

Reflection of Assamese Women Life in the Songs of Rudra Boruah: A Study

Puranda Gogoi

Junior Research Fellow, Department of Modern Indian Language & Literary Studies,
Gauhati University, Guwahati, Assam, India

ABSTRACT

Rudra Boruah is a prominent name in the cultural field of Assam. He had an artistic mind from his childhood. After Jyoti Prasad Agarwalla Rudra Boruah Has too much contribution to make the beautiful track of Assamese music. A huge number of his songs are filled with the spirit of Assamese women. Many songs were composed centering various aspects of Assamese women. An Assamese women plays several role in different time. It denotes the individuality of Assamese women. We may classified the women centering songs of Rudra Boruah into five classes, they are- Assamese women as Dawoni and Reaper, Assamese women as weaver and lover, Grief stricken childless women, Beauty of Assamese women And historically acclaimed Assamese women and their differences with modern Assamese women. This paper tries to give an overview of Rudra Boruah's women centering songs.

KEYWORDS: Rudra Boruah, women, Assamese, differences, dawoni, reaper, weaver, childless

How to cite this paper: Puranda Gogoi "Reflection of Assamese Women Life in the Songs of Rudra Boruah: A Study" Published in International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (ijtsrd), ISSN: 2456-6470, Volume-3 | Issue-6, October 2019, pp.70-73, URL: <https://www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd28039.pdf>



Copyright © 2019 by author(s) and International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development Journal. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0) (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>)



1. INTRODUCTION

The development of Music history is divided into three categories, visually- Folk music, Classical music and Modern music. In every step of development of such music there are certain issues are related to each of them. Regarding the modern song if we look into the situation, we must include that the development of modern songs were developed parallel along with the capitalism in those European countries. With the flow of Industrial revolution there came a huge change in the peoples thinking. By virtue of which a new modern culture were developed among the people. When capitalism take places and feudalism came to an end the modern folk music were introduce among the middle class people.¹ From this it is clear that the modern music are music of middle class people. With the flow of development of science and technology in a very high rate the concept of modern music has come to India from the western countries. The first published of such music were seen in West Bangle due to which we may call Rabindranath Tagore as the father of modern music in India. Gradually the change in the field of music had speared in all state of India. The intellectual people of Assam had also came through the topic because of which in 1888 the book " Geetawali" was introduce in Assam too by Satyanath Bora. Starting from that time the flow development of modern Assamese music were take places. In this way the Assamese music was going forward but in many fields of music we don't see any Assamese selfness among the songs. But in the meantime Jyoti Prasad Agarwala

comes and took Assamese music to a higher place by virtue of his own social consciousness. In one word we may call him as the soul establisher of modern Assamese music. After him an important role was played by Rudra Boruah to take Assamese music to its appropriate track. He composed many songs based on various topic of Assam to make Assamese culture rich and they are very valuable resources of Assam now days too. He composed numerous songs concentrating on the Assamese women character. We get a clear reflection of history, affectionate, beautifulness of Assamese women through his immortal songs. Here we shall discuss an analysis his women centric songs bellow.

1.1. Importance of the topic:

After Jyoti Prasad Agarwalla, Rudra Boruah has too much contribution to make the beautiful track of Assamese music. We get a clear image of Assamese women in his songs. Various forms of Assamese women, the proudness for being an Assamese woman is the main theme of his songs, because of which they have a special place in the Assamese musical field. That is why this paper has been taken into account to analysis the Assamese women character.

1.2. Range of Research:

We have taken the songs of Rudra Boruah which are mainly based on women and how they reflect the women behavior and sense within them.

1.3. Methodology:

This Research paper is based on analytical method. To prepare this paper we take help from the topic related books and the books of Rudra Boruah's song.

2. A brief introduction about Rudra Boruah:

Rudra Boruah is a prominent name in the cultural field of Assam. He was born in 1926 in the district of Nogaon near Purani Godam, at a village name Bhimorgaon. His childhood was not so comfortable as his father passed away when he was at the age of nine. He took his primary education at Mikirhaat School, after then 1945 he passed his Matriculation from Radhakanta Boruah High School located at Purani Godam. Due to economic problems of the family though he was not able to study as hoped yet he took his college education. Some prominent persons from town gave economically helping hand towards his study in college. After his matriculation he joined as 'Mohori' to survey as his family was economically backward. He passed I.A examination in 1947 and in 1948 went to Shillong to join at Silk industries. He took his night classes at St. Anthony College and graduated at 1951. After that he came into the cultural field of Assam.

