CHAPTER – 3
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND IN MARATHI FILM INDUSTRY.

3.1. Introduction:-

Movies in the western countries were being produced in the nineteenth century. At the same time around 1885, Mahadev Gopal Patwardhan performed a unique experiment ‘Shambarika Kharolika’ (शांबरिका खरोलिका), (The Magic Lantern). This much talked about experiment was akin to today’s animation. Patwardhan had hand drawn a series of small human figures with expressions smaller than five-centimetre, on a ten-centimetre slide. He had drawn more than a thousand slides and he would display these slides in quick succession, thereby producing animation. He performed these slide shows all over India and had also received recognition from the British government for his efforts.

In India, exhibition of film began in 1896 at Bombay. On 7th July 1896, at Watson Hotel of Bombay; Lumier Brothers exhibited films ‘As Arrival of the Train, The Sea Bath, The Demolition,’ etc. and launched this new entertainment media in India.

The history of film making in India may be traced to Pitale Brothers and Mahadev Patwardhan. They succeeded in showing the show of Shambrik Kharolica (शांब्रिका खरोलिका), (Magic Lantern), the magic unfolding of popular scenes from the epics Ramayana (रामायण) and Mahabharata (महाभारत) with the help of painted glass slides through magic lanterns against the background of song and arunning commentary.

A). Harishchandra Sakharam Bhatavdekar Alis Sawedada:-

Before 20th century Sawedada had created Indian short-film. At youth, he caught his surrounding in a short film. He had much interested in such a work. In 1880, at the age of 22, he had started the business of photography. When the society was thinking that photo-shooting reduces life. In that age his hobby of photography was a strange business for society.

In the year 1896, Lumier Brothers had shown some short-film first time in India, in ‘Watson Hotel, Mumbai.’ Sawedada had seen those films and got much
interest about the films. In 1896, Sawedada bought a projector and shown the shot-films like ‘Cancan Dance’, (कांसन डांस) ‘The Bates’ to high-class people in Mumbai. Then he bought the camera from Rolly Brother and started to shoot short-films by himself. He shot the wrestling between Pundlikdada and Krishna Nhavi in ‘Haging Garden’, (हेगिंग गार्डन) Mumbai. He shot some part of ‘Mumbai harbor’ for remaining film. He started to show these two first Indian short films with other foreign films on the ground nearby Bombay Gymkhana (जिमखाना).

At the beginning his short film would have sent to England for chemical process. But in very short span of time Sawedada learnt this technic also. Very soon he became perfect to make film, and make chemical process on it and to reflect from projector. From 1899, Sawedada took Gaety (गैटी) theatre (now Capital theatre) Mumbai on rent and started to show his short-film with other foreign short-films. Indian people would like most Sawedada’s deshi films.

Later, in 1898, Harishchandra Sakharam Bhatavdekar aisi Savedada made a short film on wrestling (Kusticha Laghupat) (कुस्तीचा लघूपट). In 1901 he filmed the award ceremony of Wrangler R. P. Paranjape. The play ‘Pundalik’ (पुंडलिक) was converting into a movie in 1909. It was released on 18th May 1912 by Ramchandra Gopal Alis Dadasaheb Torne and it made history.

B). Ramchandra Gopal Torane Alis Dadasaheb Torane:-

On 7 July, 1896, the short film ‘Arrival of the Train (अर्वाचक ऑफ द ट्रेन)’ by ‘Lumier Brothers’ came in India. Then foreign made short-films started to come in India. Dadasaheb Torane saw this and he felt that he should produce such films. In Mumbai where he was living there was a dramatic company named ‘Pathare Amatures Dramatic Club’ (पाठरे अभ्यंतः अमाराइटि क्लब). This company was doing rehearsal of the drama ‘Shri Pundlika’. The first show of this drama was on 13th Dec, 1904. ‘Dadasaheb Torane’ went to see that film. In exciting mood because of drama, he went in the wing and congratulated the actors and director of the drama. Shri. Kirtikar was the writer of drama ‘Shri-Pundlika’ and was working in the edition section of ‘Daily Jagatvrit’ (जागद्वित्त) in Mumbai. Dadasaheb Torane introduced with
him and became close friends. The drama ‘Shri-Pundlika’ made Torane to think about a film.

