



National Film Archive of India

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
Government of India

Interview of Assistant Cinematographer Nanasaheb Ponkshe

Interviewer : Ok, Mr. Ponkshe Namaskar.

Ponkshe : Namaskar

Interviewer : Now tell me how many years are you in the Film Industry?

Ponkshe : I am 45 years in this Film Industry.

Interviewer : I see...

Ponkshe : From 1935..from the end of 1934. From 1934 to 1976 I am in this Film Industry.

Interviewer : When you entered the movies did you have any prior experience?

Ponkshe : No, there was no experience at all.

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : I left education, meaning I failed in Matriculation.

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : And then after that 'Balwant musical play' a company became Balwant Picture Corporation was started. By Chintamanrao Kolhatkar and Master Dinanath

Mangeshkar and they started a film called Krishnarjun Yuddha . I joined that as an apprentice.

Interviewer : Ok...As apprentice what were the responsibilities?

Ponkshe : My responsibility as an apprentice at that time was to pick up the camera and place it wherever they would tell. Rest to observe from a distance what they were doing. That was the education at that time, to observe from a distance.

Interviewer : Who was the chief photographer at that time?

Ponkshe : One Niyogi was the chief photographer.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : That was Niyogi. There was one Dattaram Deshpande as an assistant with him.

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : And Anna Bhat was the supervisor.

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : That was the experience there. Vishram Bedekar was the Director.

Interviewer : Yes..Yes...

Ponkshe : Of that film.

Interviewer : Krishnarjun Yuddh that film which was made, was Krishnath taken from the play?

Ponkshe : No, no. That was a new script by Bedekar.

Interviewer : Was by Bedekar.

Ponkshe : Yes, his own.

Interviewer : Now tell us about its experience. Bedekar's direction, by what method the shooting was done.

Ponkshe : Bedekar. At that time Bedekar also did not have much experience because he had not taken any training anywhere.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : But he was attentive and by nature, he was intelligent and had very good sense. Bhat had a little knowledge so he directed the film with the help of Bhat. And being an author himself he had a good sense of story.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : Having a sense of how the director is he got the work done and at that time the day system was followed so shooting took place only in daytime.

Interviewer : Now you are in this business from 1935, so you will be having knowledge of the technical progress. So tell me something about how was the progress initially, how shooting used to take place.

Ponkshe : Initially the method was that the trial shot etc., which is done nowadays

Interviewer : Yes..

Ponkshe : The zoom lenses etc.. meaning keeping the camera at one place and stretching by zoom lenses, that was not there at that time, that system was not there.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : Because of that the movie had to be made in many small shots.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : At that time trolley shooting was not much done because the wheels of the trolley were of steel. They used to make noise, so trolley shooting was not much done.

Interviewer : Ok.. and can you tell how the light arrangement was done?

Ponkshe : All lighting arrangement was made during.

Interviewer : Yes..

Ponkshe : There were white screens in the studio

Interviewer : Yes..

Ponkshe : Reflected light came through it downwards and the empty space outside the studio was used to take the sunlight in by mirrors.

Interviewer : Yes..

Ponkshe : On the reflectors and the reflectors directed the light on the faces of the artists and work was carried on by that. So there were limitations in working because the direction of the sun changed continuously.

Interviewer : Changed continuously

Ponkshe : So as the direction of the sun kept on changing it became difficult for me at the end.

Interviewer : But how come good results were obtained with that?

Ponkshe : The lenses were good.

Interviewer : This was tedious work.

Ponkshe : Tedious work.

Interviewer : Means due to constant changes in the lighting.

Ponkshe : Lighting changed constantly because by the time everything was arranged, the direction of the sun changed. So the lighting had to be changed again.

Interviewer : Ok...Ok..

Ponkshe : Because of this it was somewhat tedious.

Interviewer : Balwant party, was it started at Sangli?

Ponkshe : In Sangli..Behind Gandharva Hotel lane.

Interviewer : Then who were the owners of the Balwant party, Chintamanrao Janardan

Ponkshe : Janardhan...Two owners.

Interviewer : Then initially films made were Thakiche Lagna and Satyache Prayog.

Ponkshe : Yes...means after Krishnarjun Yuddha.

Interviewer : Yes. Thakiche Lagna was made after that

Ponkshe : That film was made in 1937.

Interviewer : Ok..Now secondly, was Krishnarjuna Yuddha well done?

Ponkshe : Not well done.

Interviewer : Not done

Ponkshe : Not at all

Interviewer : Was it very ordinary

Ponkshe : It was in Hindi and Marathi

Interviewer : Yes..Yes..

Ponkshe : But since it was a flop it was a big loss.

Interviewer : Will you tell me who were the actors in it.

Ponkshe : In it Bal....Gokhale...

Interviewer : I know...

Ponkshe : And a woman called Balabai from Belgaon.

Interviewer : Was there.

Ponkshe : And Dinanathrao was there.

Interviewer : Whose role did he play?

Ponkshe : Some sanyasi or something like that.

Interviewer : And who played the role of Arjun

Ponkshe : The person playing Arjun was someone from the company itself.

Interviewer : Ok...Yes...

Ponkshe : Yes..It was he.

Interviewer : Did he do that?

Ponkshe : He did.

Interviewer : Ganpatrao Mohite was in that

Ponkshe : Ganpatrao Mohite was there.

Interviewer : Yes..

Ponkshe : He was Narad.

Interviewer : Damu Anna was doing something wasn't he?

Ponkshe : He played some jokers role.

Interviewer : He did.

Ponkshe : He did.

Interviewer : Ok..Ok..

Ponkshe :

Interviewer : Chintamanrao did not act?

Ponkshe : Chintamanrao did not act.

Interviewer : Did not act means do you know how many days Krishnarjun Yuddha did run, do you know?

Ponkshe : The shooting of Krishnarjun Yuddha did take a lot of time.

Interviewer : How many days?

Ponkshe : It took about one and half years and because it took a lot of time, a lot of expenses were incurred on the movie.

Interviewer : Yes...Yes...

Ponkshe : And because of that the film incurred a loss.

Interviewer : So Dinanath and Chantamanrao got into financial difficulties.

Ponkshe : Got into difficulties, in severe difficulties.

Interviewer : Ok, then which films did you make? Thakiche Lagna, Satyache Prayog.

Ponkshe : Thakiche Lagna, Satyache Prayog.

Interviewer : So both Bedekars

Ponkshe : Both movies did well. That was a joint film so they did well.

Interviewer : Ok..Ok..

Ponkshe : Satyache Prayog did ok means did not incur losses.

Interviewer : Did not. Satyache Prayog and Damu Anna Malwankar played Chimanrao in that.

Ponkshe : Yes.. played Chimanrao.

Interviewer : So in your opinion, Chimanrao was first brought by Bedekar.

Ponkshe : Bedekar did.

Interviewer : Damu Anna

Ponkshe : Damu Anna was first introduced by Visharam Bedekar and brought Sanshaywadi

Interviewer : Yes ...that Sanshaywadi was introduced

Ponkshe : What Sanshaywadi says now, Vinayakrao Damu Anna

Interviewer : No..No..Not like that

Ponkshe : That is false before that was introduced by.-----

Interviewer : I had so many...Satyache Prayog and Thakiche Lagna were first social and opposing

Ponkshe : Yes..Yes...First.

Interviewer : He did it later, Vilas did it later.

Ponkshe : The credit of the first Marathi social film goes to Bedekar.

Interviewer : So you should get the acknowledgement that you had a big contribution in the making of the first social movie.

Ponkshe : Yes..Yes..

Interviewer : Thakiche Lagna has a very important place in the History of Cinema.

Ponkshe : Yes...Yes...

