

CONTRIBUTION OF BHUPEN HAZARIKA 'S SONGS TO THE ASSAMESE SOCIETY

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Abstract: *Bhupen Hazarika (1926-2011) was a man-lyricist, poet, composer, singer, director, actor, singer, editor and what not. He is the creator of a good number of significant songs. His songs reflect the agony, pain, sufferings of the common masses. His songs had been a great contribution in the reformation of our society and are considered as the weapon of social reformation. This paper will highlight the contribution of Bhupen Hazarika's songs to the Assamese society.*

Keywords: Agony, Reformation, Bhupen Hazarika , Universal Brotherhood

I. Introduction

Bhupen Hazarika (8 September, 1926 -5 November,2011) was a lyricist, composer, performing artist, music director, film director, poet, writer and all rolled in one. His songs which are written and sung mainly in the Assamese language, are songs of humanity and unity. His songs are based on the themes of communal amity, universal brotherhood and sympathy. He is acknowledged to have introduced the culture and folk music of Assam as well as north-east India to the national level. He received the National Film Award in 1975. He was also the recipient of Sangeet Natak Academy Award (1987), Padmashri (1977), Padma Bhushan (2001), Dada SahebPhalke Award (1992), Sangeet Natak Academy Fellowship (2008). He was posthumously awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 2012 and the Bharat Ratna in 2019.

II. Objective of the Paper

The objective of the paper is to highlight on the songs that were written and sung by Bhupen Hazarika for the betterment and well-being of Assamese society. Through these songs, he tried to bring into light the plight and agony of the oppressed masses. Hence, this

paper is an attempt to highlight on the contributions of Bhupen Hazarika through his songs to the Assamese society.

III. Methodology

The method used in this paper is description evaluative method. The study is mainly review based it is purely supported by secondary sources of data, i.e. books, journals, paper, articles and interest.

IV. Contributions of Bhupen Hazarika :

Bhupen Hazarika made sterling contributions throughout his songs which he composed and song. His thoughts, his mentality were expressed through his songs in a varied way. Bhupen Hazarika also made remarkable contribution towards strengthening the unity between the Assamese people and other communities. He always asked the people of Assam to remember the manifold contributions made by different caste-communities to the social life of the Assamese people.

Bhupen Hazarika is acclaimed internationally for his evergreen songs. His songs are based on the theme of communal unity, universal justice and empathy. He has written innumerable songs and has used his songs for social change as well as the reformation of a classless society. Bhupen Hazarika's songs are divided into different categories on the basis of the needs of the society. These are- songs of patriotism, songs of human interest, songs of revolutionary change, songs of nature, songs of love etc.

Songs of Patriotism

Bhupen Hazarika was a true patriot. Thereby, his songs reflect the sense of patriotism in its truest sense. His love for the country has inspired him to pen down numerous patriotic songs.

Agni zugarfiringatimoi

Natun Assam garhim

Sarbahaaraarsarbaswa

Punarfiraaiaanim

Natun Bharat garhim

(Of the fiery age, I'm a spark; I will build up a new Assam/to the have-nots I'll bring back whatever they've lost/I will build up a new India)

Being inspired by the patriots, during the freedom struggle, Bhupen Hazarika wrote this song. The lyrics of his songs indicate a deep sense of love and respect for his nation.

In another song '*Asam aamar rupahi gunaro naai sesh*' (Our Assam is lovely so, her gifts, too, make her glow...). Bhupen Hazarika depicts a unique picture of Assam, where the sun rises first, where there is a co-existence among various communities of hills and plains. In this song the cultural harmony and social condition of Assam has been highlighted.

Another popular and heart effecting song of Bhupen Hazarika is-

Buku ham hamkaremorAai

Konenidra hare morAai

Putra hoi maikemate taro

Aai, tore hoi moimaro

(My heart is hammering, o mother! How can, I your son, tide you over? I feel like dying for you)

This particular song was a part of the film '*Maniram Dewan*' who was a great Assamese revolted against British imperialism and was hanged by the British. Later the song was used in the movie '*Maniram Dewan*' in 1963.

With regard to the pathetic condition of Indo-China war of 1962, Bhupen Hazarika composed a song in memory of the sacrifice of the martyrs i.e.,

Koto jowanormrityuhol

Kaarjeewanjouwangol

Seimrityuaparaajiya

Tenemritaknoholomaikiya

(So many soldiers met their ends/Lost their lives and youths/Their deaths are invincible/Among them had I been one...)

Song of Human interest

In Bhupen Hazarika's songs "Human being" or "Man" is the central entity. His songs reflect the humanistic feeling in its every aspect. His love for mankind can be depicted in his famous song-

Manuhammadu babu

Jadiheakonunavabe

Akonisahaanubhuti

Bhabibokunenukowa, Samaniiya?

(If humans do not care/about humans at all/with a bit of sympathy/who else will care?
Say o mate!)