For the knowledge and technic of film production Torane contacted to Hollywood and collected the information about various tools, expenditure and other things. ‘Nanaasaheb Chitre’ decided to support economically. There was need of a Camera to shoot the film. Dadasaheb Torane had taken it from the Head office, Kalkatta from ‘Born and Shepherd Company’ (बोर्न अंड शेफर्ड) for Rs. 1000/-. The camera was an unused condition. So a member named ‘Jakson’ sent to Torane and he repaired the camera. The main actors were writer Kirtikar, Nanaasaheb Chitre, Joshi, Tipnish etc. in this film.

To produce a film based on drama ‘Pundlika’ Torane got new approach about the film. By converting the dialogues into the titles a new picture film produced by Torane with the help of Kirtikar and Nadkarni. Today, what we call ‘Shooting Script’, this concept comes from ‘Pundlika’. The shooting of ‘Pundlika’ was done on ‘Lamington Road’ (now Vittalbhai road and Tribhuwan road). To complete the shooting all money was spent and Cameraman demanded for money. For the solution Torane and Kirtikar gave the Camera to ‘Born and Shepherd Company’. In back of it decided that company should take the responsibility and expenditure of making negative / positive of a shoted film. Negative print of ‘Pundlika' sent to London. By doing chemical process of a film two prints made a) Positive b) Negative.

![Engagements Ad for A Dead Man's Child and Pundlik Pundlik](image.png)
Negative print put in London and Positive print sent to India. Thus the film ‘Pundlika’ produced by Dadasaheb Torane and released on 18 May, 1912. At ‘Coronation Theatre.’ The length of this film was, 8,000 ft.

Dadasaheb Phalake’s first film ‘Raja Harishchandra’ released on 3rd May, 1913. Its length was 3,700 ft.

3.2). First Release in Movie Theatres:-

Nashik’s Dhundiraj Govind Alis Dadasaheb Phalke overcame financial difficulties and determinedly went to England. There, he learnt everything about producing a film and also ordered all the equipment required to make a film. Enduring a great amount of hardship and hard work, he produced the film ‘Raja Harishchandra’ (राजा हरिश्चन्द्र) (King Harishchandra). On 3rd May 1913, ‘Raja Harishchandra’ was released in ‘Coronation Theatre in Mumbai’. This movie is the first movie made and released in India and hence Dadasaheb Phalke is known as the ‘Father of the Indian Cinema.’ The top most awards for excellence in Indian cinema given by the India government are known as ‘The Dadasaheb Phalke Award.’

During the same time, from 1913 to 1926, S. N. Patankar from Mumbai produced 36 films in association with National Films but due to lack of good distributorship, these films could not be released in India.

3.2.1). Kalamaharshi Baburao Painter:-

Dadasaheb Phalke’s ‘Raja Harishchandra’ (राजा हरिश्चन्द्र) (1913) had triggered off great enthusiasm among many aspiring filmmakers. Among them was a young man, Baburao Painter.
Baburao Krishnarao Mestry was born in 1890 in Kolhapur. He taught himself to paint (hence the name) and sculpt in academic art school style. He and his artist cousin Anandrao Painter between 1910 and 1916 were the leading painters of stage backdrops in Western India doing several famous curtains for ‘Sangeet Natak’ (संगीत नाटक) troupes and also for Gujarati Parsee theatres. They became avid filmgoers following ‘Raja Harishchandra.’

The Princely State of Kolhapur did not lack behind in the new world of entertainment. Anandrao and Baburao Mestri, the cousins hailed as Painter Brothers because of their painting skills, took the initiative by setting up ‘Deccan Cinema,’ (डेंकन सिनेमा) a film exhibition theatre in Partnership with one Vashikar in 1912. However, the partnership was soon to be dissolved for lack of investment capital. In 1914, Painter Brothers established ‘Maharashtra Cinema’ in partnership with one Ruikar. They bought a damaged second hand one was not within their reach. They not only repaired the damaged camera but also improvised it and successfully took the trial shots.

Emboldened with the success, Anandrao wanted to devise a new movie camera. He met with an untimely death in 1916. His efforts, however, did not go waste. Baburao, his cousin, succeeded in making a movie camera and used it for shooting some swimming shots. Next, he successfully shot 1918 Bombay Special Session of Congress.

