

CHAPTER-2

Journey of Hindi Cinema

2.1 History of Film

The first thirty years is one of unparalleled expansion and growth in the history of the cinema. Starting as an innovation in a handful of big cities like New York, Paris, London and Berlin the new medium quickly found its way across the world, attracting larger and larger audiences wherever it was shown and displacing other forms of entertainment as it did so. With the increment in audiences, so did the places where films were shown, culminating in the great 'picture palaces' of the 1920s which matched theatres and opera-houses for opulence and glory. Meanwhile films themselves developed from being short 'attractions', only a couple of minutes long, to the feature length that has dominated the world's screens up to the present day. Although French, German, American and British pioneers have all been credited with the 'invention' of cinema, the British and the Germans played a relatively small role in its world-wide exploitation. It was above all the French, followed by the Americans, who were the most ardent exporters of the new invention, helping to implant the cinema in China, Japan, and Latin America as well as in Russia. In terms of artistic development it was again the French and the Americans who took the lead, though in the years preceding the First World War Italy, Denmark, and Russia also played a part.

In the end it was the United States that was to prove decisive. The United States was and has remained -- the largest single market for films. By protecting their own market and pursuing a vigorous export policy, the Americans achieved a dominant position on the world market by the eve of the First World War. During the war, while Europe languished, the American cinema continued to develop, pioneering new techniques as well as consolidating industrial control. [1]

In the early invention of film there is no definitive date from which the history of film can be said to begin. Cinema, like the steam engine, was not invented in a complete, fully working form in one stroke. Instead it was a gradual evolution over time, refined and improved until different people in different parts of the world combined all the required elements in different ways at the same time, each creating what we know as cinema today. Sadly it is common for those whom posterity credits with inventing something to be those who can afford the most publicity, rather than those who most deserve it. A lack of commercial success by many of the inventors of the 19th Century has meant that they are often not given the recognition they deserve.

2.2 World Post-Classical Cinema

'The New Hollywood' and 'post-classical cinema' are terms used to describe the period following the decline of the studio system during the 1950s and 1960s and the end of the production code. During the 1970s, filmmakers increasingly depicted explicit sexual content and showed gunfight and battle scenes that included graphic images of bloody deaths. 'Post-classical cinema' is a term used to describe the changing methods of storytelling of the "New Hollywood" producers. The new methods of drama and characterization played upon audience expectations acquired during the classical/Golden Age period: story chronology may be scrambled, storylines may feature unsettling "twist endings", main characters may behave in a morally ambiguous fashion, and the lines between the antagonist and protagonist may be blurred. The beginnings of post-classical storytelling may be seen in 1940s and 1950s film noir movies, in films such as *Rebel without a Cause* (1955), and in Hitchcock's *Psycho*. During the 1970s, a new group of American filmmakers emerged, such as Francis Ford Coppola, Steven Spielberg, George Lucas and Brian de Palma. This coincided with the increasing popularity of the auteur theory in film literature and the media, which posited that a film director's films express their personal vision and creative insights. The development of the auteur style of filmmaking helped to give these directors far greater control over their projects than would have been possible in

earlier eras. This led to some great critical and commercial successes, like Coppola's The Godfather films, Spielberg's Jaws and Close Encounters of the Third Kind and George Lucas's Star Wars. It also, however, resulted in some failures, including Peter Bogdanovich's At Long Last Love and Michael Cimino's hugely expensive Western epic Heaven's Gate, which helped to bring about the demise of its backer, United Artists. [2]

2.3 Indian Cinema

The father of Indian Cinema, Dadasaheb Phalke, when released his epochal feature film Raja Harishchandra on 3rd May 1913, it is unlikely that either the exhibitors or the pioneer film maker realized they were unleashing a mass entertainment medium that would hold millions in sway for the next hundred years. The people of France might have introduced the concept of moving images, but little did anyone know that India would one day become the largest film industry in the world. It's a miracle that Indian cinema has withstood the test of time despite the vast cultural differences in the past 100 years. Indian cinema has an identity that is very unique and unmatched. We have moved from the black and white silent films to 3D, but Indian cinema continues to retain its basic essence - to thrill. Even as internet downloads and television continue to cannibalize the theatrical revenues of Indian films, the lure of the 35 mm is something else altogether. It was Phalke who introduced India to world cinema at a time when working in films was not allowed. After the success of his film 'Raja Harishchandra', several filmmakers in Bombay and Madras began making silent films. By the mid 1920s, Madras had become the epicentre for all film related activities. Raghupathi Venkaiah Naidu, SS Vasam, AV Meiyappan set up production houses in Madras to shoot Telugu and Tamil films. The silent era came to an end when Ardeshir Irani produced his first talkie, 'Alam Ara' in 1931. If Phalke was the father of Indian cinema, Irani was the father of the talkie. The talkies changed the face of Indian cinema. Apart from looks, the actors not only needed a commanding voice but also singing skills, as music became a defining element in Indian cinema. The

