

Rabindra Sarkar's Poem

Only the Stone Knows

Like a man cut off from his roots
Obstructing the roads, a stone—
Sitting with its head between the knees.
Didn't know till then
Where and how hides
The cruelty of the post hole digger,
The heart piercing scream of drilling.

I've seen man turning into stone in grief.
Stone, too, has grief, has sadness,
Has curves and language of heart;
Its thoughts were understood by the sculptor Moore—
Rhythm, movement, rise and fall
Even in motionlessness so fluid, dynamic—
Symbol of concrete humanity.

The instant I see a tall mossy stone
I remember even today that wise professor of history
Who wore golden spectacles;
When the stars blossom at night in the Kiling valley
I hear sounds of horse hooves,
A few blank pages of time

Thanklessness of man is blessed with long life
Only the stone knows!

Translated by Uttam Duorah

Rabindra Sarkar (b.1941-d.2023) was an Indian poet and translator who wrote in Assamese language. He received Sahitya Akademi award for his collection titled *Dhuliyari Bharir Khoj* in 2013. He has more than ten collections of poems to his credit.

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