like Subala, Pita Putra, Timirtirtha, Kushilab, the novels in which he most successfully scans the existence of man with all its complexities are Astarag and Edinar Diary. In Astarag, Borgohain shows us what it means to be alive in a world a full of pain and suffering. The heartrending agony of old age is portrayed so vividly in the novel that the readers are drowned in a well of sympathy for both Dilip and his father. Borgohain strives to prove the truth that life is an indefinite reprieve from death and to be alive is to gradually wither away.

In Edinar Diary, Borgohain goes one step forward and tries to understand the essence of existence with a philosopher's profound quest for truth. Borgohain is a widely read man and the gems of his erudition are scattered throughout the pages of the book which help us to come to terms with our existence in a better way. The sense of alienation, despair, boredom all find manifestations in that particular work and we close the book with an enhanced understanding of our existence. As one character, Aditya Baruah says towards the end of the novel – "Life must be having a meaning; I will endeavour to find out that meaning from today".

He wrote all the novels after doing a great amount of research. Some of his novels contain a part of his life. Pita Putra, Astarag, Saudar Puteke Nao Meli Jai are such examples. Matsyagandha, is one of his most famous works—the story of Menaka, a lower caste woman. It was made into a major motion picture with Nikumoni Barua in the lead character.

Currently, he serves as the editor of Amar Asom, the most prestigious daily newspaper in Assam. He is known to encourage and discover a host of new writers in Assam who are established names in Assam now; such as Anuradha Sharma Pujari, Manikuntala Bhattacharya, Pranab Kumar Barman, Jayanta Saikia, Anamika Bora, Archana Borthakur, Dhanada Devi, Aruni Kashyap, Nirmal Sahewalla, Pranay Phukan and many more. Indira Goswami mentions fondly how she was encouraged by Homen Borgohain to write her autobiography, which went on to become a legendary book in Assamese literature. Homen Borgohain's style of personal essays, that effortlessly combines with the social and the political is called "Homenism" by a critic in Satsori journal, one of many literary publications he founded and edited.

 Awards

Sahitya Akademi Award

Assam Valley Literary Award

Nilamoni Phukan Award from Asom Sahitya Sabha

Bikalpa

Homen Borgohain

Sap

Homen Borgohain

The Snake

Oh, what an unbearably beautiful night, spreading warmth and heat!
My mind is excited (the mind with which I play)
As if a dazzling snake...
Golden is whose colour, the cruel emotion of death is whose eyes.
(How did this dream come true in our barren creation?)
I feel the unbearable happiness of freedom
In my being, in my consciousness; the uncontainable rhythm of life
In a serpentine motion, floating in the river of night's darkness
Frantic, cyclonic, unbarred.
Like a lunatic, I adore this blood-bath darkness of the night
The way I love the mind, like tar the colour of whose body, a prostitute
In the forest of dreams, roams a dazzling golden snake
Surrounding it the golden silence, unbearable wonder and heat
Darkness and darkness.
I adore, like the night, fascinating, a snake, and its surprised pride,
Like tar the colour of whose body, a prostitute
Like a melting heart, this togetherness of death and beauty.

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