Interviewer : What is the reason?

Ponkshe : In Marathi, no one did social movies. No one had the courage to do them and did not do them. First Bedekar did, then Vinayak

Interviewer :

Ponkshe : Many...Many...

Interviewer : Thakiche Lagna was the first social film was made in Marathi. It was directed by Bedekar.

Ponkshe : Yes...Bedekar did.

Interviewer : So it's production...

Ponkshe : This was done under the name of Bedekar Productions.

Interviewer : It came under the name of Bedekar Productions. And did you get the contribution as a cameraman or as a colleague?

Ponkshe : Yes....Yes...

Interviewer : So historically yours...the movie that was made, you were in it.

Ponkshe : Yes....I was there.

Interviewer : Ok..After Thakiche Lagna and Satyache Prayog which movie got made?

Ponkshe : After that, we made a Hindi movie called Andheri Duniya.

Interviewer : Ok...Well...Tell us its story.

Ponkshe : Of the Hindi movie, it was a story by Krishnabai Mote.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : Krishnabai Mote's story and Bedekar was director.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : Kolhatkar acted in that.

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : Parshuram Samant was there, Baburao Gokhale was there.

Interviewer : I see..

Ponkshe : And the mother of this Chandrakant Gokhale..

Interviewer : Kamlabai

Ponkshe : Kamlabai Gokhale was there in the film.

Interviewer : Was Prema Borkar there?

Ponkshe : Prema Borkar probably came in Pundlik.

Interviewer : She came.

Ponkshe : She came in Bhakt Pundlik.

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : Means after this Andheri Duniya, Bhakt Pundlik.

Interviewer : Bhakt Pundlik came

Ponkshe : So in that Prema Borkar and Ganpatrao Mohite. Hariraj

Interviewer : Hariraj

Ponkshe : Was the hero.

Interviewer : Ok...Can you tell us about Andheri Duniya. It is said that it was a good story.

Ponkshe : Yes.. A worker is working in a mill.

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : And at that time the situation was that Pathans used to lend money to mill workers.

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : And they charged exorbitant interest.

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : That was its focus

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : Those people, those mill workers had borrowed money from the Pathan.

Interviewer : Yes..ok..

Ponkshe : And to recover that loan, that Pathan was standing at the mill gate on salary day to demand money.

Interviewer : Hmm...Ok..

Ponkshe : And those people had defaulted in their promises one or two times.

Interviewer : Hmm...Hmm...

Ponkshe : Because of circumstances. And on the third time, on the way that led to his house.

Interviewer : Hmm...ok.

Ponkshe : On a bridge on that way, this Pathan was sitting.

Interviewer : Hmm...Hmm...

Ponkshe : And started demanding money there. There was a quarrel and in that the Pathan was killed at the hands of this worker. Murdered means he fell down from the bridge.

Interviewer : Fell..

Ponkshe : He was killed in the fight, and there was a warrant against him.

Interviewer : Hmm..Hmm...

Ponkshe : So the police took him from his hut in front of his wife and children.

Interviewer : Yes..

Ponkshe : And he was sentenced to fourteen years in jail.

Interviewer : Hmm...Ok...Ok..

Ponkshe : The story was like that and then that woman, the worker's wife does household work.

Interviewer : Hmm...Hmm..

Ponkshe : And the children grow up as orphans and one of them becomes a dacoit.

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : And a daughter of his becomes a dancer.

Interviewer : Ok.. I see.

Ponkshe : And this son of the worker who has become a dacoit..

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : This dacoit is also arrested by the police

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : Also comes to jail. And father and son both come to the same place. And no one recognizes the other.

Interviewer : Don't recognize.

Ponkshe : Why did you come...for son and father

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : And there they become friends and sentence of both ends at the same time. His sentence is reduced so both come out and after coming out both become

Interviewer : Ok..I ask you a question, I took this to mean that there is a slight strand of socialist thinking in that, do you feel so?

Ponkshe : Yes... certainly was.

Interviewer : Hmm...certainly was. Means to create a society without exploitation

Ponkshe : Hmm..

Interviewer : That idea was there.

Ponkshe : Yes... the idea was there.

Interviewer : Means Sawkari Pash was a silent film. In talkie films, this idea first came in Andheri Duniya.

Ponkshe : Hmm...Came in Andheri Duniya. If the importance is to be given as a movie..

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : Then Andheri Duniya was the first movie. And before that, all Hindi films were made in Mumbai.

Interviewer : Ok.. Yes...

Ponkshe :

Interviewer : And there was a very big social strand in it.

Ponkshe : Very big strand was there.

Interviewer : How it was successful?

Ponkshe : Moderately well.

Interviewer : Moderately well.. Ok.. which movie did you make after that?

Ponkshe : Pundalik.

Interviewer : Ok..Pundalik. How did it do?

Ponkshe : Bhakt Pundalik film was well done and it gave some money also.

Interviewer : Gave money. Ok... who acted in it?

Ponkshe : There was that Prema Borkar and this Ganpatrao Mohite.

Interviewer : Mohite.

Ponkshe : And Baburao Gokhale was Bhakt Pundalik's father.

Interviewer : Father

Ponkshe : And there was one Nalini Borkar

Interviewer : I know..I know..

Ponkshe : She was her mother.

Interviewer : Ok...Ok...

Ponkshe : Like that

Interviewer : Ok...How did the film do, did you see it?

Ponkshe : It was alright..

Interviewer : It was alright.. and its advertisement

Ponkshe : It was made and advertised immediately.

Interviewer : Hmm...what it means...

Ponkshe : I have done this movie independently.

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : Bhakta Pundalik

Interviewer : Yes..means your first film for which independent shooting was done was Bhakt Pundalik

Ponkshe : Bhakt Pundalik

Interviewer : And that also

Ponkshe : Andheri Duniya was also done by me.

Interviewer : Yes..Andheri Duniya was done by you. Good.

Ponkshe : After that Laxmicha Khel.

Interviewer : No, now tell me only the information about Bhakta Pundalik. Pundalik was... did they give you money?

Ponkshe : Yes..gave....four hundred.

Interviewer : Four hundred.

Ponkshe : Yes...

Interviewer : Okay... From your point of view, Bhakt Pundalik was the first movie filmed by you.

Ponkshe : First film was Bhakt Pundalik.

Interviewer : What was your age at that time?

Ponkshe : About 24 years.

Interviewer : So you were able to...

Ponkshe :

Interviewer : Could do it. And after Bhakt Pundalik Bedekar made this....I think...

Ponkshe : Which one....Laxmicha Khel.

Interviewer : was that Balwant film?

Ponkshe : No....No...No...

Interviewer : Bedekar

Ponkshe : Bedekar productions.

Interviewer : Hmm... Was Bedekar the director?

Ponkshe : It was Bedekar.

Interviewer : In it Damuanna (Malvankar)

Ponkshe : Damuanna had an important role in it.

Interviewer : Ok..Tell us about it.

Ponkshe : It was like Charlie Chaplin.

Interviewer : Yes... What was the movie like Charlie Chaplin? Tell us about it.

Ponkshe : There was some part of politics also in it.

Interviewer : Ok...there was..

Ponkshe : Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi etc.

Interviewer : Ok...I see...

Ponkshe : That topic was also there..

Interviewer : Was there...

Ponkshe : The topic of discussion was that why Gandhi observed silence on Monday.

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : Taking a chance about it.... was released on Tuesday.

Interviewer : Yes..

Ponkshe : Etc...Etc...That sort of idle talks used to happen.

Interviewer : Yes...Yes...

Ponkshe :

Interviewer : Yes...Ok...Ok...

