



# History of Indian Cinema



Introduction to History,  
Monsoon 2020

# Indian Film Industry

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- More than 1800 movies are produced every year
- \$ 2.1 billion in revenue in the year 2015
- 3.5 billion tickets sold in 2011
- **Bollywood** - largest sector - 43% revenue
- **Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, Kannada** - South Indian industry
- Tamil and Telugu form 36% of the revenue
- Unlike other technology like cars or televisions, the moviemaking had come to India as soon as it had become an art across the world

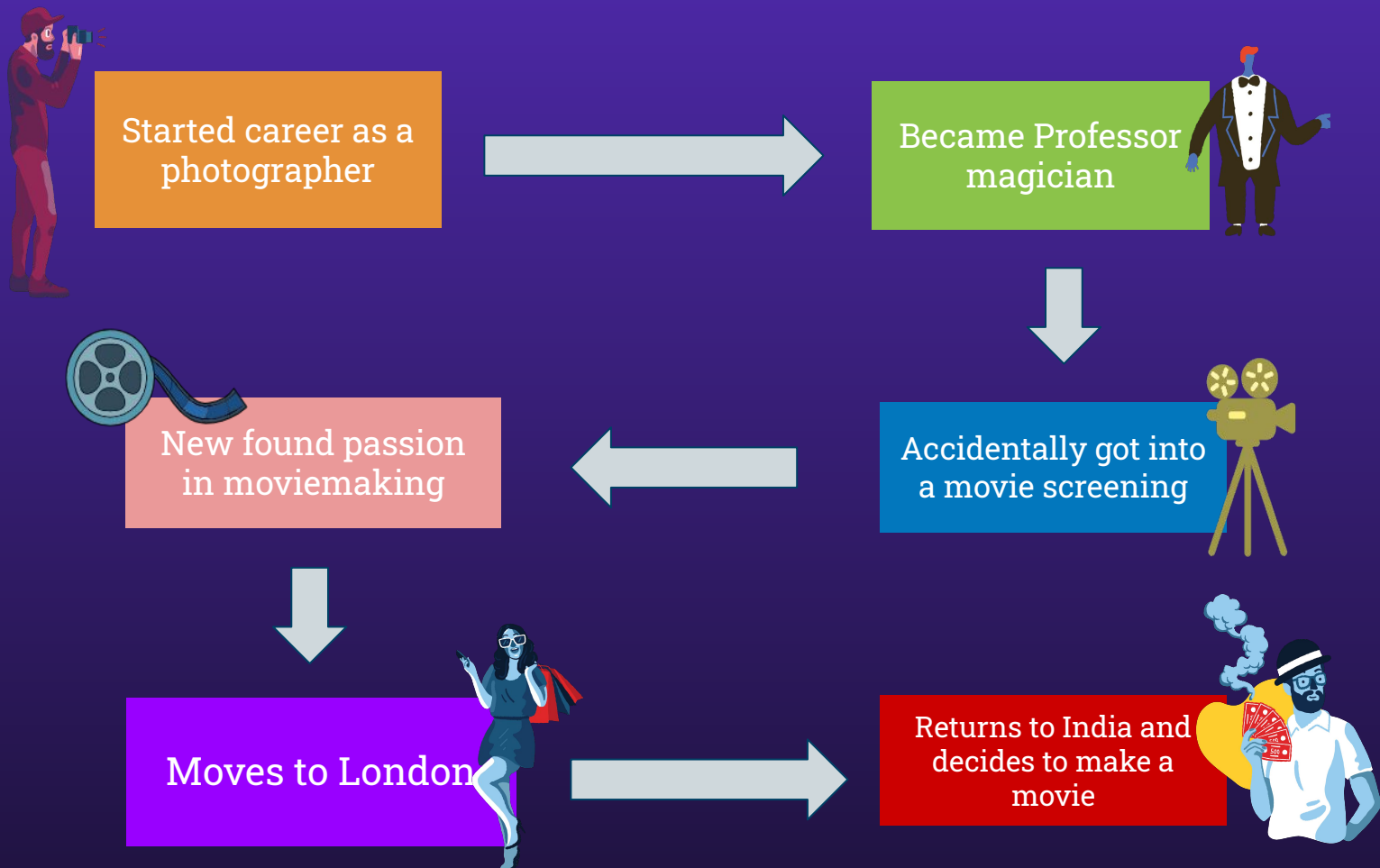
**Silent Era**

**Talkies**

**Golden Era**

**Modern Era**

# Story Time





**Dhundiraj Govind Phalke**  
(30 May 1870 - 16 February 1944)

# Making of Raja Harishchandra

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**No Financial aid:** No one was willing to loan Phalke any money since movies were never made in India before

→ Plant growth documentary  
(*Ankurachi Wadh*)

**No female actors**

**Uneducated Crowd**

- **Harishchandrachi Factory:** A Marathi movie that narrated the story of the making of the first feature film of India, Raja Harishchandra
- ◆ Focused on the brilliance of the legendary director Dadasaheb Phalke



# David A. Cook and his Orientalist views

- Describes the growth of Indian Film Industry
- Describes the audience as “unsophisticated, largely uneducated and impoverished”
- Calls Satyajit Ray as a contemporary who is talented enough to attain international stature
- Identified the problems that the industry could face when sound is introduced due to India being a land where multiple languages are spoken

# Parallel Cinema

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- The parallel cinema movement started in the 1950s as an alternative to the commercial movement
- Started in the Bengal Film Industry
- The parallel films are known for its realism, serious content
- The movement gained importance with important directors like Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen, Bimal Roy, Ritwik Ghatak etc
- The political ideology of a region or a filmmaker often influenced these films

# Mrinal Sen

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Mrinal Sen is accredited as being one of the founders of the Parallel cinema movement in the Bengal film industry. His movies earned him a reputation of being a Marxist artist.