Baburao Painter, who established ‘Maharashtra Film Company’ in 1917, turned the dream into a reality, finance was the major obstacle. However, Tanibai Kagalkar, a well-known singer, solved that problem by offering him Rs. 15,000/-. Baburao Painter chose mythological theme ‘Seeta Swayamwar’ (सीता स्वयंवर). Given the deep influence of mythology on the Indian mind, the audience for his first venture was automatically ensured. But, due to social restrictions, he could not get female artists to act in his film. As he was very particular about female artists enacting female characters, he shelved his plan of producing ‘Seeta Swayamwar’. For his next project, again a mythological theme, he chose the story of ‘Sairandhri’ based on the tale of ‘Kichak-Vadh’ (किचक-वध) (Slaying of Kichak) which was completed in recorded time. Luckily, after considerable persuasion, Gulabbai and Anusayabai agreed to act in the film. It was exhibited in ‘Aryan Theatre,’ Pune, on the 7th February 1920.
‘Lokmanya Tilak’, highly impressed, conferred the title of ‘Cinema Kesari’ (सिनेमा केसरी) on the Baburao Painter.

Thus, the foundation of Kolhapur film industry was laid down by Baburao Painter’s ‘Sairandhari’ (सैरंध्री) produced, by ‘Maharashtra Film Company’ in 1920. The cultural background of Kolhapur in general and Chh. Shahu’s liberal patronage in particular were the key factors in sowing the seeds of film industry in this state.

Kolhapur is the home of arts in Maharashtra. The two brothers from Kolhapur, Anandrao and Baburao were all-rounders in the field of art and cinema. After the demise of Anandrao, with grit and determination, Baburao single-handedly created a projector and a camera. He also created the printing machine and the developing speedometer. On 1st of December 1917, he founded the ‘Maharashtra Film Company.’ He produced the first film, which had a female character in it – ‘Sairandhari’ (सैरंध्री). It was released on 7th February 1920 in ‘Aryan Theatre in Pune’. The fight scenes between Bheem and Keechak were filmed without any trick camerawork and were so effective that some people in the audience fainted. This incident prompted the British government to introduce film censorship, which exists to-date. In 1925, Baburao Painter produced a socially relevant silent film ‘Savkaari Paash’ (सावकारी पास) through the ‘Maharashtra Film Company’ using the technique of flashback. This became the very first India film to be shown at an international film festival. Baburao Painter was a unique personality who knew film making like the back of his hand. His company, the ‘Maharashtra Film Company,’ was responsible for nurturing the talents of many great artists like H. M. Reddy and Nagi Reddy from Chennai and V. Shantaram, Damle, Fattelal, Dhaybar, Baburao Pendharkar, Master Vinayak and Nanasaheb Sarpotdar from Maharashtra. This company also launched many actors like Ruby Myers, Master Vitthal, Prithviraj Kapoor, Zebunnissa and Lalita Pawar. Baburao’s contribution to Indian Cinema includes innovation, ideals, realism and social relevance. He produced seventeen silent films from 1920 to 1928.

They turned to cinema first as exhibitors while trying to assemble their own camera. Anandrao however died in 1916 and Painter and his main disciple V.G. Damle eventually put together a working camera in 1918.

With financial support from local nobility, he set up the ‘Maharashtra Film Company’ in Kolhapur in 1919. Painter gathered around him old colleagues among
them Damle and S. Fatehlal joined a little later by V. Shantaram - the group that later left to set up The 'Prabhat Film Company.' He also introduced two female artists Gulab Bai and Anusuya Bai renamed as Kamala Devi and Sushila Devi respectively. Since acting was looked down upon, the two ladies were excommunicated by their community and had to find refuge in the studio premises. As well as acting in films, they would often cook and serve food to the entire unit!!!

Baburao's first film ‘Sairandhri’ (सैरंध्री) (1920) attracted the attention of the then censor board for its graphic depiction of the slaying of Keechak by Bhima. Finally it had to be deleted but the film won both critical and commercial acclaim spurring Painter on to more ambitious projects.

Baburao was a man of many talents - he wrote his own screenplays, changed the concept of set designing from painted curtains to solid multi-dimensional lived in spaces, he introduced artificial lighting and understood the importance of publicity. As early as 1921-22 he was the first to issue programme booklets, complete with details of the film and photographs. He also painted himself tasteful, eye-catching posters of his films.

‘Sinhagad’ (सिंहगड) (1923) proved so popular that it attracted the Revenue Department's attention to bring about introduction of Entertainment Tax.

Baburao also made the first realistic Indian film ‘Savakari Pash’ (सावकारी पाण्ड) (1925) dealing with money lending, a problem that blighted the lives of countless illiterate, poor farmers. However the audience long fed on mythological fantasy and historical love was just not prepared for so strong a dose of realism and the film did not do well. Baburao returned to costume dramas.