Ponkshe : There were two parties. One following Tilak and one following Gandhi.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : And there used to be arguments between them.

Interviewer : I see...

Ponkshe : Sitting in the square

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : Like that was its base.

Interviewer : Was the base... Acting wise how did Damuanna do?

Ponkshe : He had done good work.

Interviewer : Did good work...

Ponkshe : Did good work... The film also..

Interviewer : Did well..

Ponkshe : Then that last scene which was there.

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : That all this experience is felt by him.

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : The Director can convey the experience of this world, how there are all these great people in the world.

Interviewer : Hmm....Ok..

Ponkshe : There is cheating everywhere in the world.

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : That is why he is leaving the world. And there is a dog with him throughout.

Interviewer : Ok...Ok.. like there is a dog with Dharmaraj.

Ponkshe : Yes...like that there is a dog with him.

Interviewer : Was this Bedekar's idea?

Ponkshe :

Interviewer : Yes...

Ponkshe : While the dog is hungry

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : It goes and fetches a bhakri (Bread)

Interviewer : Oh..

Ponkshe : That dog, it steals the bhakri from someone's door

Interviewer : Hmm..ok..

Ponkshe : It brings it and he is sleeping on a bench in the garden at night. And that dog brings a piece of bhakri. He takes the piece from its mouth.

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : After taking it, just as he is hungry, that dog is also hungry.

Interviewer : Oh God

Ponkshe : He is also jumping.

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : He says, now this bhakri is in my hand, and you have no claim to it now.

Interviewer : Bedekar in those times

Ponkshe : Me, the worker toils and earns money. Bhakri is in the hands of the owner. Similarly, you toiled and brought this bhakri, it is in my hand now. There is no use of your jumping now.

Interviewer : Yes...Yes... Did made the end like that?

Ponkshe : No...No... He leaves everything. Gets fed up with all this hypocrisy.

Interviewer : Hmm..Hmm...

Ponkshe : And so he leaves the world.

Interviewer : Hmm..Hmm..

Ponkshe : While going that dog is also with him.

Interviewer : Hmm...Hmm...

Ponkshe : So while they are going there is a back shot that he is walking along the road and the dog lifts its leg and on the stone of the bridge...

Interviewer : Yes...Yes...

Ponkshe : The newspapers referred to it a lot at that time.

Interviewer : I see..

Ponkshe : That how this is shot, how this is possible, this man is fed up..

Interviewer : Yes..

Ponkshe : With the world, so that dog also

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : This happened while going at the end

Interviewer :

Ponkshe : How this was taken meaning happened

Interviewer : Happened...

Ponkshe : Means this was not deliberate. This cannot be directed.

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : But he did that and that was very

Interviewer : Means he caught it.

Ponkshe : Hmm..The camera was running.

Interviewer : Was running. Did you get it on camera?

Ponkshe : Yes..That dog..

Interviewer : I see.. I said did you catch it. Was the camera handled in that way?

Ponkshe : The camera was set like that

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : The dog was walking behind him.

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe :

Interviewer : And luckily you were able to catch it. So in your opinion, if anyone has recognized Charlie Chaplin, from an Indian point of view, one can say.

Ponkshe : Yes...

Interviewer : It was Bedekar who recognized.

Ponkshe : Bedekar only recognized.

Interviewer : And in it Damuanna was Charlie Chaplin.

Ponkshe : Hmm..

Interviewer : So in my view Bedekar made the first social movie.

Ponkshe : Hmm..

Interviewer : I can come to that conclusion.

Ponkshe : Hmm...

Interviewer : That conclusion

Ponkshe : Social film was first made by Bedekar

Interviewer : And secondly to make Charlie Chaplin as a ----- must have been done by Bedekar.

Ponkshe : Bedekar did.

Interviewer : To come to conclusion, you

Ponkshe :

Interviewer : But after that which film you directed is the important point. Direct means, I am sorry... for which film you did the shooting.

Ponkshe : Then we started Brandichi Batli

Interviewer : Tell me about that.

Ponkshe : Brandichi Batli was extreme

Interviewer : Hmm....He had that

Ponkshe : Bedekar had prepared the whole script of that.

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : And we had started that shooting.

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : We had taken the shooting of ten months

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : But Bedekar got a scholarship

Interviewer : Yes..ok..

Ponkshe : And he went to England.

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : Because the Sangli studio closed down.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : And we came to Mumbai.

Interviewer : Ok..I see..

Ponkshe : After coming to Mumbai, in the year 1939, that film

Interviewer : Hmm..I know that. To whom the story of Brandichi Batli go, did it go to Vinayakrao?

Ponkshe : It went to Vinayakrao.

Interviewer : That went earlier, I know that

Ponkshe : Hmm...and Vinayakrao

Interviewer : The original story of Brandichi Batli

Ponkshe : No...No...

Interviewer : It was straightforward. A clerk

Ponkshe : Of a clerk.

Interviewer : Vinayarao

Ponkshe :

Interviewer : That Dr. Giridhar at the time of inauguration

Ponkshe : For the inauguration

Interviewer : And Vallabhbai burns the statue by pressing a button. All that in Dandi March. Yes.. Now I ask you, was Damuanna trained by Bedekar or he was already trained?

Ponkshe : Damuanna had a knack of acting. Bedekar trained him a lot. The persona he acquired

Interviewer : Yes...

Ponkshe : Was due to Bedekar.

Interviewer : But have you seen the work of Kamanna?

Ponkshe : Yes..

Interviewer : On stage. But if you compare Damuanna and Kamanna, Kamanna is better.

Ponkshe : Yes definitely.

Interviewer : Definitely..

Ponkshe : Because that story was different. The language..

Interviewer : Which language?

Ponkshe : Kamanna's

Interviewer : Yes..

Ponkshe : The play and Kamanna's character. It was a different character.

Interviewer : But from the point of acting he was sad. He was less than Damuanna

Ponkshe : Yes...

Interviewer : Must have seen Damuanna's work in films.

Ponkshe : Excellent! Very great artist.

Interviewer : And did you ever shoot with him

Ponkshe : No..

Interviewer : Did not...

Ponkshe : Knew him well. After that the play

Interviewer :

Ponkshe : Knew him well because of Damuanna

Interviewer : And that Dinkarrao

Ponkshe : Dinkarrao and he was very knowledgeable.

Interviewer : Was very clever.

Ponkshe : And intelligent as well.

Interviewer : Bedekar said to me, a very intelligent man. Kamanna was an excellent actor in your opinion.

Ponkshe : Means you, such ease of working.

Interviewer : Means Damuanna and Kamanna. But Kamanna gave not only....

Ponkshe : Yes...By many multiples..Kamanna's work cannot be compared to anything.

Interviewer : In my view Damuanna was little. Vinayakrao made him look a little

Ponkshe :

Interviewer : By doing close-ups.

Ponkshe : Hmm...

Interviewer : Ok... This is a good experience of yours. Now I say that cinema, when talking films came, from that time what happened. Who contributed to it. How was the method of photography? Can you tell us about an excellent cinematography work?

Ponkshe : Pandurang Naik was there at that time.

Interviewer : Pandurang

Ponkshe : But Keshavrao Dhaibar was here and Pandurang Naik was also. At Kolhapur.

Interviewer : At Kolhapur.

Ponkshe : And there was one Kale. V.G. Kale.

Interviewer : It must have been V. G. Joshi. At Kolhapur. He was experienced. Was Junnarkar there.

Ponkshe : He was in Hans Pictures. Junnarkar was there.

Interviewer : Did you have any contact with Junnarkar?

Ponkshe : No...No... Not for doing any work. The film was good.

Interviewer : Was good. Junnarkar had a good feel for the medium.

Ponkshe : Had a good feel for the medium.

