

APPRECIATION OF KIDAR SHARMA AS POET-FILM LYRICIST

Kidar Sharma joined films as a writer and lyricist with New Theatres, Calcutta, after leaving Amritsar, Punjab, with a Master's degree in literature, in early 30s. Basically he was a writer, became director later, penned songs, poems, screenplay, film scripts, and dialogues.

Being a poet at heart, his all films are poetries, poetries of love and sorrow. It was said, Sharmaji writes with a pen soaked in blood. His films are love tragedies. His films depict romanticism. For him pain was the truth of life, misery was the theme; human sufferings arising from deprivation and exploitation, with characters facing hard destiny and tough social circumstances. His movies are art movies with a difference.

Having profound compositional sense, music played a subtle role in his films. He was the sole lyricist of all his films he made; with Jhande Khan [Chitrlekha (1941)], Khemchand Prakash [Gauri (1943), Dhanwan & Mumtaz Mahal (1944), Dhanna Bhagat (1945)] (earlier), Roshan and Snehal Bhatkar (later) as composers.

Besides making his own films he worked with New Theatres at beginning and later with Ranjeet after having established himself in film world. He remains one of the lyricists with Pandit Indra and Majrooh whose songs were rendered by great K.L. Saigal with a start at New Theatres, Calcutta [Devdas], ending with Ranjeet, Bombay [Bhanwara]. Sharmaji, a man of literature, had his own unique style of writing. His films are beautiful combined creation by a man of literature turned filmmaker.

Uth aur uth kar aag laga de
Phunk de pinjara pankh jala de

Raakh babula ban kar panchhi
Raakh babula ban kar teri
Pahunche unke paas panchhi kahe hot udaas
Tu chhod na manki aas

These everlasting words sung by immortal Saigal made Sharmaji an undying personality.
Songs of film Devdas :

Balam aaye baso more man mein
Savan aaya tum na aaye
Tum bin rasiya kuchh na bhaye

Man mein more hook uthat jab
Koyal kukati ban mein

OR

Na main kisika na koi mera
Chhaya charon ore andhera
Ab kachhu sujat nahin, more
Ab din bitat nahi, dukh ke

These two poignant pieces inspired Bimal Roy; in his Devdas (1955), he recorded two songs in voice of Talat Mahmood [Sahir/S D Burman] :

Mitwa, mitwa ye kaisi anbuZ pyaas

AND

Kisko khabar thi kisko yakeen tha
Aise bhi din ayenge
Jeena bhi mushkil hoga aur
Marne bhi na payenge
Haye ... !

They were desolate heroes in gloomy situations.

It were the early days of singer Mukesh when he sang in late forties:

Lakee babul mere kahe ko dini bides

Bhai ko dino mahal do mahale
Mohe dino pardes

Amir Khusrau's lyric was well used by Sharmaji at the tragic end in his film Suhag Raat [debut movie of Geeta Bali]. With this Sharmaji's verses gave some unforgettable numbers to Mukesh :

Dilon ko rond kar dil apna bahlaya nahin karte
Jo thukraye gaye hon unko thukraya nahin karte
Khayalon mein kisike { with Geeta Dutt }

AND

Bahar ayee thi kismat mein magar ye gul khilaya

Jalaya ashian saiyyad ne par noch dale
Mujhko aye malik utha le
Teri duniya mein dil lagata nahin
[Bawre Nain]

Sochta hoon ye kya ye kya kiya maine
Kyon ye sardard le liya maine { with Lata }

AND

Farishton ke nagari me main aa gaya hoon main [Hamari Yaad Ayegi]

Folk based verses from film Thes in composition of Snehal Bhatkar:

Rut hai suhani rut hai suhani

Sharmaji once told this writer, that he used to squeeze the artistes (singers, composers, actors) to get the best out of them.

Ye bijli raakh kar jayegi tere pyar ki duniya
Na phir tu jee sakega aur na tujko maut ayegi

Initiated with Lata Mangeshkar, later replaced by not popular Mubarak Begum, the song is all time hit.

He directed Jogan for Ranjeet Movietone, an offbeat subject, story of a girl who renounces world. Memorable pieces from saint Mirabai's bhajans in voice of Geeta Roy covered the pathos in her saga.

Sharmaji was one among few [contemporary and younger as well] directors who had mastery over shooting songs picturesquely and artistically in films. Raj Khosla, Vijay Anand, Hrishikesh Mukharjee, Basu Chatterji are good examples.

