

Two Poems by Khagen Saikia

Foundation Stone

Its quite sometime when we opened the door
Laid a foundation stone
Created a festive ambience
Didn't get time off in the hubbub to think
Whether things were good or bad.

Not much time elapsed, there was talk of
A new foundation stone, breaking or replacing the old one
We didn't understand that we had become infected,
Fraught, let out sighs sweating profusely
We didn't understand time's bidding
We didn't agree to the things that newly cropped up eons ago

With moving times we saw
The Golden deer of deceptive mercy and
Deep dark clouds in the sky where is born the unsteady fountain.

Time buries
The mistakes we make in every age
Remained unhurried only discriminatory keening
We've made a rotten egg of the entire earth

The earth but belonged to everyone.
Its in the long past we opened the door by mistake
Laying a foundation stone we became imposing
Creating heaven and hell, made the journey blurry
Became undifferentiable, couldn't keep up
The immortal craving.

Periphery

Somebody will speak it out

Like the stars glinting nightly in the bluish sky
It will remain and spread

How long will they remain thrifty and reticent
Someone will speak it out with an open mind
Will churn confidently
forgetting everything, even fear of death

They all know
bitterness cannot be buried under sand,
it remains vigilant

Time,too,is irascible--
Gives little opportunity to speak it out
With a pretty smile waits at a distance

Like the wise

Somebody will speak it out

Waiting ends one day

It requires seven days to muster up courage.

Translated by Uttam Dourah

Khagen Saikia is an Assamese poet, novelist and writer based in Nagaon, Assam. He has six collections of poems and six novels to his credit.

Uttam Duorah, the translator, retired as the HoD, English, Women's College, Tinsukia and is based in Tinsukia, Assam.