Interviewer : Means assistant of Vinayakrao

Ponkshe : Very good

Interviewer : Ok...Now we...Your first period of time.. After that where did you go?

Ponkshe : After that to Mumbai.

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : 1939. Asha Pictures and Atre were the two companies.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : And they were in the same studio.

Interviewer : Ok...Ok...

Ponkshe : At that time a Marathi movie called Ghardari was produced by Asha Pictures.

Interviewer : The film Ghardari means our

Ponkshe :

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : That story was

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : And director Kumar Sen Samarth

Interviewer : Yes..

Ponkshe : And Shobhana Samarth, Avinash as a hero.

Interviewer : Yes...

Ponkshe : And Vanmala as the other character. These two heroines and one hero.

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : The story is based on that. Damuanna Joshi

Interviewer : Hmm...I know..

Ponkshe : And that was the first film in Mumbai.

Interviewer : Was its shooting done by you?

Ponkshe : For its shooting, there was a cameraman called Surendra.

Interviewer : Surendra was in the top league at that time.

Ponkshe : Very good

Interviewer : Very good. Means lighting

Ponkshe : Had a good hold over lighting.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe :

Interviewer : Then where was the shooting of Gharcha Vaidya done? Was it in Mumbai?

Ponkshe : At Mumbai.

Interviewer : In the studio of Atre Pictures?

Ponkshe : In the studio of Atre Pictures.

Interviewer : You must be remembering the cameraman from Mumbai. Took a top shot.

Ponkshe : Yes...Yes...

Interviewer :

Ponkshe : Everything can be done here. This of Mumbai

Interviewer : And Gharjawai. Was Kumar Sen the director?

Ponkshe : Kumar Sen.

Interviewer : I ask how was the direction.

Ponkshe : Direction means...he had some knowledge of technique.

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : And acting etc. And

Interviewer : Who taught acting?

Ponkshe : They used to do themselves.

Interviewer : Hmm...Hmm..

Ponkshe : When dialogue and the overall scene were explained, they used to do it themselves.

Interviewer :

Ponkshe : Hmm...Means they used to do it all by themselves. Kumar Sen could not do it.

Interviewer : Technique wanted.

Ponkshe : Knew some technique.

Interviewer : Editing etc.

Ponkshe : Hmm...and husband of Shobhana Samarth was the speciality

Interviewer : only because of qualification.....Ok...Now I ask something other than Gharjawai, that the success from plays and films

Ponkshe : He came.

Interviewer : Because after watching a play, the viewers have some picture in their mind.

Ponkshe : Continuous.

Interviewer : Hm.. continuous. In cinema..does it feel stagnant? This means the characters are speaking.

Ponkshe : At that time the technique was also slightly slow. The method was also a little slow.

Interviewer : When cameraman motion. Can you tell when the dynamic camera came?

Ponkshe : Dynamic camera started after 1958.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : After 58, Mehboob made films like Roti.

Interviewer : Mehboob...I think the film Roti was made in the year 1943.

Ponkshe : After that, he made one film.

Interviewer : Made.

Ponkshe : It was made casting him.

Interviewer : You know it means that... Do you say Mother India?

Ponkshe : Mother India was made. Before that Aurat was made.

Interviewer : Aurat was made, is it? Aurat was made in the year forty.

Ponkshe : Ok, then from the year forty, the dynamic camera was there.

Interviewer : I want to ask you, what we call the flexibility of camera....

Ponkshe : Yes....definitely...

Interviewer : Called as flexibility of the camera

Ponkshe : Making an impression by the camera.

Interviewer : Making an impression. And saying briefly, the meaning of taking means the drama of that scene...

Ponkshe : Hmm...

Interviewer : As per that drama, the camera

Ponkshe : Camera's

Interviewer : To heighten the drama, call it timing shots or call it timing or call it shot division, all that

Ponkshe :

Interviewer : And camera got some meaning.

Ponkshe : Got meaning

Interviewer : Before that, there was Amrut Manthan by Shantaram Bapu

Ponkshe : Hmm..

Interviewer : He made the camera dynamic.

Ponkshe : Yes...He did.

Interviewer : Shantaram Bapu had done a good study of the camera.

Ponkshe : Yes...

Interviewer : Shantaram Bapu had a good understanding of the medium.

Ponkshe : Yes..good.

Interviewer : In my opinion will you say that Shantaram Bapu showed the difference between a play and cinema. There is a shot in the film Amrut Manthan

Ponkshe : He said...

Interviewer : There is a difference between the two mediums. Shantaram Bapu made one and Bedekar saheb made one.

Ponkshe : Bedekar saheb made one.

Interviewer : Now the next Ghar Jawai, Raja-rani...It will be better, tell me something..

Ponkshe : Ghar Jawai was a good film but it did not do well.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : After that the film Raja Rani also

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : Was social.

Interviewer : Who was the director?

Ponkshe : Director Gajanan

Interviewer : Meaning of Bombay Talkies, Punarmilan, the same one?

Ponkshe : He was the director.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : That film also, even with people with Motilal etc...

Interviewer : Yes...I know.

Ponkshe : It did not do that well.

Interviewer : Was Khan there?

Ponkshe : Khan was there.

Interviewer : Yes.. and the heroine I think, was....

Ponkshe : Heroine was Vanmala

Interviewer : Vanmala only...Ok...I see.... now can you give me the story...can you give me some thread of the story of Raja Rani.

Ponkshe : No. Now I do not remember that much. But four brothers and three brothers... and one clerk, one Pahilwan, one practising medicine... like that

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : The story was something like that.

Interviewer : So it was on the topic of the joint family system, was it?

Ponkshe : Was on the topic of a joint family system only.

Interviewer : Ok...I see.

Ponkshe : Then the quarrels among their wives, depression, then affection between brothers..

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : The ending was something like that.

Interviewer : Ok...who was the director? Was it by Naqvi?

Ponkshe : It was by Naqvi.

Interviewer : And were you connected with the film?

Ponkshe : Yes...I was there at that time.

Interviewer : With whom..with Surendra?

Ponkshe : With Surendra.

Interviewer : Means

Ponkshe : Camera

Interviewer : Ok... what was your responsibility at that time? To set the camera angle, placement etc..

Ponkshe : Placement in those times was not with the cameraman. To pick up the camera other people were there. The camera was big.

Interviewer : Yes...No....No... Placement meaning which angle to set; who used to decide that?

Ponkshe : Director...Director...Director used to tell. For all other work, what would be the height of the camera

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : How to set the lighting, all this was cameraman's job.

Interviewer : Ok...another thing, there were filters etc. in those times.

Ponkshe : Yes... all filters.

Interviewer : Filters

Ponkshe : Filters meaning for outdoor use.

Interviewer : Yes...to reduce the intensity of the sunlight.

Ponkshe : To reduce the intensity.

Interviewer : Of what colour the filters were, any idea?

Ponkshe : Some were of yellow colour. For night scenes, they were of red color, orange colour.

Interviewer : Some of red colour

Ponkshe : Some were of mixed type.

Interviewer : Did they get the night effect?

Ponkshe :

Interviewer : So, filters were used in the studio?

Ponkshe : Yes...used filters.

Interviewer : Did the effect of the night came due to the filter?

Ponkshe : Yes...Used to come in the night. And lighting had to be done.

Interviewer : So did Kumar Sen Samarth came in any contact with you?

Ponkshe : Came in contact at the time of that film.

Interviewer : Ok..Then what did he do? You were the cameraman, then what was Kumar Sen doing? Giving instructions about acting, what did he do?

Ponkshe : He had nothing else to do. Once the cameraman is told, the cameraman is the busiest man on the sets.

