

ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF

Assamese Literature



Raj Kumar Singh

Encyclopaedia सदभं
REFERENCE
of
ASSAMESE LITERATURE

Volume 1



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PREFACE

Assamese literature is the entire corpus of poetry, novels, short stories, documents etc. written in the Assamese language. It also includes such writings and popular ballads in the older forms of the language during its evolution to the contemporary form. The rich literary heritage of the Assamese language can be traced back to the 6th century in the Charyapada, where the earliest elements of the language can be discerned. The Charyapadas are often cited as the earliest example of Assamese literature. The Charyapadas are Buddhist songs composed in 8th-12th century. These writings bear similarities to Oriya and Bengali languages as well. The phonological and morphological traits of these songs bear very strong resemblance to Assamese some of which are extant.

After the Charyapadas, the period may again be split into (a) Pre-Vaishnavite and (b) Vaishnavite sub-periods. The earliest known Assamese writer is Hema da Charita". In the time of the King Saraswati, who wrote a small poem "Prahra Indranarayana (1350-1365) of Kamatapur the two poets Harihara Vipra and Kaviratna Saraswati composed *Asvamedha Parva* and *Jayadratha Vadha* respectively. Another poet named Rudra Kandali translated *Drona Parva* into Assamese. But the most well-known poet of the Pre-Vaishnavite sub period is Madhav Kandali, who rendered Valmiki's Ramayana into Assamese verse (Kotha Ramayana, 14th century) under the patronage of Mahamanikya, a Kachari king of Jayantapura.

In the middle period of the prose chronicles (*Buranji*) of the Ahom court. The Ahoms had brought with them an instinct for historical writings. In the Ahom court, historical chronicles were at first composed in their original Tibeto-Chinese language, but when the Ahom rulers adopted Assamese as the court language, historical chronicles began to be written in Assamese. From the beginning of the seventeenth century onwards, court chronicles were written in large numbers. These

chronicles or buranjis, as they were called by the Ahoms, broke away from the style of the religious writers. The language is essentially modern except for slight alterations in grammar and spelling. The modern Assamese period began with the publication of the Bible in Assamese prose by the American Baptist Missionaries in 1819. The currently prevalent standard Asamiya has its roots in the Sibsagar dialect of Eastern Assam. As mentioned in Bani Kanta Kakati's "Assamese, its Formation and Development" (1941, Published by Sree Khagendra Narayan Dutta Baruah, LBS Publications, G.N. Bordoloi Road, Gauhati-1, Assam, India)— "The Missionaries made Sibsagar in Eastern Assam the centre of their activities and used the dialect of Sibsagar for their literary purposes". The American Baptist Missionaries were the first to use this dialect in translating the Bible in 1813. These Missionaries established the first printing press in Sibsagar in 1836 and started using the local Asamiya dialect for writing purposes. In 1846 they started a monthly periodical called *Arunodoi*, and in 1848, Nathan Brown published the first book on Assamese Grammar. The Missionaries published the first Assamese-English Dictionary compiled by M. Bronson in 1867. One of the major contributions of the American Baptist Missionaries to the Assamese language is the reintroduction of Assamese as the official language in Assam. In 1848 missionary Nathan Brown published a treatise on the Assamese language. The period of modern literature began with the publication the Assamese journal *Jonaki* (1889), which introduced the short story form first by Laxminath Bezbarua. Thus began the *Jonaki* period of Assamese literature. In 1894 Rajanikanta Bordoloi published the first Assamese novel *Mirijiyori*. The modern Assamese literature has been enriched by the works of Jyoti Prasad Agarwalla, Hem Barua, Atul Chandra Hazarika, Nalini Bala Devi, Navakanta Barua, and others.

In recent years, the Assamese literature has made conspicuous progress in all its forms, mainly in fiction and poetry. The chapter on contained in this book acquaint the readers with the fluctuating scene of thematic concerns and technical experimentations in Assamese Literature. It is hoped that both the teachers and students will find them extremely useful. Even the general readers who are interested in literature in Assamese will find them intellectually stimulating.