Rudra Boruah had an artistic mind from his childhood. He was attracted by the local musical songs because of which he took part in the cultural functions at his place various times. It's to be noted that he started composing music since class eight (viii). He had a hope to design Assamese folk songs in a modern sense to make it more fascinating. During the period he lived in Shillong, he had a great experience in the cultural field, because people of Assam in Shillong created a cultural climate, by virtue of which there was a reflection of Assamese art & culture as well as literature there. He gave much importance to balance among Dance, Songs and Tunes at every stages. He composed songs for dance in accordance with Assamese local culture. He established many local artists in society. Many people get inspired by him in developing their skills. He submitted many project to the government as a director of the cultural department. But before it successfully completed, he died on 14th February, 1980.

3. Characteristics of Rudra Boruah's Songs:

If we notice deeply, the songs of Rudra Boruah we see various characteristics within them. Many authors and critic suggested their own opinion about the songs of him. The editor of the book named ' Rudraboruar Geet' says, we see four types of songs among all of them viz.- 'Bongeet', 'Dekhpremmulak Geet(Songs, those expresses the love for nation)', 'Kormo Sangeet(Songs related to work)' and ' Lora swalir geet(Child songs)'. On the other hand according to Dr. Chobi Gogoi in his book "Asomia Geeti Sahityar Samajastriyo Mulya" Rudra Boruah's songs can be divided into the following categories-

1. Cultivation of Assam
2. Nature of Assam
3. Image of villages of Assam
4. Assamese women society
5. Poverty
6. Patriotism
7. Practical life
8. Reform and Humanism
9. Developmental²

The experiences of his practical life are reflected through his songs. He didn't use any artificial elements in composing songs. Hence depending upon these we get a clear characteristic about his songs.

4. Life of Assamese women in the songs of Rudra Boruah:

The Unique features of songs of Rudra Boruah were mentioned above. One of the most distinctive features is that these songs are filled with the spirit of Assamese Women. Many songs were composed centering various aspects of Assamese women. An Assamese woman plays different roles in different times like she is a reaper, weaver, Dawoni (one who reaps crops in fields) and also a revolutionary. It denotes the individuality of Assamese women. Rudra Boruah has exceptionally composed these songs reflecting values of life. There is a huge different between old Assamese women and present generation. Earlier, it was believed that Assamese weavers pigment dreams on cloths but today, they no longer take interest in weaving. This aspect is being shower by Rudra Boruah thought his songs. For our convenience, we can classify the women centric songs of Rudra Boruah into five classes; they are as follows-

1. Assamese women as Dawoni and Reaper.
2. Assamese women as weaver and lover.
3. Grief stricken childless women.
4. Beauty of Assamese women.
5. Historically acclaimed Assamese women and their differences with modern Assamese women.

4.1. Assamese women as Dawoni and Reaper:

Assam is an agricultural state. Agriculture is the backbone of Assam's economy. Life of farmer are heavily depends on agriculture. In an agricultural society Dawoni,s (females reap crops in field) has a vital role to play. The paddy fields wait for them to come and Dawonis get busy in cultivation forgetting her won stress sorrow. They sharply cut the roots of rice crops and make their ways. Describing this scene, Rudra Boruah had composed his popular song-

Poka dhanar maje maje horru horru aali oi
Horru horru ali
Aalit pori geet jure jaak Balimahi.
Himsesaa botah aahi dhan gole sumi
Dawoniye hator kanchi khorai lole tuli
Jaw ke njaw khujere
Paw ke npaw vabere
Hurukia baat lole buli.

This song expresses how dawonis cut crops and engage in farming activities. They effortlessly do with their own with sheer elegance. The nature also gets mesmerized by the beauty of Dawonis. Dawonis also carry certain belief while doing their work. They first pay their respect to crops and then start working. It was expressed through this song-

Poka dhanye haali jaali
Dawonikye koi aaha buli
Dawoniye hewa jonai
Dhanor gusot maare muthi.

The burden of crops can't be carried by Dawonis; they feel tire. They take rest and start singing melodious song .The leaf of rice crops are edged and bleeds fingers of dawonis, but they don't get tired. They again start singing songs with a

new high spirits. They can't give up simply because they know the value of their work. That's why the lyricist wrote-

Dhanar paate kaate
Tej donga paate
Tewto amar dukh nai

This song not only depicts the beauty of dawonis. But also showcases the hope of farmers and their struggle. Rudra Boruah was an efficient composer who knows stone unturned in reflecting the beauty of dawonis and all other dimensions related to it. The struggle of Assamese reaper is also mention worthy. They work hand in hand with Assamese men. Overcoming all hurdles, they help Assamese men in their works.

