

**Second World War
and
Hindi Cinema :
A Documentation**

Manoj Panjani
Research Associate
Doon Library & Research Centre

Doon Library & Research Centre
21 Parade Ground, Dehradun 248001
Phone: +91 135 2711485; Telefax: +91 135 2713065;
E-mail: doonlib@yahoo.co.in

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In 1993,I was asked to write a piece on film by a daily news paper and I thought of writing on the sentiments expressed in films with a Second World War backdrop. Since then this subject has fascinated me,For the past three or four years I have been trying to collect books on life during the Seond World War. As there are 50 autobiographies in my personal collection and a few more in the Doon Library,I sought permission from our director, Dr. B. K. Joshi to undertake a research project on the social history of the Second World War. The permission was granted. This monograph is a part of that project. My other colleagues in the Research Section of the library,namely Chandrashekhhar Tiwari and Sunder Singh Bisht helped me with the writing of this monograph.

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The period of the Second World War created a very complex situation in India. When the war began in September,1939 and the Government of India declared war on behalf of the Indian people there was resentment. India did not have any stake as the war at that time was predominantly a European war. The Congress Ministries in the provinces resigned in protest. The Indian National Congress demanded that they could support the War effort only if a commitment was made to grant Independence to India after the War was over. There was a massive recruitment drive for the Army. The British Indian Army which was approximately one lac fifty thousand strong was raised to twenty lac. That meant approximately eighteen lac and fifty thousand jobs for the middle classes. India supplied cloth and steel to the Allied forces. Many railway tracks were dismantled and sent to the Middle East. On the political front the stalemate continued. There were no signs of any rapprochement. Earlier as the war clouds loomed large over Europe,there was sympathy in India for the victims of Fascist aggression. In the Spanish Civil War some Indians like Mulk

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Raj Anand fought on the side of the Republicans. China was battling the Japanese at that time. A medical mission under the leadership of Dr. Atal was sent to China. But there was a political consensus that unless the British make a commitment to grant India Independence there was no question of Indian cooperation in the Allied War effort. The masses were getting restive. There was pressure on Gandhi to launch another mass movement. Gandhi was not inclined. Probably he was apprehensive because any mass movement could result in a communal riot. Communal parties like the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha did not have a mass base but they retained their relevance because of the manipulations of the British colonial state, They were supporting the war effort. Therefore, by that time communal forces of the extreme kind had struck roots

In 1940, Gandhi launched the Individual Satyagraha movement. A specially chosen individual would make a speech before the public asking them not to co-operate with the British war effort. The speech would be made after the speaker had informed the authorities about his intention to make the speech. After delivering the speech the person would be arrested. All over India a few thousand persons were arrested.

However, when Japan entered the war in December, 1941, the situation changed. Within four months the Japanese had conquered Burma and were on the door step of India. President Roosevelt urged upon Winston Churchill to make a settlement with the Indian National Congress. The Cripps Mission was sent to India with that purpose. The mission was sent with the sole purpose of buying time.

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Churchill was sure that the Japanese would not attack India during the monsoon. The huge increase in the size of the Indian army could suppress any mass movement launched by the Congress. The Cripps mission failed and the Congress launched the Quit India movement on 9th August, 1942. For the last three years the colonial government was prepared to face any such eventuality. Congress leaders from all over the country were arrested within a few days. Within two weeks overtly speaking the movement was suppressed. Processions and meetings were subjected to firing by the police and army. 57 army battalions were used to suppress the movement. Despite that the movement was kept afloat in the distant parts of the country. Parallel governments functioned in Satara (Maharashtra), Midnapore (West-Bengal) and Ballia (Eastern UP). Eastern UP, Bihar, Orissa, Bengal, Assam and the Bombay Presidency were the areas where the movement was effective. Government property and institutions like post offices, police stations, tehsil and taluqa head quarters, railway lines and telegraph wires were the targets of the agitators.