year also marked the beginning of the Talkie era in South Indian films. The first talkie films in Bengali (Jumai Shasthi), Telugu (Bhakta Prahlad) and Tamil (Kalidass) were released in the same year. [3]

The origins of India's three most prominent film industries can be traced to these years when European exhibitors showcased foreign films in Bombay (1896), Madras (1897) and Calcutta (1898). All these cities played an important part in forming the subsequent Marathi, Tamil and Bengali film industry which till date are flourishing. Soon after Save Dada, photographer Hiralal Sen also made his first film, 'A Dancing Scene' from the opera 'The Flower of Persia'. Sen, subsequently started his film company, Royal Bioscope Company with his brother, Motilal and went on to make forty films in his career. By the late 1890s, short films had become a common feature and many photographers had experimented with medium. Most of these films were documentaries capturing events and some captured theatrical performances. By the time the first talkie - Ardeshir Irani's 'Alam Ara' came in 1931, Indian audience was familiar with the concept of a feature film. Several theatres had been opened in various cities of the country and filmmakers were slowly introducing new stories. Irani perhaps understood the importance of sound in films and reportedly raced to finish the film. When the film was released in Mumbai's Majestic Cinema, the police had to be summoned to control the hysterical crowd who had come to watch the film. While 'Alam Ara' brought a new change in the society it affected the careers of many filmmakers. Several pioneering filmmakers who were till then making silent films retired and faded into the oblivion with advent of the talkies as they could never cope with the changing times nor were they willing to understand the importance of sound in feature films. [4]

2.4 Rise of Bollywood

The announcement in July of 2003 by the Oxford English Dictionary that it accepted the word Bollywood and defined it as Indian cinema did not amuse everyone in the

Indian Cinema Industry. Bollywood, as the Hindi film industry is popularly known, is the largest contributor to the industry's revenue, followed by the South Indian movie industry and other language cinema industries such as Bengali, Bhojpuri, Marathi and Gujarati. Although the country's filmed entertainment industry is the largest in the world in terms of the number of films it produces (around 900) and its theatrical admissions (around 3 billion), it continues to be small in size in terms of revenue, mainly due to low ticket realization and occupancy levels. Moreover, lack of quality content and rising competition from Hollywood films continue to affect it.

The industry went through many changes after silent era in 1947 as per the growing need of industry and audiences, and one could argue that it was during this time that the modern Indian film was born. The historical and mythological stories of the past were now being replaced by social-reformist films, which turned an often critical eye on such social practices as the dowry system, polygamy and prostitution. The 1950s saw filmmakers such as Bimal Roy and Satyajit Ray focusing on the lives of the lower classes, who until then were mostly ignored as subjects. Driven by a desire to offer a greater sense of realism and an understanding of the common man, the films during this era differed greatly from larger commercial productions, which were mostly escapist fare. It was the latter that would eventually become the template for the *Masala* film, a mash of genres including action, comedy, and melodrama punctuated by approximately six song and dance numbers, and the model still used for most contemporary Bollywood films.

Bollywood-apart from world cinema-has a charm, flavour and magic of its own. It appeals not only to the film-crazy Indian public but also has enchanted a large number of audiences the world over. People who do not speak or understand Hindi still sing songs from Hindi films as the language, music and direction was amazing. Indian films are now providing variety to the audiences for the purpose of entertaining.

2.5 Indian Cinema after Independence “Golden Era”

The golden era of the Indian film industry started sometime around the last few years of the 1940's but came up in a big way only in the beginning of the 1950's. The cinema of this time is marked with a distinct voice of country just free from clutches of a 200 year Britishers' rule. Spirits were running high and there was a taste of revolution in the air. In the past 5 years India had seen the height of the freedom struggle, gained actual freedom in the year 1947, followed by a landmark geographical partition where millions of people were displaced from their homes on the basis of their religion. The riots and the bloodshed that followed was enough to change things forever.