— Dr. Raj Kumar Singh

INTRODUCTION

Assamese literature is the entire corpus of poetry, novels, short stories, documents etc. written in the Assamese language. It also includes such writings and popular ballads in the older forms of the language during its evolution to the contemporary form. The rich literary heritage of the Assamese language can be traced back to the 6th century in the Charyapada, where the earliest elements of the language can be discerned.

History

The history of the **Assamese literature** may be broadly divided into three periods:

Early Assamese (6th to 15th century AD)

The Charyapadas are often cited as the earliest example of Assamese literature. The Charyapadas are Buddhist songs composed in 8th-12th century. These writings bear similarities to Oriya and Bengali languages as well. The phonological and morphological traits of these songs bear very strong resemblance to Assamese some of which are extant. After the Charyapadas, the period may again be split into (a) Pre-Vaishnavite and (b) Vaishnavite sub-periods. The earliest known Assamese writer is Hema Saraswati, who wrote a small poem "Prahra Charita". In the time of the King Indranarayana (1350-1365) of Kamatapur the two poets Harihara Vipra and Kaviratna Saraswati composed *Asvamedha Parva* and *Jayadratha Vadha* respectively. Another poet named Rudra Kandali translated *Drona Parva* into Assamese. But the most well-known poet of the Pre-Vaishnavite sub period is Madhav Kandali, who rendered Valmiki's Ramayana into

Assamese verse (Kotha Ramayana, 14th century) under the patronage of Mahamanikya, a Kachari king of Jayantapura.

Middle Assamese (17th to 19th Century AD)

This is a period of the prose chronicles (*Buranji*) of the Ahom court. The Ahoms had brought with them an instinct for historical writings. In the Ahom court, historical chronicles were at first composed in their original Tibeto-Chinese language, but when the Ahom rulers adopted Assamese as the court language, historical chronicles began to be written in Assamese. From the beginning of the seventeenth century onwards, court chronicles were written in large numbers. These chronicles or buranjis, as they were called by the Ahoms, broke away from the style of the religious writers. The language is essentially modern except for slight alterations in grammar and spelling.

Modern Assamese

Effect of British rule: The British imposed Bengali in 1836 in Assam after the state was occupied in 1826. Due to a sustained campaign, Assamese was reinstated in 1873 as the state language. Since the initial printing and literary activity occurred in eastern Assam, the Eastern dialect was introduced in schools, courts and offices and soon came to be formally recognized as the Standard Assamese. In recent times, with the growth of Guwahati as the political and commercial centre of Assam, the Standard Assamese has moved away from its roots in the Eastern dialect.

Influence of Missionaries: The modern Assamese period began with the publication of the Bible in Assamese prose by the American Baptist Missionaries in 1819. The currently prevalent standard Asamiya has its roots in the Sibsagar dialect of Eastern Assam. As mentioned in Bani Kanta Kakati's "Assamese, its Formation and Development" (1941, Published by Sree Khagendra Narayan Dutta Baruah, LBS Publications, G.N. Bordoloi Road, Gauhati-1, Assam, India) – "The Missionaries made Sibsagar in Eastern Assam the centre of their activities and used the dialect of Sibsagar for their literary purposes". The American Baptist Missionaries were the first to use this dialect in translating the Bible in 1813. These Missionaries established the first printing press in Sibsagar in 1836 and started using the local Asamiya dialect for writing purposes. In 1846 they started a monthly periodical called *Arunodoi*, and in 1848, Nathan Brown published the first book

on Assamese Grammar. The Missionaries published the first Assamese-English Dictionary compiled by M. Bronson in 1867. One of the major contributions of the American Baptist Missionaries to the Assamese language is the reintroduction of Assamese as the official language in Assam. In 1848 missionary Nathan Brown published a treatise on the Assamese language. This treatise gave a strong impetus towards reintroducing Assamese the official language in Assam. In his 1853 official report on the province of Assam, British official Moffat Mills wrote:

“...the people complain, and in my opinion with much reason, of the substitution of Bengali for the Vernacular Assamese. Bengali is the language of the court, not of their popular books and shashtras, and there is a strong prejudice to its general use. ...Assamese is described by Mr. Brown, the best scholar in the province, as a beautiful, simple language, differing in more respects from, than agreeing with, Bengali, and I think we made a great mistake in directing that all business should be transacted in Bengali, and that the Assamese must acquire it. It is too late now to retrace our steps, but I would strongly recommend Anandaram Phukan’s proposition to the favourable consideration of the Council of Education, viz., the substitution of the vernacular language in lieu of Bengali, and completion of the course of the Vernacular education in Bengali. I feel persuaded that a youth will, under this system of tuition, learn more in two than he now acquires in four years. An English youth is not taught in Latin until he is well grounded in English, and in the same manner, an Assamese should not be taught in a foreign language until he knows his own..”

Beginning of Modern Literature

The period of modern literature began with the publication the Assamese journal *Jonaki* (1889), which introduced the short story form first by Laxminath Bezbarua. Thus began the *Jonaki* period of Assamese literature. In 1894 Rajanikanta Bordoloi published the first Assamese novel *Mirijiyori*. The modern Assamese literature has been enriched by the works of Jyoti Prasad Agarwalla, Hem Barua, Atul Chandra Hazarika, Nalini Bala Devi, Navakanta Barua, and others.

In 1917 the Oxom Xahityo Xobhawas formed as a guardian of the Assamese society and the forum for the development of Assamese

language and literature. Padmanath Gohain Baruah was the first president of the society.

Assamese Language

Assamese is the easternmost Indo-Aryan language that is spoken mainly in the state of Assam in North-East India. It is also the official language of Assam. It is also spoken in parts of Arunachal Pradesh and other northeast Indian states. Small pockets of Assamese speakers can be found in Bhutan. The easternmost of Indo-European languages, it is spoken by over 13 million people.

The English word "Assamese" is built on the same principle as "Japanese", "Taiwanese", etc. It is based on the English word "Assam" by which the tract consisting of the Brahmaputra valley is known. The people call their state *Oxom* and their language *Oxomiya*.

Formation of Assamese

Assamese and the cognate languages, Maithili, Bengali and Oriya, developed from Magadhi Prakrit. According to linguist Suniti Kumar Chatterji, the Magadhi Prakrit in the east gave rise to four Apabhramsa dialects: Radha, Vanga, Varendra and Kamarupa; and the Kamarupa Apabhramsa, keeping to the north of the Ganges, gave rise to the North Bengal dialects in West Bengal and Assamese in the Brahmaputra valley. Though early compositions in Assamese exist from the 13th century, the earliest relics of the language can be found in paleographic records of the Kamarupa Kingdom from the 5th century to the 12th century. Assamese language features have been discovered in the 9th century Charyapada, which are Buddhist verses discovered in 1907 in Nepal, and which came from the end of the Apabhramsa period.

Early compositions matured in the 14th century, during the reign of the Kamata king Durlabhnarayana of the Khen dynasty, when Madhav Kandali composed the Kotha Ramayana. Since the time of the Charyapada, Assamese has been influenced by the languages belonging to the Sino-Tibetan and Austroasiatic families.

Assamese became the court language in the Ahom kingdom by the 17th century.

Writing

Assamese uses the Assamese script, a variant of the Eastern Nagari script, which traces its descent from the Gupta script. There is a strong

tradition of writing from early times. Examples can be seen in edicts, land grants and copper plates of medieval kings. Assam had its own system of writing on the bark of the *saanchi* tree in which religious texts and chronicles were written. The present-day spellings in Assamese are not necessarily phonetic. *Hemkosh*, the second Assamese dictionary, introduced spellings based on Sanskrit which are now the standard.