Interviewer : Yes...that is what we wanted.

Ponkshe : One is most busy among all is..

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : the cameraman.

Interviewer : Ok..Ok..

Ponkshe : And cameraman does not have a minute's rest. Because as soon as one scene is over, the director tells him about the other.

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : Means....he cannot sit for even two minutes. Then immediately the next shot is explained to him, and he becomes busy again.

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : And to set up all the lighting, setting the camera, he becomes busy with that.

Once it is done then the third scene...so he does not have any rest.

Interviewer : I see...

Ponkshe : Throughout.

Interviewer : Has his situation changed, or it is like that only?

Ponkshe : The situation is the same even today.

Interviewer : Yes...the person doing all this work.

Ponkshe : Him only. He has the hardest work both physically and mentally.

Interviewer : Yes..

Ponkshe : Both, he has the most work.

Interviewer : I see...

Ponkshe : And director takes the credit for nothing.

Interviewer : I see..

Ponkshe : Means someone else writes the story,

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : People doing the acting are someone else.

Interviewer : Are separate..

Ponkshe : The person doing the songs is someone else and the musicians are again different.

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : And the thing somehow gets done.

Interviewer : Yes..

Ponkshe : And the credit is taken by the Director.

Interviewer : Yes...Yes...

Ponkshe : Then he suddenly becomes big.

Interviewer : Ok.. Another thing I ask is playback

Ponkshe : Happened before the year 1936.

Interviewer : Because of playback, I am asking you as an experienced cameraman, it will not be wrong to say that because of playback, the camera became flexible.

Ponkshe : Yes..became very flexible. Previously it had to be kept in one place. That was gone, now we could get many pieces

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : So what happened because of that...

Interviewer : Isolated short division

Ponkshe : Hmm....short division.

Interviewer : Outdoor must have helped some more.

Ponkshe : Yes.. it helped a lot. Whether outdoor or indoor, everywhere..

Interviewer : Yes..everywhere

Ponkshe : Because of this, it happened. The song got a certain speed.

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : Speed came because of playback. Speed came in all aspects.

Interviewer : Hmm...So it became fast, got speed.

Ponkshe : Became fast.

Interviewer : Ok. Now can you tell me what further progress happened in the case of the camera?

Ponkshe : The further progress in the case of the camera was that the movements stopped. Keeping the camera in one place. Previously camera was picked up from one spot, taken to another spot, that did not happen. By zoom you were at one spot, and the object could be moved forward or back.

Interviewer : What was the facility you got in feet, by zoom lense?

Ponkshe : There are different kinds of zoom lenses. Some are 10 inches, some of 15 inches, some of 20 inches, some of 31 inches.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : So with them, you can have a figure at forty-fifty feet. If you use a zoom of one hundred and fifty, you can see an object at forty-fifty feet in close up, and you can use it.

Interviewer : I see.. But what is the difference between a foot lense and zoom lense?

Ponkshe : Foot is only... With zoom, you can move the object forward and backward.

Interviewer : Hmm....Hmm...

Ponkshe : In the foot, it is not possible to move it forward and backward.

Interviewer : You can close it up and take closeups.

Ponkshe : By doing close-up. No. When a bird is sitting on a tree, you cannot go near the bird.

Interviewer : Hmm...Hmm...

Ponkshe : So you can stand a hundred feet away, below the tree and take a close-up of the bird, even its eyes.

Interviewer : Can you take it with a telephoto?

Ponkshe : Yes. It can be taken with a telephoto. Telephoto is meant for that.

Interviewer : I see..

Ponkshe : Means for this, telephoto is more useful.

Interviewer : Shantaram Bapu brought the telephoto. That close-up was taken by Shantaram Bapu.

Ponkshe : Yes.

Interviewer : Or it is not like that. Ok, then you were in for the film Payachi Dasi.

Ponkshe : I was there at the time of Payachi Dasi.

Interviewer : Means you..

Ponkshe : I was just an observer at the time of Payachi Dasi. Actually, I had nothing in it.

Interviewer : Was Atre himself on the sets?

Ponkshe : Some times he used to be there.

Interviewer : Was he?

Ponkshe : Yes.

Interviewer : Used to be there for meetings.

Ponkshe : Yes.

Interviewer : I see...

Ponkshe : Use to be there.

Interviewer : I see. And used to write a good script.

Ponkshe : Very good, he had written a script in eight days. Went to Lonawala and gave the complete script in eight days.

Interviewer : And the director used to demonstrate it himself.

Ponkshe : Being an artist, he used to demonstrate by acting.

Interviewer : I see...

Ponkshe : What is required, what is there..

Interviewer : Shot division etc.

Ponkshe : Yes...Lots of

Interviewer : I see..

Ponkshe : Being an artist, he had a good sense of that.

Interviewer : Durga had done good work in it.

Ponkshe : Durga had done good work. Vasant Deshpande's work was very good.

Interviewer : He was the hero.

Ponkshe : That is why he was the hero.

Interviewer : He did the role himself.

Ponkshe : Yes.. he did it himself.

Interviewer : And overall the film did well.

Ponkshe : It did well. It became a hit because of the songs.

Interviewer : Yes...Yes...

Ponkshe : Songs, Kusum Deshpande. Because of the two, it achieved a different height.

Interviewer : Achieved height.

Ponkshe : Acting was very good. The story was also good.

Interviewer : Yes..Good... At the time, appealing to the family. So did you see all the shooting of Payachi Dasi?

Ponkshe : Saw all...

Interviewer : Could you learn something from that?

Ponkshe : No. From the point of photography, there was not much to learn. But the drama, the story and from the point of overall presentation, it was really good.

Interviewer : Ok.. Did you start understanding that you can use the camera in a particular way, for a particular scene..

Ponkshe : That sense had not developed but overall how it can be presented.

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : Got to know how a particular situation can be done.

Interviewer : I see..

Ponkshe : How it can be done...

Interviewer : So you benefited.

Ponkshe : I benefited from that.

Interviewer : Raja Rani.

Ponkshe : Raja Rani was after that. In 1942. At the end of 1942.

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : I left Mumbai and came here to Pune at Shalimar Pictures.

Interviewer : I ask you one thing. Before that, there was a film called Tasbeer.

Ponkshe : There was Tasbeer.

Interviewer : Ok... Was based on Sanshaykallol.

Ponkshe : Yes.. Based on Sanshaykallol play.

Interviewer : Motilal

Ponkshe : Hmm...Motilal

Interviewer : Then was it successful or not?

Ponkshe : Not successful.

Interviewer : Not successful. Secondly, this film of Atre, the Vasantsena, were you in that?

Ponkshe : Yes, I used to go on the sets, but there was no contribution from me.

Interviewer : No contribution but did you see the shooting?

Ponkshe : Yes..It was slow. Became very slow.

Interviewer : I see...

Ponkshe : It took a lot of time.

Interviewer : Can you tell the reason for failure?

Ponkshe : The reason for failure was first, too much time. And there was no understanding of the script.

Interviewer : The feel

Ponkshe : It was not there in the proportion to what was needed. Artists were also not that good.

Interviewer : Ok..Ok...

Ponkshe : Meaning Vanmala and Shahu Modak for those characters. Vanmala was not what we visualized.

Interviewer : I see..

Ponkshe : And Shahu Modak was not up to that.

Interviewer : Who had done good acting in that?

Ponkshe : The work of Jahagirdar and Chintamanrao Kolhatkar was comparatively better.

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : But there was not much meaning to that. In the story of Charudatta and Vasantsena, these two characters, the noble characters could not do it.

Interviewer : They were unable to do.

Ponkshe : The director also could not understand that.

Interviewer : But was it a costume picture?