‘Netaji Palkar’ (नेताजी पालकर) (1927) directed by V. Shantaram and ‘Karna’ (कर्ण) (1928) directed by Damle and Fattelal were huge hits. However after a few more silent films, the ‘Maharashtra Film Company’ pulled down its shutters with the advent of sound. Baburao was not particularly keen on the talkies for he believed that they would destroy the visual culture so painfully evolved over the years. He returned to painting and sculpture, his original vocation barring sporadic ventures like remaking ‘Savkari Pash’ (सावकारी पाश) in sound in 1936, ‘Pratibha’ (प्रतिभा) (1937), one of his few preserved films which is a good illustration of Painter's control over big sets,
lighting and crowd scenes and ‘Lokshahir Ramjoshi’ (लोकशाहीर रामजोशी) (1947) on Shantaram’s invitation.

3.3). Anandrao Makes a Camera:-

While he was continuously obsessed by the idea of making a film in Kolhapur, Anandrao found a second-hand projector put up for sale in the ‘Null Bazaar in Bombay’. Seeing the projector, Anandrao hit upon a crazy idea, if a projector can show a film, he thought, why not use it to shoot one-making some changes in its structure. He made up his mind to purchase the projector for exhibiting films-for a start. But where was the money to buy the projector? Finally, selling gold ornaments belonging to his family, Anandrao raised enough money to purchase the projector and started exhibiting films in the ‘Shivaji Theatre, Kolhapur’. At this time, Baburao Painter, S. Fattelal and Vishnupant Damle were Anandrao’s associates. These people started exhibiting foreign films at the Shivaji Theatre for some time; the group started a mobile exhibition of films visiting many villages and towns. While seeing foreign films, they observed their film technique in minute detail and made notes for their future reference.

3.4). Aryan Film Company:

Nanasheb Sarpotdar, who had earlier worked with Baburao Painter, founded the ‘Aryan Film Company’ in Pune in 1927. His film ‘Maharachi Por’ (महाराची पोर) (The Untouchable’s daughter) based on the contemporary social issue had become a huge hit. Great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Sarojini Naidu appreciated his efforts for contributing to the social cause. Nanasaheb also directed a few films and produced a total of 24 silent films. In those days, silent films were full of violence and thrills. Tabla, Harmonium and Sarangi players used to sit in the movie theatres and play the music as per the requirements of the scene to make it more effective. Contemporary relevance of plays.

3.5). Age of the talkies:

The producers were aware that the age of the silent films was soon coming to an end and talkies were going to be a reality. Dadasaheb Torane had learnt the art of sound editing. He founded the Movie Camera Company. Through this company, Torane along with Ardeshir Irani has produced the first Indian talkie, ‘Alam Ara,’
In Hindi. This movie was released on 14th March 1931 and starred the duo Master Vitthal and Zubeida. It was rarity to have a full-length feature film with songs, dances and dialogues. The audience used to peep behind the movie screens to ensure that there were no musicians performing at the back. Later, Bhalaji Pendharkar directed Torane’s film ‘Shamsundar,’ (शामसुंदर) which went on to become a success. Through this film, the duo Shanta Apte and Shahu Modak became very famous.

a). V. Shantaram:-

Among the leading filmmakers of Mumbai during the forties, V. Shantaram was arguably the most innovative and ambitious. From his first talkie ‘Ayodhya ka Raja’ (अयोध्या का राजा) (1932) to ‘Admi’ (आदमी) (1939), it was clear that he was a filmmaker with a distinct style and social concern whose films generated wide discussion and debate. He dealt with issues like cast system, religious bigotry and women's rights. Even when Shantaram took up stories from the past, he used these as parables to highlight contemporary situations. While ‘Amrut Manthan’ (अमृत मंथन) (1934) opposed the senseless violence of Hindu rituals, ‘Dharmatama’ (धर्मतामा) (1935) dealt with Brahmanical orthodoxy and cast system. Originally titled ‘Mahatma’, (महात्मा) the film was entirely banned by the colonial censor on the ground that it treated a sacred subject irreverently and dealt with controversial politics. ‘Amarjyoti’ (अमरज्योती) (1936) was an allegory on the oppression of women in which the protagonist seeks revenge. It could perhaps be called the first women's lib film in India.
‘Duniya Na Mane’ (दुनिया ना माने) (1937) was about a young woman's courageous resistance to a much older husband whom she had been tricked into marrying. ‘Admi’ (आदमी) (1939) was one of Shantaram's major works.

