

Historical Illustration in the Songs of Bhupen Hazarika

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ABSTRACT: The ‘Bard of Brahmaputra’ Bhupen Hazarika has immense contribution to the Assamese culture, language and music. He has recognized the Assamese culture and music in global arena by his outstanding and versatile works. From 1936 his contribution to the Assamese culture has started where he recorded his first song ‘Kun-Koliyai’ in Jyoti Prasad Agarwala’s film Jaymati. From the onwards until his death he has portrayed every affairs of the contemporary world in musical literature. In this paper, I am going to illustrate and discussion about his songs and historical illustration.

KEYWORDS: Bhupen Hazarika, Sub-historical, songs, Culture, Jaymati, Assamese.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Bhupen Hazarika was a man of multidimensional talent, who furnished immense contribution to the field of Assamese music literature. He had successively been a lyricist, musician and film director. The songs of Bhupen Hazarika, who was associated with music since his childhood till his demise; break through the barriers of place and time and advances to a universal paradigm. His first song was “Kusumbara putra SriSankar guruwe dhorisil naamare taan...”. Coming into the contacts of Jyotiprasad Agarwala and Bishnu Rabha at an early age, Bhupen Hazarika recorded the song “Surare deulare rupare sikali bhangri” in the play “Sonit Kunwari”. He was only ten years old at that time. Bhupen Hazarika recorded songs in the plays “Jaymati”, “Karengar Ligiri”, and “Indramalati” of Jyotiprasad and “Beula” of Bishnuprasad.

The songs of Bhupen Hazarika entail the love of men and women, the spark of independence, the dutifulness of society and the narration of a history that is fading with the course of time; the clearness of which reminds the sweet memories of the past. The heroic valiant stories of the old tales become melodic through the Sudhakantha and strike the heart of each Assamese. The history entailed songs of Bhupen Hazarika reminds of the courage and valour of the men of the past.

In the songs of Bhupen Hazarika, an integration of new themes, elegant words and proverbs, and unconventional poetry can be seen. It can be presumed that his historical songs were composed during the early stage of his life. This category of songs takes account of personalities like Sankardev, Lachit Barphukan, Maniram Dewan, Piyali Phukan and Mahatma Gandhi. Even the recollection of battle of Ram-Ravan is also seen with the intention to aware the new generation.

Aims and Objectives: Bhupen Hazarika has carved his name in golden ink on the field of Assamese musical literature. His songs seem to reflect a stunning well studied mind and a sensitive heart. Even his memoirs outshine the individual self and shifts towards a universal notion. The lyrics, melodies and rhythms in his songs merge together to turn into a unified and unique form. Especially, a majestic depiction can be seen in his historical songs. His songs hold the melody of a familiar pleasant intimacy of hearts, which desires to touch the soul. It appears that his songs sound harmonious because of the beauty of words and excellence of melody. The key objective of this seminar paper is to highlight the expression of historical consciousness in songs of Bhupen Hazarika and different sides associated with it.

Source: To review the historical consciousness in song of Bhupen Hazarika, the book “Bhupen Hazarika geet aru jeevan rath” written by Dilip Kumar Dutta has been chosen as the primary source. In addition, the articles and books by the intelligentsia has been taken as secondary sources.

Method: For the convenience of discussion, analytical method is adopted.

II. DISCUSSION OF THE MAIN THEME

Bhupen Hazarika is an unforgettable name in the field of Assamese music literature. Dedicating whole of his life into music, Hazarika was officially entitled with the epithet “Sudhakantha” by Ananda Chandra Barua in 1968. He did not only excel in music but also entered into film making. The feature films directed by him are: Erabatar Sur (1956), Sakuntala (1961), Pratiddhwani (1965), Latighati (1966), Chikmik Bijuli (1966), Man Prajapati (1979), Chiraj (1988) etc. In 1959, he assumed as the editor of a monthly magazine “Aamaar Pratinidhi”.