Indian cinema was at the peak of its glamour from the late 1940s to the early 1960s. It is now seen as the 'glory years'. A number of Indian films from this era are often included among the greatest films of all time in various critics and directors polls. The directors like Mehboob, Bimal Roy, Guru Dutt and Raj Kapoor entered the film industry during the 1930s and '40s, which were traumatic years for the Indian people. The fight for independence, famines, changing social mores and global fight against fascism all contributed to the ethos in which the directors grew up. However, the 50's saw the rise of these great directors, who changed the fate of Indian cinema. Following India's independence, the period from the late 1940s to the 1960s is regarded by film historians as the 'Golden Age' of Indian cinema. Some of the most critically acclaimed Indian films of all time were produced during this period. In commercial Hindi cinema, examples of famous films at the time include the Guru Dutt films *Pyaasa* (1957) and *Kaagaz Ke Phool* (1959) and the Raj Kapoor films *Awaara* (1951) and *Shree 420* (1955). Hindi cinema gained popularity in between 1950-1970. Successful actors of that time are Guru Dutt, Dev Anand, Raj Kapoor and Dilip Kumar. The popular actresses were Mala Sinha, Meena Kumari, Nargis, Nutan, Madhubala, and Waheeda Rehman. They gave such powerful and mind blowing performances that we remember them for their work till date. These films expressed social themes mainly dealing with working-class urban life in India; *Awaara* presented the city as both a nightmare and a dream, while *Pyaasa* critiqued the

unreality of city life. Some of the most famous epic films of Hindi cinema were also produced at the time, including Mehboob Khan's *Mother India* (1957), which was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film and K. Asif's *Mughal-e-Azam* (1960). V. Shantaram's *Do Aankhen Barah Haath*(1957) is believed to have inspired the Hollywood film. With time in the 70's Bollywood stars like Rajesh Khanna, Dharmendra, Amitabh Bachchan, and Vinod Khanna came into the scene and captured the hearts of millions. Female stars who were making their mark are Hema Malini, Rekha, Jaya Bachchan, and Zeenat Aman. During the late 80's the film fraternity saw a new brigade of stars rising they were the three Khans. Also popular among the masses and carving a niche for themselves were Akshay Kumar and Govinda with their unique acting abilities. In the contemporary times India can be easily hailed as the largest movie producing country in the world. Indian movies are gaining popularity. The world of Indian movies is a very fascinating one that has mesmerized every person, on a global platform. [5]

Overall, the 1940s - 60s was a period that revolutionized Indian cinema. Prior to this period, most movies centered around mythological, historical or family related themes. Romance was portrayed in the most beautiful and sensitive manner during this period, and in a society where almost everyone had arranged marriages, it brought about a fresh wave of thought among the youth. The films depicted everyday lives as well as larger social issues in a subtle, yet highly impactful manner, and remain as inspiration for generations of film makers to come. In addition to Bollywood, regional cinema also thrived during this period. The Telugu, Tamil and Bengali film industries in particular made some amazing movies and had their respective golden ages, making this truly the golden Era of Indian Cinema. The time between 1951 and 1965 was indeed the golden era in the history of Indian cinema for both commercial and parallel ventures. But nothing remains the same for a long time in a diverse and ever changing country like India and soon it was time for another era to begin. The era of expensive films, adventurous plots, romantic themes and super hit songs with glamorous stars was about to begin.

2.6 Hindi Cinema in 1990s

The 1990s was a remarkable period in the history of Hindi cinema. There have been good and bad movies in every era, but the 90s, it was an extraordinary era which saw an incredible number of unintentionally hilarious movies- movies that were meant to be serious but ended up entertaining audience by tickling their funny bone. With the process of globalization in the 90s the whole scenario changed, including that of Indian cinema. The new wave films resorted to sharper critique of commodification of culture while the popular ones escaped into traditionalism, family values, sanctity of relationship - in fact all those aspects of social life which came under competition as a result of marketization, foreign television channels and displacement of indigenous industries under the onslaught of multinational companies.

These films gave the audiences a false sense of security and, as a result, became highly popular. The trend was set by Sooraj Barjatia's *Hum Apke Hain Kaun* which, with the help of 14 engrossing songs, created the illusion of happy joint families by glorifying wedding rituals. Ironically, in Barjatia's celluloid family, modernity is permissible but only in material terms- expanding business, sprawling bungalows and opulent interiors.