3.6. Sairandhri in Colour:-

After the unprecedented success of ‘Ayodhyecha Raja’ (अयोध्येचा राजा) and other films V. Shantaram produced the film ‘Sairandhri’ (सैरंध्री) and decided to make it the first colored film in India for which he took the prints to Germany. But the coloring was not done properly and the experiment failed. The colours were very gaudy. As a result of the failure of this experiment, the ‘Prabhat’ had to suffer tremendous financial loss.

![Ayodhyecha Raja (Marathi) & Ayodhyaaka Raja (Hindi) 1932.](image1)

![Sairandhri (Marathi & Hindi) 1933.](image2)

3.7. Prabhat shift to Poona:-

Even while ‘Sairandhi’ (सैरंध्री) was being filmed the prabhat was thinking of shifting from Kolhapur. They had a township in mind as a studio which was gradually expanding. Kolhapur was an inconvenient place from the point of view of availability of necessary equipment and other factors. The company was, of course, given all kind of help by the then princely State of Kolhapur. But there was no saying when there would be interference. So plants to shift to Poona were finalized and a site costing Rs. 15,000 was purchased from Sardar Natu of Poona.

a). Dadasaheb Torane’s movie ‘Shyamsunder’ (स्यामसुंदर) (1932) produced by Mr. Torane (Under the banner: Saraswati Cinetone) and directed by Bhalaji Pendlharkar.
The first movie to celebrate Silver Jubilee (27 weeks) at the ‘West End Cinema in Bombay’.

3.8). Marathi Films (1937-1941):-

The Marathi film producers adapted themselves well to the new path shown by Master Vinayak, Vishram Bedekar, etc. During the five years between 1937 to 1941 the number of social and comic films was 24. A film company like Prabhat too turned to the creation of social films. This, however, did not mean that the film-fans lost interest in mythological and historical creations.

The period from 1937 to 1941 may be described as the golden period of Marathi Film Industry. It was during this period that incomparable gems like ‘Sant Tukaram (संत तुकाराम), Dharmavir (धर्मवीर), Kunku (कुंकु), Premvir (प्रेमवीर), Gopalkrishna (गोपालकृष्ण), Brahmachari (ब्रह्मचारी), Brandichi Batali (ब्रॅंडिची बातली), Devata (देवता), Manoos (माणूस), Sukhacha Shodh (सुखाचा शोध), Ardhangi (अर्धांगी), Geeta (गीता) and Lagna Pahave Karun (लग्न पहावे करून)’ were produced.

3.9). Marathi Films (1942-1946):-

Although the Second World War starts in 1939 the film industry was not actually affected till May 1942 when Government imposed restrictions on the length of the film, which were not to exceed 11,000 feet; the trailers were not to exceed 400 feet. But in spite of these restrictions 13 Marathi films were produced during 1942. A great blow was dealt to the production of Marathi films as a result of the system of licenses for raw films introduced by Government on 17th July 1943.
3.10). Marathi Films (1947-1952):-

Following the end of second world-war in 1947 the permit system for films was abolished. The advent of independence in 1947 saw the beginning of a new era in Marathi films. The untimely death of Master Vinayak also put an end to his traditions. The Prabhat Film Company took to the production of Hindi films thus discontinuing its old traditions. The old was no more; new film companies came into existence and a new era of Marathi films was ushered in.

3.11). Marathi Films (1953-1958):-

As has been said production of Marathi films increased by leaps and bounds in the post-independence period. During the six years’ period of 1953-58 the production of Marathi films reached 92. In 1954 production reached the highest mark for during this year 29 films were produced. However from the trade point of view many of these films did not bring expected profits thus making the condition of the Marathi film industry precarious.


While the Marathi film industry was thus passing through a transitional period two Marathi picture, viz. ‘Sangate Aika’ (सांगत्ये ऐका) and ‘Shikleli Bayako’ (शिकलेली बायको) Proved to be sensational hits in 1959 and gave Marathi film industry a new life. The number of Marathi films rose from 9 in 1959 to 20 in 1962.
3.13. Some Important Silent Films:

Following Film companies produced various films.

I. **Phalke Film Company** –
   - Raja Harishchandra (राजा हरिश्चंद्र), Bhasmasur- Mohini (भस्मासुर मोहिनी),
   - Satyawan-Savitri (सत्यवान सावित्री), Lanka Dahan (लंका दहन).