India served as an important base for the war against the Japanese in South-East Asia. The Fourth Indian Division was a part of the formation which marched from the Middle East to North-Africa and through the Mediterranean into Italy. The Fourth Indian Division had a role in the liberation of Italy. P. S. Bhagat, who was with the Fourth Indian Division, won a Victoria Cross. The hugely expanded British Indian Army, which was stationed in India, went into action against the Japanese only in early 1944, when the Japanese attacked Imphal. Lord Mountbatten, as the Supreme Allied

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Commander in South-East Asia had a plan to liberate Burma through a naval operation. Plans were being made when the Japanese invaded the Indian frontier. The Indian army was used for suppressing the Quit India movement. In order to serve the requirement of the army all boats which were the main means of transport in Bengal were commandeered by the army. This was one of the reasons for the Bengal Famine, which has been described as an essentially a man-made tragedy. This tragedy took place because of the presence of a large army. During the war many people made a fortune through corrupt practices like hoarding and black marketing.

Subhash Chandra Bose, had assumed a larger than life image by his heroic act of escaping from his Calcutta home where he was placed under house arrest. He escaped to Afghanistan first and then he went to Russia and from there to Germany where he was granted political asylum. After the Japanese entered the war he came to Japan from Austria in a submarine. From Japan he went to Singapore where he organized the Indian National Army from amongst the Indian Army personnel who were captured by the Japanese when the British army surrendered in Singapore in early 1942. It was an effort on his part to liberate India with the help of the Japanese. The Indians in the British Indian Army not only fought against the Japanese but against the Indian National Army also.

India's role in winning the war against the Japanese in South-East Asia and even against the Axis powers in Europe has been very significant in terms of men and material both. However, in the nationalist discourse, because

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of the factors mentioned above, the role of India in the war could not be glorified. Though India did benefit by participating in the Allied war effort. Sterling balances due to India were not scaled down by the Labour government in Great Britain.

Now let us analyze as to how Hindi cinema saw the phenomenon of the Second World War. Indian cinema as it evolved as a business in the initial stages was organized on the lines of the studio system just like the US. The studios were not just the premises where films were shot, edited and processed. The owners of the studios employed artistes and technicians. The artiste or a technician on the pay roll of one particular studio could not work for another. Film studios in those days were dispersed all over the country. In Bombay there was Bombay Talkies, Wadia Movietone, Minerva Movietone and Imperial Film Company which produced the first talkie film in India, Alamara, in 1931, in Pune there was the Prabhat Film Company, while in Calcutta, there was New Theatres, in Lahore there was the Pancholi Studio and there was the Gemini and A V M Studio in Madras. Ashok Kumar was on the pay roll of Bombay Talkies while K L Saigal was on the pay roll of New Theatres. It is said that many people who made a fortune during the war invested their money in films posing a challenge to the studio system. The studio system collapsed within five years of the end of the Second World War. Instead of the Studio owners you had independent producers. The studios became mere premises where films were shot, edited and processed. By paying rent anybody could shoot his film in any studio.

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Indian cinema evolved during the period when the struggle for independence had intensified. The leadership of the Indian Nationalist Movement had a vision of what is going to be the shape of Indian society, polity and economy after independence. Social issues formed a very important component of the ideology of the nationalist movement. Many films made in the 1930's like Achut Kanya(1936), Duniya Na Mane(1937), Thyag Bhoomi(1939, Tamil), Aadmi(1940) and Naya Sansar(1941) dealt with social issues. Niranjan Pal , son of the famous nationalist leader Bipin Chandra Pal, was the story writer in Bombay Talkies. Because of strict censorship political subjects were taboo. Sohrab Modi, the proprietor of Minerva Movietone used tales from Ancient and Medieval India to sing glories for the great Indian culture. Films like Prithvi Ballabh(1937), Sikander(1941) and Pukar(1943) belonged to this genre. There were stunt films also which used to be patronized by the proletariat. These Nadia-John Cowas starrers had special theatres where the ticket price was slightly less and had unusual titles like Hunterwali, Punjab Mail ki Beti and Frontier Mail.

In 1943, the Bombay Talkies produced Kismet, starring Ashok Kumar-Mumtaz Shanti. This film combined the genres of social and stunt films. Ashok Kumar has gone on record to say that some people on the staff of the Bombay Talkies felt that there was something wrong with the way films were being made in India. Especially the way one scene followed another. A book on screenplay writing by Francis Marian was purchased from the U.S. Kismet was the first film which could be called a crime thriller. The protagonist of the film was a boy from a respectable family who runs away from the house

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because of a stepmother and becomes a thief. In the end he is re-united with his family. The film had everything-action,romance,dances,comedy,the standard ingredients which make what one calls a commercial film. Many persons worked on the screenplay of the film-Ashok Kumar,Sadat Hasan Manto,Shashadhar Mukherjee,Shahid Lateef and Ismat Chughtai. The film was directed by Gyan Mukherjee,an M Sc in Physics from Allahabad University. He was supposed to do PhD under Prof Meghnad Saha. However,he was offered a job in Bombay Talkies by Shashadhar Mukherjee,who happened to be his relative.

