

SUDHIN DASGUPTA: ONE OF THE GREATEST BENGALI MODERN SONG LYRICIST OF THE GOLDEN ERA

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Abstract

Sudhin Dasgupta's musical journey started in the 1950s, and he went on to become one of the most popular and successful composers in the history of Bengali music. He was particularly known for his ability to create songs that were both simple and profound, and his music often dealt with themes of love, romance, and relationships. The role of music in transcending the boundaries of time is widely acknowledged. Music affects all aspects of life, adding color and life to the seemingly formless. Lyricist Sudhin Dasgupta was a shining star in the music industry, having composed many such songs that still bring joy to many today.

Keywords: Bengali song modern, lyricist, composer, Sudhin Dasgupta.

INTRODUCTION

The influence of music can be traced back centuries, with Bengali music having an especially long and rich history. From Nidhubabu's and Sridhar Kathak's songs performed in Majlis and Theatres of the royal court, to the works of the five founders of Bengali music - Rabindranath Tagore, Dwijendralal Roy, Rajinikanth Sen, Atul Prasad Sen and Kazi Nazrulislam - the art of creating Bengali songs has been continuously perfected and developed. Sudhin Dasgupta was yet another great contributor to this history, his songs standing as a testament to the power of music in our lives.

The evolution of Bengali music has been shaped by centuries of creativity and innovation. From traditional ceremonial songs to modern day Bhavgiti and Kavyagiti, the variety of Bengali music is vast and ever-growing. Pankaj Kumar Mallick's coinage of the term "modern Bengali lyrics" in 1930 marked a milestone in the development of modern Bengali music. Sudhin Dasgupta was yet another innovator in this field, his songs inspiring many and standing as a testament to the power of music.

The evolution of modern Bengali music has been shaped by a variety of composers and singers. From the 1930s to the 1970s, the genre developed and diversified, with divisions emerging between composers and singers. Notable figures from this period include Shailen Roy, Vanikumar, Himanshu Dutta, Pankaj Kumar Mallick, Ajay Bhattacharya, Kamal Dasgupta, Sachin Dev Burman, Salil Chowdhury, Nachiketa Ghosh, Sudhin Dasgupta, Bhupen Hazarika, Pulak Bandyopadhyay, Gauri Prasanna Majumder and Shyamal Gupta etc. These innovators all played their part in making Bengali music the vibrant, ever-evolving art form that it is today.

“Ekdin dolbendhe kojonmile

Jai chute khushite harate-

Ei poth khuje sob voye muche

Keo to janena moner ei thikana".¹

The 1972 film Picnic was a hit in part due to its iconic song, composed and directed by Sudhin Dasgupta and sung by Manna Dey. The success of this song was followed by the release of other popular songs, such as Dakharkara (1958), Goli theke Rajpath (1959), Pankatilak (1961), Sankhabela (1966), Abhishapta Chambal (1967), Tin Bhuvanar Pare (1969) and Manjari Opera (1970). The talent of Sudhin Dasgupta was also recognized with the "Bengal Film Journalists Association award"² for Best Music Director, another testament to the power of music and its role in our lives.

Jatileswar Mukhopadhyay, a renowned musician, paid tribute to Sudhin Dasgupta in the book Sudhin Dasgupta -"The reason why I talk about music director Sudhin Dasgupta before talking so much about his songwriting is that with his lyrics and music composition inextricably linked. His poetic nature allowed many lyricists in the film and outside the film industry to add meditative, well-tuned lyrics to his songs, resulting in a wealth of melodious and popular songs".³

Tracing Sudhin Dasgupta's roots back to the hill town of Darjeeling, one discovers the man who has gifted music-lovers with such popular songs. Born Suchindranath Dasgupta in 1929, his father Mahendranath Dasgupta was a government school teacher who, contrary to popular belief, was very fond of vocal music and kirtan. Sudhin's musical talents were developed in his musical family, and it was his great-grandfather, Mejdada, Sejdada, and two sisters who first taught him to sing. It is clear that Sudhin Dasgupta was born into music, and his natural affinity for it was further cultivated as he grew older. His iconic songs and compositions continue to bring joy to many today, a testament to his legacy and the power of music.