Morphology and Grammar

The Assamese language has the following characteristic morphological features

- Gender and number are not grammatically marked
- There is lexical distinction of gender in the third person pronoun.
- Transitive verbs are distinguished from intransitive.
- The agentive case is overtly marked as distinct from the accusative.
- Kinship nouns are inflected for personal pronominal possession.
- Adverbs can be derived from the verb roots.
- A passive construction may be employed idiomatically.

Alveolar Stops

The Assamese phoneme inventory is unique in the Indic group of languages in its lack of a dental-retroflex distinction in coronal stops. Historically, the dental stops and retroflex stops both merged into alveolar stops. This makes Assamese resemble non-Indic languages in its use of the coronal major place of articulation. The only other language to have fronted retroflex stops into alveolars is the closely-related eastern dialects of Bengali (although a contrast with dental stops remains in those dialects).

Voiceless Velar Fricative

Unlike most eastern Indic languages, Assamese is also noted for the presence of the voiceless velar fricative x , (x , IITG, pronounced by a native speaker) historically derived from what used to be coronal sibilants. The derivation of the velar fricative from the coronal sibilant [s] is evident in the name of the language in Assamese; some Assamese prefer to write *Oxomiya/Oxomiya* instead of *Asomiya/Asamiya* to reflect the sound, represented by [x] in the International Phonetic Alphabet. This sound [x] was present in Vedic Sanskrit, but disappeared in classical

Sanskrit. It was brought back into the phonology of Assamese as a result of lenition of the three Sanskrit sibilants. This sound is present in other nearby languages, like Chittagonian.

The sound is variously transcribed in the IPA as a voiceless velar fricative [x], a voiceless uvular fricative [÷], and a voiceless velar approximant [p̥] by leading phonologists and phoneticians. Some variations of the sound is expected within different population groups and dialects, and depending on the speaker, speech register, and quality of recording, all three symbols may approximate the acoustic reading of the actual Assamese phoneme.

Velar nasal

Assamese, in contrast to other Indo-Aryan languages, uses the velar nasal extensively. In these languages the velar nasal is always attached to a homorganic sound, whereas it is used singly in Assamese.

Vowel Inventory

Eastern Indic languages like Assamese, Bengali, Sylheti, and Oriya do not have a vowel length distinction, but have a wide set of back rounded vowels. In the case of Assamese, there are four back rounded vowels, including **O** [ɔ], **o** [o], **u** [ʊ], and **u** [u]. These four vowels contrast phonemically, as demonstrated by the minimal set *kola* [kola] ‘deaf’, *kola* [kola] ‘black’, *kula* [kʊla] ‘lap’, and *kula* [kula] ‘winnowing fan’.

The high-mid back rounded vowel **u** [ʊ] is unique in this branch of the language family, and sounds very much to foreigners as something between [o] and [u]. This vowel is found in Assamese words such as *put* [pʊt] “to bury”.

Dialects

In the middle of the 19th century the dialect spoken in the Sibsagar area came into focus because it was made the official language of the state by the British and because the Christian missionaries based their work in this region. Now the Assamese spoken in and around Guwahati, located geographically in the middle of the Assamese spoken region, is accepted as the standard Assamese. The Assamese taught in schools and used in newspapers today has evolved and incorporated elements from different dialects of the language. Banikanta Kakati identified two dialects which he named (1) Eastern and (2) Western dialects. However,

recent linguistic studies have identified four dialect groups (Moral 1992), listed below from east to west:

- Eastern group, spoken in and other districts around Sibsagar district
- Central group spoken in present Nagaon district and adjoining areas
- Kamrupi group spoken in undivided Kamrup, Nalbari, Barpeta, Darrang, Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon districts
- Goalparia group spoken primarily in the Dhubri and Goalpara districts and in certain areas of Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon districts

Assamese Literature

There is a growing and strong body of literature in this language. The first characteristics of this language are seen in the Charyapadas composed in the 8th-12th century. The first examples emerge in writings of court poets in the 14th century, the finest example of which is Madhav Kandali's Kotha Ramayana, as well as popular ballad in the form of Ojapali. The 16th—17th century saw a flourishing of Vaishnavite literature, leading up to the emergence of modern forms of literature in the late 19th century.