II. **Hindustan Film Company** –
   - Krishna Janma (कृष्ण जन्म), Kaliya Mardan (कालिया मर्दन), Vali-Sugriva (वाली सुग्रीव),
   - Nala-Damayanti (नाला–दमयंती), Parshuram (परशुराम), Ritu Madalasa (रितू मदलासा),
   - Anantvrat (अनंतव्रत), Daksh Prajapati (दक्ष प्रजापति), Krishnasishatii (कृष्णशिशापाय),
   - Satyabhama Vivah (सत्यभामा विवाह), Draupadi Vastra Haran (द्राक्षी प्रस्तोत्तर),
   - Malhari-Martand (मलहरी मार्तांड), Datta Janma (दत्त जन्म),
   - Ramrajavyiyog (रामराजवियोग), Agryahun Sutka (अग्राहुन सुटका), Bajaji Nimbalkar (बाजाजी निंबालकर),
   - Sant Damaji (संत दामाजी), Jarasandh Vad (जरासंध वध),
   - Shishupal Vadh (शीशुपाल वध), Vasantsena (वसंतसेना), Gokarn Mahabaleshwar (गोकर्ण महाबलेश्वर),
   - Sant Janabai (संत जनाबाई), Lav-Kush (लव–कुष), Saimantak Rani (सईमंतक राणी),
   - Rukhmangat-Mohini (रुखमागत मोहिनी), Sati Mahananda (सती महानंदा), Setu Bandhan (सेतू बंधन).

III. **Maharashtra Film Company** –
   - Sairandhri (सैरंद्री), Vatsala Haran (वत्सला हरण) Bhakta Damaji (भक्त दामाजी),
   - Sinhagad (सिंहगड), Savkari Pash (सावकारी पाष), Maya Bajar (मायाबाजर), Gaja-Gauri (गजगौरी),
   - Shr. Krishnavatar (श्रीकृष्णावतर), Sati Padmini (सती पद्मिनी),
   - Savitri (सावित्री), Shahala Shaha (शाहाला शाहा), Kalyancha Khajina(कल्याणचा
   - खजिना), Rana Hamir (राणा हामीर), Netaji Palkar (नेताजी पालकर), Bajiprabhu
   - Deshpande (बाजीप्रभू देशपांडे), Muraliwala (मुरालीवाला), Lanka (लंका).

IV. **Prabhat Film Company** –
   - Gopal Krishna (गोपालकृष्ण), Khuni Khanjir (खुनी खंजीर), Ranisaheba
   - (रणिसाहेबा), Chandra-Sena (चंद्रसेना), Udaykal (उदयकल), Zulum (जुलूम).
V. Aryan Film Company –
Thaksen Rajputra (ठाक्सेन राजपुत्र), Arya Mahila (आर्य महिला), Samsher Bahadur (समशेर बहादुर), Good-Bye Marriage (गुड-बाय मर्रीज), Maharachi Por (महाराची पोर), Ganimi Kawa (गानिमी काव्या), Bhawani Talwar (भवानी तलवार).

3.14). Individuals and Agencies behind Marathi Cinema:
3.14.1). Film Production Houses:
In Kolhapur, films were being produced through ‘Shalini Cinetone and Kolhapur Cinetone’. In Pune, there were ‘Hans Pictures and Saraswati Cinetone’. During 1933-34, Master Deenanath Mangeshkar and Chintamanrao Kolhatkar produced the movie ‘Krisharjun Yuddha’ (कृष्णाजून युद्ध). This was a talkie and was produced by Balwant Pictures in Sangli. Under the patronage of the royal family of Kolhapur, stalwarts like Baburao Pendidkar, Acharya P. K. Atre and V. S. Khandekar produced films like ‘Jwaala’ (ज्वाला) (Fire), ‘Bramhachari’ (ब्राम्हचारी) (The Unmarried Fellow), ‘Brandichi Batli’ (ब्रेंडीची बाटली) (Bottle of Brandy) and ‘Dhruva’ (ध्रुव) under ‘Hans Pictures’.