Ponkshe : It was a costume film. The expense was very high.

Interviewer : But can it be said that the camera was not used properly at that time?

Ponkshe : No..No... The camera was used. The camera had nothing to do with that.

Interviewer : Then...

Ponkshe : The effect which should have come, the conception which should have been there it was not there from Director's side.

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : That was basically weak.

Interviewer : It went beyond their capability.

Ponkshe : Beyond their capability. They could not do it.

Interviewer : Could not do it. Oh...

Ponkshe : Means not in any respect, not from the point of the camera and not from the point of acting, It was a failure in all respects, total failure.

Interviewer : Ok...Ok...

Ponkshe : It was very slow.

Interviewer : And after that, there was a big loss.

Ponkshe : Yes.. Big loss.

Interviewer : The company became almost insolvent

Ponkshe : Yes. Jahagirdar

Interviewer : Jaghirdar also left.

Ponkshe : Then at the end of 45, or in about 43.

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : I came to Shalimar Pictures in Pune.

Interviewer : Yes..

Ponkshe : Was its owner.

Interviewer : Hmm...The previous situation..

Ponkshe : Hmm... He took it over and came there.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : In 1943, made the first film called Prem Sangeet. Jairaj and Meena.

Interviewer : Meena... Ok.. Did he make Prem Sangeet?

Ponkshe : Yes.. Prem Sangeet.

Interviewer : Was the first one.

Ponkshe : Was the first one. Jairaj was the hero.

Interviewer : What was the movie about?

Ponkshe : It was a social film.

Interviewer : Social... Ok...

Ponkshe : Did not do much.

Interviewer : Who was the director? W. Z.

Ponkshe : W. Z. was there himself.

Interviewer : How was the direction, good?

Ponkshe : All right. He had good

Interviewer : I see..

Ponkshe : Good sense of acting. He was an intelligent man.

Interviewer : Ok.. the second one Man ki Jeet.

Ponkshe : Made Man ki Jeet. It did well.

Interviewer : Yes..

Ponkshe : Made money.

Interviewer : Made..

Ponkshe : At that time there was Josh Maliabaji-----

Interviewer : Yes..

Ponkshe : He was there.

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : Bharat Vyas was there. Poet and author were in Shalimar.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : In Hindi and Urdu. Bharat Uthale, Ramanand Sagar and Bharat Vyas.

Interviewer : Was he there?

Ponkshe : All were there. Many were there.

Interviewer : I see....

Ponkshe : We had many with us.

Interviewer : There was an actor named Shyam in it.

Ponkshe : There was an actor named Shyam in Man Ki Jeet.

Interviewer : Man Ki Jeet.

Ponkshe : Hmm... He was the hero.

Interviewer : Man Ki Jeet was based on an English novel called Pace.

Ponkshe : Yes.

Interviewer : I remember that film and songs. These songs were there.

Ponkshe : Yes...Yes...

Interviewer : After Shalimar which film was directed? As director which next film you shot?

Ponkshe : After that they made Mirabai. All photos of Mirabai were mine.

Interviewer : I see..

Ponkshe : Meena was the Mira

Interviewer : And he was the hero there.

Ponkshe : Shyam was the hero. Shyam was a hero and she was Mira.

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : And that movie was made at the time of partition.

Interviewer : Ok...Ok...

Ponkshe : In the year 1948 there was chaos and haphazardness. Because most of our staff was muslim.

Interviewer : Ok.. Ok...

Ponkshe : A lot of the staff was Muslim, Somehow the film was completed.

Interviewer : Hmm...Hmm...

Ponkshe : And for me...

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : Because of that there was tension

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : So the film took time. It was finished somehow.

Interviewer : Yes..Yes.. And then did they all leave?

Ponkshe : After that, they all went to Pakistan.

Interviewer : Ok...I see.

Ponkshe : And then the owner went to Pakistan. And the studio came in the hands of the Marwari.

Interviewer : Ok...I see.

Ponkshe : And then the Rungtha made a film named Rangila Rajasthan by taking Bharat Vyas.

Interviewer : Film

Ponkshe : Yes...

Interviewer : How was it? Was the photography by you?

Ponkshe : Photography was by me. Bharat Vyas was the director. The songs were excellent.

Interviewer : Who were the characters?

Ponkshe : Bharat Bhushan was there.

Interviewer : Yes...Yes...

Ponkshe : Bharat Bhushan was the hero.

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : And the girl was some Bengali girl, some Ghosh.

Interviewer : Was it Sadhana Ghosh?

Ponkshe : No, not Sadhana Ghosh, someone else. She did not come afterwards anywhere.

Interviewer : Did not come.

Ponkshe : And its story was also good. The film was also good but the Marwaris did not exhibit it.

Interviewer : Ok.... I see..

Ponkshe : So it was profitable for him.

Interviewer : I see.. Secondly which film was made after, was it Gulami?

Ponkshe : Yes Gulami, Shalimar Picture made this propaganda film for Government.

Interviewer : Was it made?

Ponkshe : Yes. Propaganda film.

Interviewer : Who was its director?

Ponkshe : One Wadhvani.

Interviewer : Yes...

Ponkshe : Mohan Wadhvani

Interviewer : Yes... Wadhvani.

Ponkshe : Later, he was in Films Division also.

Interviewer : You said Krishna Bhagwan

Ponkshe : Krishna Bhagwan was to be started. Some shooting was done.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : Some scenes of Kansa, the birth of Shri Krishna etc., those scenes were done.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : Were also done.

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : Then it remained incomplete. Means all this happening of Partition, because of that it all shut down.

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : He ran away to Pakistan. Because of that all that closed down.

Interviewer : Closed down. Then what was done? Did it go into scrap?

Ponkshe : Scrap means it was mortgaged to Marwari.

Interviewer : Mortgaged....Ok..

Ponkshe : All went there.

Interviewer : Who was it?

Ponkshe : Rungta was Marwari of Mumbai

Interviewer : Ok...Hmm.

Ponkshe : Owner of famous Film Studio at Mahalaxmi.

Interviewer :

Ponkshe : There was a laboratory called Shriraj Ali Hakim at Tardeo.

Interviewer : Yes...Yes...

Ponkshe : He was a financier of all that.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : As he ran away to Pakistan

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : That laboratory and that studio all came into possession of Marwari.

Interviewer : Ok... I see..

Ponkshe : And this studio at Pune

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : All went to the Marwari

Interviewer : That was this Bacchu Bhai?

Ponkshe : Jogat Putra was the owner of that property by means of that land.

Interviewer : I see... of Saraswati

Ponkshe : Hmm... of Saraswati..

Interviewer : Oh....

Ponkshe : So it came back from Rungta to him.

Interviewer : It came to him...ok..much

Ponkshe : Much. Then that Deccan Studio... Deccan Studio made many films.

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : Makarand Film City.

Interviewer : Yes.. I know. Did you work in that?

Ponkshe : There Kunkwacha Dhani, Keshavrao Date Shanta Apte.

Interviewer : Ok.. Now I ask you, which in the Deccan Studio

Ponkshe : Kunkawacha Dhani, I did the photography.

Interviewer : Complete

Ponkshe : Keshavrao Date, Apte.

Interviewer : After Shalimar, you worked in Makarand?

Ponkshe : Yes. In Makarand. Then came Kunkawacha Dhani.

Interviewer : Director Datta Dharmadhikari

Ponkshe : Datta Dharmadhikari

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : Keshavrao Date, Shantaram Apte, Chittaranjan Kolhatkar.

Interviewer : Yes..Yes..

Ponkshe : All these people were in it.

Interviewer : How well did that film do?

Ponkshe : It did well. It earned good money.