Kismet could be called the first blockbuster of Indian cinema. At the Roxy theatre in Bombay it had a three year run. One interpretation of this phenomenon was that the War made the middle class prosperous. They had money to spend on their entertainment so they saw this film again and again. People of that generation say that it was very difficult to get tickets for that film.

During the Second World War like everything else there was rationing on film raw stock. The length of a film could not exceed 11,000 feet. The reel length of Kismet was exceeding the limit of 11,000 feet by 250 feet. The rules could be relaxed if the film did war propoganda for the Allies. There were two scenes which could be said to be doing war propoganda for the allies. There is one scene where a news paper vendor is shouting aaj ki taaza khabar. One news is that a notorius thief has been apprehended and the other is that the Allied forces have landed in Africa. The other instance of war propoganda iin the film is actually nationalist propoganda. There was a song penned by Kavi Pradeep;

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Aaj Himalaya ki Choti se Phir Hamne Lalkara Hai,
Door Hato Ai Duniya Walon,Hindustan Hamara Hai,
Yahan Hamara Taj Mahal Hai aur Qutub Minaara Hai,
Yahan Hamaare Mandir Masjid,Sikhon ka Gurdwara Hai,

It is only the last two lines of the song,tum na kisi ke aage jhukna,German ho ya Japani,that there is some hint of propaganda for the Allies. People perceived this song as a patriotic song. People believed that the authorities had been fooled by the film maker.

In 1943 the position of the British government in India was in a vulnerable position. It was faced with a mass movement on one hand and a war on the Indian frontier on the other. Therefore,it was compelled to overlook such minor aberrations. Another example was the career of writer Nabendu Ghosh. He worked as a clerk in the office of the Inspector General of Police in Patna. This office was located in the premises of the Patna Secretariat. During the Quit India movement there was an effort to hoist the tricolour flag on the secretariat building. The police resorted to firing resulting in the death of many. Inspired by this incident Nabendu Ghosh wrote a novel in Bengali,Dak Diye Jayee. The novel contained graphic descriptions of the atrocities committed by the British authorities. As was the practice in those days the novel was serialized in a magazine. The C I D officials some of whom were known to Nabendu Ghosh personally warned him to tone down his descriptions of the atrocities otherwise they will be compelled to take action against him. He decided to resign and subsequently he got another job. That was in the office of the Eastern Command. He could not be confirmed

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as the police report said that he was a seditious writer. N K Sinha, who later on was superseded for the appointment as Chief of the Army Staff in 1983, had participated in a few demonstrations during the Quit India movement. He was also recruited in the Army as an Emergency Commissioned Officer.

One year after the end of the war that is in 1946, two films, namely, Dharti ke Lal and Dr Kotnis ki Amar Kahani, with a Second World War backdrop were released. The former was made by Khwaja Ahmed Abbas and the latter was made by V Shantaram. Khwaja Ahmed Abbas started his career as a journalist. He used to review films for Bombay Chronicle. Later on he got a break in films as a writer in Naya Sansar, produced by the Bombay Talkies and starred Ashok Kumar and Renuka Devi. The theme of this film was corruption in the municipality. Dr Kotnis ki Amar Kahani was also written by Khwaja Ahmed Abbas.

Based on the Bengal Famine, Dharti ke Lal was based on a play by Bijon Bhattacharya. The Khwaja Ahmed Abbas directed film was written by Krishen Chander, Bijon Bhattacharya and Abbas himself. The Indian Peoples Theatre Association could be said to be the cultural wing of the Communist Party of India. The Communist Party of India remained banned for a considerable length of time. It maintained its presence through certain front organizations like the All India Trade Union Congress, the All India Students Federation and the Progressive Writers Association. In June 1941, when the Soviet Union entered the war on the side of the Allies, the Second World War which for the Communists till then was an imperialist war became a peoples war. The ban on the party was lifted and during the war years the

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Communist Party of India was able to expand its influence. It took up the issue of British atrocities during the Quit India movement. It did a lot of relief work during the Bengal famine. Dharti ke Lal had all its artistes and technicians from the Indian Peoples Theatre Association . The plot of the film revolved around the exploitation of the common people by the hoarders of grain. The bulk of the population of Bengal starved while the grain traders amassed wealth.