A sense of moral consciousness is also seen to be emerging from the songs of Bhupen Hazarika. He lived in the present, but could never forget the brilliant personalities from the past. He realized that no creative artist can progress far in his field overlooking the valiant creations of the past. Therefore, he at his early days, he wrote about the most magnificent personality in history of Assam, Sankardev:

Kusumbar Putra SriSankar Guruwe
Dharichil Naamore Taan,
Naamore Surate Aanandat Nachichil
Pavitra Bardowa Thaan
Mur Guru Oi, Pavitra Bardowa Thaan

Assamese literature has a history. That history has been flowing continually since the days of Sankar-Madhav till present. Many poets and literates have been contributing to the inventory of Assamese literature in different times. All ethnicity including Bodo, Rabha, Mising etc have put Assamese language into life. Therefore he sings:

Sankar Madhavar maha sristrire
Ujjwal luitare paar
Katajan salagile Asamiya likhani
Padma Gohaibaruar.
Bodo, Rabha, Misingor rupe rase bharpur
Jeeya jeeya aamar bhasa
Likhabur kiya parhi parhi
Choa nai Pamegaam Bishnu Rabhar

Each historical song of Hazarika seems to depict a story. The sky of past Assam was lit shining in the light of pride. The hengdan of Lachit eliminated the grey clouds of Assamese sky by defeating and disposing the enemy in the battle of Saraighat.

Bhupen Hazarika's song reflects scrupulously about the mighty Brahmaputra River. It also states about migration of Barobhuyans from Kanyakubja (**Kanauj**) to Assam. Sankardeva is descendent of these Barobhuyans. Hazarika in his song writes-

Mahabahu Brahmaputra
Mahamilanor Tirtha
Koto jug dhori ahise prakashi
Hamanyar Artha
Hudur Kanyakubjara para Barobhuyana ahisila
Hai Banashata Sankardev iyate janmila

In the battle of Saraighat, the Lachit Barphukan defeated the enemy and bounded the Assamese people with love irrespective of religion, language and ethnicity. On the other hand, '**Kirat Putra**' Bishnu Rabha has shown the ideology of unity. Even Hazarika's song have brilliant reflection on Azar Fakir's "**Zikir**" as well as paintings of 'Hashti Vidyarnava'.

Marur Deshara Aajan Fakira
Madhur jikir rachila
Dillior Dilwara Aahi
Hashti puthi Ankila
P)ancha Nadir Tag Bahadura
Dharanor Hatu Garhila
Hamanyar Dekhuwala Kato praksh Swatosphurta
Durar Lachit Sarai Ghatota Satoru Agachila
Jati, Dharma, Bhakha Saboke
Swadekh Premere Bandhila
Kirat Putra Bishnu Rabhai
Matir Kristi Jiyala

Many of his songs are situation (time) concerned. These songs have made many of the historic period evergreens. His song written on the death of Gandhi has owned the hearths of thousands of people. Some of the lines are as follows—

Tarasho Chowannar Maghara Mahora
Yullara Biyali Bala
Prithibir Sirota Brapat Porila
Bapuji Kolainu Gola?
Andharor Majere Jur Loi Ahila
Akash Jatona Vedi
Maromor Hahire Hangdang Bhangila

Aashatyak Keneba Khedi

Similarly, in 1962 during India-China war he wrote songs like “Ranaklanta Nahau”, “Koto Juwanor Mrityo Hol”, in the death of Jawaharlal Nehru “Jethore Terore Budhore Duporiya”. In 1960-61, during language agitation :Ghorot Nobohe Mon Homoniya Potharot Nobohe Mon”, in the year 1965 during Indo-Pak war “O Ayub Khan Aru Bhuttu Jan”, in 1966 on Lal Bahadur Sashtri’s death “Nai Nai Nai Henu Amar Apun Sashtri” etc.

During Assam agitation in 1979 he wrote “Aji Brahmaputra Hol Bahniman”, to inside the people he wrote ‘Sesh Shakiyani’ while hearing about the arrest of students who took part in Assamese agitation he wrote: Luitpariya Dekabandhu

Tumar Tulona Nai

Jiyai Thokar Jujot Namisa

Mrityo sapot Khai

He also wrote songs like

Juiye Pura Tirakhir Nirbasonir Bosor

Mur Vaiti Nuhua Hol

Nepalu Khabor

Toi Janone Khabor?

III. CONCLUSION

Bhupen Hazarika has flourished the Assamese musical literature would by his multidimensional talents and placed in the global platform as a colorful one. Not only Assamese but he has also directed songs of Hindi, Bodo and Bangali cinema. From the very childhood, until his demise he has done outstanding works in the musical field and probably there were very few hearts, that have not touched by his musical works.

He has placed every contemporary/ historical affair like Assam, agitation, Indian, Independence, Sankardeva-Madhavdeva, Lachit Barphukan, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru etc.

Finally after discussing his outstanding works and its historical reflection we my come to the conclusion that-

- i) His songs reflect moral values.
- ii) He tried to inspire the youth through his musical works.
- iii) His songs reflect respect to the past events.
- iv) He has made oasis of indigenous, foreign and his own music and placed himself in the throne of Assamese music.

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