Goalpariya

Goalpariya is a dialect of the erstwhile Goalpara district of Assam in India. It is largely spoken in Dhubri, Goalpara, Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon districts which were created from erstwhile Goalpara district. The basic characteristic of the **Goalpariya** dialect is that it is a composite one into which words of different concerns and regions have been amalgamated.

The people who speak this dialect, call themselves *deshi*, a dominant section, leaving out the Bodos, Ravas, Mechs, Chawtals and other communities of the region. They call their dialect as *deshi bhasa*. A large section of these people are known as *Rajbongshi*, which means men of royal descent who are *Koch* in origin. To trace the intermingling nature of this dialect, one can look its words. For example, the word *kechha*, meaning story, could have been derived from the Urdu word *kissa* and transformed itself into the **Goalpariya** dialect. The Urdu influence may be traced to the Mughal general, Mir Jumla, who, during

his invasion of Assam, had pitched his military camp at Panbari in Dhubri district, probably due to the Panbari Mosque which was used by Muslim soldiers. Indeed, a section of the Mughals had settled in the district and the process of acculturation followed.

There are many other Arabic, Persian and Urdu words in use in the Goalpariya dialect such as *roshan*, *haram*, *nasta*, *chacha*, *chachi*, *bhabi*, *nana* and *nani*. These are particularly used by the Muslim community. There are, of course, some variations in the dialect as one moves from one place to another which is not surprising as when there is a physical separation in terms of distance. According to Birendra Nath Dutta, the outgoing president of the Asom Sahitya Sabha, the old district can roughly be divided into two zones, the eastern and the western, on the basis of variation in their dialects.

The eastern zone is contiguous to the district of Kamrup and the western zone is closer to north Bengal. Thus, *moi ahilo* in Assamese becomes *moiahilung* in the eastern zone and *moiasilong* in the western zone. *Moiahilung* resembles the dialect of Kamrup district and differs a little from that of the west zone. As the eastern zone is close to Kamrup district, it could not keep itself aloof from the latter's influence.

In this context, the following examples will serve to show that the dialect of these zones have many points in common with that of Kamrup.

Eastern Kamrup: 1. *Api gila gharor para olaw* 2. *Bhal amta kaikhal*

Western Kamrup: 1. *Api gila gharar para ola* 2. *Bhal atmu kai khalak*.

The western zone on the other hand, being contiguous to North Bengal, could not remain unaffected from the Bengali influence. For example, Bengali words such as *matha* (head), *pakhi* (birds) and Assamese words such as *duar* (door), *chuli* (hair), *bihan* (morning), which were used in early Assamese, are used by the people of Goalpara. There are some peculiarities in the dialect of Goalpara. For example, *uyak aisa khaibe* (he has to come), *mok ei kamta* or *kajta kara khai* (I have to do this work). Again, sometimes "L" becomes "N" in western dialect, such as *lage* becomes *nage* and *lal* becomes *nal* (red), infusing another difference in the dialect. In the Goalpariya dialect, expressions such as *pet peta* (rotten), *tiktika* (deep) are very common. It is worth noting that the Maithili word *angcha* (garment), and Hindi words such

as *kawari* (door) and *damad* (bridegroom) have directly entered into the Goalpariya dialect and are still found in the same form and carrying the same meaning.

Hemkosh

Hemkosh is the first etymological dictionary of the Assamese Language based on Sanskrit spellings, compiled by Hemchandra Barua. It was first published in 1900 under the supervision of Capt. P. R. Gordon, ISC and Hemchandra Goswami, 33 years after the publication of the Bronson's dictionary. It contained about 22,346 words. This dictionary still published by *Hemkosh Printers* is considered to be the *Standard* reference of the Assamese Language.