‘Hans Pictures’ later became ‘Navyug Chitra’. The duo of Acharya Atre and Master Vinayak proved that Marathi comedy movies were rich and of a high quality content. Movies like ‘Brahmachari,’ (ब्राह्मचारी) ‘Ardhangi,’ (अर्धांगी) ‘Brandichi Batli,’ (ब्रेंडीची बाटली) ‘Sukhacha Shodh,’ (सुखाचा शोध) ‘Devata’ (देवता) etc. brought fame and status to comedy movies. These movies introduced the trend of full-length comedy movies in Marathi. ‘Saraswati Cinetone and Prabhat Films’ produced different genres of movies like historical, mythological and movies on saints. Movies like ‘Thakiche lagna’ (ठाकीचे लग्न), ‘Satyache prayog’ (सत्याचे प्रयोग) and ‘Netaji Palkar’ (नेताजी पालकर) made by other production houses were noteworthy. Dadasaheb Torne produced around fifteen movies through ‘Saraswati Cinetone’ till he stopped making films. Dadasaheb managed to elevate the status of Marathi movies with sound to such an extent that the government too had to sit up and take notice. He was on par with Dadasaheb Phalke as far Marathi movies were concerned.
Great filmmaker stalwarts like Damle-Fattelal, actors like Keshavrao Dhaybar and V. Shantaram were with Baburao Painter’s ‘Maharashtra Film Company’ ever since its inception. They worked for ‘Maharashtra Film Company’ for ten years. Damle and Fattelal later became directors and Dhaybar learnt scriptwriting. They worked hard and learnt every little detail of filmmaking. The silent film ‘Netaji Palkar’ by Dhaybar and V. Shantaram became very popular. The silent film ‘Maharathi Karna’ (महारथी कर्ण) by Damle-Fattelal also was a big hit.

3.14.2). Famous Movies and Artists:

A young and attractive Chandrakant Mandhare with a magnetic personality entered the Marathi film industry through ‘Thoratanchi Kamala,’ (थोरटांची कमला) ‘Shejari, (शेजारी) ‘Bharatbhet’ (भरतभेट) and ‘Ramrajya’ (रामराज्य). Durga Khote who came from a well-to-do and educated family, Shahu Modak and Shobhana Samarth were his contemporaries. Bhalji Pendharkar and Master Vinayak made socially relevant films. V. Shantaram produced a beautiful film titled Ram Joshi, in 1947. It was directed by Baburao Painter and the music director was Vasant Desai. Jayram Shiledar played the title role while Hansa Wadkar and G. D. Madgulkar ably supported him.

Ram Gabale directed the film ‘Vande Mataram’ (वन्दे मातरम) in 1948. P. L. Deshpande and Sunita Deshpande were the main actors. The story, screenplay and dialogues were by G. D. Madgulkar.

Ram Gabale directed a beautiful movie for young children titled ‘Devbappaa’ (देवबाप्पा). The music, screenplay and dialogues were by P. L. Deshpande. It was loved by children and adults alike. It became famous for its songs, ‘Nach Re Mora’ (नाच रे मोरा) and ‘Ivlya Ivlyashya Tiklya Tiklyanchya.’ (इव्ल्या इव्ल्याश्या टिक्ल्या टिक्ल्यांच्या) During the same time, P. L. Deshpande produced, directed, wrote the screenplay and dialogues, composed the music and acted in the movie ‘Gulacha Ganapati’ (गुलच्छा गणपती). The speciality of this movie was its melodious songs like Hi ‘Kuni Chedili Taar’ (कृणी छेड़ली तार), ‘Ithech Taaka Tamba.’ (इथेच टाका तंब) The devotional song ‘Indrayani Kathi’ (इंद्रायनी कथी) (On the banks of the river Indrayani) sung by Pandit Bhimsen Joshi is popular even today. The simple minded character played by P. L.
Deshpande with an easygoing, natural grace struck a chord among the audience. After this period, P. L. Deshpande’s direct contribution to Marathi cinema is few and far between.

Around 13 films were produced during 1949-50. Lata Mangeshkar composed music for the first time for Dinkar D. Patil’s ‘Ram Ram Pavhana’ (राम राम पावहण) (Welcome, guest!). Lata Mangeshkar’s production house ‘Surel Chitra Company’ produced some good movies like ‘Vaadal’ (वादल) (Storm), ‘Kanchanganga’ (कांचणगंगा), ‘Shikleli Baayko’ (शिकलेली बायको) (An educated wife), ‘Kanyaadaan’ (कन्यादान) and ‘Laxmi Aali Ghara’ (लक्ष्मी आली घरा). The director of all these movies, Madhav Shinde got the President’s medal for the best direction. During 1950-60, many social, historic and women oriented films were produced.