Music is a form of knowledge, and it is essential to follow the path of a mentor if one wishes to learn it. Sudhin Dasgupta's musical journey began in his musical family, but he later took formal lessons with musician Naresh Chandra Banerjee to further refined his skills. He also gained an understanding of Bengali kirtan from renowned kirtanias Bhupen Bose and Rathin Ghosh, thus expanding his musical palette. These experiences enabled him to create his iconic songs and compositions, which have brought joy to many and stand as a testament to the power of music.

In addition to vocal music, Sudhin Dasgupta was proficient in a variety of instruments, including setar, piano, dotara, ektara, mandolin, harmonium and guitar. He also held a diploma in Western Music from "The Royal School of Music in London"⁴, further evidencing

1 <https://www.milansagar.com>

2 <https://www.en.m.wikipedia.com>

3 Sudhin Dasgupta, Ashok Dasgupta (Ed.) Aajkal Publishers Private Limited, B B 7 Sector 5 Saltlake, Kolkata 91, January 2009,P-37.

4 Adhunik Bangla Gan-Rup O Rupantor, Kaji Soukot Shahi, 1 Vol. Akashdip Publisher, A/176, Uposohor Joshor, 10 February 2018, P-496

his dedication to music and its development. His iconic songs and compositions have touched the lives of many, and his legacy continues to live on.

In 1949-50, Sudhin Dasgupta and his family moved permanently to Calcutta, marking his foray into the Bengali music world. He began his career by assisting the famous music director Kamal Dasgupta, and went on to compose his first two songs. His iconic songs and compositions continue to bring joy to many, a testament to the power of music and its role in our lives. After that, he composed his one the first song, “Koto Asha o koto bhalobasa” and “kano akash hote”.

Different styles can be seen in his music. While songs suitable for children can be noticed, devotional songs and romantic songs for adults are also present. Again, among his creations, he has left his own mark in the world of songs and songs in different languages including Hindi, English, Assamese, Bhajans and smooth music.

Here goes the compositional features, which prove that he is an accomplished composer and music director But apart from these two forms, there are two more forms of Him. One is singer Sudhin Dasgupta, and other is poets and lyricist Sudhin Dasgupta. If he appeared in the music world as a composer. But who knows that he goes into the role of a lyricist? Lyricist Arun Kumar Basu (pseudonym Bhaskar Basu) says about the fact that “he was an extraordinary lyricist-Sudhin Dasgupta is not only one of the greatest composers of Bengali era, but he himself wrote many wonderful songs. He also said that after a long time we were surprised to see Sudhinda's own songs written side by side with the uniqueness of his perception. In the validity of his right to use language and words”¹.

Today at this moment, we do feel proud and at the same time embarrassed for his lyrical essence of brightness and distinctness. His songs are truly incomparable, with his beautiful languages. For example, a part of a song composed by him is mentioned below-

“Char deoyaler moddhe nanan drishyoke

Sajiye niye dekhi nanan biswoke

Akash kore chadtake, barai jodi haat take

Muthoy dhori diner suryatarar raat tak-

Bisworuper drisyoy dekhay chokher obissaswoke”²

Singer Manna Dey said, “It has appealed to me quite a lot. The subject matter of the song and the way it was expressed in the words really like it.”³

1 Sudhin Dasgupta, Ashok Dasgupta (Ed) Ajkal Publishers Private Limited, B B 7 Sector 5 Saltlake, Kolkata 91, January, 2009, P-25.

2 Sudhin Dasgupta, Ashok Dasgupta (Ed.) Ajkal Publishers Private Limited, B B 7 Sector 5 Saltlake, Kolkata 91, January 2009, P- 36.