Ekaathu oi bukate kunenu oi kothia
Aakhiye aakhiye tule.....
Jaak boroxun pithit loi
Dehare dukh pahori goi
Ghar ghoruwahi hote
Var barikhat bhui rolo
Murore gham bhorit tholo
Monor hepahote

These Assamese reaper works not just for their livelihood, they work in paddy fields in all conditions no matter how difficult it is. They simply enjoy working there and forgot their suffering in such way.

4.2. Assamese women as weaver and lover:

It is a famous a saying that Assamese weavers pigment dreams on their cloths. They put their heart and soul in weaving a cloth. Every Assamese household who has "taathaal"(weaving machine) possess respect in their society. It is not just a pride for Assamese women. It is their symbol of creative greatness. Rudra Boruah successfully portrayed all these images effectually in his songs. He said-

Tator durepoti solai ghonepoti
Polokot tulutha ghure
Kun nu heigoraki silonir oi jiwari
Selengnu sokothiya juree

Bihu festival reigns over the soul of Assamese people. Weaving has inseparable relation with bihu. The advent of bihu of spring reminds Assamese girls about bihu.

Ribi ribi kori bolil senai
Phagunore posua jaak
(Mure) monenu o urai loi gol

Assamese weavers make clothes for their loved once and wait for them. They become restless for waiting in solitude.

Senai oi bohu taator patot
Senai oi soku aalibatot
Maku hori pori gol

When they loved once whistles, they get overwhelmed. They want to see their love and cannot focus on their work. Rudra Boruah expressed their feelings in this way-

Tator patot bohi guti ful basute
Maku hori hori pore
Phulore saneki sai moi thakute
Ghone prota kena lage

The weavers want to spend some time with their loved once, but they can't. They want to say something but can't whisper anything. They sob in solitude and become sad.

Kaitye bindhadi kolijat bindhehi
Souk mur panire vore
Kenekoi uthi jaw podulir muroloi
Kothati koboloi thare

The weaves had many more things to say and confess. They can't stop thinking about their love. How can they please them, is the only thing the weavers think off.

Vabise kenekoi senai rupohiye
Letai serekire rupot
Dukhoni hiyake bandhibo pari
Seneh enajorir bandhot

The Assamese weavers sat again started doing their work with utmost dedication. They wanted to impress loved once by showing their weaving skills

Bohagi golegoi buli oi
Aakash khan bauli hole o
Morile nasonir mone
Pachfal huwoni taathalkhoni oi
Makuti nomota hole

No matter how they feel, they never fail to do their works. It is their utmost strength. Rudra Boruah succinctly expressed all this in his songs.

4.3. Grief stricken childless mother:

'Hoiyera jetuki bai' is one of the famous songs of Rudra Boruah. The song centered around a lady and her tragic story. This song was an exemplary of many likewise women. Jetuki bai was one of amongst them. She had lost her girl child. Jetuki bai had a dream of marriage of her beloved daughter. But it got vanished when her daughter met an untimely death. Jetuki bai's dream could not become true. Therefore she sang folksongs of marriages in others marriage just to console herself. The lyricist wrote-

Karubar puteke kunubar jiyek
Niboloi patise biya
Juair ba kin nam jura di ki gam
Turehe tot naikia

This song indicates the pair of Jetuki. Those who listen to her songs sympathize with her. Sometimes, her presence in other's marriage ceremony make the atmosphere little bit awkward. Some people can't even understand the cause of Jetuikis sorrowness.