V Shantaram had established his reputation by making films with a social purpose, like Amrit Manthan(1934), Duniya na Mane(1937) and Aadmi(1941). In 1941, he had left the Prabhat Studios in Pune and had come to Bombay and established Rajkamal Studios over there. After the end of the war he made Dr Kotnis ki Amar Kahani. Dr Kotnis was a part of the medical mission to China led by Dr Atal. Before the war began in Europe, China was facing aggression from Japan. There was resistance to the Japanese aggression. The Indian medical mission was sent with the purpose of assisting the resistance. The terrain was tough. Apart from resisting the Japanese one had to battle disease too. While he was in China he heard the news of the demise of his father. His colleagues suggested that he should return to India. However, he felt that the best way to commemorate the memory of his father was to assist the Chinese people in the resistance to Japan. From February, 1939, till his death in December, 1942, he worked with the soldiers of the Eighth Route Army.

The film made in 1946 documented the life of Dr Kotnis in China. The story of a doctor in the prime of his youth fighting the forces of fascism in an alien land away from his

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family had the potential of firing the imagination of the audience. The role of Dr Kotnis was essayed by V Shantaram himself. The role of the Chinese nurse, who married Dr Kotnis was played by Jaishree, wife of V Shantaram. Independence was near but it had still not come. One could not make a film on the nationalist movement. However, the deeds and sacrifice of Dr Kotnis in a foreign land could arouse nationalist enthusiasm.

In 1948, Bimal Roy made a film, *Pehla Aadmi*, based on the Indian National Army. Bimal Roy had started as a cameraman with New-Theatres. He gained fame when a film made by him, titled, *Udayar Pathe* in Bengali was a huge success. Police had to wield lathis to control crowds wanting to see the film. This film was remade as *Hamrahi* in Hindi. *Pehla Aadmi* was made while Bimal Roy was still in Calcutta. The story of *Pehla Aadmi* was penned by Nazir Hussain, who had been with the Indian National Army. The film had on its cast roster actual persons who had served in the Indian National Army.

In 1945, the British government in India decided to prosecute the officers and soldiers who had served in the Indian National Army. The trials were to take place in the Red Fort. The INA trials aroused tremendous anger among the masses. There were demonstrations all over the country and the slogan 'lal kile se aayee awaz, Sehgal, Dhillon, Shah Nawaz' could be heard all over. Shah Nawaz Khan, Gurbakhshish Singh Dhillon and Prem Kumar Sehgal were the prime accused in the case. It was in the fitness of things, therefore, that a film glorifying the role of the Indian National Army should be made after India had become Independent.

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In 1950, there was another film based on the Indian National Army, *Samadhi* starring Ashok Kumar-Nalini Jaywant. This film was produced by Filmistan Studios, which had earlier produced the Dilip Kumar-Kamini Kaushal starrer *Shaheed*. *Shaheed* was released immediately after Independence. It was directed by Ramesh Saigal, who later on directed *Samadhi*. *Samadhi* was the story of two brothers who were in the army. The drama in the film came from the fact that one brother is on the side of the British and the other has joined the INA. The purpose of this film was also the glorification of the INA. These films had been released immediately after Independence. It is ironic that Dr Kotnis was eulogised for participating in the resistance against the Japanese and the soldiers of the Indian National Army for siding with the Japanese.