After leaving Prabhat Films, Datta Dharmadhikari, Anant Mane, E. Mohammed established the ‘Alhad Chitra Institution.’ In 1951 ‘Bala Jo Jo Re’ (बाळा जो जो रे) (Go to sleep, o baby) was released and it became a huge hit launching the lead pair of Suryakant and Usha kiran. The duo later acted together in twelve films. ‘Alhad Chitra’ made women-centric films and became successful. They became financially sound. Datta Dharmadhikari made ‘Mahatma’ (महात्मा) in Hindi but it was a box office failure. As a result, Alhad Chitra had to close shop. During the same time, V. Shantaram made ‘Amar Bhupali’ (अमर भुपाली) (on poet Honaji Bala) was screened at Cannes Film Festival and bagged the award for Best Sound Editing.

The film ‘Mi TulasTtuzhya Angani’ (मी तुलसी तुड्ड्या अंगाणी) (I am a basil plant in your yard) made by the trio of Raja Thakur, G. D. Madgulkar and Sudhir Phadke won the President’s silver medal in 1955. The songs in this film sung by Pandit Bhimsen Joshi were based on classical music. Stalwart writer G. D. Madgulkar acted in this movie. Later, ‘Grihadevata’ (गृहदेवता) made by Lata Mangeshkar’s ‘Surel Chitra’ bagged the silver medal in 1957. This became the first Marathi film to be screened at the ‘Tashkent Film Festival, Russia.’ The movie ‘Naykinicha Sajja’ (नायकिणीचा सज्जा) directed by the famous singer Hemant Kumar was also from this same era.

Director Rajdatta, whose genre was family oriented films, directed the successful ‘Madhuchandra’ (मधुचंद्र) (Honeymoon). Kashinath Ghanekar was the lead
actor in it. In 1969, Raja Paranjape’s ‘Aparadh’ (अपराध) (Crime) bagged the best film at the ‘Maharashtra State Film Festival Awards’. Bhalji Pendharkar’s ‘Tambadi Mati’ (तांबडी माती) (The Red Earth) was Dada Kondke’s first movie. The songs from the movie ‘Gharkul’ (घरकुल) became very popular in 1979. The music director was C. Ramchandra.

At a time when Marathi cinema was struggling to find financial success, Dada Kondke’s ‘Songadya’ (सोंगाडया) hit the theatres and attracted the rural as well as the urban crowd. At the same time, in the year 1972, ‘Pinjara’ (पिंजरा) directed by V. Shantaram became a huge hit and created history. Shriram Lagu and Sandhya were the lead actors. It had a strong screenplay, excellent acting, effective lyrics and beautiful music. Music director, Ram Kadam had worked hard to compose the music and the audience loved it.

Marathi cinema refers to films produced in the Marathi language in the state of Maharashtra, India. Marathi Cinema is one of the oldest industries in Indian Cinema. In fact the pioneer of cinema in Union of India was Dadasaheb Phalke, who brought the revolution of moving images to India with his first indigenously made silent film ‘Raja Harishchandra’ (राजा हरिशचंद्र) in 1913, which is considered by IFFI (International Film Festival of India) and NIFD part of Marathi Cinema as it was made by a Marathi crew.

3.15). Maharashtra Government’s Awards:-

The production of Marathi films increased considerably in 1962. A total of 20 Marathi films came to the screen. Financially however, this year proved very disappointing. But an important development took place. The Maharashtra Government started Marathi Film Festival. During the first year owing to Chinese aggression this festival could not be held. But the Government awarded the following prizes by considering the films censored between 1st January 1961 and August 1962:

1. Best film – 1st Prize of Rs. 12,000 – Prapanch (प्रपंच).
2. Best film – 2nd Prize of Rs. 6,000 – Suvasini (सुवासिनी).
3. Best film – 3rd Prize of Rs. 4,000 – Shahir Parshuram (शाहीर परशुराम).
4. Best director – 1st prize of Rs. 3,000 – Madhukar Pathak in Prapanch.
5. Best director – 2nd Prize of Rs. 1,500 – Raja Paranjape in Suvashini.
6. Best director – 3rd Prize of Rs. 1,000 – Anant Mane in Shahir Parsharam.
8. Best supporting actor – Chandrakant Gokhale in Suvashini – Prize and cash award of Rs. 500.
10. Best supporting actress – Kusum Deshpande in Prapanch – Prize and cash award of Rs. 500.
13. Best music – Sudhir Phadke in Prapanch – Prize and award of Rs. 500.
15. Best sound recording – B. N. Sharma for Prapanch – Prize and award of Rs. 500.
18. Best playback singer – Talat Mahamood in Putra Whava Aisa – Prize and award of Rs. 500.
3.16. Reference:-