3 Ibid ,P-4.

Here a song written by Sudhin Dasgupta understanding the atmosphere of the context in a movie named: Har Mana Har, where he wrote like this “esechiamiesechi/durthekebohudure/pothepotheghureghure/ esechiamiesechi”¹ famous artist Manna Dey praised on this song “I have survived, I have come... What a wonderful, meaningful writing and composition. He understood the situation of the song so well, he could make the thought come alive in the melody. Without these qualities, who is SudhinDasgupta? He was a great artist insight”.²

Apart from these two songs, there are many other songs composed by him which are doyen of its world. Some songs are mentioned below-

- 1." jhirijhiri chaitali batase (Gita Dutta)
2. Oi ujjolo din dake swapno rongin (Subir Sen)
3. Eto sur ar eto gan, jodi konodin theme jay(Subir Sen)
4. Nach moyuri nach re, rum jhumachum nache re (Asha Bhosle)
5. Naam rekhechi bonolota jokhon dekhechi (Shyamol Mitra)
6. Chinechi chinechi tomar e mon (Aarti Mukherjee)
7. Hoytoh tomari jonno hoyechi preme je bonya (Manna Dey)
8. Chinechi tomare ochenar majhe (Sondhya Mukherjee)"³

He also wrote poems and rhymes. An example of such a rhyme maybe mentioned which was written for his daughter Saberi Dasgupta-

“ dekhlei aarsola
Jar chokh golla golla
Urlei projapoti
Dhora jay vimroti.
Piprera hente gele
Je palay sob fele
Deyalete tiktiki
Dekhe daat khitimiti

1 Ibid ,P-6.

2 Ibid ,P-6.

3 Sudhin Dasgupta, Ashok Dasgupta(Ed.) Aajkal Publishers Private Limited, B B 7 Sector 5 Saltlake, Kolkata 91, January 2009,P-118,120,123,125,130,117,127,131

Jodi dekhi dupure

Rastar kukure

Porimukh thubre

Noy jay kunkor

E to jay gunaboli

Jake niye bola-boli

Jano tar namkhani?

Mamoni-mamoni”

“Mamonike”¹ 20-12-1981

Time and society have been forever captured and carried by our literature and music. In the so-called society which is still in evidence today as a document, Lyrics Sudhin Dasgupta Mahashay's song in this field to brings a golden, colorful chapter in those days. Music is the joyous realization of every living being. From the day when there was no theory or information or formula but music woke up in the hearts of people. And those who are worshipers of that music, carefully arrange them in the manikota of the mind. Also discussed is the language of songs written by Sudhin Dasgupta Mahashay, which created the modern shape of contemporary Bengali songs of the society for the period of the golden age, just before the songs of Charpada, the songs of Sri Krishna Kirtan, the songs of Mangal Kavya or the romantic songs of seventeenth century Muslim poets of later songs only worshiped God. That is to say, like the various aspects of painting, although there are human words inside the literature, there were gods' offerings outside. Where people can speak clearly through music. Dinesh Chandra Sen Edited Ballet or Eastern Ballet in which these images have been captured, which nowadays can be done through a Boul Sangeet, Shakta Sangeet through songs such as Thungri, Toppar etc. In the second and third centuries of modern Bengali music, the golden age of Bengali music has created a new direction in its own genre. Along with films, Bengali songs have made their own place. And various music artists have come forward to promote and promote this modern Bengali song. Our nationalism or patriotic songs like Mukunda Kavi's were coming from the hands of this 20th century music trend, which gave a different dimension to the picture of the life of that time, the aspirations of the people. In view of all the words and tunes that I saw after that, Sudhin Dasgupta Mahashay's compositions and tunes strengthened our society, showed society a new direction. The aspect which is timeless and hence all these creations are called creations of the golden age. We can see the external and internal side of every melody and every word; it shows the lifestyle of

¹ Sudhin Dasgupta Soron Songkha, Open Mind, 19 September 2008 (Collected from daughter Saberi Dasgupta)

people with spiritualism. His writings show the lifestyle of people and the common mind. The way we can understand the side of his lyrical being today, from that we can say, he is a good lyricist. Whose contribution in creating the foundation of modern Bengali song is unparalleled. He left the world of music in 1982 and crossed the limelight like a sudden thunderbolt in the heart of the music community. This timeless legendary music lover has always been and will always be honoured as a bright and unforgettable star in our minds and hearts.

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