

Poetry Series

Keshab Sigdel
- poems -

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Keshab Sigdel(July 11,1979)

Born in 1979 in Bardiya, Nepal, Keshab Sigdel has had an exciting and varied career in teaching English language and literature, trainers' training, and human rights activism. He is an MA, . in English and has also earned Law degrees from Nepal, India and Sweden.

Mr. Sigdel currently is an Assistant Professor of English at Tribhuvan University and also teaches at the MA English program at St. Xavier's College, Kathmandu. He is the Vice President of Society of Nepali Writers in English (N/WEN) , and Founding Member of Asia Pacific Writers and Translators Association. Apart from that, he works as the General Secretary of Literary Association of Nepal (LAN) and works with the Translation Committee at International PEN Nepal Chapter. He is also associated with Amnesty International and has already served as the National Vice Chairperson of Nepal Section of Amnesty International.

His poems and plays are prescribed in University Curriculum and School Level text books in Nepal.

Apart from Nepal, he has traveled to India, Hong Kong/China, Bangladesh, Thailand, Indonesia, Bahrain, Sweden, Finland and the Netherlands to participate in international literary conferences, meetings/ workshops and for study visits.

He is the author of a collection of poems in Nepali, Samaya Bighatan (2007) , and a co-author of a joint anthology of poems in English, Six Strings (2011) . He is also a co-editor of English literary magazine Of Nepalese Clay and Devkota Studies, a bilingual research publication.

At The Teashop

At the teashop
They come every morning
For yet another cup of tea
After rounds of tea at their homes or elsewhere.
There is nothing special here:
Yes, Mithila vaujau still remembers the etiquette of a business—
She'll smile indiscriminately
To anyone
Who comes at her teashop
Except those days
When a customer picks up a paper
At the teashop
And recounts the news
Of the scarcity of LP gas,
Or increase in sugar price.

They come and talk their business,
Their new boss in the office,
Or the communist party in the government.
She has nothing to do with those talks
But she still loves them
Because she practices the business etiquette
To love things
That brings profit to her.

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Of My Poetry Class

Today, as every previous-year's day,
I'll meet a new batch of students
In my poetry class.
May be I'll talk to them on Chaucer
On how he democratically portrayed his characters
Or, may be, I'll, as always,
Romanticize Ginsberg as a Hippie-hero
And elaborate his experiments with sex and drugs;
Or, I may be overtaken by the personal life of Yeats
By failures of his love life
More than the philosophical visions in his poems.

They'll have expectations
And may end in impressions,
I'll also have expectations
But I'll need to continue on those impressions,
The way I've been doing these many years.

In the classroom
They'll be my students
Or, I will be their teacher, by reciprocation.
Very consciously, we'll build and maintain the distance
Of our being—as a teacher, as students.
Each day, we'll interact with each other
Through faces- foamy smiles this time, and frowns at other times.
In the turn of the year, before my poetry classes end
These new faces will soon be registered as ' gold-old batch'
And I'll be left to expect new faces again.

At this moment of thought, as always,
I am drawn back to the same question:
With these fleets of fancy-fiery faces,
(As a new teacher to these new students) ,
Am I simply rehearsing to keep time away?

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Reality

Here they came
In a mission
In search of a 'right' man.
I proposed them the tallest of men;
Very moment, they shrunk down to Liliputs themselves,
And, out of fear, they outright rejected the Guliver.
Then I proposed them the shortest of men,
This time, they themselves swelled as big as the Guliver
Out of scorn, they again rejected this poor Liliput.
Finally, I asked them who they really wanted:
'Tallest of the dwarfs, ' they humbly answered.

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