This song has been considered as the most popular song in Assam and has been translated to almost all Indian languages.

During the war of independence of Bangladesh in 1971 thousands of people lost their lives. These incidents emotionalized and sadden Bhupen Hazarika . As a result, he reflected his emotions by writing the beautiful song-

Ganga amar ma

Padma amar ma

O amar dui chokhe

Dui jalerdharaMeghnaJamuna

Another significant song of Bhupen Hazarika is-

Xitoremekarati

Bastrabihinkonokhetiyokor

Bhagiporapojatir

Tuhjuiakura

Raktimjenetiuttaphau

(Chilly is the winter night/In the worn-out cottage/Of a peasant hard up for cloths/Let me be its glowing warmth...)

Here, Bhupen Hazarika talks about the poor, suppressed and deprived masses of the society. He revolt against the rules and feudal for their autocratic nature. He also explains the scenario of the intellectual society which remains silent in those contemporary issues.

Bhupen Hazarika was always concerned with the different stratum of society irrespective of sex, caste, creed, religion etc. Therefore, he writes

Prothomnohoi

Ditiyanohoi

Tritiyashrenirjatriaami

(Neither first/nor second/we are the passengers of the third class)

Celebrating the strength of the working mass, he identified himself as a co passenger travelling towards the same destination. In this song we find optimistic expression of human philosophy of Bhupen Hazarika.

Songs of revolutionary change

Bhupen Hazarika was always concerned with the problems of the common masses. He was a true revolutionary and his revolutionary spirit was reflected in his various songs. His famous song which depicts a revolutionary change is-

Bistiirnapaarare

Asangkhyajanare

Haahaakaarsunio

Nihsabdeniirawe

Burhaaluittumi

Burhaaluitbowaakiya?

In this song Bhupen Hazarika speaks about the cultural, political, economic and social reform of his native Assamese society. He uses some powerful words like 'Unmadona', 'Veer', 'Pitritta' etc. for the change of the society.

Another example of Bhupen Hazarika's song with the revolutionary theme-

AamiAsomiyanaahaodukhiya

Bulisaantanalabhilenohobo

This particular song of Bhupen Hazarika addresses the Assamese people as 'Thalua' and 'NatunAsomiya'. When the song was composed the entire state was confronting with the problem of indentify conflict. In this song the message unity in diversity is highlighted.

Songs of Nature

Bhupen Hazarika was a true lover of nature. His most of the songs depicts the natural beauty of Assam as well as north-east.

Shillongoregodhuli

Xapunsohorormaramisarator

Xuworonixonali

Shillongoregodhuli

This song narrates the beauty of Shillong along with Bhupen Hazarika's romantic moments. Bhupen Hazarika composed it when he was in Shillong. Shillong is one of the most beautiful cities of north-eastern region and is considered as one of the famous destination among all.

Bhupen Hazarika was quite fascinated by the natural beauty of Shillong. Thereby, in order to promote this beauty worldwide he has written the song first in Assamese and later, it was translated in English.

Another popular song of Bhupen Hazarika which speaks about nature is-

Akashi janere

Uroniamonore

Dukmukalite

Pashimorpara,

Bangarparamarilu era

Mur lokhyosthanholTezpur

In this song Bhupen Hazarika reminds the golden old days when people used to fly and write poems about it. Here, Bhupen Hazarika depicts his aerial journey from Kolkata to Tezpur. He also describes about the Brahmaputra and how it looks like the *gamusa* from the blue infinite above, the Garo Hills while travelling to his destination i.e., Tezpur.

Songs of Love

Bhupen Hazarika has also written a number of love songs. One such song which speaks about love is-

XoixoboteDhemalite

Tumaareumolamonotase

BohagmaahorLuitKhon

Duihaturamonotase...

In this song Bhupen Hazarika describes about the love story of a boy who has fallen in love with a girl in teen age period of his life. But, unfortunately the girl left him. In order to give the song a touch of eternal love Bhupen Hazarika uses some powerful words like 'gusigola', 'goraak i bolila' etc.

Bhupen Hazarika's another magnificent song which narrates about love is-

Tumardekhunaampatralekha

Patratuminilikhahola

Hoitumurpuronathikona

Tumarmonotnai

(Your name I know is Patralekha/yet you've stopped writing letters/May be, you do not remember/The old address of mine)

Here, Bhupen Hazarika expresses the feeling of lovers, love and affection. This song clearly expresses the feeling of love which is attached in a relationship.

v. Conclusion

Bhupen Hazarika's songs play an important role in inculcating moral values in one's own life. His songs contain the feeling of love, friendship, oneness, peace, unity and harmony, which can be regarded as the weapon of social reformation. His songs do not have only theoretical importance, but practical importance too. Today, our society is deeply rooted with evils, conflicts, violence etc. In this context, Bhupen Hazarika's immortal songs

which are flooded with all such noble values helps in eradicating all the evils from our society and will further built a better society in the nearby future.

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