Hemkosh is actually the second dictionary of Assamese language. The first Assamese dictionary was compiled by Dr. Miles Bronson, an American Baptist Missionary. His Dictionary, published in 1867 at American Baptist Mission Press Sibsagar, is out of print now. Bronson's work did not pretend to be an etymological dictionary but contained a very considerable collection of words culled from the lips of the people but without derivations.

Kamrupi

Kamrupi is the language that was spoken in the Kamarupa kingdom in the first millennium, which, some linguists claim, gave rise to or influenced various eastern Indo-European languages like Assamese and Bengali.

During British India at some point Kamrup was divided into two big districts for administrative reasons one added to Assam and other to Bengal. Slowly after this division, same **Kamrupi** gets dialect status of Assamese and Bengali although both Assamese and Bengali rooted out from mighty **Kamrupi**.

Kamrupi today is an endangered language, and it will probably go to "dead" state like Latin and Sanskrit.

Dialects

Assamese: **Kamrupi** today denotes a group of dialects of Assamese language spoken in the undivided Kamrup district of Assam. The four main dialects that form this group are Kamrupi, Nalbariya, Barpetiya and South Kamrupi [Moral, 1992]. These dialects are spoken in the

present districts of Kamrup, Nalbari, Barpeta, Darrang, Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon in Assam. The name is derived from the Kamarupa kingdom that existed from the fourth to the eleventh century, ruled by three major dynasties. The south Kamrupi dialect has been used with dramatic effect in the works of Mamoni Raisom Goswami.

Bengali

The modern Bengali scholars like Suniti Kumar Chatterjee and Sukumar Sen have named the dialect of Bengali spoken in North Bengal as Kamrupi. This dialect is also called *Kamatapuri* named after the Kamata kingdom that succeeded the Kamarupa kingdom in the 13th century. The Assamese Kamrupi and the Bengali Kamrupi are very similar according to Suniti Kumar Chatterjee. The division possibly occurred due to political reasons: the division in the 16th-17th century of the Kamata kingdom (under Koch dynasty) along the Sankosh river. Today the two dialects form a dialect continuum.

Apabhramsa

Some linguists claim that there existed a Kamrupi apabhramsa as opposed to the Magadhi apabhramsa from which the three cognate languages—Assamese, Bengali and Oriya—sprouted. The initial motive comes from extra-linguistic considerations. Kamarupa was the most powerful and formidable kingdom in the region which provided the political and cultural influence for the development of the Kamrupi apabhramsa.

Xuanzang's mention that the language spoken in Kamarupa was a 'little different' from the one spoken in Pundravardhana is provided as evidence that this apabhramsa existed as early as the 5th century. That Kamarupa remained unconquered till the beginning of the Kamrupi language in the 14th century points to the possibility that the apabhramsa of the Kamarupa kingdom must have flourished.

Archaic forms found in epigraphic records from the Kamarupa period give evidence of this apabhramsa, of which there are numerous examples.

The Buddhist Charyapadas from the 8th to 12th century are claimed by different languages: Assamese, Bengali, Oriya and Maithili languages. But the geographical region of its composition was the Kamarupa pitha and many of the composers were Kamrupi siddhas. Therefore the language in the Charyapadas is the best example of this apabhramsa.

H. P. Sastri, who discovered these poems, termed the language *sandhya bhasha* (twilight language) and this is nothing but the Kamarupi apabhramsa.

Endangered Language

Kamrupi is an endangered language. The language is defined by uniquely identifiable Kamrupi grammar where Sanskritize pronunciation is used to compose present perfect form. This grammar is heavily used by Kamrupi speakers all over greater Kamrup now including in Assam and West Bengal. At least 95% of the "sloka" composed in yester year scriptures use this unique Kamrupi grammar.

Kamrupi came to endangered language during British India when for administrative reasons Kamrup was divided into two big districts one added to Bengal and the other to Assam. Thus, **Kamrupi** since then has never been written but only spoken and do not have a State Language status in India.