Sen was inspired by Communist ideals and his movies are often famous for portraying communism. His movies were famous for being courageous and were said to bring social realities to the forefront. Sen's movies were different in the sense that instead of looking for the enemy outside, it looked for the enemy "within his own middle class society".

His movies were criticised for showing raw human suffering.



Noted Works:  
Interview, Ek Din Pratidin, Calcutta 71



# Neepa Majumdar

- Discussed gender roles and stardom in her book
- “Cultured woman” becoming the basis of female stardom in the movie industry
- Richard Dyer: *The idea of a star should not be communicated to the public through just performances, but also through off-screen information and interactions.*
- Neepa acknowledges the validity of the theory but at the same time discusses how in the early years of the film industry when the concept of “stardom” was born, people’s imagination was captured only through on-screen performances and nothing beyond.

# Corporatization

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## Studio System

- Film producers started adopting the studio system that had tasted success in Hollywood
- It was a factory oriented system for better management
- Studios have teams to take care of distribution, production etc.

## Star System

- Actors did not have contractual obligations to studios
- Actors were more like freelancers
- Caused several production issues including production delays and increased costs

# Corporatization

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- Industry status granted to film industry in 2001
- Production houses started involving corporates to secure money
- Standard accounting practices, business plans, targets and schedules started coming up
- **Deregularization of film screens:** Reduced stringency while opening of film screens, no regulation on ticket prices by the government
- **Deregularization of import:** New and better technology started coming in from abroad
- International studios like Walt Disney, Warner Bros. and Sony gained access to Indian markets to distribute their movies
- Marketing of films had come to the prime with over 30-40% of the budget utilised for the same

# Amit Khanna

- **Bollywood insider who wrote about corporatization of the industry**
- **Supported corporatization and holds optimistic views on the industry**
- **Spoke about Bombay Talkies, one of the earliest studios in Bollywood**
- **Introduction of songs and playback singers attaining stardom of their own**
- **Talks about monetization through digitalisation**
- **Believes online streaming services could help the industry by explaining the evolution of the techniques in filmmaking**

Thank You