Interviewer : Ok.. I see. And did you do the photography for it?

Ponkshe : Yes.. I did the photography.

Interviewer : In it Date

Ponkshe : Keshavrao Date and Shantaram Apte.

Interviewer : Keshavrao Date. And was Raja Paranjpe there?

Ponkshe : No. Not Raja Paranjpe.

Interviewer : Ok.. Secondly Baburao. Ek Gosht he made in Makarand. Was it directed by you?

Ponkshe : No.

Interviewer : No. Not direction. It was made by Makarand. The direction was by Raja Paranjpe. So yours

Ponkshe : No. No. Then I came here in the year fifty.

Interviewer : Where?

Ponkshe : In Deccan Studio. Achyutrao Ranade.

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : When he made Jiwachi Mumbai

Interviewer : Yes...Yes... He had brought it. How was it?

Ponkshe : No... It did not do well . Then came Bala Jo Jo Re

Interviewer : Then Achyutrao. Was that story by Mukhram Sharma?

Ponkshe : No...No... Marathi film

Interviewer : Marathi film

Ponkshe : Hmm... That was Bokil's story.

Interviewer : Yes... I know.

Ponkshe : And Marulkar was skipped from it.

Interviewer : Hmm...Ok...Ok...

Ponkshe : And that Bala Jo Jo Re. It was their movie.

Interviewer : Ok.. I see.

Ponkshe : Hmm.

Interviewer : Did well.

Ponkshe : Yes... Well-meaning a hit.

Interviewer : I see..

Ponkshe : That film did very well.

Interviewer : Was its photography done by you?

Ponkshe : Yes.. I did its photography.

Interviewer : I see.. I remember....

Ponkshe : We finished it in thirty days.

Interviewer : In thirty days?

Ponkshe : We completed the movie in thirty days. Completed the movie in thirty days and a very little film.

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : Because of the new producer Dharmadhikari..

Interviewer : Yes..

Ponkshe : And to help him, we worked very fast. Using very less film, working fast, completed the movie for him.

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : And actually the movie which was made, we saw its trial.

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : And the trial people. Actually I abused Dharmadhikari.

Interviewer : Ok... why?

Ponkshe : By making the film I was fatigued. Too much hurry of work.

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : I could not work properly. And I made the film in that.

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : I thought it was a bogus film, who was going to watch it..

Interviewer : I see....

Ponkshe : And that film did extremely well.

Interviewer :

Ponkshe : Wave means for the first three weeks, the three-show income of the movie was not even fifteen rupees.

Interviewer : Yes...

Ponkshe : When the movie was released, first two-three days. After that, for the three weeks after that the daily income of the film was not more than 15-20 rupees.

Interviewer : Then how did the business pick up after that?

Ponkshe : Then ... what miracle happened. Actually it is a miracle.

Interviewer : I see... yes..

Ponkshe : One morning there was a big rush at the theatre. That tenant went to the house of the theatre owner to tell him that there was a very big crowd at the theatre. You come and see what is the matter.

Interviewer : Yes...

Ponkshe : And he came to see what is the matter. Whether there is any fight or scuffle. Such a big crowd at 8.30 in the morning, what is the reason.

Interviewer : Ok...Ok...

Ponkshe : Then it became known that all the people had come to book their tickets.

Interviewer : Yes...Yes... and when for the three shows a total of ten or fifteen people did not used to be there. After that did you do Jivachi Mumbai and Shivleela?

Ponkshe : Shivleela in Manish Studios

Interviewer : Did you do it?

Ponkshe : Ravindrarao Ghanekar was the director.

Interviewer : Director...

Ponkshe : Did Shivleela, it was Marathi.

Interviewer : I think there was a new actress in it..

Ponkshe : Yes.. Yes... There was some girl. Balakram was there.

Interviewer : Balakram was there. Who had the main role in Shivleela? Who else apart from Balakram?

Ponkshe : There was someone from Hindi.

Interviewer : I see..

Ponkshe : Did the role of Shiva.

Interviewer : Ok...Ok... Did the role of Shiva. Ok.. Balakram. Then which was the next one made?

Ponkshe : Next was Stree Janma Tuzi Kahani.

Interviewer : I see...

Ponkshe : Mukhram Sharma's story.

Interviewer : Story... I see.. Yes... Yes... Its direction by Datta Dharmadhikari..

Ponkshe : Datta Dharmadhikari.. Hmm...

Interviewer : Then like a wave, it was forceful

Ponkshe : With force.. It was made in Hindi also Kardar made it.

Interviewer : I see..

Ponkshe : While making they also produced Hindi.

Interviewer : I see, they made Hindi.. Ok...

Ponkshe : Yes.. It was mine.

Interviewer : In how many days you made Stree Janma Tuzi Kahani?

Ponkshe : Stree Janma Tuzi Kahani was done in 35-36 days..

Interviewer : I see..

Ponkshe : Did quickly.

Interviewer : I see... There was Suryakant also in it.

Ponkshe : Suryakant was there and Usha Kiran was there

Interviewer : I see... Your previous experience must have been useful for these films.

Ponkshe : Yes... a lot.

Interviewer : So for shot-taking

Ponkshe : Yes... a lot.

Interviewer : Yes...

Ponkshe : And regarding dresses and costumes, the old method..

Interviewer : Yes...Yes..

Ponkshe : That was from times of Prabhat. Still, those people used to wear red and yellow clothes.

Interviewer : Yes..Yes..

Ponkshe : It was stopped with me at the time of Kunkawacha Dhani.

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : ----- Date was a rich man, slightly decadent. So clothes of such a person, white shirt... I introduced that method.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : At that time Datta Dharmadhikari, the Prabhat people made a lot of noise against me.

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : These are old clothes. How will they look like? I said that is my responsibility.

Interviewer : Yes...Yes...

Ponkshe : And this man is flirtatious.

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : He should look like that.

Interviewer : Yes.. that is right. I ask, white dresses, yellow dresses, why were they used?

Ponkshe : Orthro chromatic film was used at that time. It was more sensitive to yellow dresses.

Interviewer : Yes... Most dresses used to be yellow, isn't it?

Ponkshe : White dress used to reflect a lot.

Interviewer : Yes..

Ponkshe : The reflection was more bright.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : So that the face should not become dull, it used to be coloured.

Interviewer : Hmm... yellow colour...

Ponkshe : Yellow colour, red colour.

Interviewer : I see.. Ok.. Secondly you, Bala Jo Jo Re...Stree Janma Tuzi Kahani, and which was the third?

Ponkshe : Chimni Pakhare.

Interviewer : How did Chimni Pakhare do?

Ponkshe : Chimni Pakhare was a hit.

Interviewer : I see..

Ponkshe : It was a hit in Mumbai.

Interviewer : It was a hit ... That photographer's practice.. I see.. Was the movie good to watch?

Ponkshe : Story of the movie was very good.

Interviewer : Financially

Ponkshe : Financially it was very good. And both in Marathi...in both, tickets.

Interviewer : Then..

Ponkshe : Then he got a lot of money. To Dharmadhikari. And then he made Bhagyawan in Hindi, Marathi and English and it flopped.

Interviewer : And it went down.

Ponkshe : It went down. And he drowned in debt.

Interviewer : Then Bala Jo Jo Re, Stree Janma Tuzi Kahani. Your good experiences.

Ponkshe :

Interviewer : After that what?

Ponkshe : Good in rates.

Interviewer : What in the year 1956.

Ponkshe : After that, I was idle for some time.

Interviewer : Yes.. Yes... Now tell me what is your opinion about this business.

Ponkshe : There is a large part of luck.

Interviewer : From 1935, nearly thirty to forty years you spent.

Ponkshe : Forty years.