It also claims that the standard languages, Bengali and Assamese, as well as the different dialects belonging to these language groups like Radhi, Virendari etc. have branched out of **Kamrupi**. This claim is not well substantiated because Bengali and other languages have had independent developments since the 14th century.

Sahitya Akademi Award to Assamese Writers

Sahitya Akademi Award is given each year, since 1955, by Sahitya Akademi (India's National Academy of Letters), to writers and their works, for their outstanding contribution to the upliftment of Indian literature and Assamese literature in particular.

Sahitya Akademi Award winners and their works in Assamese language

Year	Book	writer	Category of Books
1955	Banaphul	Jatindra Nath Duowrah	Poetry
1960	Congressor Kasiyoli Rodot	Benudhar Sharma	Reminiscences
1961	Iaruingom	Birendra Kumar Bhattacharya	Novel
1964	Assamar Looka Sanskriti	Birinchi Kumar Barua	Prose
1966	Bedanar Ulka	Ambikagiri Roychudhury	Poetry
1967	Adhunik Galpa Sahitya	Trailokya Nath Goswami	Literary criticism
1968	Alakanda	NaliniBala Devi	Poetry
1969	Manchalekha	Atul Chandra Hazarika	Prose
1970	Mahatmar Pora Rupkuoroloi	Lakshminath Phukan	Reminiscences
1972	Aghari Atmar Kahini	Syed Abdul Malik	Novel
1974	Golam	Saurav Kumar Chaliha	Short stories
1975	Kakadeutar Har	Nabakanta Barua	Novel
1976	Srinkhal	Bhabendra Nath Saikia	Short stories

1977	Bakul Banar Kabita	Anandra Chandra Barua	Poetry
1978	Pita Putra	Homen Borgohain	Novel
1979	Sunali Jahaj	Bhaben Barua	Poetry
1980	Prithibir Akukh	Jogesh Das	Short stories
1981	Kabita	Neelamoni Phukan	Poetry
1982	Mamore Dhara Tarual	Mamoni Roysom Goswami (Indira Goswami)	Novel
1983	Sudhirga Din Aru Rati	Nirmal Probha Bordoloi	Poetry
1984	Jangham	Debendra Nath Acharya	Novel
1985	Krishnakanta Handique Rasana Sambhar	Krishnakata Handique	Prose
1986	Benudhar Sharma	Tirthanath Sarma	Biography
1987	Aan Ejon	Harekrishna Deka	Poetry
1988	Patal Bhairabhi	Laksminandan Bora	Novel
1989	Assamiya Jatiyo Jeebonot Mahapurukhia Parampora	Hiren Gohain	Criticism
1990	Sneha Devir Akuki Galpa	Sneha Devi	Short stories
1991	Brahmaputra Ityadi Padya	Ajit Barua	Poetry
1992	Saisor Pothar Manuh	Hiren Bhattacharya	Poetry
1993	Muru Je Kiman Hepah	Keshav Mahanta	Lyrics
1994	Madhupur Bahudur	Sheelabhadra	Short stories
1995	Maharathi	Chandra Prasad Saikia	Novel
1996	Abhijatri	Nirupama Borgohain	Novel
1997	Andharot Nijor Mukh	Nagen Saikia	Short stories
1998	Ashirbador Rong	Arun Sharma	Novel
1999	Bippana Somoy	Medini Choudhury	Novel
2000	Baghe Tapur Rati	Apurba Sharma	Short stories
2001	Adhani Mahir Hahi	Mahim Bora	Novel
2002	Mahat Aitihya	Nalinidhar Bhattacharya	Prose
2003	Anek Manuh Anek Thai Aru Nirjonota	Bireshwar Barua	Poetry
2004	Manuh Anukule	Hirendra Nath Dutta	Poetry
2005	Mouna Uth Mukhar Hridoy	Yese Dorje Thongse	Novel
2006	Cheneh Jarir Gathi	Atulananda Goswami	Short stories
2007	Santanu KulNandan	Purabi Bormudoj	Novel
2008	Deo Langkhui	Reeta Choudhury	Novel