The next film made with the second world war backdrop was *Hum Dono*, produced by Dev Anand's banner Navketan Films. This was not a war film. The Second World War was merely a backdrop. It was a romantic film, a story of two look alike army officers. The story was written by Nirmal Sircar. Sircar was the neighbour of Prem Prakash, an assistant director in the Navketan unit. Prem Prakash introduced Nirmal Sarkar to Dev Anand with the story of *Hum Dono*. Dev Anand, who was born on 23rd September, 1923 had seen the period of the Second World War

In his autobiography, *Romancing Life*, published in 2007, he has written,

“Man killing man. It's been there through the ages from the ancient ages to the very present, a time no less barbaric. . I have seen and heard and read about it all, from as far

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back as I can remember. It had happened in 1942,when the Second World War was ravaging the world and India was fighting for its independence from the British.
. Mahatma Candhi had given the clarion call,commanding the Englishmen to Quit India. The British in turn had sent their tommies into the streets with tommy guns and rifles. The peaceful Indian 'satyagrahis' were filling the jails in numbers,while the agitating nationalists resisting oppression were facing bullets outside. ”

Dev Anand had done his graduation from Government College,Lahore in 1943. He wanted to do his Masters from that institution and then go to England for further studies and be a part of an elite group of Indians. However,his father did not have the resources to educate his third son any further. He had applied for a commission in the Royal Indian Navy but was rejected on the ground that his eldest brother ,Manmohan Anand was in the Congress. He came to Bombay in that year itself. In Bombay he got a job in the Military Censor's office. The letters which the soldiers and officers wrote to their family members and beloveds were censored. Any information given about their position or the position of the enemy or war strategy was to be censored. In an interview given to this writer,Dev Anand said that certain details about army life on the war front were inspired by those letters. Those inputs were given to Goldie(Vijay Anand),who wrote the screenplay and dialogues of the film.

Hum Dono could not be called a war film. It was the story of two look alike army officers. One could say that the film had a Second World War backdrop. Dev Anand had a double role. One was an emrgency commissioned officer and

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the other had the rank of a major who had joined the army before the war had begun. The difference was obvious through the body language of the two officers. The battle scenes in the film were supervised by one Montgomere Kee, who had been a colonel with the British Indian Army. . In the film there are references to the adverse impact of war on the lives of many.

There is a scene in which the major says;

“Agar tumhe maloom ho to batao, who kaun si taqat hai jo hamein bandook uthane par majboor karti hai, jabki ham jaante hain ki jang buri hai, nafrat buri hai, hinsa buri hai, pet ki aag, desh se pyaar, ya shohrat ki bhookh, ya hamari insaanियat jo haiwaniyat ka muqabla karne ke liye hamare kandhon par bandook daal deti hai, insaan apne andar ke lohe ko c hamkane ke liye aamada rahta hai, lekin woh bhool jaata hai ke hum jaise logon ke ghar mein ek ma hai, ek biwi hai ek premika hai. ”(If you know then tell me that what is the force which compels us to pick up the gun, even when we all know that war is bad, violence is bad, hatred is bad. Is it for his daily bread, is it for the honour of the country or his own personal honour. or our goodness which forces us to challenge the evil. War takes place because of the conceit of certain powerful individuals, who forget that the people who fight for them have a mother, a wife or a beloved waiting for them.)The character was probably referring to Hitler, Mussolini and Tojo who had forced war on the people.

The mothers of the two look alike army officers get very upset when their sons have to go on the war front. Infact the mother of the younger officer dies of anxiety. There is a

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scene where the elder officer has received a letter from his wife. In the letter it is mentioned that his mother organized a prayer for him at home. She believes that no one returns from the war alive and in case he does so he does not return in one piece. The film has a devotional song;

Allah tero nam,ishwar tero naam,sabko sammati de bhagwan,

O saare jag ke rakhwale,nirbal ko bal dene wale,balwaanon ko de de gyan

The devotional song is making a plea to the almighty to instill in the minds of the powerful some sense so they do not make war. The producer of the film has seen the days of the war. He had some direct experience when in the office of the military censor he could read the feelings of those army men who were involved in war. In certain portions of the film anti-war sentiments were articulated.

In 1967,there was a film with the title of Aman. The protagonist of the film was a doctor who went to Japan,to treat those patients who were suffering from the after effects of the Hiroshima bombing. In this film Lord Bertrand Russel made an appearance. The film starts with a scene of refugees being evacuated from Burma after the Japanese had captured it. The family of the protagonist is one of the evacuees. He is sitting on the shoulders of a family servant and his parents are walking with grim faces. There is constant bombardment from the air. During the bombardment his mother dies. The second world war ended with the use of the atom bomb. The protagonist of the film goes to study medicine in England and after completing his studies goes

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to meet Lord Bertrand Russel to seek his blessings before going to Japan.