Interviewer : Till the year 75. What is your experience?

Ponkshe : Luck plays a large part.

Interviewer : Yes.. Luck.

Ponkshe : I will say luck plays a large part.

Interviewer : And uncertainty.

Ponkshe : There is a lot of uncertainty.

Interviewer : I see...

Ponkshe : After partition..

Interviewer : Yes...

Ponkshe : Punjabi people came, South Indians came. Their groups were formed.

Interviewer : Yes..

Ponkshe : Because of that they were scattered. There was very little scope for the Marathi people.

Interviewer : Ok... Now secondly technicians earned very little money?

Ponkshe : No. Not much money is earned. Not by recordist, not by the cameraman, not even by heroine and director. Meaning as much as the hero gets, even half of that to the director...

Interviewer : I see..

Ponkshe : Music director, hero and heroine, compared to the money these three characters get, anyone else does not get much.

Interviewer : Ok.. Mahesh Kaul.

Ponkshe : Did photography.

Interviewer : How was the director? Was he good?

Ponkshe : Mahesh.. intelligent director.

Interviewer : I see..

Ponkshe : Intelligent, having good understanding but no confidence.

Interviewer : I see..

Ponkshe : The man's confidence was very low, so he required a lot of time.

Interviewer : Yes.. Yes..

Ponkshe : And he enjoyed the flattery created by his followers.

Interviewer : Yes.. means all things came. Then did you have any contact with Nitin?

Ponkshe : Did the whole film with Nitin Bose.

Interviewer : Nartaki.

Ponkshe : Nartaki.

Interviewer : How did that film do?

Ponkshe : Did well. Earned good money.

Interviewer : I see..

Ponkshe : Film was also good. And Nitin Bose was a very intelligent boy of craftmanship

Interviewer : And this....

Ponkshe : Very good. He had a good sense...Very good.

Interviewer : I see.. Was Nitin Bose a director and photographer?

Ponkshe : He was both.

Interviewer : Then he must be having a good feel for everything.

Ponkshe : Had a good feel for everything.

Interviewer : I see. After Nitin Bose, you went to.. Which artists were in Nartaki?

Ponkshe : Baby Nanda and Sunil Dutt in Nartaki.

Interviewer : I see..

Ponkshe : Nana Palshikar, Om Prakash.

Interviewer : I see... Then your ... when relationship ... do you have any idea? You said from the year 1963.

Ponkshe : No. Not 1963. After 1964.

Interviewer : Went on reducing.

Ponkshe : Went on reducing.. and reducing. But..

Interviewer : You said of cinema.

Ponkshe : Did the movie but it was an ordinary movie. The movie is called...

Interviewer : Yes...

Ponkshe : It was a movie of C type. The hero becomes... and it made losses.

Interviewer : I see..

Ponkshe : Did not get anything in it.

Interviewer : You show miracles. The scenes that are tricks Do you do them?

Ponkshe : No.. No..

Interviewer : Why not?

Ponkshe : Because it requires much patience.

Interviewer : Hmm...

Ponkshe : And it is a headache.

Interviewer : Do you have any information about that?

Ponkshe : I know how these scenes are done. But if I am told to do them, I will not do it. Because all the patience that is required, it is not in me.

Interviewer : There was a director named Dhirubhai Desai. Do you know him?

Ponkshe : I have heard the name.

Interviewer : Not known him?

Ponkshe : No.

Interviewer : Ok... Who directed..

Ponkshe : Someone... A Gujarati. I do not remember the name.

Interviewer : Ok... Now in the period 1963 to 1976 your contact became less and less.

Ponkshe : Contact became less.

Interviewer : Then in that.. All the mythological films you directed.

Ponkshe : Hmm...

Interviewer : Which film directd..

Ponkshe : Shot..

Interviewer : Yes shot.

Ponkshe : Mata Vaishnavi...

Interviewer : Mata Vaishnavi..

Ponkshe : And

Interviewer : Yes... Yes... Who was the director of Mata Vaishnavi/

Ponkshe : Satish Kumar.

Interviewer : Was it colourful?

Ponkshe : It was black white

Interviewer : Was the movie good?

Ponkshe : There was a story of Mata Vaishnavi somewhere in the Puranas.

Interviewer : Ok..

Ponkshe : It was based on that.

Interviewer : Ok... another was Preet ki Dori.

Ponkshe : There was Preet Ki Dori. A. B. Nanda and Balraj Sahni.

Interviewer : Balla Swami... yes... I see.. Was it social?

Ponkshe : Social... Social!

Interviewer : The director was Satish Kumar, wasn't he?

Ponkshe : Satish Kumar.

Interviewer : Now the institution at the time of Bhagwan. Please tell us something.

Ek Nath.

Ponkshe : These people did not know that Eknath is a Saint story. That director was from Lucknow.

Interviewer : Yes...Yes...

Ponkshe : So he did not know anything, how a saint is.

Interviewer : Yes...Yes..

Ponkshe : How a saint looks like, what is his name, how he walks, how he talks.

Interviewer : Yes..Yes..

Ponkshe : They did not know anything.

Interviewer : Was it based on Eknath?

Ponkshe : Yes, it was on Eknath. Means like Prabhat's.

Interviewer :

Ponkshe : They did it on him.

Interviewer : Yes...

Ponkshe : That was bogus.

Interviewer : Who was the heroine in it?

Ponkshe : Heroine was Kamini Kaushal.

Interviewer : Tell us some information about it.

Ponkshe : Kamini Kaushal came to the sets in the manner of a heroine of a social film.

Interviewer : Yes...

Ponkshe : Her synthetic saree, and wearing a modern blouse.

Interviewer : Yes....

Ponkshe : And hair in a big bun, very big bun

Interviewer :

Ponkshe : And a big garland of flowers on it.

Interviewer : Yes.. Yes..

Ponkshe : She came to the sets like that.

Interviewer : Means very

Ponkshe : Horrible. It was all weird.

Interviewer : But its name, get another name for it.

Ponkshe : All that matching blouse etc., that was more prominent because it was in colour.

Interviewer : I see.. Its name was initially different.

Ponkshe : 'Kan Kan Men Bhagwan'

Interviewer : What about it?

Ponkshe : Yes.. Some fifteen years before that a film named 'Kan Kan Men Bhagwan' had become a hit.

Interviewer : Ok...

Ponkshe : So when this film is going to be released, if they know the old, then it will be a hit.

Interviewer : Yes..

Ponkshe : This film of ours will not succeed at that time, so they changed the name.

Interviewer : Made 'Kan Kan Men Bhagwan'.....

Ponkshe : And then made 'Bhagwan Samaye Sansar Mein'...

Interviewer : How was the film, was it all right?

Ponkshe : Yes.. all right.

Interviewer : Then did 'Kan Kan Men Bhagwan' did better than this one?

Ponkshe : Yes... it was a hit.

Interviewer : Was a hit... Now I will come to the conclusion, that you are in this field for forty-five years. Did you see a gap, break at the time of war? Did the war affect movies in a big way?

Ponkshe : No. Not in any significant way.

Interviewer : Marathi cinema suffered in that

Ponkshe : Yes..

Interviewer : Directors had to compromise.

Ponkshe : Yes..

Interviewer : Taste of the masses,.. do you agree?

Ponkshe : Absolutely agree. Secondly there was director there. After Vinayakrao there was no director of that calibre in Marathi.

Interviewer : Yes..

Ponkshe : No one became. Means excepting Bedekar, there was no one else.

Interviewer : Hmm..

Ponkshe : Bedekar did only one or two films. He did not do more.

Interviewer : Ok.. You are very experienced. I am thankful that you met us. I thank you for giving us this recording and this information.