In movie Shokhiyan (1951), Kidar Sharma took Jamal Sen as the composer. Film had art and romance so was the music:

Raton ki neend chheen lee
Aankhon ke intezaar ne { Suraiya }

AND

Sapna ban sajan aye
Hum dekh dekh muskaye

{Lata Mangeshkar}

Kidar Sharma was star maker. He introduced many artistes at their beginning who later became successful; he taught them acting, singing, dialogue delivery, music and, lessons that made them first runners in film world. Tears rolled from his eyes when he was looking at the age when many of his disciples reached the fame and glory amid crossing all barriers, limits. They were Raj Kapoor, Geeta Bali, Mala Sinha, Tanuja, Zeb Rehman list is big. He made films with new comers or not so popular artistes. Roshan was with him at his start [film Neki aur Badi] (1949); as Roshan after Baware Nain (1950) became busy, he took Snehal Bhatkar (who composed earlier for Suhag Raat (1948)), not famed at that time, as his composer (Thes, Gunaah, Hamari Yaad Ayegi, Fariyaad). He remained always a searcher, hunter for novel ideas and fresh talents. He remained the master. He made artistes not stars.

The voice of Raj Kumari fascinated him. Once his wife came to recording studio, he asked her to listen to Raj, how great she sings!! Raj Kumari, after Mahal (1949) became celebrated with her song in Baware Nain 'Sun bairi balam sach bol....' the entire song was taken from folk language of Haryana. Second song equally melodious (Raj Kapoor and Geeta Bali in rhythmic conversation):

'Mujhe sach sach bata do
Kya !
Ke kab dil mein samaye the...'
{Raj Kumari with Mukesh;}

Dialogues in film lyrics, was an original creation of Kidar Sharma.

All songs were in raga Bhairavi in his film Chitralkha (heroine: Mehtab) (1941), and in Suhag Raat (1948), they all were in raga Pahadi.

Mere khayal mein ake gale laga ja mujhe
ke aaj phir mera dil chahta hai rone ko

Thaka hua hai musafir sawal hai data
Kafan dila mujhe munh dhankne ko sone ko

These verses are by Kidar Sharma, voiced by Talat Mahmood in Gunaah (1953); on screen, it was sung by actor Jaidev Bambhri. Bambhri later played roles of villain in films. The song becomes popular and reaches to masses if it were picturized on a famous star in the movie.

In 1961 (Hamari Yaad Ayegi) and in 1964 (Fariyaad) the movies with no famous star cast, gave winning music, Fariyaad gave fresh face Zeb Rehman with his son Ashok Sharma. They together sang 'Dekho dekho dekh raha tha papiha' (Suman with Mahendra Kapoor) and a solo by Zeb, 'Hale dil unko sunana tha sunaya na gaya, jo zaban par mujhe lana tha woh laya na gaya', both songs gave Suman Kalyanpur an edge, a tone, a pitch. Rhythmic narration was the quality of his films.

Bahut aasan hai chilman se lag kar muskrana
{Lata & Mohd. Rafi}
(on screen Mala Sinha & Shammi Kapoor)

This was the second duet song by Lata Mangeshkar and Mohd. Rafi penned by Kidar Sharma in Rangeen Raaten (1956) that became popular after first of its kind in film Chhora Chhori (1955) (Aa bedardi balama preet ka karen hisaab). In Rangeen Raaten he introduced Mala Sinha and groomed her for her way to become successful heroine in future.

He directed films for Children's Film Society in '50s (Jaldeep & Scout Camp) and films Pehala Kadam [based on adult education in rural India] with remarkable performance by Sapna Sarang (KS's discovery) and Partap Sharma, (1981) & Bheegi Palken, (1984), besides films Kagaz ki Nav (based on child labour), Aise logh bhi Hote Hain, for Doordarshan (T.V. India) all with Snehal Bhatkar as composer. It was essential for him to fill the movie with poetry and music that played subtle roles in all the films he made. He wrote unforgettable, hit song for Indian T.V Hum honge kamyab ek din, man mein hai vishwaas.

According to him, Motilal was the best actor in Hindi films' history followed by Ashok Kumar. As to the former, he directed him in many films. Kidar Sharma was associated with films for six decades; his work is a subject of research. Creativity and films, were his obsessions, like in one of his songs in Bhanwara :

Hero Saigal had an unsuccessful love, he sings :

Hum apna unhe bana na sake, kho kar bhi unko pa na sake

The irony is that his beloved whom he always loved, asks him:

'kya tumne kisise kabhi mohabbat ki hai !'

Saigal laughs, says :

'woh bole mohabbat ki hai kabhi, kya jaan kisi pe di hai kabhi ?
hum chir ke dil dikhla na sake, samjha na sake,

hum apna unhe bana na sake'

Sharmaji depicted helplessness and desperation as ground realities of life. He touched the truth of our existence in his lyrics:

Maze lutne char din chandni hai
Jawani ko dekha budhapa pukara
Kya ?
Lut gaya woh bechara, beta, lut gaya woh bechara
Diya jisne dil, lut gaya who bechara
{Saigal & chorus in film Bhanwara}

Films containing big budget, famous stars, composers, and having wide publicity, remain always in the memory of individuals. Kidar Sharma made pictures with low budget and fresh cast (whom he could nurture). He established the truth that making movies is wholly a director's medium, director commands artistes follow. He did not make films for entertainment or to make money but because he was fully gripped by the art of film making.

By Mrs. V.N. Purohit
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