Tur je jiyerok jome karhi nile
Buku huda pori jai
Porore jiyorik juwaiye newte
Kando toi nam gun gai

Jetuki weeps when the bride leaves her home and goes to her husband's home. Nobody in the marriage ceremony realized how Jetuki feels at that time. Everybody forgets her the next day

Robha ghar huwoni jiwari bowari
Tuloi thaikye nai
Biyat toi namoti biyat he huyore
Puwaloi pahori jai

Jetuki bai is getting older but she has immense love for other children. Dr Chobi gogoi commented that this song of Rudra Boruah clearly showcased that money can't buy everything. Money might give you fame, honour and prosperity, but the scantily of Jetuki Bai can't be brought by money.³

4.4. Beauty of Assamese women:

By studying the songs of Rudra Boruah we can see how effortlessly he portrayed the beauty of Assamese women. Some of his songs are mention worthy in his aspect. They are 'sikimiki dalim guti', 'kakhot kolosi hali jali', 'aathuloike pora sikmikia', 'kanote jilike nejalkoi thuria', 'toraloi hun nasabi toi' etc. The song 'toraloi toi nasabi hun' (O dear, don't look at stars) is denoting his lover as 'sons' (Dear one). It is truly praising the beauty of Assamese women. The lyricist said that even the beauty of stars and moon is inferior to those Assamese women. The fragrance of flowers lost their essence because the hairs of Assamese women have even more essence. That is why he said-

(Toi) lajot rongga noporibi
Nokhe mati lekhi
Gulape je laj pabo
Ture dugaal dekhi

The lyricist mentioned that the breast of Assamese women is so magnificent that wind blows just to have a touch on them. Lotus flower explained this in this way-

Bilor bukut thoka
Podumore koli
Har mani tuke dekhi
Lajot rongga pori

The ornaments wore by Assamese girl also sang in praise of their beauty-

Kanote jilike nejalkoi thuria
Khupate kopouful pahi
Hatot game kharu gawore gabhoru
Mukhot mone hora hahi

It is being said that the Muga silk enriches the beauty of Assamese women. If they bind their hair that it seems that they look like flowers. The lyricist sometime gets confused that their (Assamese women) eyes are as same as lotus. Their teeth look like seeds of pomegranate. Thus Rudra Boruah expressed the beauty of Assamese women.

4.5. Historically acclaimed Assamese women and their differences with modern Assamese women:

Rudra Boruah also tried to represent the bravery and courage of Assamese women. He wanted to send a message to present generation by mentioning the chronicles of Assamese women. He felt it necessary to tell stories of Kanaklata, Bhogeswari phukannani so that present generations take inspiration from them. He really wants to instill hope and courage in present time as our history is glorious. He pleaded in this way-

Jaga asomore jiwari buwari
Aaji jagibore hol
Turei logori konok bhugeswari
Dhoroni kopai gol

In the song named 'Dukhorenu ratite ketia puwabo'-he again said-

Aasene mur bhoniti asomi aair jiwari
Dhale toruale pare ronua hajibo
Dekhore khiyati rakhi jonombhumir hoke
Hahi hahi nonor tholit pran boli dibo

Joymoti is an immortal historical figure of Assam history. She is the symbol of bravery and honesty. She endured atrocities for seven days continuously for her husband. She resisted against tyranny of Ahom sovereign. She protested for the sake of Assamese people⁴. That is why, she is relevant even today. The lyricist wrote-

O kopil voyot thar thar kori
Khiyomotaluvir dol
Eman jiyatu eman jatona
Nirobe thakila hohi

The sacrifice of Joymoti is a source of inspiration for every Assamese. So again Rudra Boruah wrote-

O aai tumar tulona nai
Tumar kahini jugor karone
Hol preronar thal

Rudra Boruah portrayed the modern educated Assamese women. He vividly represented the difference between past Assamese women and present day Assamese women. He felt sorry for present day Assamese women that they wouldn't recognize their history. In the past, Assamese women did everything for protecting their motherland. But today's generation don't even want to take weaving as profession. The lyricist was so disheartened that he said-

Rati kopah tuli ratite newthi
Rati paji hera kati
Mur hipiniye puwaloi dicile
Kokalot tongali aati

The song 'huntora moi dehot tumar' also signified the moral degradation of Assamese women-

Huntora haalkhoni
Uiye puke khai
Son pori aase houwa kothiya toil
Eiya nohoi homajkot dekhicilu ji.

5. Conclusion:

The songs of Rudra Boruah are documentation of various aspects of Assamese women from history to present. He not only praised Assamese women but also criticized them accordingly. At last we can say that in the lyrical literature trends of Assam. His songs are adorable and praiseworthy.

Reference:

- [1] Goswami, Looknath, hongeeor utpotti aru kormobikash, page-62
- [2] Gogoi, Chobi, Asomia geeti sahityar samaj sastriyo mulyo, page-167
- [3] Goswami, Looknath, hongeeor utpotti aru kormobikash, page-196
- [4] Goswami, Looknath, hongeeor utpotti aru kormobikash, page-201