Though made by a commercial film maker,the film was realistic. The hospital scenes about the condition of the patients were heart wrenching. One patient has lost her hair and looks like a 60 year old,when actually she is thirty years younger. There is one professor who has lost his appetite,there is a factory worker who lost his eyesight because of radiation and finally there is a young girl,who was in her mother's womb when the bombing took place. The film ends in a tragedy when the protagonist has to rescue some persons who live on a island where some radiation has taken place from the debris of the bomb. He dies as a result.

As he is dying he gives a message that God has made this earth beautiful,our duty is to make the earth more beautiful,see to it that a time should not come when nothing will be left on this earth,God is going to shed tears of blood and there will be no one to wipe them.

Mohan Kumar,the producer-director of the film had started out as a maker of socially relevant films. In 1961 he made Aas ka Panchi,which spoke against thrusting your wishes on your children regarding their career options or forcing a career on your child for which he may not have the right aptitude. This film was directed by him for his friend and co-brother J Om Prakash. His next film was Anpadh which gave the message that the best dowry one can give to one's daughter is education. This film was also produced by him in partnership with another friend of his,Rajendra Bhatia. His third film as a writer –director was produced by his own

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banner,Emkay Films. This film was Aapki Parcaiyaan, starring Dharmendra and Supriya Chaudhari. The theme was children not taking care of their parents. Aman was the second film made by his exclusive banner. Colour films were making their appearance in India. Black and White and colour films continued to be made in India simultaneously for a decade. Serious films were to be made in black and white while those made in colour were supposed to be romantic musicals to be shot in Kashmir. Mohan Kumar in between made one such film for J Om Prakash, namely, Aayee Milan ki Bela in 1966.

When he made Aman, he had barely established himself as a producer-director. In those days because of the foreign exchange crunch it was very expensive to shoot abroad. Just to shoot an interview with Lord Bertrand Russel he went to Wales. Some scenes were shot in London also and bulk of the shooting took place in Japan. Other films shot on foreign locales at that time like, Sangam, Love in Tokyo, An Evening in Paris and Around the World were romantic musicals or had commercially viable subjects. But to spend so much money on a subject like atomic weapons and its disastrous consequences was an extremely courageous step coming from a 32 year old film-maker. It showed how strongly as a society India felt about the issue of nuclear weapons and war as such.

Mohan Kumar says that he was deeply influenced by the writings of leaders like Nehru and Bertrand Russel on the subject and wanted that such tragedies like the one which took place in Hiroshima should not recur. Before starting shooting, he along with his writer Ranjan Bose had visited Japan and the peace park at Hiroshima. The film unit

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received the whole hearted co-operation from the Japanese, who were touched by the fact that they had come from thousands of miles away to share their sorrow. The film was a commercial disaster despite having popular artistes like Rajendra Kumar, Saira Banu and Balraj Sahani.

In 1972, another film with a Second World War backdrop was released. It was made by Ramanand Sagar. Actually this film was made under duress. The film maker wanted to make a film on the 1965, Indo-Pak war. But one of the conditions of the Tashkent Agreement signed between Lal Bahadur Shastri and Field Marshal Ayub Khan was that there would be no propaganda against each other through the media. Since the film had been announced and as it happens with a successful producer the distributors had paid advances, so the film could not be shelved. So he decided to make a film with a second world war backdrop. The film is the story of two brothers, one in the air force and the other in the army.

The film begins with a conversation between the two sons and their father who was a retired army colonel. The younger son is mischievous and the elder one sober. His father reprimands him for resorting to lies which is not the appropriate conduct of a soldier of the Indian army. He says that he is an officer in the army of the British and their rule is based on lies and falsehoods. The day India becomes independent and he becomes an Indian soldier he will stop telling lies. The father says that an army man should not have anything to do with politics. At that point the elder brother says why not. Nothing is going to come out from civil agitation. The day army men start talking about politics the

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British will be compelled to grant independence to India.