Other films like *Dil Wale Dulhaniya Le Jayenge*, *Dil To Pagal Hai* and *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai* also pleaded for a behavioural code sanctified by tradition and custom like obedience to the patriarchal law, respect for elders and an overwhelming desire to belong to the fold, clan or community. Or, they celebrated love, friendship and commitment and the need to internalise conflicts. But is it hazardous to make generalisations about Hindi cinema. During the same period, film makers like Mani Ratnam (*Roja*), Gulzar (*Maachis*), Kaazad Gustad (*Bombay Boys*) Nagesh Kukyanoor (*Hyderabad Blues*) and Deepa Mehta (*Fire*), made films which had individuality, explored new themes and imparted freshness to the film scene. All this shows the vigor and vibrancy of the Indian cinema and its tremendous capacity to keep abreast of changes. It is these qualities which have made Indian cinema a dominant urban culture influencing all other art forms: television, theatre, advertising, music, new

modes of information technology, journalism, architecture, fashion and even the profiles of goddesses on calendars and in Puja pandals.

2.7 Modern Indian Hindi Cinema

The new century of 21st saw the growth in the popularity of Indian cinema which spreaded all over the world. After a very long time mainstream Indian films seemed to have caught the fancy of the international markets. The lines of distribution which had been silently working towards commercial distribution of Indian films abroad found themselves in demand in over 90 countries outside of its own. Dev Benegal's Road Movie (2010) was sold for international distribution before it was sold in India. This was just the right amount of boost that the filmmakers required and there was a marked improvement in the quality of the content produced with superior technological innovations in cinematography, special effects and story lines. The earlier trends in cinema had sought only to please the Indian audiences, but this has changed with time and now films are made with a global perspective in mind. The entire film experience is no longer limited to the cinema halls. There are now progressive promotions and pre or post release marketing of television channels, radio and at all mediums of media.

The 21st century was when Indian cinema finally found some sort of a balance between the ever genres of popular commercial and parallel cinema. Several new films were produced which brought to light the fact that Indian cinema could be meaningful and yet be commercially successful. Some of the best movies of the past decade have been – Lagaan (2001), Devdas (2002), Koi... Mil Gaya (2003), Rang De Basanti (2006), Lage Raho Munnabhai (2006), Chak De India (2007), , Wake Up Sid, No Smoking, Dev D, Mr and Mrs Iyer, Raincoat, My Brother Nikhil, Mumbai Meri Jaan, Aks, Pinjar, Monsoon Wedding, Omkara, Maqbool, Oye Lucky Lucky Oye, Khosla Ka Ghonsla, Blue Umbrella, Seher, Naach, Aamir, Astitva, Zubeida, Hazaaron Khwaishein Aisi, Manorama Six Feet Under, Black Friday, Matribhoomi,

Haasil and more recently Peepli Live. Among the mainstream films, Lagaan won the Audience Award at the Locarno International Film Festival and was nominated for Best Foreign Language Film at the 74th Academy Awards, while Devdas and Rang De Basanti were both nominated for the BAFTA Award for Best Foreign Language Film. Though India has always been partial to its film stars, with actors like Amitabh Bacchan, Shah Rukh Khan, Amir Khan, Salman Khan and Akshay Kumar having careers which span decades, it has also of late become open to new and young talent like Ranbir Kapoor, Abhay Deol, Neil Nitin Mukesh and John Abraham.

Old film production studios that had monopolized the market in the 90's reinvented themselves to suit the new Indian cinema goer's preferences (Like Yash Raj Films and Dharma Productions). Those which could not change were left behind in the race. Economic growth of the country in general and rising disposable income levels in particular clubbed with the gradually liberalizing attitude of the Government by bringing forth favorable regulatory initiatives liberalized the foreign direct investment in the Indian film industry. Since 100% FDI was allowed in Film Industry including film financing, production, distribution, exhibition, and marketing and associated activities related to film industry. This resulted in a lot of foreign companies like Time Warner, Paramount, 20th Century Fox, Fox Searchlight and Disney to either setup offices in India or enters into lucrative partnerships with the existing production houses.

At the end while talking about modern Indian cinema it is also very important to highlight that trends of Animation movies production is also started in India cinema. As much of now the movies produced and directed outside India and by Foreigner Directors captured big market in India, this thing also being understood by Indian moviemakers and they started producing animation (2D & 3D) movies to cater Indian audiences.

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