The father says that if this is what he thinks then how is he going to fight on the Burma front. The son says that Burma front is a different issue as the Japanese are entrenched on the Indian border. The resources of England are being used in saving its own house in Europe. Therefore, the responsibility to save the Indian frontier from Japanese aggression rests on people like him. He and many others like him are not fighting for the British but for their own motherland. Though not referred to in the film, the fact was that the British had capitulated meekly in Malaya and Singapore. Therefore, they could not be depended upon to save India from the Japanese aggression.

So 27 years after the end of the war one can say that the dilemma of those in the army during the war was explained. Ramanand Saagar, born in 1915, had seen the war days. He belonged to Punjab, which formed the backbone of the British Indian Army before the war. It was only during the war that the British were forced to extend their catchment area to parts other than Punjab. One could say that he had some personal experience of the situation of that time. Before joining films Ramanand Saagar was well known in the Urdu literary circles. He had gained fame with his work, *T B Patient ki Diary*, published in 1936. His Partition novel *Aur Insaan Mar Gaya* is regarded as a classic. His film career started as a writer with *Barsaat*, produced and directed by Raj Kapoor. For a decade and a half he wrote many films, mainly for S S Vassan's Gemini studios. He became a director with *Ghunghat* in the early sixties and got established as a producer-director with block buster films

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like Aarzo and Aankhen. The former was a romantic film and the later an espionage drama

There are a couple of scenes in the mess which show no interaction between the young British officers and their Indian counterparts. In one shot a British officer is fiddling with his neck tie. On being asked by an Indian major, he says that he was trying the Indian ropetrick. A mood of gloom and despair associated with a world at war is expressed in a song;

aaj ga lo muskura lo, mehfilein saja lo, na jaane kal koi
sathi choot jaaye,

jeevan ki dor, badi kamzor, yaron jeevan ki dor badi
kamzor, kisko khabar

hai kahan toot jaaye

The line jeevan ki dor badi kamzor was sung with gusto. The second stanza of the song reads as follows;

jang aur nafrat bhare is jahan mein, mohobbat ka koyee
chalan chod jao,

yaad mein koyee bahaye do aansoo kisi dil mein aisi
lagan chod jao, hai

yaaron mein kitni wafa azma lo

The underlying idea is that the chances of any soldier surviving a war are very slim. Very similar to the fear of the mothers of the two look alike army officers. The line jang aur nafrat bhare is jahan mein, mohobbat ka koyee chalan chod jao, talks about the necessity of romantic love in a world ravaged by war.

Lalkar was made in 1972, ignoring the INA factor was possible. The war had thrown up many situations. Each

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situation could be the subject of a film. When one of the two protagonists says in the beginning of the film that he was not fighting for the British but for his motherland; it showed that those Indians who were fighting against the Japanese were not necessarily renegades. There are references in the film about some local tribals assisting the Japanese. They were giving information about the movements of the British Indian Army and the activities of the Air Force.

The war affected Hindi cinema in many ways. It dealt a death blow to the studio system. Because of the war, nationalist propaganda was disguised as war propaganda. Immediately after the war a film was made to honour a hero who had gone to China to help the Chinese to resist Japanese aggression and another film was made to document the Bengal Famine, which took place because of the war. Immediately after Independence there were two films made to glorify the Indian National Army and finally anti-war sentiments were expressed in the three films made subsequently.

Anti war sentiments have also been expressed in the films made on the Indo-China and Indo-Pak wars. The films make it clear that as a nation we are peace loving people but if the enemy country attacks us we no how to reply. In J P Dutta's *Border*, released in 1997 and *LOC*, released in 2003, the loss of human lives during war is lamented in the songs at the end of both films. In Farhan Akhtar's *Lakshya*, written by Javed Akhtar and released in 2004, one character says, *jung buri hai yeh baat ek Fauji se achcha aur koi nahin samajhta*.

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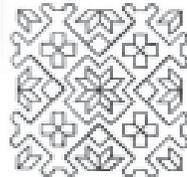
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Manoj Panjani

(Research Associate)

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Film Studio



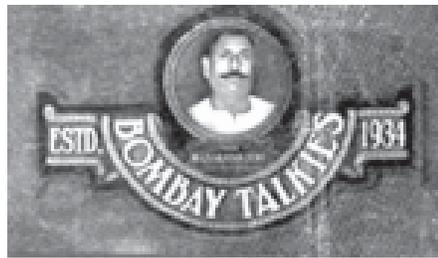
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